This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

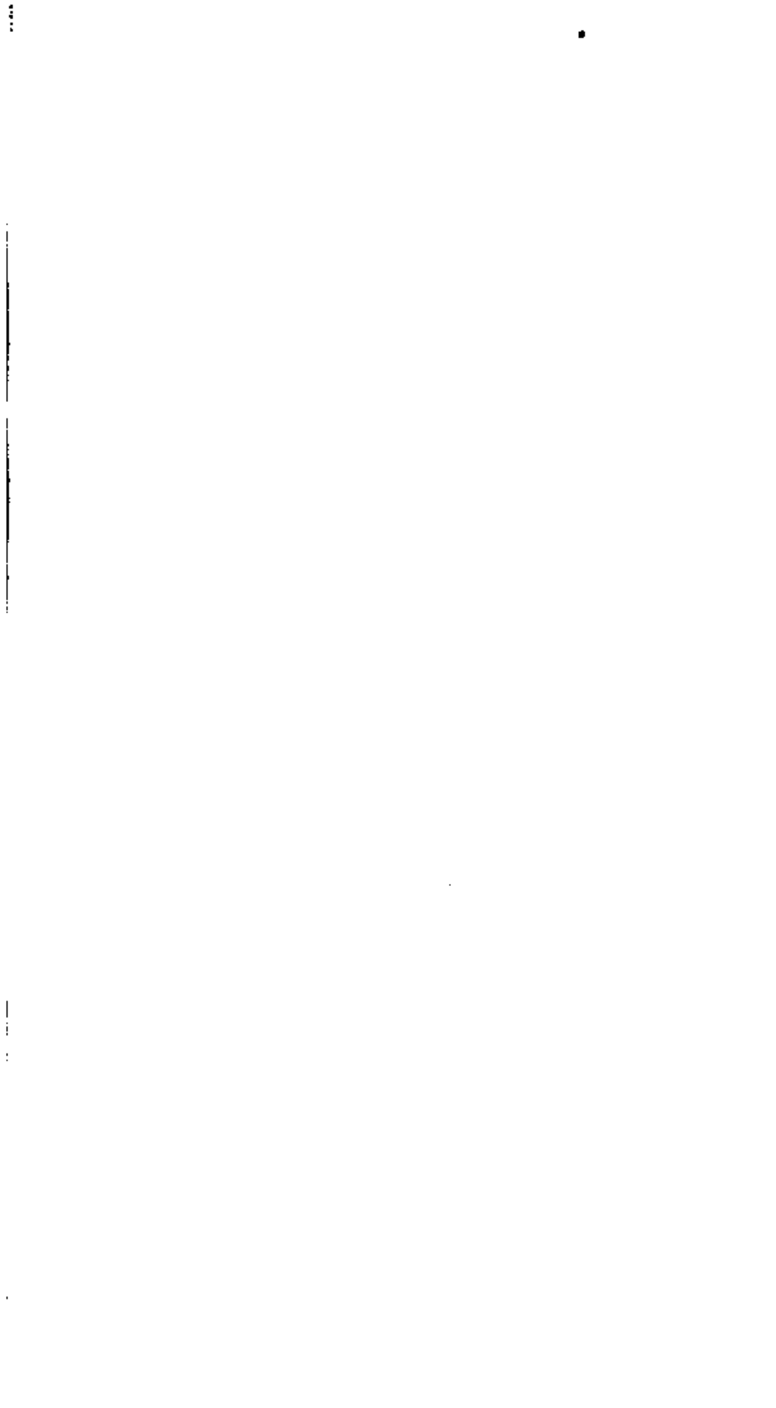
About Google Book Search

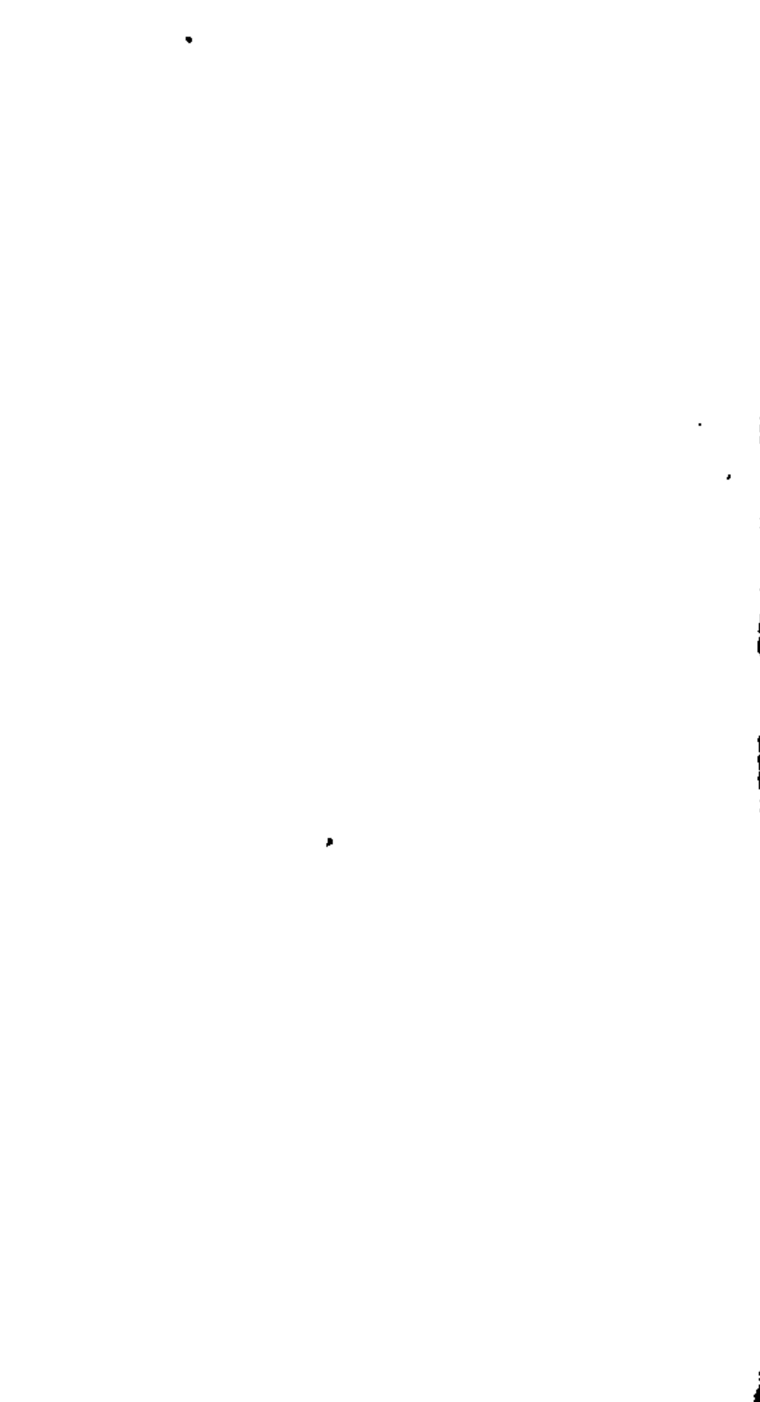
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at http://books.google.com/

1

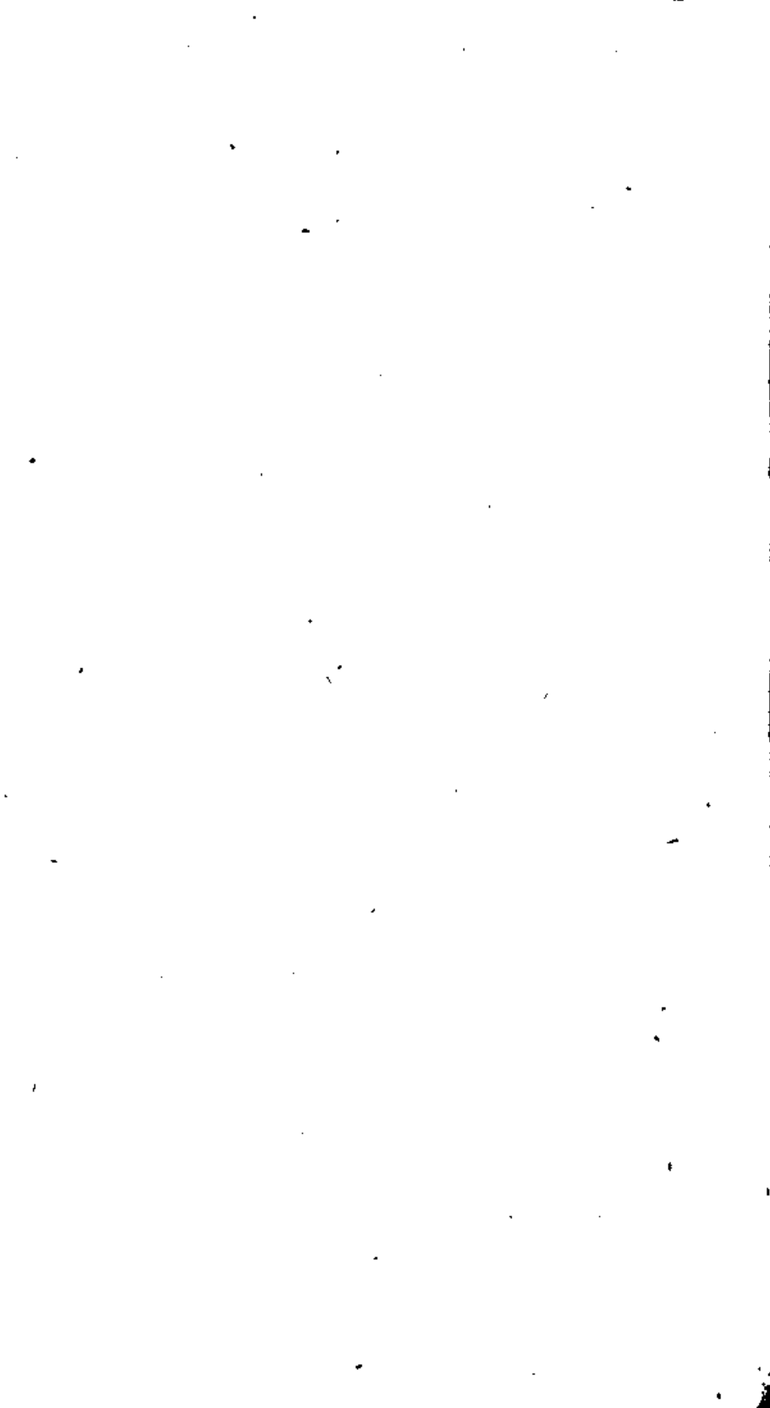
DW

Cooper.





V. 2,
DW
Cooper



CAREY, LEA AND BLANCHARD

Have lately published new editions of the following works

by Mr. Cooper:

THE SPY; a Tale of the Neutral Ground.

THE PIONEERS, or the Sources of the Susquehanna: a descriptive Tale.

THE PILOT: a Tale of the Sea.

LIONEL LINCOLN; or the Leaguer of Boston.

THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS: a Narrative of 1757.

THE PRAIRIE: a Tale.

THE RED ROVER: a Tale.

THE WEPT OF WISH-TON-WISH: a Tale.

THE WATER WITCH: or the Skimmer of the Seas.

THE BRAVO: a Tale.

NOTIONS OF THE AMERICANS: Picked up by a Travelling Bachelor.

THE HEIDENMAUER; or the Benedictines. A Legend of the Rhine.

THE HEADSMAN; or the Abbaye des Vignerons: a Tale.

THE MONIKINS: Edited by the Author of "The Spy."

PRECAUTION: a Novel, revised and corrected.

WOR 19 FEB 35

CAREY, LEA AND BLANCHARD

HAVE LATELY PUBLISHED

SKETCHES OF SWITZERLAND. By J. FENNIMORE COOPER, Author of "The Spy," &c. &c. in 2 vols. 12mo.

A RESIDENCE IN FRANCE, with an Excursion up the Rhine, and a Second Visit to Switzerland. By the same Author. In 2 vols 12mo.

"As we take up the pen to note down our impressions of these volumes, we feel as though we had just returned from an excursion in Switzerland, with a companion full to overflowing with an intense love of nature, and an exquisite taste for the picturesque. We cannot give our thanks and praise a more cordial emphasis—but if we could, we would; for so much pleasure are we indebted to Mr. Cooper. After the dull flats and dreary wastes of reading, of which there is abundance in all seasons, how "refreshing" (the word is unavoidable) to ascend with such a guide into the mountainous regions of literature. To those who are at all acquainted with the bold and vivid style of Mr. Cooper's descriptions of natural marvels and magnificence—and to whom are his original powers of imagery and expression unknown?—we need only say, that these powers have been unsparingly employed in the present volumes. It is only necessary to remind the reader of what Mr. Cooper can do, when his enthusiasm is kindled, to bid him recollect that the scene of the author's excursions is Switzerland. Upon such a subject as the scenery of Switzerland, how could Mr. Cooper fail to write with infinite freshness, grace, energy, and poetic ardour. Many of the letters moreover (for the work is in that form) have the advantage of being written under the immediate feelings excited by a first, unfading view of the beauties and wonders described. In short, this is just the work for every body to read and every body to relish.

Mr. Cooper has attempted, in these letters, little beyond descriptions of external nature. Switzerland, as he remarks, enjoying probably the sublimest as well as the most diversified beauties of this sort that exist on the globe, would seem to have a claim to be treated sui generis. Man, says the writer, appears almost to sink to a secondary rank in such a country. We feel all the force of this remark, and are quite content that Mr. Cooper should have confined the range of his genius to the higher ground. He has found room and reward there, much as it had been described before."—*Court Journal.*

GLEANINGS

IN EUROPE.

BY AN AMERICAN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA:

CAREY, LEA & BLANCHARD.

1837.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
51402B
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1940 L

Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1836, by Carey, Lea & Blanchard, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

FRANCE.

LETTER I.

To James E. De Kay, Esquire.

We have not only had Mr. Canning in Paris, but Sir Walter Scott has suddenly appeared among us. The arrival of the Great Unknown, or, indeed, of any little Unknown from England, would be an event to throw all the reading clubs at home, into a state of high moral and poetical excitement. We are true village *lionizers*. As the professors of the Catholic religion are notoriously more addicted to yielding faith to miraculous interventions, in the remoter dioceses, than in Rome itself; as loyalty is always more zealous in a colony, than in a court; as fashions are more exaggerated in a province, than in a capital, and men are more prodigious to every one else, than their own valets, so do we throw the ha-

loes of a vast ocean around the honoured heads of the celebrated men of this eastern hemisphere. This, perhaps, is the natural course of things, and is as unavoidable as that the sun shall hold the earth within the influence of its attraction, until matters shall be reversed by the earth's becoming the larger and more glorious orb of the two. Not so in Paris. Here men of every gradation of celebrity, from Napoleon down to the Psalmanazar of the day, are so very common, that one scarcely turns round in the streets, to look at them. Delicate and polite attentions, however, fall as much to the share of reputation, here, as in any other country, and perhaps more so, as respects literary men, though there is so little *wonder-mongering*. It would be quite impossible that the presence of Sir Walter Scott should not excite a sensation. He was frequently named in the journals, received a good deal of private, and some public notice, but, on the whole, much less of both, I think, than one would have a right to expect for him, in a place like Paris. I account for the fact, by the French distrusting the forthcoming work on Napoleon, and by a little dissatisfaction which prevails on the subject of the tone of "Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk." This feeling may surprise you, as coming from a nation as old and as great as France, but, alas! we are all human.

The King spoke to him, in going to his chapel, Sir Walter being in waiting for that purpose, but beyond this I believe he met with no civilities from the court.

As for myself, circumstances that it is needless to recount, had brought me, to a slight degree, within the notice of Sir Walter Scott, though we had never met, nor had I ever seen him, even in public, so as to know his person. Still I was not without hopes of being more fortunate now, while I felt a delicacy about obtruding myself any further on his time and attention. Several days after his arrival went by, however, without my good luck bringing me in his way, and I began to give the matter up, though the *Princesse* ——, with whom I had the advantage of being on friendly terms, flattered me with an opportunity of seeing the great writer at her house, for she had a fixed resolution of making his acquaintance before he left Paris, *coute qui coute.*

It might have been ten days after the arrival of Sir Walter Scott, that I had ordered a carriage, one morning, with an intention of driving over to the other side of the river, and had got as far as the lower flight of steps, on my way to enter it, when, by the tramping of horses in the court, I found that another coach was driving in. It was raining, and, as my own carriage drove from the door, to make way for the new comer, I stopped where I was, until it could return. The carriage-steps rattled, and presently a large, heavy-moulded man appeared in the door of the hotel. He was gray, and limped a little, walking with a cane. His carriage immediately drove round, and was succeeded by mine, again; so I descended. We passed each other on the stairs, bowing as a matter of course. I had got

to the door, and was about to enter the carriage, when it flashed on my mind that the visit might be to myself. The two lower floors of the hotel were occupied as a girl's boarding-school; the reason of our dwelling in it, for our own daughters were in the establishment; *au seconde,* there was nothing but our own *appartement,* and above us, again, dwelt a family whose visitors never came in carriages. The door of the boarding-school was below, and men seldom came to it, at all. Strangers, moreover, sometimes did honour me with calls. Under these impressions I paused, to see if the visitor went as far as our flight of steps. All this time, I had not the slightest suspicion of who he was, though I fancied both the face and form were known to me.

The stranger got up the large stone steps slowly, leaning, with one hand, on the iron railing, and with the other, on his cane. He was on the first landing, as I stopped, and, turning towards the next flight, our eyes met. The idea that I might be the person he wanted, seemed then to strike him for the first time. "*Est-ce Mons. ——, que j'ai l'honneur de voir?*" he asked, in French, and with but an indifferent accent. "*Monsieur, je m'appele ——.*" "*Eh bien, donc—je suis Walter Scott.*"

I ran up to the landing, shook him by the hand, which he stood holding out to me cordially, and expressed my sense of the honour he was conferring. He told me, in substance, that the *Princesse ——* had been as good as her word, and having succeeded herself in getting hold of him, she had good-na-

turedly given him my address. By way of cutting short all ceremony he had driven from his hotel to my lodgings. All this time he was speaking French, while my answers and remarks were in English. Suddenly recollecting himself, he said—"Well, here have I been *parlez-vousing* to you, in a way to surprise you, no doubt; but these Frenchmen have got my tongue so set to their lingo, that I have half forgotten my own language." As we proceeded up the next flight of steps, he accepted my arm, and continued the conversation in English, walking with more difficulty than I had expected to see. You will excuse the vanity of my repeating the next observation he made, which I do in the hope that some of our own *exquisites* in literature may learn in what manner a man of true sentiment and sound feeling regards a trait that they have seen fit to stigmatize as unbecoming. "I'll tell you what I most like," he added, abruptly; "and it is the manner in which you maintain the ascendancy of your own country on all proper occasions, without descending to vulgar abuse of ours. You are obliged to bring the two nations in collision, and I respect your liberal hostility." This will probably be esteemed treason in our own self-constituted mentors of the press, one of whom, I observe, has quite lately had to apologize to his readers for exposing some of the sins of the English writers in reference to ourselves! But these people are not worth our attention, for they have neither the independence which belongs to masculine reason, nor manhood even to

prize the quality in others. "I am afraid the mother has not always treated the daughter well," he continued, "feeling a little jealous of her growth, perhaps; for, though we hope England has not yet begun to descend on the evil side, we have a presentiment that she has got to the top of the ladder."

There were two entrances to our apartments; one, the principal, leading by an ante-chamber and *salle à manger* into the *salon*, and thence through other rooms to a terrace; and the other, by a private *corridor*, to the same spot. The door of my *cabinet* opened on this *corridor*, and though it was dark, crooked, and any thing but savoury, as it lead by the kitchen, I conducted Sir Walter through it, under an impression that he walked with pain, an idea, of which I could not divest myself, in the hurry of the moment. But for this awkwardness on my part, I believe I should have been the witness of a singular interview. General Lafayette had been with me a few minutes before, and he had gone away by the *salon*, in order to speak to Mrs. ——. Having a note to write, I had left him there, and I think his carriage could not have quitted the court when that of Sir Walter Scott entered. If so, the General must have passed out by the ante-chamber, about the time we came through the *corridor*.

There would be an impropriety in my relating all that passed in this interview; but we talked over a matter of business, and then the conversation was more general. You will remember that Sir Walter

was still the *Unknown*,* and that he was believed to be in Paris, in search of facts for the Life of Napoleon. Notwithstanding the former circumstance, he spoke of his works with great frankness and simplicity, and without the parade of asking any promises of secrecy. In short, as he commenced in this style, his authorship was alluded to by us both, just as if it had never been called in question. He asked me if I had a copy of the —— by me, and on my confessing I did not own a single volume of anything I had written, he laughed, and said he believed that most authors had the same feeling on the subject: as for himself, he cared not if he never saw a Waverly novel again, as long as he lived. Curious to know whether a writer as great and as practised as he, felt the occasional despondency which invariably attends all my own little efforts of this nature, I remarked that I found the mere composition of a tale a source of pleasure; so much so, that I always invented twice as much as was committed to paper, in my walks, or in bed, and, in my own judgment, much the best parts of the composition never saw the light; for, what was written was usually written at set hours, and was a good deal a matter of chance; and that going over and over the same subject, in proofs, disgusted me so thoroughly with the book, that I supposed every one else would be disposed to view it with the same eyes. To this he answered, that he was spared much of the labour

* He did not avow himself for several months afterwards.

of proof-reading, Scotland, he presumed, being better off than America, in this respect; but, still, he said he "would as soon see his dinner again, after a hearty meal, as to read one of his own tales when he was fairly rid of it."

He sat with me nearly an hour, and he manifested, during the time the conversation was not tied down to business, a strong propensity to humour. Having occasion to mention our common publisher in Paris, he quaintly termed him, with a sort of malicious fun, "our Gosling;"* adding, that he hoped he, at least, "laid golden eggs."

I hoped that he had found the facilities he desired, in obtaining facts for the forth-coming history. He rather hesitated about admitting this.—"One can hear as much as he pleases, in the way of anecdote," he said, "but then, as a gentleman, he is not always sure how much of it he can, with propriety, relate in a book—besides," throwing all his latent humour into the expression of his small gray eyes, "one may even doubt how much of what he hears is fit for history, on another account." He paused, and his face assumed an exquisite air of confiding simplicity, as he continued with perfect *bonne foi* and strong Scottish feeling, "I have been to see *my countryman* M'Donald, and I rather think that will be about as much as I can do here, now." This was uttered with so much *naïveté* that I could hardly believe it was the same man, who, a moment

* His name was *Gosselin*.

before, had shown so much shrewd distrust of oral relations of facts.

I inquired when we might expect the work. "Some time in the course of the winter," he replied, "though it is likely to prove larger than I, at first, intended. We have got several volumes printed, but I find I must add to the matter, considerably, in order to dispose of the subject. I thought I should get rid of it in seven volumes, which are already written, but it will reach, I think, to nine." "If you have two still to write, I shall not expect to see the book before spring." "You may. Let me once get back to Abbotsford, and I'll soon knock off those two fellows." To this I had nothing to say, although I thought such a *tour de force* in writing might better suit invention than history.

When he rose to go, I begged him to step into the *salon*, that I might have the gratification of introducing my wife to him. To this he very good naturedly assented, and entering the room, after presenting Mrs. —— and my nephew W——, he took a seat. He sat some little time, and his fit of pleasantry returned, for he illustrated his discourse by one or two apt anecdotes, related with a slightly Scottish accent, that he seemed to drop and assume at will. Mrs. —— observed to him that the *bergère* in which he was seated, had been twice honoured that morning, for General Lafayette had not left it more than half an hour. Sir Walter Scott looked surprised at this, and said, inquiringly, "I thought he had gone to America, to pass the rest of his

days?" On my explaining the true state of the case, he merely observed, "he is a great man;" and yet, I thought the remark was made coldly, or in complaisance to us.

When Sir Walter left us, it was settled that I was to breakfast with him, the following day but one. I was punctual, of course, and found him in a new silk *douilliette* that he had just purchased, trying "as hard as he could," as he pleasantly observed, to make a Frenchman of himself; an undertaking as little likely to be successful, I should think, in the case of his Scottish exterior, and Scottish interior, too, as any experiment well could be. There were two or three visitors present, besides Miss Ann Scott, his daughter, who was his companion in the journey. He was just answering an invitation from the *Princesse* ——, to an evening party, as I entered. "Here," said he, "you are a friend of the lady, and *parlez-vous* so much better than I, can you tell me whether this is for *jeudi*, or *lundi*, or *mardi*, or whether it means no day at all." I told him the day of the week intended. "You get notes occasionally from the lady, or you could not read her scrawl so readily?" "She is very kind to us, and we often have occasion to read her writing." "Well, it is worth a very good dinner to get through a page of it." "I take my revenge in kind, and I fancy she has the worst of it." "I don't know, after all, that she will get much the better of me, with this *plume d'auberge*." He was quite right, for, although Sir Walter writes a smooth

even hand, and one that appears rather well than otherwise on a page, it is one of the most difficult to decipher I have ever met with. The i's, u's, m's, n's, a's, e's, t's, &c., &c., for want of dots, crossings, and being fully rounded, looking all alike, and rendering the reading slow and difficult, without great familiarity with his mode of handling the pen; at least, I have found it so.

He had sealed the note, and was about writing the direction, when he seemed at a loss. "How do you address this lady—as 'Her Highness'?" I was much surprised at this question from him, for it denoted a want of familiarity with the world, that one would not have expected in a man who had been so very much and so long courted by the great. But, after all, his life has been provincial, though, as his daughter remarked in the course of the morning, they had no occasion to quit Scotland, to see the world, all the world coming to see Scotland.

The next morning he was with me again, for near an hour, and we completed our little affair. After this, we had a conversation on the Law of Copy-Rights, in the two countries, which, as we possess a common language, is a subject of great national interest. I understood him to say that he had a double right, in England, to his works; one under a statute, and the other growing out of common law. Any one publishing a book, let it be written by whom it might, in England, duly complying with the law, can secure the right, whereas, none but a *citizen* can do the same in America. I

regret to say, that I misled him on the subject of our copy-right law, which, after all, is not so much more illiberal than that of England, as I had thought it.

I told Sir Walter Scott, that, in order to secure a copy-right in America, it was necessary the book should never have been published *anywhere else.* This was said under the popular notion of the matter; or that which is entertained among the booksellers. Reflection and examination have since convinced me of my error: the publication alluded to in the law, can only mean publication in America; for, as the object of doing certain acts previously to publication is merely to forewarn the *American* public that the right is reserved, there can be no motive for having reference to any other publication. It is, moreover, in conformity with the spirit of all laws to limit the meaning of their phrases by their proper jurisdiction. Let us suppose a case. An American writes a book. He sends a copy to England, where it is published in March. Complying with the terms of our own Copy-Right Law, as to the entries and notices, the same work is published here in April. Now, will it be pretended that his right is lost, always providing that his own is the first *American* publication? I do not see how it can be so, by either the letter or the spirit of the law. The intention is to encourage the citizen to write, and to give him a just property in the fruits of his labour; and the precautionary provisions of the law are merely to prevent others from

being injured for want of proper information. It is of no moment to either of these objects that the author of a work has already reaped emolument, in a foreign country. The principle is to encourage literature, by giving it all the advantages it can obtain.

If these views are correct, why may not an English writer secure a right in this country, by selling it in season, to a citizen here? An equitable trust might not, probably would not be sufficient, but a *bonâ fide* transfer for a valuable consideration, I begin to think, would. It seems to me that all the misconception which has existed on this point, has arisen from supposing that the term *publication* refers to other than a publication in the country. But, when one remembers how rare it is to get lawyers to agree on a question like this, it becomes a layman to advance his opinion with great humility. I suppose, after all, a good way of getting an accurate notion of the meaning of the law, would be to toss a dollar into the air, and cry "heads," or "tails." Sir Walter Scott seemed fully aware of the great circulation of his books in America, as well as how much he lost by not being able to secure a copyright. Still, he admitted they produced him something. Our conversation on this subject terminated by a frank offer, on his part, of aiding me with the publishers of his own country,* but, although grate-

* An offer that was twice renewed, after intervals of several years.

ful for the kindness, I was not so circumstanced as to be able to profit by it.

He did not appear to me to be pleased with Paris. His notions of the French were pretty accurate, though clearly not free from the old-fashioned prejudices. "After all," he remarked, "I am a true Scot, never, except on this occasion, and the short visit I made to Paris in 1815, having been out of my own country, unless to visit England, and I have even done very little of the latter." I understood him to say he had never been in Ireland, at all.

I met him once more, in the evening, at the hotel of the *Princesse* ——. The party had been got together in a hurry, and was not large. Our hostess contrived to assemble some exceedingly clever people, however, among whom were one or two women, who are already historical, and whom I had fancied long since dead. All the female part of the company, with the silent delicacy that the French so well understand, appeared with ribbons, hats, or ornaments of some sort or other, of a Scottish stamp. Indeed, almost the only woman in the room that did not appear to be a Caledonian was Miss Scott. She was in half-mourning, and with her black eyes and jet-black hair, might very well have passed for a French woman, but for a slight peculiarity about the cheek bones. She looked exceedingly well, and was much admired. Having two or three more places to go to, they staid but an hour. As a matter of course, all the French women were exceedingly *empressées* in their manner towards the Great

Unknown, and as there were three or four that were very exaggerated on the score of romance, he was quite lucky if he escaped some absurdities. Nothing could be more patient than his manner, under it all, but as soon as he very well could, he got into a corner, where I went to speak to him. He said, laughingly, that he spoke French with so much difficulty he was embarrassed to answer the compliments. "I'm as good a lion as needs be, allowing my mane to be stroked as familiarly as they please, but I can't growl for them, in French. How is it with you?" Disclaiming the necessity of being either a good or a bad lion, being very little troubled in that way, for his amusement I related to him an anecdote. Pointing out to him a *Comtesse de* ——, who was present, I told him, this lady I had met once a week, for several months, and at every *soirée* she invariably sailed up to me to say—"*Oh, Monsieur* ——, *quelles livres!—vos charmants livres—que vos livres sont charmants!*" and I had just made up my mind that she was, at least, a woman of taste, when she approached me with the utmost *sang froid*, and cried—"*Bon soir, Monsieur* ——*; je viens d'acheter tous vos livres et je compte profiter de la premiere occasion pour les lire!*"

I took leave of him, in the ante-chamber, as he went away, for he was to quit Paris the following evening.

Sir Walter Scott's person and manner have been so often described, that you will not ask much of me, in this way, especially as I saw so little of him.

His frame is large and muscular, his walk difficult, in appearance, though he boasted himself a vigorous mountaineer, and his action, in general, measured and heavy. His features and countenance were very Scottish, with the short thick nose, heavy lips, and massive cheeks. The superior or intellectual part of his head was neither deep nor broad, but perhaps the reverse, though singularly high. Indeed, it is quite uncommon to see a scull so round and tower-like in the formation, though I have met with them in individuals not at all distinguished for talents. I do not think a casual observer would find anything unusual in the exterior of Sir Walter Scott, beyond his physical force, which is great, without being at all extraordinary. His eye, however, is certainly remarkable. Gray, small, and without lustre, in his graver moments it appears to look inward, instead of regarding external objects, in a way, though the expression, more or less, belongs to abstraction, that I have never seen equalled. His smile is good-natured and social; and when he is in the mood, as happened to be the fact so often in our brief intercourse as to lead me to think it characteristic of the man, his eye would lighten with a great deal of latent fun. He spoke more freely of his private affairs than I had reason to expect, though our business introduced the subject naturally; and, at such times, I thought the expression changed to a sort of melancholy resolution, that was not wanting in sublimity.

The manner of Sir Walter Scott is that of a man

accustomed to see much of the world without being exactly a man of the world himself.. He has evidently great social tact, perfect self-possession, is quiet, and absolutely without pretension, and has much dignity; and yet it struck me that he wanted the ease and *àplomb* of one accustomed to live with his equals. The fact of his being a lion, may produce some such effect, but I am mistaken if it be not more the influence of early habits and opinions than of any thing else.

Scott has been so much the mark of society, that it has evidently changed his natural manner, which is far less restrained, than it is his habit to be in the world. I do not mean by this, the mere restraint of decorum, but a drilled simplicity or demureness, like that of girls who are curbed in their tendency to fun and light-heartedness, by the dread of observation. I have seldom known a man of his years, whose manner was so different in a *tête-à-tête*, and in the presence of a third person. In Edinburgh the circle must be small, and he probably knows every one. If strangers do go there, they do not go all at once, and, of course, the old faces form the great majority; so that he finds himself always on familiar ground. I can readily imagine that in *Auld Reekie*, and among the proper set, warmed perhaps by a glass of mountain-dew, that Sir Walter Scott, in his peculiar way, is one of the pleasantest companions the world holds.

There was a certain *M. de* —— at the *soirée* of the *Princesse* ——, who has obtained some notori-

ety as the writer of novels. I had the honour of being introduced to this person, and was much amused with one of his questions. You are to understand that the vaguest possible notions exist in France, on the subject of the United States. Empires, states, continents and islands, are blended in inextricable confusion, in the minds of a large majority of even the intelligent classes, and we sometimes hear the oddest ideas imaginable. This ignorance, quite pardonable in part, is not confined to France, by any means, but exists even in England, a country that ought to know us better. It would seem that *M. de* ——, either because I was a shade or two whiter than himself, or because he did not conceive it possible that an American could write a book, (for in this quarter of the world, there is a strong tendency to believe that every man whose name crosses the ocean from America, is merely some European who has gone there,) or, from some cause that to me is inexplicable, took it into his head that I was an Englishman who had amused a leisure year or two in the Western Hemisphere. After asking me a few questions concerning the country, he very coolly continued—"*Et, combien de tems avez-vous passé, en Amérique, Monsieur?*" Comprehending his mistake, for a little practice here makes one quick in such matters, I answered—"*Monsieur, nous y sommes, dépuis deux siècles.*" I question if M. de —— has yet recovered from his surprize!

The French, when their general cleverness is con-

sidered, are singularly ignorant of the habits, institutions, and civilization of other countries. This is in part owing to their being little addicted to travelling. Their commercial enterprize is not great; for though we occasionally see a Frenchman carrying with him into pursuits of this nature, the comprehensive views, and one might almost say, the philosophy, that distinguish the real intelligence of the country, such instances are rare, the prevailing character of their commerce being caution and close dealing. Like the people of all great nations, their attention is drawn more to themselves than to others, and then the want of a knowledge of foreign languages has greatly contributed to their ignorance. This want of knowledge of foreign languages, in a nation that has traversed Europe as conquerors, is owing to the fact that they have either carried their own language with them, or met it everywhere. It is a want, moreover, that belongs rather to the last generation, than to the present; the returned emigrants having brought back with them a taste for English, German, Italian and Spanish, which has communicated itself to all, or nearly all, the educated people of the country. English, in particular, is now very generally studied; and perhaps, relatively, more French, under thirty years of age, are to be found in Paris, who speak English, than Americans, of the same age, are to be found in New York, who speak French.

I think the limited powers of the language, and the rigid laws to which it has been subjected, con-

tribute to render the French less acquainted with foreign nations, than they would otherwise be. In all their translations, there is an effort to render the word, however peculiar may be its meaning, into the French tongue. Thus, "township," and "city," met with in an American book, would probably be rendered by "*canton*," or "*commune*," or "*ville*;" neither of which conveys an accurate idea of the thing intended. In an English or American book, we should introduce the French word at once, which would induce the reader to inquire into the differences that exist between the minor territorial divisions of his own country, and those of the country of which he is reading. In this manner is the door opened for further information, until both writers and readers come to find it easier and more agreeable to borrow words from others, than to curtail their ideas by their national vocabularies. The French, however, are beginning to feel their poverty, in this respect, and some are already bold enough to resort to the natural cure.

The habit of thinking of other nations through their own customs, betrays the people of this country into many ridiculous mistakes. One hears, here, the queerest questions imaginable, every day; all of which, veiled by the good-breeding and delicacy that characterize the nation, betray an innocent sense of superiority, that may be smiled at, and which creates no feeling of resentment. A *savan* lately named to me the coasting tonnage of France, evidently with the expectation of exciting my admiration; and on

my receiving the information coolly, he inquired, with a little sarcasm of manner—"without doubt, you have some coasting tonnage, also, in America?" "The coasting tonnage of the United States, Monsieur, is greater than the entire tonnage of France." The man looked astonished, and I was covered with questions, as to the nature of the trade that required so much shipping, among a population numerically so small. It could not possibly be the consumption of a country—he did not say it, but he evidently thought it—so insignificant and poor? I told him, that, bread, wine, and every other article of the first necessity excepted, the other consumption of America, especially in luxuries, did not fall so much short of that of France as he imagined, owing to the great abundance in which the middling and lower classes lived. Unlike Europe, articles that were imported, were mere necessaries of life, in America, such as tea, coffee, sugar, &c., &c., the lowest labourer usually indulging in them. He left me evidently impressed with new notions, for there is a desire to learn mingled with all their vanity.

But, I will relate a laughable blunder of a translator, by way of giving you a familiar example of the manner in which the French fall into error, concerning the condition of other nations, and to illustrate my meaning. In one of the recent American novels that have been circulated here, a character is made to betray confusion, by tracing lines on the table, after dinner, with some wine that had been spilt, a sort of idle occupation sufficiently common

to allow the allusion to be understood by every American. The sentence was faithfully rendered; but, not satisfied with giving his original, the translator annexes a note, in which he says, "one sees by this little trait, that the use of table-cloths, at the time of the American Revolution, was unknown in America!" You will understand the train of reasoning that led him to this conclusion. In France the cover is laid, perhaps, on a coarse table of oak, or even of pine, and the cloth is never drawn; the men leaving the table with the women. In America, the table is of highly polished mahogany, the cloth is removed, and the men sit, as in England. Now the French custom was supposed to be the custom of mankind, and wine could not be traced on the wood had there been a cloth; America was a young and semi-civilized nation, and, *ergo*, in 1779, there could have been no table-cloths known in America! When men even visit a people of whom they have been accustomed to think in this way, they use their eyes through the medium of the imagination. I lately met a French traveller who affirmed that the use of carpets was hardly known among us.

LETTER II.

To James E. De Kay, Esquire.

In my last, I gave you a few examples of the instances in which the French have mistaken the relative civilization of their country and America, and I shall now give you some in which we have fallen into the same error, or the other side of the question.

There has lately been an exhibition of articles of French manufacture, at Paris; one of, I believe, the triennial collections of this character, that have been established here. The court of the Louvre was filled with temporary booths, for the occasion, and vast ranges of the unfinished apartments in that magnificent palace have been thrown open for the same purpose. The court of the Louvre, of itself, is an area rather more than four hundred feet square, and I should think fully a quarter of a mile of rooms in the building itself, are to be added to the space occupied for this purpose.

The first idea, with which I was impressed, on walking through the booths and galleries, on this occasion, was the great disproportion between the objects purely of taste and luxury, and the objects of

use. The former abounded, were very generally elegant and well imagined, while the latter betrayed the condition of a nation whose civilization has commenced with the summit, instead of the base of society.

In France, nearly every improvement in machinery is the result of scientific research; is unobjectionable in principles, profound in the adaptation of its parts to the end, and commonly beautiful in form. But it ends here, rarely penetrating the mass, and producing positive results. The *conservatoire des arts*, for instance, is full of beautiful and ingenious ploughs, while France is tilled with heavy, costly and cumbrous implements of this nature. One sees light mould turning up, here, under a sort of agricultural *diligences*, drawn by four, and even six heavy horses, which in America would be done quite as well, and much sooner, by two. You know I am farmer enough to understand what I say, on a point like this. In France, the cutlery, iron-ware, glass, door-fastenings, hinges, locks, fire-irons, axes, hatchets, carpenter's tools, and, in short, almost every thing that is connected with homely industry and homely comfort, is inferior to the same thing in America. It is true, many of our articles are imported, but this produces no change in the habits of the respective people; our manufactories are merely in Birmingham, instead of being in Philadelphia.

I have now been long enough in France to understand that seeing an article in an exhibition like the one I am describing, is no proof that it enters at all

into the comforts and civilization of the nation, although it may be an object as homely as a harrow or a spade. The scientific part of the country has little influence, in this way, on the operative. The chasm between knowledge and ignorance is so vast in France, that it requires a long time for the simplest idea to find its way across it.

Exhibitions are every where bad guides to the average civilization of a country, as it is usual to expose only the objects that have been wrought with the greatest care. In a popular sense, they are proofs of what *can* be done, rather than of what *is* done. The cloths that I saw in the booths, for instance, are not to be met with in the shops; the specimens of fire-arms, glass, cutlery, &c. &c., too, are all much superior to any thing one finds on sale. But this is the case every where, from the boarding-school to the military parade, men invariably putting the best foot foremost, when they are to be especially inspected. This is not the difference I mean. Familiar, as every American, at all accustomed to the usages of genteel life in his own country, must be, with the better manufactures of Great Britain, I think he would be struck by the inferiority of even the best specimens of the commoner articles that were here laid before the public. But when it came to the articles of elegance and luxury, as connected with forms, taste and execution, though not always in ingenuity and extent of comfort, I should think that no Englishman, let his rank in life be

what it would, could pass through this wilderness of elegancies, without wonder.

Even the manufactures in which we, or rather the English (for I now refer more to use than to production) ordinarily excel, such as carpets, rugs, porcelain, plate, and all the higher articles of personal comfort, *as exceptions*, surpass those of which we have any notion. I say, *as exceptions*, not in the sense by which we distinguish the extraordinary efforts of the ordinary manufacturer, in order to make a figure at an exhibition, but certain objects produced in certain exclusive establishments, that are chiefly the property of the crown, as they have been the offspring of regal taste and magnificence.

Of this latter character is the *Sèvres* china. There are manufactures of this name, of a quality that brings them within the reach of moderate fortunes, it is true, but one obtains no idea of the length to which luxury and taste have been pushed in this branch of art, without examining the objects made especially for the king, who is in the habit of distributing them as presents among the crowned heads and his personal favourites. After the ware has been made, with the greatest care, and of the best materials, artists of celebrity are employed to paint it. You can easily imagine the value of these articles, when you remember that each plate has a design of its own, beautifully executed in colours, and presenting a landscape or an historical subject, that is fit to be framed and suspended in a gallery. One or two of the artists employed in this manner have

great reputations, and it is no uncommon thing to see miniatures, in gilded frames, which, on examination, prove to be on porcelain. Of course the painting has been subject to the action of heat, in the baking. As respects the miniatures, there is not much to be said in their favour. They are well drawn and well enough coloured, but the process and the material together, give them a glossy, unnatural appearance, which must prevent them from ever being considered as more than so many *tours de force* in the arts. But on vases, dinner setts, and all ornamental furniture of this nature, in which we look for the peculiarities of the material, they produce a magnificence of effect, that I cannot describe. Vases of the value of ten or fifteen thousand francs, or even of more money, are not uncommon, and at the exhibition there was a little table, the price of which I believe was two thousand dollars, that was a perfect treasure in its way.

Busts, and even statues, I believe, have been attempted in this branch of art. This, of course, is enlisting the statuary as well as the painter in its service. I remember to have seen, when at *Sèvres*, many busts of the late *Duc de Berri*, in the process of drying, previously to being put into the oven. Our *cicerone*, on that occasion, made us laugh, by the routine with which he went through his catalogue of wonders. He had pointed out to us the unbaked busts, in a particular room, and, on entering another apartment, where the baked busts were standing, he exclaimed—"*Ah! voilà son Al-*

tesse Royal tout cuit." This is just the amount of the criticism I should hazard on this branch of the *Sèvres* art, or on that which exceeds its legitimate limits—"Behold his Royal Highness, ready cooked."

The value of some of the single plates must be very considerable, and the king, frequently, in presenting a solitary vase, or ornament of the *Sèvres* porcelain, presents thousands.

The tapestry is another of the costly works, that it has suited the policy of France to keep up, while her ploughs, and axes, and carts, and other ordinary implements are still so primitive and awkward. The exhibition contained many specimens from the *Gobelins*, that greatly surpassed my expectations. They were chiefly historical subjects, with the figures larger than life, and might very well have passed, with a novice, at a little distance, for oil paintings. The dimensions of the apartment are taken, and the subject is designed, of course, on a scale suited to the room. The effect of this species of ornament is very noble and imposing, and the tapestries have the additional merit of warmth and comfort. Hangings in cloth are very common in Paris, but the tapestry of the *Gobelins* is chiefly confined to the royal palaces. Our neighbour the *duc de* ——, has some of it, however, in his hotel, a present from the king, but the colours are much faded, and the work is otherwise the worse for time. I have heard him say, that one piece he has, even in its dilapidated state, is valued at seven thousand francs. Occasionally a little of this tapestry is found, in this manner,

in the great hotels; but, as a rule, its use is strictly royal.

The paper for hangings, is another article in which the French excel. We get very pretty specimens of their skill in this manufacture in America, but, with occasional exceptions, nothing that is strictly magnificent finds its way into our markets. I was much struck with some of these hangings that were made to imitate velvet. The cloth appeared to be actually incorporated with the paper, and by no ingenuity of which I was master, could I detect the means. The style of paper is common enough, every where, but this exhibition had qualities far surpassing any thing of the sort I had ever before seen. Curiosity has since led me to the paper-maker, in order to penetrate the secrets of his art, and there, like the affair of Columbus and the egg, I found the whole thing as simple as heart could wish. You will probably smile, when you learn the process by which paper is converted into velvet, which is briefly this.

Wooden moulds are used to stamp the designs, each colour being put on, by laying a separate mould on its proper place, one mould being used after another, though only one is used on any particular occasion. Thus, all the black is put on now, the green to-morrow, and the yellow next day. As to the velvets, they are produced as follows. Wool is chopped fine, and dyed the desired hue. I am not certain that cotton, or even other materials may not be used. This chopped and coloured wool is thrown

into a tub; the mould is covered with some glutinous substance, and when applied it leaves on the paper the adhesive property, as types leave the ink. The paper passes immediately over the tub, and a boy throws on the wool. A light blow or two, of a rattan, tosses it about, and finally throws all back again into the tub that has not touched the glue. The *printed* part, of course, is covered with blue, or purple, or scarlet wool, and is converted, by a touch of the wand, into velvet! The process of covering a yard lasts about ten seconds, and I should think considerably more than a hundred yards of paper could be *velvetized* in an hour. We laughed at the discovery, and came away satisfied that Solomon could have known nothing about manufacturing paper-hangings, or he would not have said there was nothing "new under the sun."

But the manufacture of France that struck me as being strictly in the best taste, in which perfection and magnificence are attained without recourse to conceits, or doing violence to any of the proprieties, are the products of the *Savonnerie*, and the exquisitely designed and executed works of Beauvais. These include chair bottoms and backs, hangings for rooms, and, I believe, carpets. At all events, if the carpets do not come from these places, they are quite worthy to have that extraction. Flowers, *arabesques*, and other similar designs, exquisitely coloured and drawn, chiefly limit the efforts of the former; and the carpets were in single pieces, and made to fit the room. Nothing that you have ever

seen, or probably have imagined, at all equals the magnificence of some of these princely carpets. Indeed, I know nothing that runs a closer parallel to the general civilization between France and England, and I might almost add of America, than the history of their respective carpets. In France, a vast majority of the people hardly know what a carpet is. They use mud floors, or, rising a little above the very lowest classes, coarse stone and rude tiles are substituted. The middling classes, out of the large towns, have little else besides painted tiles. The wooden *parquet* is met with, in all the better houses, and is well made and well kept. There is a finish and beauty about them, that is not misplaced even in a palace. Among all these classes, until quite lately, carpets were unknown, or at least they were confined to the very highest class of society. The great influx of English has introduced them into the public hotels, and common lodging houses, but I have visited among many French of rank and fortune, in the dead of winter, and found no carpets. A few of a very coarse quality, made of rags, adroitly tortured into laboured designs, are seen, it is true, even in indifferent houses; but the rule is, as I have told you. In short, carpets, in this country, until quite lately, have been deemed articles of high luxury; and, like nearly every thing else that is magnificent and luxurious, at the point where they have been taken up, they infinitely exceed any thing of the sort in England. The classical designs, perfect

drawings, and brilliant colours, defeat every effort to surpass them,—I had almost said, all competition.

In all America, except in the new regions, with here and there, a dwelling on the frontier, there is scarcely a house to be found without carpets, the owners of which are at all above the labouring classes. Even in many of the latter they are to be found. We are carpetted, frequently, from the kitchen to the garret; the richness and rarity of the manufacture increasing as we ascend in the scale of wealth and fashion, until we reach the uttermost limits of our habits—a point where beauty and neatness verge upon elegance and magnificence. At this point, however, we stop, and the turn of the French commences. Now this is the history of the comparative civilization of the two countries, in a multitude of other matters; perhaps it would be better to say it is the general comparative history of the two countries. The English differ from us, only, in carrying their scale both higher and lower than ourselves: in being sometimes magnificent, and sometimes impoverished; but rarely, indeed, do they equal the French, in the light, classical, and elegant taste that so eminently distinguishes these people. There is something ponderous and purse-proud about the magnificence of England, that is scarcely ever visible here; though taste is evidently and rapidly on the increase in England, on the one hand, as comfort is here, on the other. The French have even partially adopted the two words "*fashionable,*" and "*comfortable.*"

One of the most curious things connected with the arts in France, is that of transferring old pictures from wood to canvass. A large proportion of the paintings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were done on wood or copper, and many of the former are, or have been, in danger of being lost, from decay. In order to meet the evil, a process has been invented by which the painting is transferred to canvas, where it remains, to all appearance, as good as ever. I have taken some pains to ascertain in what manner this nice operation is performed. I have seen pictures in various stages of the process, though I have never watched any one through it all; and, in one instance, I saw a small Wouvermans, stripped to the shirt, if it may be so expressed, or, in other words, *when it was nothing but paint.* From what I have seen and been told, I understand the mode of effecting this delicate and almost incredible operation, to be as follows:—

A glue is rubbed over the face of the picture, which is then laid on a piece of canvas that is properly stretched and secured, to receive it. Weights are now laid on the back of the picture, and it is left for a day or two, in order that the glue may harden. The weights are then removed, and the operator commences removing the wood, first with a plane, and, when he approaches the paint, with sharp delicate chissels. The paint is kept in its place by the canvas to which it is glued, and which is itself secured to the table; and, although the entire body of the colours, hardened as it is by time, is usually not

thicker than a thin wafer, the wood is commonly taken entirely from it. Should a thin fragment be left, however, or a crack made in the paint, it is considered of no great moment. The Wouvermans alluded to, was pure paint, however, and I was shown the pieces of wood, much worm-eaten, that had been removed. When the wood is away, glue is applied to the *back of the paint,* and to the canvas on which it is intended the picture shall remain. The latter is then laid on the paint. New weights are placed above it, and they are left two or three days longer, for this new glue to harden. When it is thought the adhesion between the second canvas and the paint is sufficient, the weights are removed, the picture is turned, and warm water is used in loosening the first canvas from the face of the picture, until it can be stripped off. More or less of the varnish of the picture usually comes off, with the glue, rendering the separation easier. The painting is then cleaned, retouched, and should it be necessary, varnished and framed; after which it commonly looks as well, and is really as sound and as good as ever, so far, at least, as the consistency is concerned.

Among other wonders in the exhibition, was the coronation coach of Charles X. This carriage is truly magnificent. It is quite large, as indeed are all the royal carriages, perhaps as large as an American stage-coach; the glass, pure and spotless as air, goes all round the upper compartments, so as to admit of a view of the whole interior; the pannels are

beautifully painted in design; the top has gilded and well-formed angels blowing trumpets, and the crown of France surmounts the centre. The wheels, and train, and pole, are red, striped with gold. All the leather is red morocco, gilt, as is the harness. Plumes of ostrich feathers ornament the angles, and, altogether, it is a most glittering and gorgeous vehicle. The paintings, the gildings, and all the details are well executed, except the running gear, which struck me as clumsy and imperfect. The cost is said to have been about sixty thousand dollars.

Many new rooms in the Louvre were thrown open on this occasion, in order that the paintings on their ceilings might be viewed, and as I walked through this gorgeous magnificence, I felt how small were our highest pretensions to anything like elegance or splendour. The very extreme of art, of this nature, may, of itself, be of no great direct benefit, it is true, but it should be remembered, that the skill which produces these extraordinary fruits, in its road to the higher points of magnificence, produces all that embellishes life in the intermediate gradations.

In America, in the eagerness of gain, and with the contracted habits that a love of gain engenders, which by their own avidity, as is usual with the grosser passions, too often defeat their own ends, we overlook the vast importance of cultivating the fine arts, even in a pecuniary sense, to say nothing of the increased means of enjoying the very money that is

so blindly pursued, which their possession entails. France is at this moment laying all christendom under contribution, simply by means of her taste. Italy, where the arts have flourished still longer, and where they have still more effectually penetrated society, would drive the English and French out of every market on earth, were the national energy at all equal to the national tastes. These things do not as exclusively belong to extreme luxury as they may at first seem. Science, skill of the nicest investigation, and great research, are all enlisted in their behalf; and, in time, implements of the most homely uses derive perfection, as by-plays, from the investigations consequent on the production of luxuries. It is true, that, by blending a certain amount of information with practice, as in the case of the American labourer, our wants find the means of furnishing their own supplies; but, apart from the fact that the man who makes a chair is not obliged to sit in it, and is therefore content to consult his profits merely, the impulses of practice are much aided by the accumulated knowledge of study. The influence that the arts of design have had on the French manufactures is incalculable. They have brought in the aid of chemistry, and mathematics, and a knowledge of antiquity; and we can trace the effects in the bronzes, the porcelain, the hangings, the chintzes, the silks, down to the very ribbands of the country. We shall in vain endeavour to compete with the great European nations, unless we make stronger efforts to cultivate

the fine arts. Of what avails our beautiful glass, unless we know how to cut it; or of what great advantage, in the strife of industry, will be even the *skilful* glass-cutter, should he not also be the *tasteful* glass-cutter. It is true that classical forms and proportions are, as yet, of no great account among us, and the great mass of the American people still cling to their own uninstructed fancies, in preference to the outlines and proportions of the more approved models, and to those hues which art has demonstrated to be harmonious. This is the history of every society in its progress to perfection; and, cut off as we are from the rest of the civilized world, it is not to be expected that we are to make an extraordinary exception. But, while we may be satisfied with our own skill and taste, the happy lot of all ignorance, our customers will not have the same self-complacency, to induce them to become purchasers. We find this truth already. We beat all nations in the fabrication of common unstamped cottons. Were trade as free as some political economists pretend, we should drive all our competitors out of every market, as respects this one article. But the moment we attempt to print, or to meddle with that part of the business which requires taste, we find ourselves inferior to the Europeans, whose forms we are compelled to imitate, and of course to receive when no longer novel, and whose hues defy our art.

The wisest thing the United States could do, would be to appropriate thirty or forty millions to the formation of a marine, not to secure the coast,

as our hen-roost statesmen are always preaching, but to keep, in our own hands, the control of our own fortunes, by rendering our enmity or friendship of so much account to Europe, that no power shall ever again dare trespass on our national rights:—and one of the next wisest measures, I honestly believe, would be to appropriate, at once, a million to the formation of a National Gallery, in which copies of the antique, antiques themselves, pictures, bronzes, *arabesques*, and other models of true taste, might be collected, before which the young aspirants for fame might study, and with which become imbued, as the preliminary step to an infusion of their merits into society. Without including the vast influence of such a cultivation on the manners, associations, intellects and habits of the people—an influence that can scarcely be appreciated too highly—fifty years would see the first cost returned fifty-fold, in the shape of the much beloved dollars. Will this happen? Not till men of enlightened minds—*statesmen*, instead of *political partizans*—are sent to Washington. It is the misfortune of America to lie so remote from the rest of the civilized world, as to feel little of the impulses of a noble competition, our rivalry commonly limiting itself to the vulgar exhibitions of individual vanity; and this the more to our disadvantage, as, denied access to the best models for even this humble species of contention, with the antagonists we are compelled to choose, victory is as bad as defeat.

One of the great impediments to a high class of

improvement, in America, is the disposition to resent every intimation that we can be any better than we are at present. Few, perhaps no country, has ever endured so much evil-disposed and unmerited abuse as our own. It is not difficult to trace the reasons, and every American should meet it with a just and manly indignation. But, being deemed a nation of rogues; barbarous, and manifesting the vices of an ancestry of convicts, is a very different thing from standing at the head of civilization. This tendency to repel every suggestion of inferiority is one of the surest signs of provincial habits; it is exactly the feeling with which the resident of the village resents what he calls the airs of the town, and that which the inland trader brings with him among those whom he terms the "dandies" of the sea-board. In short, it is the jealousy of inferiority, on the exciting points, whatever may be the merits of its subject in other matters, and furnishes, of itself, the best possible proof that there is room for amendment. The French have a clever and pithy saying, that of—"*On peut tout dire, à un grand peuple.*" "One may tell all to a great nation."

Note.—Every one was telling me that I should find the country so altered, after an absence of eight years, that I should not know it. Altered, indeed, I found it; but not quite so evidently improved. It struck me that there was a vast expansion of mediocrity, that was well enough in itself, but which was so overwhelming as nearly to overshadow every thing that once stood prominent, as more excellent. This was, perhaps, no more than a natural consequence of the elasticity and growth of a young

vigorous community, which, in its aggregate character, as in that of its individuals, must pass through youth to arrive at manhood. Still it was painful, and doubly so, to one coming from Europe. I saw the towns increased, more tawdry than ever, but absolutely with less real taste than they had in my youth. The art of painting alone appeared to me to have made any material advances in the right direction, if one excepts increase in wealth, and in the facilities to create wealth. The steam-boats were the only objects that approached magnificence, but while they had increased in show, they had less comfort and respectability. The taverns, as a whole, had deteriorated, though the three first I happened to enter might well compete with a very high class of European inns, viz. Head's, Barnum's, and Gadsby's.

LETTER III.

To James Stevenson, Esquire, Albany.

I cannot tell you whence the vulgar notions that we entertain of the French, which, with many other pernicious prejudices have made a part of our great inheritance from England, have been originally obtained. Certainly I have seen no thing, nor any person, after a long residence in the country, to serve as models to the flippant *marquis*, the over-dressed courtiers, or the *petites maitresses* of the English dramatists. Even a French *perruquier* is quite as homely and plain a personage as an English or an American barber. But these Athenians grossly caricature themselves as well as their neighbours. Although Paris is pretty well garnished with English of all degrees, from the Duke down, it has never yet been my luck to encounter an English dandy. Now and then one meets with a "*dresser*," a man who thinks more of his appearance than becomes his manhood, or than comports with good breeding; and occasionally a woman is seen who is a mere appendage to her attire, but, I am persuaded, that, as a rule, neither of these vulgar classes exists, among people of any condition, in either country.

It is impossible for me to say what changes the revolution, and the wars, and the new notions, may have produced in France, but there is no sufficient reason for believing that the present cropped and fringeless, be-whiskered, and *laceless* generation of France, differs more from their be-wigged, belaced and powdered predecessors, than the men and women of any other country differ from their particular ancestors. Boys wore cock'd hats, and breeches, and swords, in America, previously to the revolution; and our immediate fathers flourished in scarlet coats, powder, ruffled fingers, and embroidered waistcoats.

The manners of the continent of Europe are more finished than those of England, and, while quiet and simplicity are the governing rules of good-breeding every where, even in unsophisticated America, this quiet and simplicity is more gracious and more graceful in France than in the neighbouring island. As yet, I see no other difference, in mere deportment, though there is abundance when one goes into the examination of character.

I have met with a good many people of the old court at Paris, and, though now and then there is a certain *roué* atmosphere about them, both men and women, as if too much time had been passed at Coblentz, they have generally, in other respects, been models of elegant demeanor. Usually they are simple, dignified, and yet extremely gracious—gracious without the appearance of affability, a quality that is almost always indicative of a consciousness of superiority. The predominant fault of manner here

is too strong a hand in applying flattery, but this is as much the fault of the head as of breeding. The French are fond of hearing pleasant things. They say themselves that "a Frenchman goes into society to make himself agreeable, and an Englishman to make himself disagreeable," and the *dire* is not altogether without foundation in truth. I never met a Frenchman, in society here, who appeared to wish to enhance his importance by what are called "airs," though a coxcomb in feeling is an animal not altogether unknown to the natural history of Paris, nor is the zoological science of M. Cuvier indispensable to his discovery.

I shall probably surprise you with one of my opinions. I think the population of Paris, physically speaking, finer than that of London. Fine men and fine women are, by no means, as frequent, after allowing for the difference in whole numbers, in the French, as in the English capital, but, neither are there as many miserable, pallid and squalid objects. The French are a smaller race than the English, much smaller than the race of English gentlemen, so many of whom congregate at London; but the population of Paris has a sturdy, healthful look, that I do not think is by any means as general in London. In making this comparison, allowance must be made for the better dress of the English, and for their fogs, whose effect is to bleach the skin and to give a colour that has no necessary connexion with the springs of life, although the female portion of the population of Paris has probably as much colour

as that of London. It might possibly be safer to say that the female population of Paris is finer than that of London, though I think on the whole the males may be included, also. I do not mean by this, that there is relatively as much female beauty in Paris as in London, for in this respect the latter has immeasurably the advantage, but, looks apart, that the *physique* of the French of Paris is superior to that of the English of London. The population of Paris is a favourable specimen of that of the kingdom, while that of London, Westminster excepted, is not at all above the level of the entire country, if, indeed, it be as good.*

The very general notion, which exists in America, that the French are a slightly-built, airy people, and that their women, in particular, are thin and without *embonpoint*, is a most extraordinary one, for there is not a particle of foundation for it. The women of Paris are about as tall as the women of America, and could a fair sample of the two nations be placed in the scales, I have no doubt it would be

* This opinion remains the same in the writer, who, between the years 1806 and 1833, has been six times in London, and between the years 1826 and 1833, five times in Paris. In 1833, he left Paris for London, sailing for home from the latter place. A few days after his arrival he went to Washington, where, *during the session of Congress*, dress and air not considered, he thought he had never met so large a proportion of fine men, in any part of the world. He was particularly struck with their size, as was an American friend who was with him, and who had also passed many years abroad, having left Liverpool the same day the writer sailed from Portsmouth.

found that the French women would outweigh the Americans in the proportion of six to five. Instead of being meagre, they are compactly built, with good busts, inclining to be full, and well limbed, as any one may see, who will take the trouble to walk the streets after a hard shower; for, as Falstaff told Prince Henry, "You are straight enough in the shoulders: you care not who sees your back." Indeed, I know no females to whom the opinion which we entertain of the French women may better apply than to our own, and yet I know none who are so generally well-looking.

The French are not a handsome nation. Personal beauty in either sex is rare: there is a want of simplicity, of repose, of dignity, and even of harmonious expression, what they themselves call *finesse,* in their countenances, and yet the liveliness of the eyes and the joyous character of their looks, render them agreeable. You are not to understand from this that great personal beauty does not exist in France, however, for there are so many exceptions to the rule, that they have occasionally made me hesitate about believing it a rule at all. The French quite often possess a feature in great perfection, that is very rare in England, where personal beauty is so common in both sexes. It is in the mouth, and particularly in the smile. Want of *finesse* about the mouth is a general European deficiency (the Italians have more of it than any other people I know), and it is as prevalent an advantage in America. But the races of Saxon root fail in the

chin, which wants nobleness and volume. Here, it is quite common to see profiles that would seem in their proper places on a Roman coin.

Although female beauty is not common in France, when it is found, it is usually of a very high order. The sweet, cherub-like, guileless expression, that belongs to the English female face, and through it, to the American, is hardly ever, perhaps never, met with here. The French countenance seldom conveys the idea of extreme, infantile, innocence. Even in the children there is a *manner*, which, while it does not absolutely convey an impression of an absence of the virtues, I think leaves less conviction of its belonging to the soul of the being, than the peculiar look I mean. One always sees *woman*; modest, amiable, *spirituel*, feminine and attractive, if you will, in a French girl; while one sometimes sees an *angel* in a young English or American face. I have no allusion now to religious education, or to religious feelings, which are quite as general in the sex, particularly the young of good families, under their characteristic distinctions, here, as anywhere else. In this particular, the great difference is, that in America it is religion, and in France it is infidelity, that is metaphysical.

There is a coquetish prettiness that is quite common in France, in which air and manner are mingled with a certain sauciness of expression, that is not easily described, but which, while it blends well enough with the style of the face, is rather pleasing than captivating. It marks the peculiar beauty of

the *grisette*, who, with her little cap, hands stuck in the pockets of her apron, mincing walk, coquettish eye, and well-balanced head, is a creature perfectly *sui generis.* Such a girl is more like an actress imitating the character, than one is apt to imagine the character itself. I have met with imitators of these roguish beauties in a higher station, such as the wives and daughters of the industrious classes, as it is the fashion to call them here, and even among the banking community, but never among women of condition, whose deportment in France, whatever may be their morals, is usually marked by gentility of air, and a perfectly good tone of manner, always excepting that small taint of *rouéism* to which I have already alluded, and which certainly must have come from the camp and emigration.

The highest style of the French beauty is the classical. I cannot recall a more lovely picture, a finer union of the grand and the feminine, than the *Duchesse de* ——, in full dress, at a carnival ball, where she shone peerless among hundreds of the *élite* of Europe. I see her now, with her small, well-seated head; her large dark, brilliant eye riveted on the mazes of a *Polognnaise*, danced in character; her hair, black as the raven's wing, clustering over a brow of ivory; her graceful form slightly inclining forward in delighted and graceful attention; her features just Grecian enough to be a model of delicate beauty, just Roman enough to be noble; her colour heightened to that of youth, by the heat of

the room, and her costume, in which all the art of Paris was blended with a critical knowledge of the just and the becoming. And yet this woman was a grandmother!

The men of France have the same physical and the same conventional peculiarities as the women. They are short, but sturdy. Including all France, for there is a material difference in this respect between the north and the south, I should think the average stature of the French *men*, (not women) to be quite an inch and a half below the average stature of America, and possibly two inches. At home, I did not find myself greatly above the medium height, and in a crowd I was always compelled to stand on tip-toe to look over the heads of those around me; whereas, here, I am evidently *un grand*, and can see across the *Champs Elysées*, without any difficulty. You may remember that I stand, as near as may be, to five feet ten; it follows that five feet ten is rather a tall man in France. You are not to suppose, however, that there are not occasionally men of great stature in this country. One of the largest men I have ever seen, appears daily in the garden of the *Tuileries*, and I am told he is a Frenchman of one of the north-eastern provinces. That part of the kingdom is German, rather than French, however, and the population still retain most of the peculiarities of their origin.

The army has a look of service and activity, rather than of force. I should think it more formidable by its manœuvres than its charges. Indeed,

the tactics of Napoleon, who used the legs of his troops more than their muskets, aiming at concentrating masses on important points, goes to show that he depended on alertness instead of *bottom*. This is just the quality that would be most likely to prevail against your methodical, slow-thinking, and slow-moving German, and I make no question, the short, sturdy, nimble legs of the little warriors of this country have gained many a field.

A general officer, himself a six-footer, told me, lately, that they had found the tall men of very little use in the field, from their inability to endure the fatigues of a campaign. When armies shall march on rail roads, and manœuvre by steam, the grenadiers will come in play again; but, as it is, the French are admirably adapted by their *physique*, to run the career that history has given them. The Romans resembled them in this respect, Cicero admitting that many people excelled them in size, strength, beauty, and even learning, though he claimed a superiority for his countrymen, on the score of love of country and a reverence for the gods. The French are certainly patriotic enough, though their reverence for the gods may possibly be questioned.

The regiments of the guards, the heavy cavalry, and the artillery are all filled with men chosen with some care. These troops would, I think, form about an average American army, on the score of size. The battalions of the line receive the rest. As much attention is bestowed in adapting the duty to the physique, and entire corps are composed of men of as

nearly as possible the same physical force, some of the regiments certainly make but an indifferent figure, as to dimensions, while others appear particularly well. Still, if not overworked, I should think these short men would do good service. I think I have seen one or two regiments, in which the average height has not exceeded five feet three inches. The chances of not being hit in such a corps are worth something, for the proportion, compared to the chances in a corps of six-footers, is as sixty-three to seventy-two, or is one-eighth in favour of the Lilliputians. I believe the rule for retreating is when one-third of the men are *hors de combat*. Now, supposing a regiment of three thousand grenadiers would be obliged to retire with a loss of one thousand men, the little fellows, under the same fire, should have, at the same time, two thousand one hundred and thirty-seven sound men left, and of course, unless bullied out of it, they ought to gain the day.

LETTER IV.

To James E. De Kay, Esquire.

It appears to be the melancholy lot of humanity, that every institution which ingenuity can devise shall be perverted to an end different from the legitimate. If we plan a democracy, the craven wretch who, in a despotism, would be the parasite of a monarch, heads us off, and gets the best of it under the pretence of extreme love for the people; if we flatter ourselves that by throwing power into the hands of the rich and noble, it is put beyond the temptation to abuse it, we soon discover that rich is a term of convention, no one thinking he has enough until he has all, and that nobility of station has no absolute connexion with nobleness of spirit or of conduct; if we confide all to one, indolence, favouritism, and indeed the impossibility of supervision throws us again into the hands of the demagogue, in his new, or rather true character, of a courtier. So it is with life; in politics, religion, arms, arts and letters, yea, even the republic of letters, as it is called, is the prey of schemers and parasites, and things *in fact*, are very different from things *as they seem to be.*

"In the seventeen years that I have been a mar-

ried man," said Captain —— of the British navy, "I have passed but seventeen months with my wife and family." "But, now there is peace, you will pass a few years quietly in America, to look after your affairs," said I, by way of awkward condolence. "No, indeed; I shall return to England as soon as possible, to make up for lost time. I have been kept so much at sea, that they have forgotten me at home, and duty to my children requires that I should be on the spot." In the simplicity of my heart, I thought this strange, and yet nothing could be more true. Captain —— was a scion of the English aristocracy, and looked to his sword for his fortune. Storms, fagging, cruising, all were of small avail compared to interest at the admiralty, and so it is with all things else, whether in Europe or America. The man who really gains the victory, is lucky, indeed, if he obtain the meed of his skill and valour. You may be curious to know of what all this is *à propos?* To be frank with you, I have visited the French Academy; *ces quarante qui ont l'esprit comme quatre*, and, have come away fully impressed with the vanity of human things!

The occasion was the reception of two or three new members, when, according to a settled usage, the successful candidates pronounced eulogies on their predecessors. You may be curious to know what impression the assembled genius of France produced on a stranger from the western world. I can only answer, none. The academy of the sciences can scarcely ever be less than distinguished in such

a nation, but when I came to look about me, and to inquire after the purely literary men, I was forcibly struck with the feebleness of the catalogue of names. Not one in five was at all known to me, and very few even of those who were, could properly be classed among the celebrated writers of the day. As France has many very clever men who were not on the list, I was desirous of knowing the reason, and then learned that intrigue, court-favour, and "*log-rolling*," to use a quaint American term, made members of the academy as well as members of the cabinet. A moment's reflection might have told me it could not well be otherwise. It would be so in America, if we were burthened with an academy; it *is* so as respects collegiate honours; and what reason is there for supposing it should not be so in a country so notoriously addicted to intrigue as France?

One ought not to be the dupe of these things. There are a few great names, distinguished by common consent, whose claims it is necessary to respect. These men form the front of every honorary institution; if there are to be knights and nobles, and academicians, they must be of the number; not that such distinctions are necessary to them, but that they are necessary to the distinctions; after which the *oi polloi* are enrolled as they can find interest. Something very like an admission of this is contained in an inscription on the statue of *Moliere*, which stands in the vestibule of the hall of the Academy, which frankly says, though "we are not necessary to your glory, you are necessary to ours." He

was excluded from the forty, by intrigue, on account of his profession being that of a player. Shakspeare, himself, would have fared no better. Now, fancy a country in which there was a club of select authors, that should refuse to enrol the name of William Shakspeare on their list!

The sitting was well attended, and I dare say the addresses were not amiss, though there is something exceedingly tiresome in one of these eulogies, that is perpetrated by *malice prepense.* The audience applauded very much, after the fashion of those impromptus which are made *à loisir*, and I could not but fancy that a good portion of the assembly began to think the academy was what the cockneys call a *rum* place, before they heard the last of it. We had a poem by *Comte Daru*, to which I confess I did not listen, notwithstanding my personal respect for the distinguished writer, simply because I was most heartily wearied before he began, and because I can never make any thing of French poetry, in the academy or out of it.

It would be unjust to speak lightly of any part of the French academy, without a passing remark in honour of those sections of it, to which honour is due. In these sections may be included, I think, that of the arts, as well as that of the sciences. The number of respectable artists that exist in this country is perfectly astonishing. The *connisseurs,* I believe, dispute the merits of the school, and ignorant as I am, in such matters, I can myself see that there is a prevalent disposition, both in statuary and painting,

to sacrifice simplicity to details, and that the theatrical is sometimes mistaken for the grand; but, after admitting both these faults, and some defects in colouring, there still remains a sufficient accumulation of merit, to create wonder in one, like myself, who has not had previous opportunities of ascertaining the affluence of a great nation in this respect.

As regards the scientific attainments of the French, it is unnecessary to say anything, though I believe you will admit that they ought at least to have the effect of counteracting some of the prejudices about dancing-masters, *petits maîtres*, and *perruquiers*, that have descended to us, through English novels and plays. Such a man as La Place, alone, is sufficient to redeem an entire people from these imputations. The very sight of one of his demonstrations will give common men, like ourselves, headaches, and you will remember that having successfully got through one of the toughest of them, he felicitated himself that there was but one other man living who could comprehend it, now it was made.

What a noble gift would it have been to his fellow-creatures, had some competent follower of La Place bestowed on them a comprehensive but popular compend of the leading astronomical facts, to be used as one of the most ordinary school books. Apart from the general usefulness of this peculiar species of knowledge, and the chances that, by thus popularizing the study, sparks might be struck from the spirit of some dormant Newton, I

know no inquiry that has so strong a tendency to raise the mind from the gross and vulgar pursuits of the world, to a contemplation of the power and designs of God. It has often happened to me, when, filled with wonder and respect for the daring and art of man, I have been wandering through the gorgeous halls of some palace, or other public edifice, that an orrery or a diagram of the planetary system has met my eye, and recalled me, in a moment, from the consideration of art, and its intrinsic feebleness, to that of the sublimity of nature. At such times, this globe has appeared so insignificant, in comparison with the mighty system of which it forms so secondary a part, that I have felt a truly philosophical indifference, not to give it a better term, for all it contained. Admiration of human powers, as connected with the objects around me, has been lost in admiration of the mysterious spirit which could penetrate the remote and sublime secrets of the science; and, on no other occasions, have I felt so profound a conviction of my own isolated insignificance, or so lively a perception of the stupendous majesty of the Deity.

Passing by the common and conceded facts of the dimensions of the planets, and the extent of their orbits, what thoughts are awakened by the suggestion that the fixed stars are the centres of other solar systems, and that the eccentric comets are links to connect them all, in one great and harmonious design! The astronomers tell us, that some of these comets have no visible nucleuses, that the fixed stars

are seen through their apparent densest parts, and that they can be nothing but luminous gases; while, on the other hand, others do betray dark compact bodies of more solid matter. Fixed stars unaccountably disappear, as if suddenly struck out of their places. Now, we know that ærolites are formed in the atmosphere, by a natural process, and descend in masses of pure iron. Why may not the matter of one globe, dispersed into its elements by the fusion of its consummation, reassemble, in the shape of comets, gaseous at first, and slowly increasing and condensing in the form of solid matter, varying in their course as they acquire the property of attraction, until they finally settle into new and regular planetary orbits, by the power of their own masses, thus establishing a regular reproduction of worlds to meet the waste of eternity? Were the earth dissolved into gases, by fusion, what would become of its satellite, the moon? Might not the principles of our planet, thus volatilized, yield to its nearer attraction, assemble around that orb, which, losing its governing influence, should be left to wander in infinite space, subject to a new but eccentric law of gravity, until finally reduced again within the limits of some new system? How know we that such is not the origin of comets?

Many astronomers have believed that the solar system, in company with thousands of other systems, revolves around a common centre, in orbits so vast as to defy computation, and a religious sentiment might well suggest that this centre of the uni-

verse is the throne of the Most High. Here we may fancy the Deity seated in power, and controlling, by his will, the movements of worlds, directing each to the completion of his own mysterious and benevolent designs.

It certainly might be dangerous to push our speculations too far, but there can be no risk in familiarizing men to consider the omnipotence of God, and to feel their own comparative insignificance. What ideas of vastness are obtained by a knowledge of the fact that there exist stars in the firmament, which ordinary telescopes show us only as single bodies, but which, on examination by using reflectors of a higher power, are found to be clusters of orbs—clusters of worlds—or clusters of suns! These, again, are found to be *binary* stars, or two stars revolving round each other, while they are thought, at the same time, to revolve around their central sun, and accompanied by this again, probably, to revolve around the great common centre of all!

But, in the words of the quaint old song, I must cry "Holla! my fancy, whither dost thou go?" Before taking leave of the stars altogether, however, I will add that the French, and I believe all Europe, with the exception of England, follow the natural order of time, in counting the seasons. Thus the spring commences with the vernal equinox, and the autumn with the autumnal. This division of the year leaves nearly the whole of March as a winter month, June as a spring month, and September

as belonging to the summer. No general division of the seasons can suit all latitudes; but the equinoxes certainly suggest the only two great events of the year, that equally affect the entire sphere. Had the old method of computing time continued, the seasons would gradually have made the circle of the months, until their order was reversed, as they are now known to be in the northern and southern hemispheres.

Quitting the Academy, which, with its schools of the classical and the romantic, has tempted me to a higher flight than I could have believed possible, let us descend to the theatres of Paris. Talma was still playing last year, when we arrived, and as in the case of repentance, I put off a visit to the *Théâtre Français*, with a full determination to go, because it might be made at any time. In the mean while, he fell ill and died, and it never was my good fortune to see that great actor. Mademoiselle Mars I have seen, and, certainly, in her line of characters, I have never beheld her equal. Indeed, it is scarcely possible to conceive of a purer, more severe, more faultless, and yet more poetical representation of common nature, than that which characterizes her art. Her acting has all the finish of high breeding, with just as much feeling as is necessary to keep alive the illusion. As for rant, there is not as much about her whole system, as would serve a common English, or American actress, for a single "length."

To be frank with you, so great is the superiority of the French actors, in *vaudevilles*, the light opera,

and genteel comedy, that I fear I have lost my taste for the English stage. Of tragedy I say nothing, for I cannot enter into the poetry of the country at all, but, in all below it, these people, to my taste, are immeasurably our superiors; and by *ours*, you know I include the English stage. The different lines here, are divided among the different theatres, so that if you wish to laugh, you can go to the *Variétés;* to weep, to the *Théâtre Français;* or, to gape, to the *Odeon*. At the *Porte St. Martin*, one finds vigorous touches of national character, and at the *Gymnase*, the fashionable place of resort, just at this moment, national traits polished by convention. Besides these, there are many other theatres, not one of which, in its way, can be called less than tolerable.

One can say but little in favour of the morals of too many of the pieces represented here. In this particular there is a strange obliquity of reason, arising out of habitual exaggeration of feeling, that really seems to disqualify most of the women, even, from perceiving what is monstrous, provided it be sentimental and touching. I was particularly advised, to go to the *Théâtre Madame* to see a certain piece, by a *côterie* of very amiable women, whom I met the following night at a house where we all regularly resorted, once a week. On entering, they eagerly inquired if "I had not been charmed, fascinated; if any thing could be better played, or more touching?" Better played it could not easily be, but I had been so shocked with the moral of the

piece, that I could scarcely admire the acting. "The moral! This was the first time they had heard it questioned." I was obliged to explain. A certain person had been left the protector of a friend's daughter, then an infant. He had the child educated as his sister, and she grew to be a woman, ignorant of her real origin. In the mean time, she has offers of marriage, all of which she unaccountably refuses. In fine, she was secretly cherishing a passion for her guardian *and supposed brother;* an explanation is had, they marry, and the piece closes. I objected to the probability of a well educated young woman's falling in love with a man old enough to be selected as her guardian, when she was an infant, and against whom there existed the trifling objection of his being her own brother. "But, he was *not* her brother—not even a relative." "True; but she *believed* him to be her brother." "And nature—do you count nature as nothing—a *secret sentiment* told her he was not her brother." "And use, and education, and an *open sentiment*, and all the world, told her he was. Such a woman was guilty of a revolting indelicacy and a heinous crime, and no exaggerated representation of love, a passion of great purity in itself, can ever do away with the shocking realities of such a case."

I found no one to agree with me. He was *not* her brother, and though his tongue, and all around her, told her he was, her heart, that infallible guide, told her the truth. What more could any reasonable man ask?

It was *à propos* of this play, and of my objections to this particular feature of it, that an exceedingly clever French woman laughingly told me she understood there was no such thing as love in America. That a people, of manners as artificial as the French, should suppose that others, under the influence of the cold formal exterior which the puritans have entailed on so large a portion of the republic, were without strong feeling, is not altogether as irrational as may at first appear. Art, in ordinary deportment, is both cause and effect. That which we habitually affect to be, gets, in the end, to be so incorporated with our natural propensities, as to form a part of the real man. We all know that by discipline we can get the mastery of our strongest passions, and, on the other hand, by yielding to them and encouraging them, that they soon get the mastery over us. Thus do a highly artificial people, fond of, and always seeking, high excitement, come, in time, to feel it, artificially, as it were, by natural impulses.

I have mentioned the anecdote of the play, because I think it characteristic of a tone of feeling that is quite prevalent among a large class of the French, though I am far from saying there is not a class who would, at once, see the grave sacrifice of principle that is involved, in building up the sentiments of a fiction on such a foundation of animal instinct. I find, on recollection, however, that Miss Lee, in one of her Canterbury Tales, has made the love of her plot hinge on a very similar incident.

Surely, she must have been under the influence of some of the German monstrosities that were so much in vogue, about the time she wrote, for even Juvenal would scarcely have imagined any thing worse, as the subject of his satire.

You will get a better idea of the sentimentalism that more or less influences the tastes of this country, however, if I tell you that the ladies of the *côterie*, in which the remarks on the amorous sister were made, once gravely discussed, in my presence, the question whether Madame de Stael was right or wrong, in causing *Corinne* to go through certain sentimental *experiences*, as our canters call it at home, on a clouded day, instead of choosing one on which the sun was bright; or, *vice versâ;* for I really forget whether it was on the "windy side" of sensibility, or not, that the daughter of Neckar was supposed to have erred.

The first feeling is that of surprise at finding a people so artificial in their ordinary deportment, so chaste and free from exaggeration in their scenic representations of life. But reflection will show us that all finish has the effect of bringing us within the compass of severe laws, and that the high taste which results from cultivation repudiates all excess of mere manner. The simple fact is, that an educated Frenchman is a great actor all the while, and that when he goes on the stage, he has much less to do, to be perfect, than an Englishman who has drilled himself into coldness, or an American who looks upon strong expressions of feeling as affecta-

tion. When the two latter commence the business of playing assumed parts, they consider it as a new occupation, and go at it so much in earnest, that every body sees they are acting.*

You will remember, I say nothing in favour of the French tragic representations. When a great and an intellectual nation, like France, unites to applaud images and sentiments, that are communicated through their own peculiar forms of speech, it becomes a stranger to distrust his own knowledge, rather than their taste. I dare say that were I more accustomed to the language, I might enjoy Corneille and Racine, and even Voltaire, for I can now greatly enjoy Molière; but, to be honest in the matter, all reciters of heroic French poetry appear to me to depend on a pompous declamation, to compensate for the poverty of the idioms, and the want of nobleness in the expressions. I never heard any one, poet or actor, he who read his own verses, or he who repeated those of others, who did not appear to mouth, and all their tragic playing has had the air of being on stilts. Napoleon has said from the sublime to the ridiculous it is but a step. This is much truer in France than in most other countries, for the sublime is commonly so sublimated,

* Mr. Mathews and Mr. Power were the nearest to the neat acting of France of any male English performers the writer ever saw. The first sometimes permitted himself to be led astray, by the caricatures he was required to represent, and by the tastes of his audience; but the latter, so far as the writer has seen him, appears determined to be chaste, come what, come will.

that it will admit of no great increase. Racine, in a most touching scene, makes one of his heroic characters offer to wipe off the tears of a heroine lest they should discolour her *rouge!* I had a classmate at college, who was so very ultra courtly in his language, that he never forgot to say Mr. Julius Cæsar, and Mr. Homer.

There exists a perfect mania for letters throughout Europe, in this "piping time of peace." Statesmen, soldiers, peers, princes and kings, hardly think themselves *illustrated*, until each has produced his book. The world never before saw a tithe of the names of people of condition, figuring in the catalogues of its writers. "Some thinks he writes Cinna; he owns to Panurge," applies to half the people one meets in society. I was at dinner lately, given by the Marquis de ——, when the table was filled with peers, generals, ex-ministers, ex-ambassadors, naturalists, philosophers and statesmen of all degrees. Casting my eyes round the circle, I was struck with the singular prevalence of the *cacœthes scribendi*, among so many men of different educations, antecedents, and pursuits. There was a soldier present who had written on taste, a politician on the art of war, a *diplomate* who had dabbled in poetry, and a jurist who pretended to enlighten the world in ethics. It was the drollest assemblage in the world, and suggested many queer associations, for, I believe, the only man at table, who had not dealt in ink, was an old Lieutenant-General, who sat by me, and who, when I alluded to the circum-

stance, strongly felicitated himself that he had escaped the mania of the age, as it was an *illustration* of itself. Among the *convives* were Cuvier, Villemain, Daru, and several others who are almost as well known to science and letters.

Half the voluntary visits I receive, are preceded by a volume of some sort or other, as a token of my new acquaintance being a regularly initiated member of the fraternity of the quill. In two or three instances, I have been surprised at subsequently discovering that the regular profession of the writer is arms, or some other pursuit, in which one would scarcely anticipate so strong a devotion to letters. In short, such is the actual state of opinion in Europe, that one is hardly satisfied with any amount, or any quality of glory, until it is consummated by that of having written a book. Napoleon closed his career with the quill, and his successor was hardly on his throne, before he began to publish. The principal officers of the Empire, and *emigrés* without number, have fairly set to work as so many disinterested historians, and even a lady, who, by way of abbreviation, is called "The Widow of the Grand Army," is giving us regularly volumes, whose eccentricities and periodicity, as the astronomers say, can be reduced to known laws, by the use of figures.

In the middle ages golden spurs were the object of every man's ambition. Without them, neither wealth, nor birth, nor power was properly esteemed; and, at the present time, passing from the lance to

the pen, from the casque and shield, to the ink-pot and fool's cap, we all seek a passport from the order of Letters. Does this augur good or evil, for the world? The public press of France is conducted with great spirit and talents, on all sides. It has few points in common with our own, beyond the mere fact of its general character. In America, a single literary man, putting the best face on it, enters into a compact with some person of practical knowledge, a printer, perhaps, and together they establish a newspaper, the mechanical part of which is confided to the care of the latter partner, and the intellectual to the former. In the country, half the time, the editor is no other than the printer himself, the division of labour not having yet reached even this important branch of industry. But looking to the papers that are published in the towns, one man of letters is a luxury about an American print. There are a few instances in which there are two, or three; but, generally, the subordinates are little more than scissor's men. Now, it must be apparent, at a glance, that no one individual can keep up the character of a daily print, of any magnitude; the drain on his knowledge and other resources being too great. This, I take it, is the simple reason why the press of America ranks no higher than it does. The business is too much divided; too much is required, and this, too, in a country where matters of grave import are of rare occurrence, and in which the chief interests are centered in the vulgar concerns of mere party politics, with little or no con-

nection with great measures, or great principles. You have only to fancy the superior importance that attaches to the views of powerful monarchs, the secret intrigues of courts, on whose results, perhaps, depend the fortunes of Christendom, and the serious and radical principles that are dependent on the great changes of systems that are silently working their way, in this part of the world, and which involve material alterations in the very structure of society, to get an idea of how much more interest a European journal, *ceteris paribus*, must be, compared to an American journal, by the nature of its facts alone. It is true that we get a portion of these facts, as light finally arrives from the remoter stars, but mutilated, and necessarily shorn of much of their interest, by their want of importance to our own country. I had been in Europe some time, before I could fully comprehend the reason why I was ignorant of so many minor points of its political history, for, from boyhood up, I had been an attentive reader of all that touched this part of the world, as it appeared in our prints. By dint of inquiry, however, I believe I have come at the fact. The winds are by no means as regular as the daily prints; and it frequently happens, especially in the winter and spring months, that five or six packets arrive nearly together, bringing with them the condensed intelligence of as many weeks. Now, newspaper finders notoriously seek the latest news, and in the hurry and confusion of reading and selecting, and bringing out, to meet the wants of the day, many of

the connecting links are lost, readers get imperfect notions of men and things, and, from a want of a complete understanding of the matter, the mind gives up, without regret, the little and unsatisfactory knowledge it had so casually obtained. I take it, this is a principal cause of the many false notions that exist among us, on the subject of Europe and its events.

In France, a paper is established by a regular subscription of capital; a principal editor is selected, and he is commonly supported, in the case of a leading journal, by four or five paid assistants. In addition to this formidable corps, many of the most distinguished men of France are known to contribute freely to the columns of the prints in the interest of their cause.

The laws of France compel a journal that has admitted any statement involving facts, concerning an individual, to publish his reply, that the antidote may meet the poison. This is a regulation that we might adopt with great advantage to truth and the character of the country.

There is not, at this moment, within my knowledge, a single critical literary journal, of received authority, in all France. This is a species of literature to which the French pay but little attention, just now, although many of the leading daily prints contain articles on the principal works, as they appear.

By the little that has come under my observation, I should say the fraudulent and disgusting system

of puffing and of abusing, as interest or pique dictates, is even carried to a greater length in France, than it is in either England or America. The following anecdote, which relates to myself, may give you some notion of the *modus operandi.*

All the works I had written previously to coming to Europe, had been taken from the English editions, and translated, appearing simultaneously with their originals. Having an intention to cause a new book to be printed in English, in Paris, for the sake of reading the proofs, the necessity was felt of getting some control over the translation, lest, profiting by the interval necessary to send the sheets home to be reprinted, it might appear as the original book. I knew that the sheets of previous books had been purchased in England, and I accordingly sent a proposition to the publishers, that the next bargain should be made with me. Under the impression that an author's price would be asked, they took the alarm, and made difficulties. Finding me firm, and indisposed to yield to some threats of doing as they pleased, the matter was suspended for a few days. Just at this moment, I received, through the post, a single number of an obscure newspaper, whose existence, until then, was quite unknown to me. Surprised at such an attention, I was curious to know the contents. The journal contained an article on my merits and demerits as a writer, the latter being treated with a good deal of freedom. When one gets a paper, in this manner, containing abuse of himself, he is pretty safe in believing its opinions

dishonest. But I had even better evidence than common, in this particular case, for I happened to be extolled for the manner in which I had treated the character of Franklin, a personage whose name even had never appeared in anything I had written. This, of course, settled the character of the critique, and the next time I saw the individual who had acted as agent in the negotiation just mentioned, I gave him the paper, and told him I was half disposed to raise my price on account of the pitiful manœuvre it contained. We had already come to terms, the publishers finding that the price was little more than nominal, and the answer was a virtual conclusion that the article was intended to affect my estimate of the value of the intended work in France, and to bring me under subjection to the critics.*

I apprehend that few books are brought before the public in France, dependent only on their intrinsic merits, and the system of intrigue, which predominates in every thing, is as active in this as in other interests.

In France, a book that penetrates to the provinces,

* The writer suffers this anecdote to stand as it was written nine years since; but since his return home, he has discovered that we are in no degree behind the French in the corruption and frauds that render the pursuits of a writer one of the most humiliating and revolting in which a man of any pride of character can engage, unless he resolutely maintains his independence, a temerity that is certain to be resented by all those, who, unequal to going alone in the paths of literature, seek their ends by clinging to those who can, either as pirates or robbers.

may be said to be popular; and, as for a book coming *from* the provinces, it is almost unheard of. The despotism of the trade, on this point, is unyielding. Paris appears to deem itself the arbiter in all matters of taste and literature, and it is almost as unlikely that a new fashion should come from Lyons, or Bordeaux, or Marseilles, as that a new work should be received with favour, that was published in either of those towns. The approbation of Paris is indispensable, and the publishers of the capital, assisted by their paid corps of puffers and detractors, are sufficiently powerful to prevent that potent public, to whom all affect to defer, from judging for itself.

We have lately had a proof, here, of the unwillingness of the Parisians to permit others to decide for them, in any thing relating to taste, in a case that refers to us Americans. Madame Malibran arrived from America a few months since. In Europe she was unknown, but the great name of her father stood her in stead. Unluckily, it was whispered that she had met with great success in America. America! and this, too, in conjunction with music and the opera! The poor woman was compelled to appear under the disadvantage of having brought an American reputation with her, and, seriously, this single fact went nigh to destroy her fortunes. Those wretches who, as Coleridge expresses it, are "animalculæ, who live by feeding on the body of genius," affected to be displeased, and the public hesitated, at their suggestions, about accepting an artist

from the "colonies," as they still have the audacity to call the great Republic. I have no means of knowing what sacrifices were made to the petty tyrants of the press, before this woman, who has the talents necessary to raise her to the summit of her profession, was enabled to gain the favour of a "*generous and discerning public.*"!

LETTER V.

To James Stevenson, Esquire, Albany.

We have been the residents of a French village ever since the first of June, and it is now drawing to the close of October. We had already passed the greater part of a summer, an entire autumn, winter and spring, within the walls of Paris, and then we thought we might indulge our tastes a little, by retreating to the fields, to catch a glimpse of country life. You will smile when I add that we are only a league from the *Barrière de Clichy*. This is the reason I have not before spoken of the removal, for we are in town three or four times every week, and never miss an occasion, when there is any thing to be seen. I shall now proceed, however, to let you into the secret of our actual situation.

I passed the month of May examining the environs of the capital in quest of a house. As this was an agreeable occupation, we were in no hurry, but having set up my *cabriolet*, we killed two birds with one stone, by making ourselves familiarly acquainted with nearly every village, or hamlet, within three leagues of Paris, a distance beyond which I did not wish to go.

On the side of St. Cloud, which embraces Passy, Auteuil, and all the places that encircle the *Bois de Boulogne*, the Hyde Park of Paris, there are very many pleasant residences, but, from one cause or another, no one suited us, exactly, and we finally took a house in the village of St. Ouen, the Runnymeade of France. When Louis XVIII. came, in 1814, to his capital, in the rear of the allies, he stopped for a few days at St. Ouen, a league from the barriers, where there was a small *château* that was the property of the crown. Here he was met by M. de Talleyrand and others, and hence he issued the celebrated charter, that is to render France, forevermore, a constitutional country.

The *château* has since been razed, and a pavilion erected in its place, which has been presented to the Comtesse de ——, a lady, who, reversing the ordinary lot of courtiers, is said to cause majesty to live in the sunshine of *her* smiles. What an appropriate and encouraging monument to rear on the birthplace of French liberty! At the opposite extremity of the village, is another considerable house, that was once the dwelling of M. Neckar, and is now the property and country residence of M. Ternaux, or the *Baron* Ternaux, if it were polite to style him thus, the most celebrated manufacturer of France. I say polite, for the mere *fanfaronade* of nobility is little in vogue here. The wags tell a story of some one, who was formally announced as "*Mons. le Marquis d'un tel,*" turning short round on the servant, and exclaiming with indignation, "*Mar-*

quis, toi-même!" But this story savours of the Bonapartists, for, as the Emperor created neither *marquis* nor *vicomtes*, there was a sort of affectation of assuming these titles at the restoration, as proofs of belonging to the old *règime*.

St. Ouen is a cluster of small, mean, stone houses, stretched along the right bank of the Seine, which, after making a circuit of near twenty miles, winds round so close to the town, again, that they are actually constructing a basin, near the village, for the use of the capital; it being easier to wheel articles from this point to Paris, than to contend with the current and to thread its shoals. In addition to the two houses named, however, it has six or eight respectable abodes between the street and the river, one of which is our own.

This place became a princely residence about the year 1300, since which time it has been more or less frequented as such, down to the 4th June, 1814, the date of the memorable charter.* Madame de

* The *château* of St. Ouen, rather less than two centuries since, passed into the possession of the *Duc de Gesvre.* Dulaure gives the following, a part of a letter from this nobleman, as a specimen of the education of a *Duc*, in the seventeenth century. "*Monsieur, me trouvant obligé de randre une bonne party de largan que mais enfant ont pris de peuis qu'il sont au campane, monsieur, cela moblige a vous suplier tres humblemant monsieur de me faire la grasse de commander monsieur quant il vous plera que lon me pay la capitenery de Monsaux monsieur vous assurant que vous mobligeres fort sansiblement monsieur comme ausy de me croire avec toute sorte de respec. etc,*" This beats Jack Cade, out and out. The great con-

Pompadour possessed the *château* in 1745, so you see it has been "dust to dust" with this place, as with all that is frail.

The village of St. Ouen, small, dirty, crowded and unsavoury as it is, has a *place*, like every other French village. When we drove into it, to look at the house, I confess to having laughed outright, at the idea of inhabiting such a hole. Two large *porte-cochères*, however, opened from the square, and we were admitted, through the best-looking of the two, into a spacious and an extremely neat court. On one side of the gate was a lodge for a porter, and, on the other, a building to contain gardener's tools, plants, &c. The walls that separate it from the square and the adjoining gardens, are twelve or fourteen feet high, and once within them, the world is completely excluded. The width of the grounds does not exceed a hundred and fifty feet; the length, the form being that of a parallelogram, may be three hundred, or a little more; and yet in these narrow limits, which are planted *à l'Anglaise*, so well is every thing contrived, that we appear to have abundance of room. The garden terminates in a terrace that overhangs the river, and, from this point, the eye ranges over a wide extent of beautiful plain, that is bounded by fine bold hills which are teeming with gray villages and *bourgs*.

nêtable *Anne de Montmorency* could not write his name, and, as his signature became necessary, his secretary stood over his shoulder to tell him when he had made enough *pits de mouche* to answer the purpose.

The house is of stone, and not without elegance. It may be ninety feet in length, by some forty in width. The entrance is into a vestibule, which has the offices on the right, and the great staircase on the left. The principal *salon* is in front. This is a good room, near thirty feet long, fifteen or sixteen high, and has three good windows, that open on the garden. The billiard-room communicates on one side, and the *salle à manger* on the other; next the latter come the offices again, and next the billiard-room is a very pretty little *boudoir*. Up stairs, are suites of bed-rooms and dressing-rooms; every thing is neat, and the house is in excellent order, and well furnished for a country residence. Now, all this I get at a hundred dollars a month, for the five summer months. There are also a carriage house, and stabling for three horses. The gardener and porter are paid by the proprietor. The village, however, is not in much request, and the rent is thought to be low.

One of the great advantages that is enjoyed by a residence in Europe, are the facilities of this nature. Furnished apartments, or furnished houses, can be had in almost every town of any size; and, owning your own linen and plate, nearly every other necessary is found you. It is true, that one sometimes misses comforts to which he has been accustomed in his own house; but, in France, many little things are found, it is not usual to meet with elsewhere. Thus, no principal bed-room is considered properly furnished in a good house, without a handsome se-

cretary, and a bureau. These two articles are as much matters of course, as are the eternal two rooms and folding doors, in New York.

This, then, has been our *Tusculum* since June. M. Ternaux enlivens the scene, occasionally, by a dinner; and he has politely granted us permission to walk in his grounds, which are extensive and well laid out, for the old French style. We have a neighbour on our left, name unknown, who gives suppers in his garden, and concerts that really are worthy of the grand opera. Occasionally, we get a song, in a female voice, that rivals the best of Madame Malibran's. On our right lives a staid widow, whose establishment is as tranquil as our own.

One of our great amusements is to watch the *living* life on the river,—there is no *still* life in France. All the washerwomen of the village assemble, three days in the week, beneath our terrace, and a merrier set of *grisettes* is not to be found in the neighbourhood of Paris. They chat, and joke, and splash, and scream from morning to night, lightening the toil by never-ceasing good humour. Occasionally an enormous scow-like barge is hauled up against the current, by stout horses, loaded to the waters edge, or one, without freight, comes dropping down the stream, nearly filling the whole river as it floats broad-side to. There are three or four islands opposite, and, now and then, a small boat is seen paddling among them. We have even tried *punting* ourselves, but the amusement was soon exhausted.

Sunday is a great day with us, for then the shore is lined with Parisians, as thoroughly cockney as if Bow-bells could be heard in the *quartier Montmartre!* These good people visit us, in all sorts of ways; some on donkies, some in *cabriolets*, some in *fiacres*, and, by far the larger portion on foot. They are perfectly inoffensive and unobtrusive, being, in this respect, just as unlike an American inroad from a town, as can well be. These crowds pass vineyards on their way to us, unprotected by any fences. This point in the French character, however, about which so much has been said to our disadvantage, as well as to that of the English, is subject to some explanation. The statues, promenades, gardens, &c. &c. are, almost without exception, guarded by sentinels; and then there are agents of the police, in common clothes, scattered through the towns, in such numbers as to make depredations hazardous. In the country each *commune* has one, or more, *gardes champêtre*, whose sole business it is to detect and arrest trespassers. When to these are added the *gensdarmes à piè* and *à cheval*, who are constantly in motion, one sees that the risk of breaking the laws, is attended with more hazard here, than with us. There is no doubt, on the other hand, that the training and habits, produced by such a system of watchfulness, enter so far into the character of the people, that they cease to think of doing that which is so strenuously denied them.

Some of our visitors make their appearance in a very quaint style. I met a party the other day,

among whom the following family arrangement had obtained. The man was mounted on a donkey, with his feet just clear of the ground. The wife, a buxom brunette, was trudging afoot in the rear, accompanied by the two younger children, a boy and girl, between twelve and fourteen, led by a small dog, fastened to a string, like the guide of a blind mendicant; while the eldest daughter was mounted on the crupper, maintaining her equilibrium by a masculine disposition of her lower limbs. She was a fine, rosy cheeked *grisette*, of about seventeen; and, as they ambled along, just fast enough to keep the cur on a slow strot, her cap flared in the wind, her black eyes flashed with pleasure, and her dark ringlets streamed behind her, like so many silken pennants. She had a ready laugh for every one she met, and a sort of malicious pleasure in asking, by her countenance, if they did not wish they too had a donkey? As the seat was none of the most commodious, she had contrived to make a pair of stirrups of her petticoats. The gown was pinned up about her waist, leaving her knees instead of her feet, as the *points d'appui*. The well-turned legs, and the ancles, with such a *chaussure* as at once marks a *Parisienne*, were exposed to the admiration of a *parterre* of some hundreds of idle wayfarers. Truly, it is no wonder that sculptors abound in this country, for capital models are to be found, even in the highways. The donkey was the only one who appeared displeased with this *monture*, and he only manifested dissatisfaction by lifting his

hinder extremities a little, as the man occasionally touched his flanks with a nettle, that the ass would much rather have been eating.

Not long since I passed half an hour on the terrace, an amused witness of the perils of a voyage across the Seine, in a punt. The adventurers were a *bourgeois*, his wife, sister, and child. Honest Pierre, the waterman, had conditioned to take the whole party to the island opposite, and to return them safe to the main, for the modicum of five *sous*. The old fox invariably charged me a *franc*, for the same service. There was much demurring and many doubts about encountering the risks; and, more than once, the women would have receded, had not the man treated the matter as a trifle. He affirmed *parole d'honneur* that his father had crossed the Maine a dozen times, and no harm had come of it! This encouraged them, and with many pretty screams, *mes fois*, and *oh, dieus*, they finally embarked. The punt was a narrow scow, that a ton weight would not have disturbed, the river was so low and sluggish that it might have been forded two-thirds of the distance, and the width was not three hundred feet. Pierre protested that the danger was certainly not worth mentioning, and away he went, as philosophical in appearance as his punt. The voyage was made in safety, and the bows of the boat had actually touched the shore on its return, before any of the passengers ventured to smile. The excursion, like most travelling, was likely to be most productive of happiness by the recollections. But

the women were no sooner landed, than that rash adventurer, the husband, brother, and father, seized an oar, and began to ply it with all his force. He merely wished to tell his *confreres* of the *rue Montmartre* how a punt might be rowed. Pierre had gallantly landed to assist the ladies, and the boat, relieved of its weight, slowly yielded to the impulse of the oar, and inclined its bows from the land. "*Oh! Edouard! mon mari! mon frere!—que fais tu?*" exclaimed the ladies. "*Ce n'est rien,*" returned the man, puffing and giving another lusty sweep, by which he succeeded in forcing the punt fully twenty feet from the shore. "*Edouard! cher Edouard!*" "*Laisse-moi m'amuser. Je m'amuse—je m'amuse,*" cried the husband, in a tone of indignant remonstrance. But *Edouard*, a tight, sleek little *epicier*, of about five and thirty, had never heard that an oar on each side was necessary in a boat, and the harder he pulled, the less likely was he to regain the shore. Of this he began to be convinced, as he whirled more into the centre of the current; and his efforts now really became frantic, for his imagination probably painted the horrors of a distant voyage, in an unknown bark, to an unknown land, and all without food or compass. The women screamed, and the louder they cried, the more strenuously he persevered in saying, "*Laisse-moi m'amuser—je m'amuse, je m'amuse.*" By this time the perspiration poured from the face of *Edouard*, and I called to the imperturbable Pierre, who stood in silent admiration of his punt while

playing such antics, and desired him to tell the man to put his oar on the bottom, and to push the boat ashore. "*Oui, Monsieur*," said the rogue, with a leer, for he remembered the francs, and we soon had our adventurer safe on *terra firma* again. Then began the tender expostulations, the affectionate reproaches, and the kind injunctions for the truant to remember that he was a husband and a father. *Edouard*, secretly cursing the punt and all rivers in his heart, made light of the matter, however, protesting to the last, that he had only been enjoying himself.

We have had a *fête*, too; for every village in the vicinity of Paris has its *fête*. The square was filled with whirligigs and flying-horses, and all the ingenious contrivances of the French to make and to spend a *sous* pleasantly. There was service in the parish church, at which our neighbours sang, in a style fit for St. Peter's; and the villagers danced *quadrilles* on the green, with an air that would be thought fine in many a country drawing-room.

I enjoy all this greatly; for, to own the truth, the crowds and mannered sameness of Paris began to weary me. Our friends occasionally come from town to see us, and we make good use of the *cabriolet*. As we are near neighbours to *St. Denis*, we have paid several visits to the tombs of the French kings, and returned, each time, less pleased with most of the unmeaning obsequies that are observed in their vaults. There was a ceremony, not long ince, at which the royal family, and many of the

great officers of the court assisted, and among others, M. de Talleyrand. The latter was in the body of the church, when a man rushed upon him, and actually struck him, or shoved him, to the earth, using, at the same time, language that left no doubt of the nature of the assault. There are strange rumours connected with the affair. The assailant was a *Marquis de* ——, and it is reported that his wrongs, real or imaginary, are connected with a plot to rob one of the dethroned family of her jewels, or of some crown jewels, I cannot say which, at the epoch of the restoration. The journals said a good deal about it, at the time, but events occur so fast, here, that a quarrel of this sort produces little sensation. I pretend to no knowledge of the merits of this affair, and only give a general outline of what was current in the public prints, at the time.

We have also visited Enghien, and Montmorency. The latter, as you know already, stands on the side of a low mountain, in plain view of Paris. It is a town of some size, with very uneven streets, some of them being actually sharp acclivities, and a gothic church that is seen from afar, and that is well worth viewing near by. These quaint edifices afford us deep delight, by their antiquity, architecture, size, and pious histories. What matters it to us how much or how little superstition may blend with the rites, when we know and feel that we are standing in a nave that has echoed with orisons to God, for a thousand years! This of Montmorency

is not quite so old, however, having been rebuilt only three centuries since.

Dulaure, a severe judge of aristocracy, denounces the pretension of the *Montmorencies* to be the *Premiers Barons Chretiens*, affirming that they were neither the first barons, nor the first Christians, by a great many. He says, that the extravagant title has most probably been a war-cry, in the time of the crusaders. According to his account of the family, it originated, about the year 1008, in a certain Burchard, who, proving a bad neighbour to the Abbey of St. Denis, the vassals of which he was in the habit of robbing, besides, now and then, despoiling a monk, the king caused his fortress in the *isle St. Denis* to be razed; after which, by a treaty, he was put in possession of the mountain hard by, with permission to erect another hold near a fountain, at a place called in the charters, *Montmorenciacum*. Hence the name, and the family. This writer thinks that the first castle must have been built of wood!

We took a road that led us up to a bluff on the mountain, behind the town, where we obtained a new and very peculiar view of Paris and its environs. I have said that the French towns have no straggling suburbs. A few wine-houses (to save the *ortroi*) are built near the gates, compactly, as in the town itself, and there the buildings cease as suddenly as if pared down by a knife. The fields touch the walls, in many places, and between St. Ouen and the *guinguettes* and wine-houses, at the *barrière de Clichy*, a distance of quite two miles,

there is but a solitary building. A wide plain separates Paris, on this side, from the mountains, and of course our view extended across it. The number of villages was absolutely astounding. Although I did not attempt counting them, I should think not fewer than a hundred were in sight, all gray, picturesque, and clustering round the high nave and church tower, like chickens gathering beneath the wing. The day was clouded, and the hamlets rose from their beds of verdure, sombre but distinct, with their faces of wall, now in subdued light, and now quite shaded, resembling the glorious *darks* of Rembrandt's pictures.

514028

LETTER VI.

To Capt. M. Perry, U. S. N.

I am often in the saddle, since our removal to St. Ouen. I first commenced the business of exploring in the cabriolet, with my wife for a companion, during which time, several very pretty drives, of whose existence one journeying along the great roads would form no idea, were discovered. At last, as these became exhausted, I mounted, and pricked into the fields. The result has been a better knowledge of the details of ordinary rural life, in this country, than a stranger would get by a residence, after the ordinary fashion, of years.

I found the vast plain intersected by roads as intricate as the veins of the human body. The comparison is not unapt, by the way, and may be even carried out much further; for the *grandes routes* can be compared to the arteries, the *chemins vicinaux,* or cross-roads, to the veins, and the innumerable paths that intersect the fields, in all directions, to the more minute blood vessels, circulation being the object common to all.

I mount my horse and gallop into the fields at random, merely taking care not to quit the paths. By the latter, one can go in almost any direction; and, as they are very winding, there is a certain

pleasure in following their sinuosities, doubtful whither they tend. Much of the plain is in vegetables, for the use of Paris, though there is occasionally a vineyard, or a field of grain. The weather has become settled and autumnal, and is equally without the chilling moisture of the winter or the fickleness of the spring. The kind-hearted peasants see me pass among them without distrust, and my salutations are answered with cheerfulness and civility. Even at this trifling distance from the capital, I miss the *brusque* ferocity that is so apt to characterize the deportment of its lower classes, who are truly the people that Voltaire has described as "*ou singes, ou tigres.*" Nothing, I think, strikes an American more than the marked difference between the town and country of France. With us, the towns are less town-like, and the country less country-like, than is usually the case. Our towns are provincial from the want of tone that can only be acquired by time, while it is a fault with our country to wish to imitate the towns. I now allude to habits only, for the nature at home, owing to the great abundance of wood, is more strikingly rural than in any other country I know. The inhabitant of Paris can quit his own door in the centre of the place, and after walking an hour, he finds himself truly in the country, both as to the air of external objects, and as to the manners of the people. The influence of the capital doubtless has some little effect on the latter, but not enough to raise them above the ordinary rusticity, for the

French peasants are as rustic in their appearance and habits, as the upper classes are refined.

One of my rides is through the plain that lies between St. Ouen and Montmartre, ascending the latter by its rear to the windmills, that night and day, are whirling their ragged arms over the capital of France. Thence I descend into the town, by the carriage road. A view from this height is like a glimpse into the pages of history, for every foot of land that it commands, and more than half the artificial accessories, are pregnant of the past. Looking down into the fissures between the houses, men appear the mites they are, and one gets to have a philosophical indifference to human vanities, by obtaining these bird's-eye views of them in the mass. It was a happy thought that first suggested the summits of mountains for religious contemplation; nor do I think the Father of Evil discovered his usual sagacity when he resorted to such a place for the purposes of selfish temptation; perhaps, however, it would be better to say, he betrayed the grovelling propensities of his own nature. The cathedral of Notre Dame should have been reared on this noble and isolated height, that the airs of heaven might whisper through its fane, breathing the chaunts in honour of God.

Dismounting, manfully, I have lately undertaken a far more serious enterprise—that of making the entire circuit of Paris, on foot. My companion was our old friend Capt. ——. We met, by appointment, at eleven o'clock, just without the *barrière de Clichy*, and, ordering the carriage to come

for us at five, off we started, taking the direction of the eastern side of the town. You probably know that what are commonly called the *boulevards* of Paris, are no more than a circular line of wide streets, through the very heart of the place, which obtain their common appellation from the fact that they occupy the sites of the ancient walls. Thus the street, within this circuit, is called by its name, whatever it may happen to be, and, if continued without the circuit, the term of *fauxbourg* or suburb is added; as in the case of the "*rue St. Honoré,*" and the "*rue fauxbourg St. Honoré,*" the latter being strictly a continuation of the former, but lying without the site of the ancient walls. As the town has increased, it has been found necessary to enlarge its *enceinte,* and the walls are now encircled with wide avenues that are called the outer *boulevards.* There are avenues within and without the walls, and immediately beneath them; and, in many places, both are planted. Our route was on the exterior.

We began the march in good spirits, and by twelve, we had handsomely done our four miles and a half. Of course we passed the different *barrières,* and the gate of *Père la Chaise.* The captain commenced with great vigour, and for near two hours, as he expressed himself, he had me a little on his lee quarter, not more, however, he thought, than was due to his superior rank, for he had once been my senior, as a midshipman. At the *barrière du trone* we were compelled to diverge a little from the wall, in order to get across

the river by the *pont d' Austerlitz.* By this time, I had ranged up abeam of the commodore, and I proposed that we should follow the river, up as far as the wall again, in order to do our work honestly. But to this he objected that he had no wish to puzzle himself with spherical trigonometry, that plane sailing was his humour at the moment, and that he had, moreover, just discovered that one of his boots pinched his foot. Accordingly we proceeded straight from the bridge, not meeting the wall again until we were beyond the *abattoir.* These *abattoirs* are slaughter-houses, that Napoleon caused to be built, near the walls, in some places within, and in others without them, according to the different localities. There are five or six of them, that of *Montmartre* being the most considerable. They are kept in excellent order, and the regulations respecting them appear to be generally good. The butchers sell their meats, in shops, all over the town, a general custom in Europe, and one that has more advantages than disadvantages, as it enables the inhabitant to order a meal at any moment. This independence in the mode of living distinguishes all the large towns of this part of the world from our own; for I greatly question if there be any civilized people among whom the individual is as much obliged to consult the habits and tastes of *all,* in gratifying his own, as in free and independent America. A part of this uncomfortable feature in our domestic economy, is no doubt the result of circumstances unavoidably connected with the condition of a young

country, but a great deal is to be ascribed to the practice of referring every thing to the public, and not a little to those religious sects who extended their supervision to all the affairs of life, that had a chief concern in settling the country, and who have entailed so much that is inconvenient and ungraceful (I might almost say, in some instances, *disgraceful*) on the nation, blended with so much that forms its purest sources of pride. Men are always an inconsistent medley of good and bad.

The captain and myself had visited the *abattoir* of *Montmartre* only a few days previously to this excursion, and we had both been much gratified with its order and neatness. But an unfortunate pile of hocks, hoofs, tallow, and nameless fragments of carcasses, had caught my companion's eye. I found him musing over this *omnium gatherum*, which he protested was worse than a bread pudding at Saratoga. By some process of reasoning, that was rather material than philosophical, he came to the conclusion that the substratum of all the extraordinary compounds he had met with at the *restaurants* was derived from this pile, and he swore, as terribly as any of "our army in Flanders," that not another mouthful would he touch, while he remained in Paris, if the dish put his knowledge of natural history at fault. He had all along suspected he had been eating cats and vermin, but his imagination had never pictured to him such a store of abominations for the *casserole*, as were to be seen in this pile. In vain I asked him if he did not find the dishes good. Cats might be

good for any thing he knew, but he was too old to change his habits. On the present occasion, he made the situation of the *abattoir d' Ivry* an excuse for not turning up the river, by the wall. I do not think, however, we gained any thing in the distance, the *détour* to cross the bridge more than equaling the ground we missed.

We came under the wall again, at the *barrière de Ville Juif*, and followed it, keeping on the side next the town, until we fairly reached the river, once more, beyond *Vaugirard*. Here we were compelled to walk some distance to cross the *Pont de Jéne*, and again to make a considerable circuit through Passy, on account of the gardens, in order to do justice to our task. About this time, the commodore fairly fell astern; and he discovered that the other boot was too large. I kept talking to him over my shoulder, and cheering him on, and he felicitated me on frogs agreeing so well with my constitution. At length, we came in at the *barrière de Clichy*, just as the clocks struck three, or in four hours, to a minute, from the time we had left the same spot. We had neither stopped, eaten, nor drunk a mouthful. The distance is supposed to be about eighteen miles, but I can hardly think it is so much, for we went rather further than if we had closely followed the wall.

Our agility having greatly exceeded my calculations, we were obliged to walk two miles further, in order to find the carriage. The time expended in going this distance included, we were just four hours and a half on our feet. The captain pro-

tested that his boots had disgraced him, and forthwith commanded another pair; a subterfuge that did him no good.

One anecdote connected with the sojourn of this eccentric, but really excellent-hearted and intelligent man,* at Paris, is too good not to be told. He cannot speak a word of pure French, and of all Anglicizing of the language, I have ever heard, his attempts at it are the most droll. He calls the *Tuileries*, Tully*rees*, the *jardins des plantes* the *garden dis plants*, the *guillotine*, *gullyteen*, and the *garçons* of the *cafés*, *gassons*. Cholerick, with whiskers like a bear, and a voice of thunder, if any thing goes wrong, he swears away, starboard and larboard, in French and English, in delightful discord.

He sought me out, soon after his arrival, and carried me with him, as an interpreter, in quest of lodgings. We found a very snug little apartment of four rooms, that he took. The last occupant was a lady, who in letting the rooms, conditioned that *Marie*, her servant, must be hired with them, to look after the furniture, and to be in readiness to receive her, at her return from the provinces. A few days after this arrangement I called, and was surprised, on ringing the bell, to hear the cry of an infant. After a moment's delay the door was cautiously opened, and the captain in his gruffest tone demanded, "*cur vully voo?*" An exclamation of surprize, at seeing me, followed; but instead of opening the door for my admission,

* He is since dead.

he held it, for a moment, as if undecided whether to be "at home" or not. At this critical instant an infant cried again, and the thing became too ridiculous for further gravity. We both laughed outright. I entered and found the captain with a child three days old, tucked under his right arm, or that which had been concealed by the door. The explanation was very simple, and infinitely to his credit.

Marie, the *locum tenens* of the lady who had let the apartment, and the wife of a coachman who was in the country, was the mother of the infant. After its birth, she presented herself to her new master; told her story, adding, by means of an interpreter, that if he turned her away, she had no place in which to lay her head. The kind-hearted fellow made out to live abroad as well as he could, for a day or two; an easy thing enough in Paris, by the way; and when I so unexpectedly entered, Marie was actually cooking the captain's breakfast in the kitchen, while he was nursing the child in the *salon!*

The dialogues between the captain and Marie, were, to the last degree, amusing. He was quite unconscious of the odd sounds he uttered in speaking French, but thought he was getting on very well, being rather minute and particular in his orders; and she felt his kindness to herself and child so sensibly, that she always fancied she understood his wishes. I was frequently compelled to interpret between them, first asking him to explain himself in English, for I could make but

little of his French, myself. On one occasion, he invited me to breakfast, as we were to pass the day exploring, in company. By way of inducement, he told me that he had accidentally found some cocoa in the shell, and that he had been teaching Marie how to cook it, "ship-fashion." I would not promise, as his hour was rather early, and the distance between us so great; but before eleven I would certainly be with him. I breakfasted at home, therefore, but was punctual to the latter engagement. "I hope you have breakfasted?" cried the captain, rather fiercely, as I entered. I satisfied him on this point, and then, after a minute of demure reflection, he resumed, "you are lucky, for Marie boiled the cocoa, and, after throwing away the liquor, she buttered and peppered the shells, and served them for me to eat! I don't see how she made such a mistake, for I was very particular in my directions, and be d—d to her. I don't care so much about my own breakfast, neither, for that can be had at the next *café*, but the poor creature has lost hers, which I told her to cook out of the rest of the cocoa." I had the curiosity to inquire how he had made out to tell *Marie* to do all this. "Why, I showed her the cocoa, to be sure, and then told her to "*boily vous-même.*" There was no laughing at this, and so I went with the captain to a *café*, after which we proceeded in quest of the "*gullyteen,*" which he was particularly anxious to see.

My rides often extend to the heights behind Malmaison and St. Cloud, where there is a fine

country, and where some of the best views, in the vicinity of Paris, are to be obtained. As the court is at St. Cloud, I often meet different members of the royal family, dashing to or from town, or perhaps passing from one of their abodes to another. The style is pretty uniform, for I do not remember to have ever met the king, but once, with less than eight horses. The exception, was quite early one morning, when he was going into the country with very little *éclat*, accompanied by the Dauphine. Even on this occasion, he was in a carriage and six, followed by another with four, and attended by a dozen mounted men. These royal progresses are truly magnificent; and they serve greatly to enliven the road, as we live so near the country palace. The king has been quite lately to a camp, formed at St. Omer, and I happened to meet a portion of his equipages on their return. The carriages I saw were very neatly built post-chaises, well leathered, and contained what are here called the "officers of the mouth," alias "cooks and purveyors." They were all drawn by four horses. This was a great occasion—furniture being actually sent from the palace of Compèigne for the king's lodgings, and the court is said to have employed seventy different vehicles to transport it. I saw about a dozen.

Returning the other night from a dinner-party, given on the banks of the Seine, a few miles above us, I saw flaring lights gleaming along the highway, which, at first, caused nearly as much conjecture as some of the adventures of Don Quixotte.

My horse proving a little restive, I pulled up, placing the *cabriolet* on one side of the road, for the first impression was that the cattle employed at some funeral procession had taken flight, and were running away. It proved to be the Dauphine dashing towards St. Cloud. This was the first time I had ever met any of the royal equipages at night, and the passage was much the most picturesque of any I had hitherto seen. Footmen, holding flaming flambeaux, rode in pairs, in front, by the side of the carriage, and in its rear; the *piqueur* scouring along the road in advance, like a rocket. By the way, a lady of the court told me lately, that Louis XVIIIth had lost some of his French by the emigration, for he did not know how to pronounce this word *piqueur*.

On witnessing all this magnificence, the mind is carried back a few generations, in the inquiry after the progress of luxury, and the usages of our fathers. Coaches were first used in England in the reign of Elizabeth. It is clear enough, by the pictures in the Louvre, that in the time of Louis XIVth the royal carriages were huge, clumsy vehicles, with at least three seats. *Mademoiselle de Montpensier*, in her Memoirs, tell us how often she took her place at the window, in order to admire the graceful attitudes of *M. de Lauzun*, who rode near it. There is still in existence, in the *Bibliotheque du Roi*, a letter of Henry IVth to Sully, in which the king explains to the grand master, the reason why he could not come to the

arsenal that day: the excuse being that the queen *was using the carriage!* To-day his descendant seldom moves at a pace slower than ten miles the hour, is drawn by eight horses, and is usually accompanied by one or more empty vehicles, of equal magnificence, to receive him, in the event of an accident.

Notwithstanding all this regal splendour, the turn-outs of Paris, as a whole, are by no means remarkable. The genteelest, and the fashionable, carriage is the chariot. I like the proportions of the French carriages better than those of the English, or our own: the first being too heavy, and the last too light. The French vehicles appear to me to be, in this respect, a happy medium. But the finish is by no means equal to that of the English carriages, nor at all better than that of ours. There are, relatively, a large proportion of shabby-genteel equipages at Paris. Even the vehicles that are seen standing in the court of the *Tuileries*, on a reception day, are not at all superior to the better sort of American carriages, though the liveries are much more showy.

Few people here, own the carriages and horses they use. Even the strangers, who are obliged to have travelling vehicles, rarely use them in town, the road and the streets requiring very different sorts of equipages. There are certain job-dealers who furnish all that is required, for a stipulated sum. You select the carriage and horses, on trial, and contract at so much a month, or at so much a

year. The coachman usually comes with the equipage, as does the footman sometimes, though both are paid by the person taking the coach. They will wear your livery, if you choose, and, you can have your arms put on the carriage, if desirable. I pay five hundred francs a month for a carriage and horses, and forty francs for a coachman. I believe this is the usual price. I have a right to have a pair of horses, always at my command, finding nothing but the stable, and even this would be un necessary in Paris. If we go away from our own stable, I pay five francs a day, extra. There is a very great convenience to strangers, in particular, in this system, for one can set up, and lay down a carriage, without unnecessary trouble or expense, as it may be wanted. In every thing of this nature, we have no town that has the least the character, or the conveniences, of a capital

The French have little to boast of in the way of horse flesh. Most of the fine coach and cabriolet cattle of Paris come from Mecklenburg, though some are imported from England. It is not common to meet with a very fine animal of the native breed. In America, land is so plenty and so cheap, that we keep a much larger proportion of brute force than is kept here. It is not uncommon with us to meet with those who live by day's work, using either oxen or horses. The consequence is, that many beasts are raised with little care, and with scarcely any attention to the breeds. We find many bad horses, therefore, in America, but still

we find many good ones. In spite of bad grooming, little training, and hard work, I greatly question if even England possesses a larger proportion of good horses, comparing the population of the two countries, than America. Our animals are quicker footed, and at trotting, I suspect, we could beat the world ; Christendom, certainly. The great avenue between the garden of the *Tuileries* and the *Bois de Boulogne*, with the *allées* of the latter, are the places to meet the fast goers of the French capital, and I am strongly of opinion that there is no such exhibition of speed, in either, as one meets on the Third Avenue of New York. As for the *Avenue de Neuilly*, our sulky riders would vanish like the wind from any thing I have seen on it, although one meets there, occasionally, fine animals from all parts of Europe.

The cattle of the *diligences*, of the post houses, and even of the cavalry of France, are solid, hardy and good feeders, but they are almost entirely without speed or action. The two former are very much the same, and it is a hard matter to get more than eight miles out of them, without breaking into a gallop, or more than ten, if put under the whip. Now, a short time previously to leaving home, I went eleven measured miles, in a public coach, in two minutes less than an hour, the whip untouched. I sat on the box, by the side of the driver, and know that this was done under a pull that actually disabled one of his arms, and that neither of the four animals broke its trot. It is not often our roads

will admit of this, but, had we the roads of England, I make little doubt we should altogether outdo her in speed. As for the horses used here, in the public conveyances, and for the post routes, they are commonly compact, clumsy beasts, with less force than their shape would give reason to suppose. Their manes are long and shaggy, the fetlocks are rarely trimmed, the shoes are seldom corked, and, when there is a little coquetry, the tail is braided. In this trim, with a coarse harness, that is hardly ever cleaned, traces of common rope, and half the time no blinkers or reins, away they scamper, with their heads in all directions, like the classical representation of a team in an ancient car, through thick and thin, working with all their might to do two posts within an hour; one, being the legal measure. These animals appear to possess a strange *bonhomie*, being obedient, willing, and tractable, although, in the way of harness and reins, they are pretty much their own masters.

My excursions in the environs have made me acquainted with a great variety of modes of communication between the capital and its adjacent villages. Although Paris is pared down so accurately, and is almost without suburbs, the population, within a circuit of ten miles in each direction, is almost equal to that of Paris itself. St. Denis has several thousands, St. Germain the same, and Versailles is still a town of considerable importance. All these places, with villages out of number, keep up daily intercourse with the city, and in addition

to the hundreds of vegetable carts that constantly pass to and fro, there are many conveyances that are exclusively devoted to passengers. The cheapest and lowest is called a *coucou*, for no reason that I can see, unless it be that a man looks very like a fool to have a seat in one of them. They are large *cabriolets*, with two and even three seats. The wheels are enormous, and there is commonly a small horse harnessed by the side of a larger, in the thills, to drag perhaps eight or nine people. One is amazed to see the living carrion that is driven about a place like Paris, in these uncouth vehicles. The river is so exceedingly crooked, that it is little used by travellers above Rouen.

The internal transportation of France, where the lines of the rivers are not followed, is carried on, almost exclusively, in enormous carts, drawn by six and even eight heavy horses, harnessed in a line. The burthen is often as large as a load of hay, not quite so high, perhaps, but generally longer, care being had to preserve the balance in such a manner as to leave no great weight on the shaft-horse. These teams are managed with great dexterity, and I have often stopped and witnessed, with admiration, the entrance of one of them into a yard, as it passed from a crowded street probably not more than thirty feet wide. But the evolutions of the *diligence*, guided as it chiefly is by the whip, and moving on a trot, are really nice affairs. I came from *La Grange*, some time since, in one, and I thought that we should dash every thing to pieces

in the streets, and yet nothing was injured. At the close of the journey, our team of five horses, two on the pole and three on the lead, wheeled, without breaking its trot, into a street that was barely wide enough to receive the huge vehicle, and this too without human direction, the driver being much too drunk to be of any service. These *diligences* are uncouth objects to the eye; but, for the inside passengers, they are much more comfortable, so far as my experience extends, than either the American stage, or the English coach.

The necessity of passing the *barrière* two or three times a day, has also made me acquainted with the great amount of drunkenness that prevails in Paris. Wine can be had *outside* of the walls, for about half the price which is paid for it within the town, as it escapes the *ortroi*, or city duty. The people resort to these places for indulgence, and there is quite as much low blackguardism and guzzling here, as is to be met with in any seaport I know.

Provisions of all sorts, too, are cheaper without the gates, for the same reason; and the lower classes resort to them to celebrate their weddings, and on other eating and drinking occasions. "*Ici on fait festins et noces,*"* is a common sign, no barrier being without more or less of these houses. The *guinguettes* are low gardens, answering to the English tea-gardens of the humblest class, with a dif-

* Weddings and merry-makings are kept here.

ference in the drinkables and other fare. The base of Montmartre is crowded with them.

One sometimes meets with an unpleasant adventure among these exhilirated gentry; for, though, I think, a low Frenchman is usually better natured when a little *grisé* than when perfectly sober, this is not always the case. Quite lately I had an affair that might have terminated seriously, but for our good luck. It is usual to have two sets of reins to the *cabriolets*, the horses being very spirited, and the danger from accidents in streets so narrow and crowded, being great. I had dined in town, and was coming out about nine o'clock. The horse was walking up the ascent to the *barrière de Clichy*, when I observed, by the shadow cast from a bright moon, that there was a man seated on the *cabriolet*, behind. Charles was driving, and I ordered him to tell the man to get off. Finding words of no effect, Charles gave him a slight tap with his whip. The fellow instantly sprang forward, seized the horse by the reins, and attempted to drag him to one side of the road. Failing in this, he fled up the street. Charles now called out that he had cut the reins. I seized the other pair and brought the horse up, and, as soon as he was under command, we pursued our assailant at a gallop. He was soon out of breath, and we captured him. As I felt very indignant at the supposed outrage, which might have cost, not us only, but others, their lives, I gave him in charge to two *gensd'armes* at the gate, with

my address, promising to call at the police office in the morning.

Accordingly, next day I presented myself, and was surprised to find that the man had been liberated. I had discovered, in the interval, that the leather had *broken*, and had not been *cut*, which materially altered the *animus* of the offence, and I had come with an intention to ask for the release of the culprit, believing it merely a sally of temper, which a night's imprisonment sufficiently punished; but, the man being *charged* with cutting the rein, I thought the magistrate had greatly forgotten himself, in discharging him before I appeared. Indeed I made no scruple in telling him so. We had some warm words, and parted. I make no doubt I was mistaken for an Englishman, and that the old national antipathy was at work against me.

I was a good deal surprised at the termination of this, my first essay in French criminal justice. So many eulogiums have been passed on the police, that I was not prepared to find this indifference to an offence like that of wantonly cutting the reins of a spirited cabriolet horse, in the streets of Paris; for such was the charge on which the man stood committed. I mentioned the affair to a friend, and he said that the police was good only for political offences, and that the government rather leaned to the side of the rabble, in order to find support with them, in the event of any serious movement. This, you will remember, was the opinion of a Frenchman, and not mine; for I only relate the facts (one

conjecture excepted,) and to do justice to all parties, it is proper to add that my friend is warmly opposed to the present *régime*.

I have uniformly found the *gensd'armes* civil, and even obliging; and I have seen them show great forbearance on various occasions. As to the marvellous stories we have heard of the police of Paris, I suspect they have been gotten up for effect, such things being constantly practised here. One needs be behind the curtain, in a great many things, to get a just idea of the true state of the world. A laughable instance has just occurred, within my knowledge, of a story that has been got up for effect. The town was quite horrified, lately, with an account, in the journals, of a careless nurse permitting a child to fall into the *fossé* of the great bears, in the *jardins des plantes*, and of the bears eating up the dear little thing, to the smallest fragment, before succour could be obtained. Happening to be at the garden soon after, in the company of one connected with the establishment, I inquired into the circumstances, and was told that the nurses were very careless with the children, and that the story was published in order that the bears *should not eat up any child hereafter*, rather than because they *had eaten up* a child *heretofore*.

LETTER VII.

To Mrs. Pomeroy, Cooperstown.

I have said very little, in my previous letters, on the subject of our personal intercourse with the society of Paris. It is not always easy for one to be particular in these matters, and maintain the reserve that is due to others. Violating the confidence he may have received through his hospitality, is but an indifferent return from the guest to the host. Still there are men, if I may so express it, so public in their very essence, certainly in their lives, that propriety is less concerned with a repetition of their sentiments, and with delineations of their characters, than in ordinary cases; for the practice of the world has put them so much on their guard against the representations of travellers, that there is more danger of rendering a false account, by becoming their dupes, than of betraying them in their unguarded moments. I have scarcely ever been admitted to the presence of a real notoriety, that I did not find the man, or woman—sex making little difference—an actor; and this, too, much beyond the every day and perhaps justifiable little practices of conventional life. Inherent simplicity of character, is one of the rarest, as, tempered by the tone imparted by

refinement, it is the loveliest of all our traits, though it is quite common to meet with those who affect it, with an address that is very apt to deceive the ordinary, and most especially the flattered, observer.

Opportunity, rather than talents, is the great requisite for circulating gossip; a very moderate degree of ability, sufficing for the observation which shall render private anecdotes, more especially when they relate to persons of celebrity, of interest to the general reader. But there is another objection to being merely the medium of information of this low quality, that I should think would have great influence with every one who has the common self-respect of a gentleman. *There is a tacit admission of inferiority* in the occupation, that ought to prove too humiliating to a man accustomed to those associations, which imply equality. It is permitted to touch upon the habits and appearance of a truly great man; but to dwell upon the peculiarities of a duke, merely because he is a duke, is as much as to say he is your superior; a concession I do not feel disposed to make in favour of any *mere duke* in Christendom.

I shall not, however, be wholly silent on the general impressions left by the little I have seen of the society of Paris; and, occasionally, when it is characteristic, an anecdote may be introduced, for such things sometimes give distinctness, as well as piquancy, to a description.

During our first winter in Paris, our circle, never

very large, was principally confined to foreign families, intermingled with a few French; but since our return to town, from St. Ouen, we have seen more of the people of the country. I should greatly mislead you, however, were I to leave the impression that our currency in the French capital has been at all general, for it certainly has not. Neither my health, leisure, fortune, nor opportunities, have permitted this. I believe few, perhaps no Americans, have very general access to the best society of any large European town; at all events, I have met with no one who, I have had any reason to think was much better off than myself in this respect; and, I repeat, my own familiarity with the circles of the capital, is nothing to boast of. It is in Paris, as it is every where else, as respects those who are easy of access. In all large towns there is to be found a troublesome and pushing set, who, requiring notoriety, obtrude themselves on strangers, sometimes with sounding names, and always with offensive pretensions of some sort or other; but the truly respectable and estimable class, in every country, except in cases that cannot properly be included in the rule, are to be sought. Now, one must feel that he has peculiar claims, or be better furnished with letters than happened to be my case, to get a ready admission into this set, or, having obtained it, to feel that his position enabled him to maintain the intercourse, with the ease and freedom that could alone render it agreeable. To be shown about as a lion, when circumstances offer the means; to be stuck up at a

dinner table, as a piece of luxury, like strawberries in February, or peaches in April, can hardly be called association: the terms being much on a par with that which forms the *liaison*, between him who gives the entertainment, and the hired plate with which his table is garnished. With this explanation, then, you are welcome to an outline of the little I know on the subject.

One of the errors respecting the French, which has been imported into America, through England, is the impression that they are not hospitable. Since my residence here, I have often been at a loss to imagine how such a notion could have arisen, for I am acquainted with no town, in which it has struck me there is more true hospitality, than in Paris. Not only are dinners, balls, and all the minor entertainments frequent, but there is scarcely a man, or a woman, of any note in society, who does not cause his or her doors to be opened, once a fortnight at least, and, in half the cases, once a week. At these *soirées* invitations are sometimes given, it is true, but then they are general, and for the whole season; and it is not unusual, even, to consider them free to all who are on visiting terms with the family. The utmost simplicity and good taste prevail at these places, the refreshments being light and appropriate, and the forms exacting no more than what belongs to good breeding. You will, at once, conceive the great advantages that a stranger possesses in having access to such social resources. One, with a tolerable visiting list, may choose his

circle for any particular evening, and, if by chance, the company should not happen to be to his mind, he has still before him the alternative of several other houses, which are certain to be open. It is not easy to say what can be more truly hospitable than this.

The *petits soupers*, once so celebrated, are entirely superseded by the new distribution of time, which is probably the most rational that can be devised for a town life. The dinner is at six, an hour that is too early to interfere with the engagements of the evening, it being usually over at eight, and too late to render food again necessary that night; an arrangement that greatly facilitates the evening intercourse, releasing it at once from all trouble and parade.

It has often been said, in favour of French society, that once within the doors of a *salon* all are equal. This is not literally so, it being impossible that such a state of things can exist; nor is it desirable that it should; since it is confounding all sentiment and feeling, overlooking the claims of age, services, merit of every sort, and setting at naught the whole construction of society. It is not absolutely true, that even rank is entirely forgotten in French society, though I think it sufficiently so to prevent any deference to it from being offensive. The social pretensions of a French peer are exceedingly well regulated, nor do I remember to have seen an instance in which a very young man has been particularly noticed on account of his having claims of this sort. Distinguished men are so very nume-

rous in Paris, that they excite no great feeling, and the even course of society is little disturbed on their account.

Although all within the doors of a French *salon* are not perfectly equal, none are made unpleasantly to feel the indifference. I dare say there are circles in Paris, in which the mere possession of money may be a source of evident distinction, but it must be in a very inferior set. The French, while they are singularly alive to the advantages of money, and extremely liable to yield to its influence in all important matters, rarely permit any manifestations of its power to escape them in their ordinary intercourse. As a people, they appear to me to be ready to yield every thing to money, but its external homage. On these points, they are the very converse of the Americans, who are hard to be bought, while they consider money the very base of all distinction. The origin of these peculiarities may be found in the respective conditions of the two countries.

In America, fortunes are easily and rapidly acquired; pressure reduces few to want; he who serves is, if any thing, more in demand than he who is to be served; and the want of temptation produces exemption from the liability to corruption. Men will, and do, daily, *corrupt themselves*, in the rapacious pursuit of gain, but comparatively few are in the market, to be bought and sold by others. Notwithstanding this, money being every man's goal, there is a secret, profound, and general deference for it;

while money will do less, than in almost any other country in Christendom. Here, few young men look forward to gaining distinction by making money; they search for it, as a means; whereas, with us, it is the end. We have little need of arms in America, and the profession is in less request than that of law or merchandize. Of the arts and letters, the country possesses none, or next to none; and there is no true sympathy with either. The only career that is felt, as likely to lead, and which can lead, to distinction independently of money, is that of politics, and, as a whole, this is so much occupied by sheer adventurers, with little or no pretension to the name of statesmen, that it is scarcely reputable to belong to it. Although money has no influence in politics, or as little as well may be, even the successful politician is but a secondary man, in ordinary society, in comparison with the *milionaire.* Now, all this is very much reversed in Paris. Money does much, while it seems to do but little. The writer of a successful comedy would be a much more important personage, in the *côteries* of Paris, than M. Rothschild; and the inventor of a new bonnet would enjoy much more *éclat* than the inventor of a clever speculation. I question if there be a community on earth, in which gambling risks in the funds, for instance, are more general than in this, and yet the subject appears to be entirely lost sight of out of the *Bourse.*

The little social notoriety that is attached to military distinction, here, has greatly surprised me. It

really seems as if France has had so much military renown, as to be satiated with it. One is elbowed constantly by generals, who have gained this or that victory, and yet no one seems to care anything about them. I do not mean that the nation is indifferent to military glory, but society appears to care little or nothing about it. I have seen a good deal of fuss made with the writer of a few clever verses, but I have never seen any made with a hero. Perhaps it was because the verses were new, and the victories old.

The perfect good taste and indifference which the French manifest concerning the private affairs, and concerning the mode of living, of one who is admitted to the *salons*, has justly extorted admiration, even from the English, the people of all others who most submit to a contrary feeling. A hackney coach is not always admitted into a court-yard, but both men and women make their visits in them, without any apparent hesitation. No one seems ashamed of confessing poverty. I do not say that women of quality often use *fiacres* to make their visits, but men do, and I have seen women in them, openly, whom I have met in some of the best houses in Paris. It is better to go in a private carriage, or in a *remise*, if one can, but few hesitate, when their means are limited, about using the former. In order to appreciate this self-denial, or simplicity, or good sense, it is necessary to remember that a Paris *fiacre* is not to be confounded with any other vehicle on earth. I witnessed, a short time since, a ludicrous instance of

the different degrees of feeling that exist on this point, among different people. A—— and myself went to the house of an English woman, of our acquaintance, who is not very choice in her French. A Mrs. ——, the wife of a colonel in the English army, sat next A——, as a French lady begged that her carriage might be ordered. Our hostess told her servant to order the *fiacre* of Madame ——. Now, Madame —— kept her chariot, to my certain knowledge, but she disregarded the mistake. A—— soon after desired that our carriage might come next. The good woman of the house, who loved to be busy, again called for the *fiacre* of Madame ——. I saw the foot of A—— in motion, but catching my eye, she smiled, and the thing passed off. The *voiture de Madame* ——, or our own carriage, was announced, just as Mrs. —— was trying to make a servant understand she wished for hers.—"*Le fiacre de Madame* ——," again put in the bustling hostess. This was too much for a colonel's lady, and, with a very pretty air of distress, she took care to explain in a way that all might hear her, that it was a *remise*.

I dare say, vulgar prejudices influence vulgar minds, here, as elsewhere, and yet I must say, that I never knew any one hesitate about giving an address, on account of the humility of the lodgings. It is to be presumed that the manner in which families that are historical, and of long-established rank, were broken down by the revolution, has had an influence in effecting this healthful state of feeling.

The great tact and careful training of the women, serve to add very much to the grace of French society. They effectually prevent all embarrassments from the question of precedency, by their own decisions. Indeed, it appears to be admitted, that when there is any doubt on these points, the mistress of the house shall settle it in her own way. I found myself lately, at a small dinner, the only stranger, and the especially invited guest, standing near *Madame la Marquise* at the moment the service was announced. A bishop made one of the trio. I could not precede a man of his years and profession, and he was too polite to precede a stranger. It was a nice point. Had it been a question between a duke and myself, as a stranger, and under the circumstances of the invitation, I should have had the *pas*, but even the lady hesitated about discrediting a father of the church. She delayed but an instant, and, smiling, she begged us to follow her to the table, avoiding the decision altogether. In America, such a thing could not have happened, for no woman, by a fiction of society, is supposed to know how to walk in company without support; but, here, a woman will not spoil her curtesy, on entering a room, by leaning on an arm, if she can well help it. The practice of tucking up a brace of females, (liver and gizzard, as the English coarsely, but not inaptly, term it,) under one's arms, in order to enter a small room that is crowded in a way to render the movements of even one person difficult, does not prevail here, it being rightly judged that a proper *tenue*, a

good walk, and a graceful movement, are all impaired by it. This habit also singularly contributes to the comfort of your sex, by rendering them more independent of ours. No one thinks, except in very particular cases, of going to the door to see a lady into her carriage, a custom too provincial to prevail in a capital, anywhere. Still, there is an amusing assiduity among the men, on certain points of etiquette, that has sometimes made me laugh; though, in truth, every concession to politeness being a tribute to benevolence, is respectable, unless spoiled in the manner. As we are gossiping about trifles, I will mention a usage or two, that to you will at least be novel.

I was honoured with a letter from *le Chevalier Alexandre de Lameth*,* accompanied by an offering of a book, and I took an early opportunity to pay my respects to him. I found this gentleman, who once played so conspicuous a part in the politics of France, and who is now a liberal deputy, at breakfast, in a small cabinet, at the end of a suite of four rooms. He received me politely, conversed a good deal of America, in which country he had served as a colonel, under Rochambeau, and I took my leave. That M. de Lameth should rise, and even see me into the next room, was what every one would expect, and there I again took my leave of him. But he followed me to each door, in succession, and when, with a little gentle violence, I suc-

* Since dead.

ceeded in shutting him in the ante-chamber, he seemed to yield to my entreaties not to give himself any further trouble. I was on the landing, on my way down, when, hearing the door of M. de Lameth's apartment open, I turned and saw its master standing before it, to give and receive the last bow. Although this extreme attention to the feelings of others, and delicacy of demeanor, rather marks the Frenchman of the old school, perhaps, it is by no means uncommon here. General la Fayette, while he permits me to see him with very little ceremony, scarcely ever suffers me to leave him, without going with me as far as two or three doors. This, in my case, he does more from habit than any thing else, for he frequently does not even rise when I enter; and, sometimes, when I laughingly venture to say so much ceremony is scarcely necessary between us, he will take me at my word, and go back to his writing, with perfect simplicity.

The reception between the women, I see plainly, is graduated with an unpretending but nice regard to their respective claims. They rise, even to men, a much more becoming and graceful habit than that of America, except in evening circles, or in receiving intimates. I never saw a French woman offer her hand to a male visitor, unless a relative, though it is quite common for females to kiss each other, when the *réunion* is not an affair of ceremony. The practice of kissing among men, still exists, though it is not very common at Paris. It appears to be gradually going out with the ear-rings. I have never had

an offer from a Frenchman, of my own age, to kiss me, but it has frequently occurred, with my seniors. General la Fayette practises it still, with all his intimates.

I was seated, the other evening, in quiet conversation, with *Madame la Princesse de* ——. Several people had come and gone in the course of an hour, and all had been received in the usual manner. At length the *huissier*, walking fast through the antechambers, announced the wife of an ambassador. The *Princesse*, at the moment, was seated on a *divan*, with her feet raised so as not to touch the floor. I was startled with the suddenness and vehemence of her movements. She sprang to her feet, and rather ran than walked across the vast *salon* to the door, where she was met by her visitor, who, observing the *empressement* of her hostess, through the vista of rooms, had rushed forward as fast as decorum would at all allow, in order to anticipate her at the door. It was my impression, at first, that they were bosom friends, about to be restored to each other, after a long absence, and that the impetuosity of their feelings had gotten the better of their ordinary self-command. No such thing; it was merely a strife of courtesy, for the meeting was followed by an extreme attention to all the forms of society, profound curtseys, and the elaborated demeanor which marks ceremony rather than friendship.

Much has been said about the latitude of speech among the women of France, and comparisons have

been made between them and our own females, to the disadvantage of the former. If the American usages are to be taken as the standard of delicacy in such matters, I know of no other people who come up to it. As to our mere feelings, habit can render any thing proper, or any thing improper, and it is not an easy matter to say where the line, in conformity with good sense and good taste, should be actually drawn. I confess a leaning to the American school, but how far I am influenced by education, it would not be easy for me to say myself. Foreigners affirm that we are squeamish, and that we wound delicacy oftener by the awkward attempts to protect it, than if we had more simplicity. There may be some truth in this, for though cherishing the notions of my youth, I never belonged to the ultra school at home, which, I believe you will agree with me, rather proves low breeding than good breeding. One sees instances of this truth, not only every day, but every hour of the day. Yesterday, in crossing the Tuileries, I was witness of a ludicrous scene that sufficiently illustrates what I mean. The statues of the garden have little or no drapery. A countryman, and two women of the same class, in passing one, were struck with this circumstance, and their bursts of laughter, running and hiding their faces, and loud giggling, left no one in ignorance of the cause of their extreme bashfulness. Thousands of both sexes pass daily beneath the same statue, without a thought of its nudity, and it is looked upon as a noble piece of sculpture.

In dismissing this subject, which is every way delicate, I shall merely say that usage tolerates a license of speech, of which you probably have no idea, but, that I think one hears very rarely, from a French woman of condition, little that would not be uttered, by an American female, under similar circumstances. So far as my experience goes, there is a marked difference, in this particular, between the women of a middle station and those of a higher rank; by rank, however, I mean hereditary rank, for the revolution has made a *pèle mèle* in the *salons* of Paris.

Although the *petits soupers* have disappeared, the dinners are very sufficient substitutes. They are given at a better hour, and the service of a French entertainment, so quiet, so entirely free from effort, or chatter about food, is admirably adapted to rendering them agreeable. I am clearly of opinion no one ought to give any entertainment that has not the means of making it pass off as a matter-of-course thing, and without effort. I have certainly seen a few fussy dinners here, but they are surprisingly rare. At home, we have plenty of people who know that a party that has a laboured air is inherently vulgar, but how few are there that know how to treat a brilliant entertainment as a mere matter of course! Paris is full of those desirable houses in which the thing is understood.

The forms of the table vary a little, according to the set one is in. In truly French houses, until quite lately I believe, it was not the custom to

change the knife, the duty of which, by the way, is not great, the cookery requiring little more than the fork. In families that mingle more with strangers, both are changed, as with us. A great dinner is served very much as at home, so far as the mere courses are concerned, though I have seen the melons follow the soup. This I believe to be in good taste, though it is not common, and it struck me, at first, as being as much out of season as the old New England custom of eating the pudding before the meat. But the French give small dinners, (small in name, though certainly very great in execution,) in which the dishes are served singly, or nearly so, the entertainment resembling those given by the Turks, and being liable to the same objection; for when there is but a single dish before one, and it is not known whether there is to be any more, it is an awkward thing to decline eating. Such dinners are generally of the best quality, but I think they should never be given except where there is sufficient intimacy to embolden the guest to say *jam satis.*

The old devotion to the sex is not so exclusively the occupation of a French *salon,* as it was, probably, half a century since. I have been in several, where the men were grouped in a corner, talking politics, while the women amused each other, as best they could, in cold, formal lines, looking like so many figures placed there to show off the latest modes of the *toilette.* I do not say this is abso-

lutely common, but it is less rare than you might be apt to suppose.

I can tell you little of the habit of reading manuscripts, in society. Such things are certainly done, for I have been invited to be present on one or two occasions, but having a horror of such exhibitions, I make it a point to be indisposed, the choice lying between the megrims before, or after them. Once, and once only, I have heard a poet recite his verses in a well filled drawing-room, and, though I have every reason to think him clever, my ear was so little accustomed to the language, that, in the mouthing of French recitation, I lost nearly all of it.

I have had an odd pleasure in driving from one house to another, on particular evenings, in order to produce as strong contrasts as my limited visiting list will procure. Having a fair opportunity a few nights since, in consequence of two or three invitations coming in, for the evening on which several houses where I occasionally called were opened, I determined to make a night of it, in order to note the effect. As A—— did not know several of the people, I went alone, and you may possibly be amused with an account of my adventures: they shall be told.

In the first place I had to dress, in order to go to dinner at a house that I had never entered, and with a family of which I had never seen a soul. These are incidents which frequently come over a stranger, and, at first, were not a little awkward, but use hardens us to much greater misfortunes. At

six, then, I stepped punctually into my *coupé*, and gave Charles the necessary number and street. I ought to tell you that the invitation had come a few days before, and, in a fit of curiosity, I had accepted it, and sent a card, without having the least idea who my host and hostess were, beyond their names. There was something *piquant* in this ignorance, and I had almost made up my mind to go in the same mysterious manner, leaving all to events, when happening, in an idle moment, to ask a lady of my acquaintance, and for whom I have a great respect, if she knew a *Madame de* ——, to my surprise, her answer was—"Most certainly—she is my cousin, and you are to dine there to-morrow." I said no more, though this satisfied me that my hosts were people of some standing. While driving to their hotel, it struck me, under all the circumstances, it might be well to know more of them, and I stopped at the gate of a female friend, who knows every body, and who, I was certain, would receive me even at that unseasonable hour. I was admitted, explained my errand, and inquired if she knew *a M. de* ——. "*Quelle question!*" she exclaimed — "*M. de* —— *est Chancelier de la France!*" Absurd, and even awkward, as it might have proved, but for this lucky thought, I should have gone and dined with the French Lord High Chancellor, without having the smallest suspicion of who he was!

The hotel was a fine one, though the apartment was merely good, and the reception, service and general style of the house were so simple

that neither would have awakened the least suspicion of the importance of my hosts. The party was small and the dinner modest. I found the *chancelier* a grave dignified man, a little curious on the subject of America, and his wife, apparently a woman of great good sense, and, I should think, of a good deal of attainment. Every thing went off in the quietest manner possible, and I was sorry when it was time to go.

From this dinner, I drove to the hotel of the *Marquis de Marbois*, to pay a visit of digestion. M. de Marbois retires so early, on account of his great age, that one is obliged to be punctual, or he will find the gate locked at nine. The company had got back into the drawing-room, and as the last week's guests were mostly there, as well as those who had just left the table, there might have been thirty people present, all of whom were men but two. One of the ladies was Madame de Souza, known in French literature as the writer of several clever novels of society. In the drawing-room, were grouped, in clusters, the Grand Referendary, M. Cuvier, M. Daru, M. Villemain, M. de Plaisance, Mr. Brown, and many others of note. There seemed to be something in the wind, as the conversation was in low confidential whispers, attended by divers ominous shrugs. This could only be politics, and watching an opportunity, I questioned an acquaintance. The fact was really so. The appointed hour had come, and the ministry of M. de Villèle was in the agony. The elections had not been favourable,

and it was expedient to make an attempt to reach the *old* end, by what is called a *new* combination. It is necessary to understand the general influence of political intrigues on certain *côteries* of Paris, to appreciate the effect of this intelligence, on a drawing-room filled, like this, with men who had been actors in the principal events of France, for forty years. The name of M. Cuvier was even mentioned as one of the new ministers. Comte Roy was also named, as likely to be the new premier. I was told that this gentleman was one of the greatest landed proprietors of France, his estates being valued at four millions of dollars. The fact is curious, as showing, not on vulgar rumour, but from a respectable source, what is deemed a first rate landed property in this country. It is certainly no merit, nor do I believe it is any very great advantage; but, I think we might materially beat this, even in America. The company soon separated, and I retired.

From the *Place de la Madeleine*, I drove to a house near the *Carrousel*, where I had been invited to step in, in the course of the evening. All the buildings that remain within the intended parallelogram, which will some day make this spot one of the finest squares in the world, have been bought by the government, or nearly so, with the intent to have them pulled down, at a proper time; and the court bestows lodgings, *ad interim*, among them, on its favourites. Madame de —— was one of these favoured persons, and she occupies a small apartment in the third story of one of these houses. The rooms

were neat and well arranged, but small. Probably the largest does not exceed fifteen feet square. The approach to a Paris lodging is usually either very good, or very bad. In the new buildings may be found some of the mediocrity of the new order of things; but in all those which were erected previously to the revolution, there is nothing but extremes in this, as in most other things. Great luxury and elegance, or great meanness and discomfort. The house of Madame de —— happens to be of the latter class, and although all the disagreeables have disappeared from her own rooms, one is compelled to climb up to them, through a dark well of a staircase, by flights of steps not much better than those we use in our stables. You have no notion of such staircases as those I had just descended in the hotels of the *Chancelier* and the *Premier President;** nor have we any just idea, as connected with respectable dwellings, of these I had now to clamber up. M. de —— is a man of talents and great respectability, and his wife is exceedingly clever, but they are not rich. He is a professor, and she is an artist. After having passed so much of my youth, on top-gallant-yards, and in becketting royals, you are not to suppose, however, I had any great difficulty in getting up these stairs, narrow, steep, and winding as they were.

We are now at the door, and I have rung. On whom do you imagine the curtain will rise? On a *réunion* of philosophers come to discuss

* M. de Marbois was the first president of the Court of Accounts.

questions in botany, with M. de ——, or on artists, assembled to talk over the troubles of their profession, with his wife? The door opens, and I enter.

The little drawing-room is crowded; chiefly with men. Two card tables are set, and at one I recognize a party, in which are three dukes of the *veille cour*, with M. de Duras at their head! The rest of the company was a little more mixed, but, on the whole, it savoured strongly of Coblentz and the *emigration*. This was more truly French than any thing I had yet stumbled on. One or two of the grandees looked at me as if, better informed than Scott, they knew that General La Fayette had not gone to America to live. Some of these gentlemen certainly do not love us; but I had cut out too much work for the night to stay and return the big looks of even dukes, and, watching an opportunity, when the eyes of Madame de —— were another way, I stole out of the room.

Charles now took his orders, and we drove down into the heart of the town, somewhere near the general post-office, or into those mazes of streets that, near two years of practice, have not yet taught me to thread. We entered the court of a large hotel, that was brilliantly lighted, and I ascended, by a noble flight of steps, to the first floor. Ante-chambers communicated with a magnificent saloon, which appeared to be near forty feet square. The ceilings were lofty, and the walls were ornamented with military trophies, beautifully designed, and which had the air of being embossed and gilded. I had got into the hotel of one of Napoleon's marshals, you will

say, of at least into one of a marshal of the old *régime*. The latter conjecture may be true, but the house is now inhabited by a great woollen manufacturer, whom the events of the day has thrown into the presence of all these military emblems. I found the worthy *industriel* surrounded by a groupe, composed of men of his own stamp, eagerly discussing the recent changes in the government. The women, of whom there might have been a dozen, were ranged, like a neglected parterre, along the opposite side of the room. I paid my compliments, staid a few minutes, and stole away to the next engagement.

We had now to go to a little, retired, house on the *Champs Elysées*. There were only three or four carriages before the door, and on ascending to a small, but very neat apartment, I found some twenty people collected. The mistress of the house was an English lady, single, of a certain age, and a daughter of the Earl of ——, who was once governor of New York. Here was a very different set. One or two ladies of the old court, women of elegant manners, and seemingly of good information, several English women, pretty, quiet and clever, besides a dozen men of different nations. This was one of those little *réunions* that are so common in Paris, among the foreigners, in which a small infusion of French serves to leaven a considerable batch of human beings from other parts of the world. As it is always a relief to me to speak my own language, after being a good while among foreigners, I staid an hour at this house.

In the course of the evening an Irishman of great wit and of exquisite humour, one of the paragons of the age in his way, came in. In the course of conversation, this gentleman, who is the proprietor of an Irish estate, and a Catholic, told me of an atrocity in the laws of his country, of which until then I was ignorant. It seems that any younger brother, or next heir, might claim the estate by turning Protestant, or drive the incumbent to the same act. I was rejoiced to hear that there was hardly an instance of such profligacy known.* To what baseness will not the struggle for political ascendancy urge us!

In the course of the evening, Mr. ——, the Irish gentleman, gravely introduced me to a Sir James ——, adding, with perfect gravity, "a gentleman whose father humbugged the Pope—humbugged infallibility." One could not but be amused with such an introduction, urged in a way so infinitely droll, and I ventured, at a proper moment, to ask an explanation, which, unless I was also humbugged, was as follows.

Among the *détenus* in 1804, was Sir William ——, the father of Sir James ——, the person in question. Taking advantage of the presence of the Pope at Paris, he is said to have called on the good-hearted Pius, with great concern of manner, to state his case. He had left his sons in England, and through his absence they had fallen under the care of two Presbyterian aunts; as a father he was na-

* I believe this infamous law, however, has been repealed.

turally anxious to rescue them from this perilous situation. "New Pius," continued my merry informant, "quite naturally supposed that all this solicitude was in behalf of two orthodox Catholic souls, and he got permission from Napoleon for the return of so good a father, to his own country, never dreaming that the conversion of the boys, if it ever took place, would only be from the Protestant Episcopal Church of England, to that of Calvin; or a rescue from one of the devil's furnaces, to pop them into another." I laughed at this story, I suppose with a little incredulity, but my Irish friend insisted on its truth, ending the conversation with a significant nod, Catholic as he was, and saying—"humbugged infallibility!"

By this time it was eleven o'clock, and as I am obliged to keep reasonable hours, it was time to go to *the* party of the evening. Count ——, of the —— Legation, gave a great ball. My carriage entered the line at the distance of near a quarter of a mile from the *hôtel; gensdarmes* being actively employed in keeping us all in our places. It was half an hour before I was set down, and the *quadrilles* were in full motion when I entered. It was a brilliant affair, much the most so I have ever yet witnessed in a private house. Some said there were fifteen hundred people present. The number seems incredible, and yet, when one comes to calculate, it may be so. As I got into my carriage to go away, Charles informed me that the people at the gates affirm that more than six hundred carriages had en-

tered the court that evening. By allowing an average of little more than two to each vehicle, we get the number mentioned.

I do not know exactly how many rooms were opened on this occasion, but I should think there were fully a dozen. Two or three were very large *salons*, and the one in the centre, which was almost at fever heat, had crimson hangings, by way of cooling one. I have never witnessed dancing at all comparable to that of the quadrilles of this evening. Usually there is either too much or too little of the dancing master, but on this occasion every one seemed inspired with a love of the art. It was a beautiful sight to see a hundred charming young women, of the first families of Europe, for they were there of all nations, dressed with the simple elegance that is so becoming to the young of the sex, and which is never departed from here until after marriage, moving in perfect time to delightful music, as if animated by a common soul. The men, too, did better than usual, being less lugubrious and mournful than our sex is apt to be in dancing. I do not know how it is in private, but in the world, at Paris, every young woman seems to have a good mother; or, at least, one capable of giving her both a good tone, and good taste.

At this party I met the ——, an intimate friend of the ambassador, and one who also honours me with a portion of her friendship. In talking over the appearance of things, she told me that some hundreds of *applications for invitations* to this

ball had been made. "Applications! I cannot conceive of such meanness. In what manner?" "Directly; by note, by personal intercession—almost by tears. Be certain of it, many hundreds have been refused." In America we hear of refusals to go to balls, but we have not yet reached the pass of sending refusals to invite! "Do you see Mademoiselle ——, dancing in the set before you?" She pointed to a beautiful French girl, whom I had often seen at her house, but whose family was in a much lower station in society than herself. "Certainly—pray how came *she* here?" "I brought her. Her mother was dying to come, too, and she begged me to get an invitation for her and her daughter; but it would not do to bring the mother to such a place, and I was obliged to say no more tickets could be issued. I wished, however, to bring the daughter, she is so pretty, and we compromised the affair in that way." "And to this the mother assented!" "Assented! How can you doubt it—what funny American notions you have brought with you to France!"

I got some droll anecdotes from my companion, concerning the ingredients of the company on this occasion, for she could be as sarcastic as she was elegant. A young woman near us attracted attention by a loud and vulgar manner of laughing. "Do you know that lady?" demanded my neighbour. "I have seen her before, but scarcely know her name." "She is the daughter of your acquaintance, the *Marquise de* ——." "Then she is, or

was, a *Mademoiselle de* ——." "She is not, nor properly ever was, a *Mademoiselle de* ——. In the revolution the *Marquis* was imprisoned by you wicked republicans, and the *Marquise* fled to England, whence she returned, after an absence of three years, bringing with her this young lady, then an infant a few months old." "And *Monsieur le Marquis?*" "He never saw his daughter, having been beheaded in Paris, about a year before her birth." "*Quelle contre tems!*" "*Ne c'est-ce pas?*"

It is a melancholy admission, but it is no less true, that good breeding is sometimes quite as active a virtue, as good principles. How many more of the company present were born about a year after their fathers were beheaded, I have no means of knowing; but had it been the case with all of them, the company would have been of as elegant demeanor, and of much more *retenue* of deportment, than we are accustomed to see, I will not say in *good,* but certainly in *general* society, at home. One of the consequences of good breeding is also a disinclination, positively a distaste, to pry into the private affairs of others. The little specimen to the contrary, just named, was rather an exception, owing to the character of the individual, and to the indiscretion of the young lady in laughing too loud, and then the affair of a birth so *very* posthumous was rather too *patent* to escape all criticism.

My friend was in a gossiping mood this evening, and as she was well turned of fifty, I ventured to continue the conversation. As some of the *liaisons*

which exist here must be novel to you, I shall mention one or two more.

A *Madame de J——* passed us, leaning on the arm of *M. de C——*. I knew the former, who was a widow; had frequently visited her, and had been surprised at the intimacy which existed between her and *M. de C——*, who always appeared quite at home, in her house. I ventured to ask my neighbour if the gentleman were the brother of the lady. "Her brother! It is to be hoped not, as he is her husband." "Why does she not bear his name, if that be the case?" "Because her first husband is of a more illustrious family than her second; and then there are some difficulties on the score of fortune. No, no. These people are *bonâ fide* married. *Tenez*—do you see that gentleman who is standing so assiduously near the chair of *Madame de S——*? He who is all attention and smiles to the lady?" "Certainly—his politeness is even affectionate." "Well it ought to be, for it is *M. de S——*, her husband." "They are a happy couple, then." "*Hors de doute*—he meets her at *soirées* and balls; is the pink of politeness; puts on her shawl; sees her safe into her carriage, and —" "Then they drive home together, as loving as Darby and Joan." "And then he jumps into his *cabriolet*, and drives to the lodgings of ——. *Bon soir, monsieur* ——, you are making me fall into the vulgar crime of scandal."

Now, as much as all this may sound like invention, it is quite true, that I repeat no more to you

than was said to me, and no more than what I believe to be exact. As respects the latter couple, I have been elsewhere told that they literally never see each other, except in public, where they constantly meet, as the best friends in the world.

I was lately in some English society, when Lady G—— bet a pair of gloves with Lord R—— that he had not seen Lady R—— in a fortnight. The bet was won by the gentleman, who proved satisfactorily that he had met his wife at a dinner party, only ten days before.

After all I have told you, and all that you may have heard from others, I am nevertheless inclined to believe, that the high society of Paris is quite as exemplary as that of any other large European town. If we are any better ourselves, is it not more owing to the absence of temptation, than to any other cause? Put large garrisons into our towns, fill the streets with idlers, who have nothing to do but to render themselves agreeable, and with women with whom dress and pleasure are the principal occupations, and then let us see what protestantism and liberty will avail us, in this particular. The intelligent French say that their society is improving in morals. I can believe this, of which I think there is sufficient proof by comparing the present with the past, as the latter has been described to us. By the past, I do not mean the period of the revolution, when vulgarity assisted to render vice still more odious—a happy union, perhaps, for those who were to follow—but the days of the old *régime*.

Chance has thrown me in the way of three or four old dowagers of that period, women of high rank, and still in the first circles, who, amid all their *finesse* of breeding, and ease of manner, have had a most desperate *rouée* air about them. Their very laugh, at times, has seemed replete with a bold levity, that was as disgusting as it was unfeminine. I have never, in any other part of the world, seen loose sentiments *affichés*, with more effrontery. These women are the complete antipodes of the quiet, elegant *Princesse de* ——, who was at Lady —— ——'s, this evening; though some of them write *Princesses* on their cards, too.

The influence of a court must be great on the morals of those who live in its purlieus. Conversing with the Duc de ——, a man who has had general currency in the best society of Europe, on this subject, he said,—"England has long decried our manners. Previously to the revolution, I admit they were bad; perhaps worse than her own; but I know nothing in our history as bad as what I lately witnessed in England. You know I was there, quite recently. The king invited me to dine at Windsor. I found every one in the drawing-room, but His Majesty and Lady ——. She entered but a minute before him, like a queen. Her reception was that of a queen; young, unmarried females kissed her hand. Now, all this might happen in France, even now; but Louis XV., the most dissolute of our monarchs, went no farther. At Windsor, I saw the husband, sons, and daughters of the

favourite, in the circle! *Le parc des Cerfs* was not as bad as this."

"And yet, M. de ——, since we are conversing frankly, listen to what I witnessed, but the other day, in France. You know the situation of things at St. Ouen, and the rumours that are so rife. We had the *fête Dieu*, during my residence there. You, who are a Catholic, need not be told that your sect believe in the doctrine of the "real presence." There was a *reposoir* erected in the garden of the *château*, and God, in person, was carried, with religious pomp, to rest in the bowers of the ex-favourite. It is true, the husband was not present: he was only in the provinces!"

"The influence of a throne makes sad parasites and hypocrites," said M. de ——, shrugging his shoulders.

"And the influence of the people, too, though in a different way. A courtier is merely a well-dressed demagogue."

"It follows, then, that man is just a poor devil."

But I am gossiping away with you, when my Asmodean career is ended, and it is time I went to bed. Good night.

LETTER VIII.

To Jacob Sutherland, Esquire, New York.

The Chambers have been opened with the customary ceremonies and parade. It is usual for the King, attended by a brilliant *cortège*, to go, on these occasions, from the Tuileries to the Palais Bourbon, through lines of troops, under a salute of guns. The French love *spectacles*, and their monarch, if he would be popular, is compelled to make himself one, at every plausible opportunity.

The garden of the Tuileries is a parallelogram, of, I should think, fifty acres, of which one end is bounded by the palace. It has a high vaulted terrace on the side next the river, as well as at the opposite end, and one a little lower, next the *rue de Rivoli*. There is also a very low broad terrace, immediately beneath the windows of the palace, which separates the buildings from the *parterres*. You will understand that the effect of this arrangement, is to shut out the world from the persons in the garden, by means of the terraces, and, indeed, to enable them, by taking refuge in the woods that fill quite half the area, to bury themselves almost in

a forest. The public has free access to this place, from an early hour in the morning, to eight or nine at night, according to the season. When it is required to clear them, a party of troops marches, by beat of drum, from the *château*, through the great *allée*, to the lower end of the garden. This is always taken as the signal to disperse, and the world begins to go out, at the different gates. It is understood that the place is frequently used as a promenade, by the royal family, after this hour, especially in the fine season; but, as it would be quite easy for any one, evilly disposed, to conceal himself among the trees, statues and shrubs, the troops are extended in very open order, and march slowly back to the palace, of course driving every one before them. Each gate is locked, as the line passes it.

The only parts of the garden, which appear, on the exterior, to be on a level with the street, though such is actually the fact with the whole of the interior, are the great gate opposite the palace, and a side gate near its southern end; the latter being the way by which one passes out, to cross the Pont Royal.

In attempting to pass in at this gate the other morning, for the first time, at that hour, I found it closed. A party of ladies and gentlemen were walking on the low terrace, beneath the palace windows, and a hundred people might have been looking at them from without. A second glance showed me, that among some children, were the heir presumptive, and his sister Mademoiselle d'Artois. The exhibition could merely be an attempt to feel the public pulse,

for the country house of *la Bagatelle*, to which the children go two or three times a week, is much better suited to taking the air. I could not believe in the indifference that was manifested, had I not seen it. The children are both engaging, particularly the daughter, and yet, these innocent and perfectly inoffensive beings were evidently regarded more with aversion, than with affection.

The display of the opening of the session produced no more effect on the public mind, than the appearance on the terrace of *les Enfants de France*. The Parisians are the least loyal of Charles's subjects, and though the troops, and a portion of the crowd, cried *vive le roi*, it was easy to see that the disaffected were more numerous than the well-affected.

I have attended some of the sittings since the opening, and shall now say a word on the subject of the French parliamentary proceedings. The hall is an amphitheatre, like our own; the disposition of the seats and speaker's chair being much the same as at Washington. The members sit on benches, however, that rise one behind the other, and through which they ascend and descend, by aisles. These aisles separate the different shades of opinion, for those who think alike sit together. Thus the *gauche* or left is occupied by the extreme liberals; the *centre gauche*, by those who are a shade nearer the Bourbons. The *centre droit*, or right centre, by the true Bourbonists, and so on, to the farthest point of the semicircle. Some of the members affect even to manifest the minuter shades of their opinions, by

their relative positions in their own sections, and I believe it is usual for each one to occupy his proper place.

You probably know that the French members speak from a stand, immediately beneath the chair of the president, called a tribune. Absurd as this may seem, I believe it to be a very useful regulation, the vivacity of the national character rendering some such check on loquacity quite necessary. Without it, a dozen would often be on their feet at once; as it is, even, this sometimes happens. No disorder that ever occurs in our legislative bodies, will give you any just notion of that which frequently occurs here. The president rings a bell as a summons to keep order, and as a last resource he puts on his hat, a signal that the sitting is suspended.

The speaking of both chambers is generally bad. Two-thirds of the members read their speeches, which gives the sitting a dull, monotonous character, and as you may suppose, the greater part of their lectures are very little attended to. The most parliamentary speaker is M. Royer Collard, who is, just now, so popular that he has been returned for seven different places at the recent election.

M. Constant is an exceedingly animated speaker, resembling in this particular Mr. M'Duffie. M. Constant, however, has a different motion from the last gentleman, his movement being a constant oscillation over the edge of the tribune, about as fast, and almost as regular, as that of the pendulum of a large clock. It resembles that of a sawyer in the Missis-

sippi. General La Fayette speaks with the steadiness and calm, that you would expect from his character, and is always listened to with respect. Many professional men speak well, and exercise considerable influence in the house, for here, as elsewhere, the habit of public and extemporaneous speaking gives an immediate ascendancy in deliberative bodies.

Some of the scenes one witnesses in the Chamber of Deputies are amusing by their exceeding vivacity. The habit of crying *écoutez* prevails, as in the English parliament, though the different intonations of that cry are not well understood. I have seen members run at the tribune, like children playing puss in a corner; and, on one occasion, I saw five different persons on its steps, in waiting for the descent of the member in possession. When a great question is to be solemnly argued, the members inscribe their names for the discussion, and are called on to speak in the order in which they stand on the list.

The French never sit in committee of the whole, but they have adopted in its place an expedient, that gives power more control over the proceedings of the two houses. At the commencement of the session, the members draw for their numbers in the *bureaux*, as they are called. Of these *bureaux*, there are ten or twelve, and, as a matter of course, they include all the members. As soon as the numbers are drawn, the members assemble in their respective rooms, and choose their officers; a president and secretary. These elections are always supposed to be indicative of the political tendency of each

bureau; those which have a majority of liberals, choosing officers of their own opinions, and *vice versâ.* These *bureaux* are remodelled, periodically, by drawing anew; the term of duration being a month or six weeks. I believe the chamber retains the power to refer questions, or not, to these *bureaux;* their institution being no more than a matter of internal regulation, and not of constitutional law. It is, however, usual to send all important laws to them, where they are discussed and voted on: the approbation of a majority of the *bureaux* being, in such cases, necessary for their reception in the chambers.

The great evil of the present system is the *initiative* of the king. By this reservation in the charter, the crown possesses more than a veto, all laws actually emanating from the sovereign. The tendency of such a regulation is either to convert the chambers into the old *lits de justice*, or to overthrow the throne, an event which will certainly accompany any serious change here. As might have been, and as *would* have been anticipated, by any one familiar with the action of legislative bodies, in our time, this right is already so vigorously assailed, as to give rise to constant contentions between the great powers of the state. All parties are agreed that no law can be presented, that does not come originally from the throne; but the liberals are for putting so wide a construction on the right to amend, as already to threaten to pervert the regulation. This has driven some of the Bourbonists to maintain that the cham-

bers have no right, at all, to amend a royal proposition. Any one may foresee, that this is a state of things which cannot peaceably endure for any great length of time. The ministry are compelled to pack the chambers, and in order to effect their objects, they resort to all the expedients of power that offer. As those who drew up the charter had neither the fore-thought, nor the experience, to anticipate all the embarrassments of a parliamentary government, they unwittingly committed themselves, and illegal acts are constantly resorted to, in order that the system may be upheld. The charter was bestowed *ad captandum*, and is a contradictory *mélange* of inexpedient concessions and wily reservations. The conscription undermined the popularity of Napoleon, and Louis XVIII., in his charter says, "The conscription is abolished; the *recruiting* for the army and navy shall be settled by a law." Now the conscription *is not* abolished; but, if pushed on this point, a French jurist would perhaps tell you it is *now* established by law. The feudal exclusiveness, on the subject of taxation, is done away with, all men being equally liable to taxation. The nett pay of the army is about two sous a day; *this* is settled by law, passed by the representatives of those who pay two hundred francs a year, in direct taxation. The conscription, in appearance, is general and fair enough; but he who has money can always hire a substitute, at a price quite within his power. It is only the poor man, who is never in possession of one or two

thousand francs, that is obliged to serve seven years at two sous a day, nett.

France has gained, beyond estimate, by the changes from the old to the present system, but it is in a manner to render further violent changes necessary. I say *violent*, for political changes are everywhere unavoidable, since questions of polity are, after all, no other than questions of facts, and these are interests that will regulate themselves, directly or indirectly. The great desideratum of a government, after settling its principles in conformity with controlling facts, is to secure to itself the means of progressive change, without the apprehension of convulsion. Such is not the case with France, and further revolutions are inevitable. The mongrel government which exists, neither can stand, nor does it deserve to stand. It contains the seeds of its own destruction. Here, you will be told, that the King is a Jesuit, that he desires to return to the ancient *régime*, and that the opposition wishes merely to keep him within the limits of the charter. My own observations lead to a very different conclusion. The difficulty is in the charter itself, which leaves the government neither free, nor despotic; in short, without any distinctive character.

This defect is so much felt, that, in carying out the details of the system, much that properly belongs to it has been studiously omitted. The King can do no wrong, here, as in England, but the ministers are responsible. By way of making a parade of this responsibility, every official act of the king

is countersigned by the minister of the proper department, and, by the theory of the government, that particular minister is responsible for that particular act. Now, by the charter, the peers are the judges of political crimes. By the charter, also, it is stipulated that no one can be proceeded against except in cases expressly provided for by law, and in the *forms* prescribed by the law. You will remember that, all the previous constitutions being declared illegal, Louis XVIII. dates his reign from the supposed death of Louis XVII., and that there are no fundamental precedents that may be drawn in to aid the constructions, but that the charter must be interpreted by its own provisions. It follows, then, as a consequence, that no minister can be legally punished until a law is enacted to dictate the punishment, explain the offences, and point out the forms of procedure. Now, no such law has ever been proposed, and although the chambers may *recommend* laws to the king, they must await his pleasure in order even to discuss them openly, and enlist the public feeling in their behalf. The responsibility of the ministers was proposed *ad captandum*, like the abolition of the conscription, but neither has been found convenient in practice.*

The electors of France are said to be between

* When the ministers of Charles X. were tried, it was without law, and they would probably have escaped punishment altogether, on this plea, had not the condition of the public mind required a concession.

eighty and one hundred thousand. The qualifications of a deputy being much higher than those of an elector, it is computed that the four hundred and fifty members must be elected from among some four or five thousand available candidates. It is not pretended that France does not contain more than this number of individuals who pay a thousand francs a year in direct taxes, for taxation is so great that this sum is soon made up; but a deputy must be forty years old, a regulation which at once excludes fully one half the men, of itself; and then it will be recollected that many are superannuated, several hundreds are peers, others cannot quit their employments, &c., &c. I have seen the number of available candidates estimated as low, even, as three thousand.

The elections in France are conducted in a mode peculiar to the nation. The electors of the highest class have two votes, or for representatives of two descriptions. This plan was an after-thought of the king, for the original charter contains no such regulation, but the munificent father of the national liberties saw fit, subsequently, to qualify his gift. Had Louis XVIII. lived a little longer, he would most probably have been dethroned before this; the hopes and expectations which usually accompany a new reign, having, most probably, deferred the crisis for a few years. The electors form themselves into colleges, into which no one who is not privileged to vote is admitted. This is a good regulation, and might be copied to advantage at home. A law prescribing

certain limits around each poll, and rendering it penal for any but those authorized to vote at that particular poll, to cross it, would greatly purify our elections. The government, here, appoints the presiding officer of each electoral college, and the selection is always carefully made of one in the interests of the ministry, though in what manner such a functionary can influence the result, is more than I can tell you. It is, however, thought to be favourable to an individual's own election to get this nomination. The vote is by ballot, though the charter secures no such privilege. Indeed that instrument is little more than a declaration of rights, fortified by a few general constituent laws.

The same latitude exists here, in the constructions of the charter, as exists at home, in the constructions of the constitution. The French have, however, one great advantage over us, in daring to think for themselves; for, though there is a party of *doctrinaires*, who wish to imitate England, too, it is neither a numerous nor a strong party. These *doctrinaires*, as the name implies, are men who wish to defer to theories, rather than facts; a class, that is to be found all over the world. For obvious reasons, the English system has admirers throughout Europe, as well as in America, since nothing can be more agreeable, for those who are in a situation to look forward to such an advantage, than to see themselves elevated into, as La Fayette expresses, so many "little legitimacies." The peerage, with its exclusive and hereditary benefits, is

the aim of all the nobility of Europe, and wishes of this sort make easy converts to any philosophy that may favour the desire.

One meets, here, with droll evidences of the truth of what I have just told you. I have made the acquaintance of a Russian of very illustrious family, and he has always been loud and constant in his eulogiums of America and her liberty. Alluding to the subject, the other day, he amused me by *naïvely* observing, "Ah, you are a happy people—you are *free*—and so are the *English*. Now, in Russia, all rank depends on the commission one bears in the army, or on the will of the Emperor. I am a Prince; my father was a Prince; my grandfather, too; but it is of no avail. I get no privileges by my birth; whereas, in England, where I have been, it is *so* different—and I dare say it is different in America, too?" I told him it was, indeed, "very different in America." He sighed, and seemed to envy me.

The party of the *doctrinaires* is the one that menaces the most serious evil to France. It is inherently the party of aristocracy; and, in a country as far advanced as France, it is the combinations of the few, that, after all, are most to be apprehended. The worst of it is, that, in countries where abuses have so long existed, the people get to be so disqualified for entertaining free institutions, that even the disinterested and well-meaning are often induced to side with the rapacious and selfish, to prevent the evils of reaction.

In a country so much inclined to speculate, to philosophize, and to reason on every thing, it is not surprising that a fundamental law, as vaguely expressed as the charter, should leave ample room for discussion. We find that our own long experience in these written instruments, does not protect us from violent differences of opinion, some of which are quite as extravagant as any that exist here, though possibly less apt to lead to as grave consequences.*

* The discussion which grew out of the law to protect American industry, affords a singular instance of the manner in which clever men can persuade themselves and others, into any notion, however extravagant. The uncouth doctrine of nullification turned on the construction that might be put on the intimacy of the relations created by the Union, and on the nature of the sovereignties of the states.

Because the constitution commences with a declaration, that it is formed and adopted by "we the people of the United States," overlooking, not only all the facts of the case, but misconceiving the very meaning of the words they quote, one party virtually contended, that the instrument was formed by a consolidated nation. On this point their argument, certainly sustained in part by unanswerable truth, mainly depends.

The word "people" has notoriously several significations. It means a "population;" it means the "vulgar;" it means any particular portion of a population, as "rich people," "poor people," "mercantile people," &c. &c. In a political sense, it has always been understood to mean that portion of the population of a country, which is possessed of *political rights*. On this sense, then, it means a *constituency* in a representative government, and so it has always been understood in England, and is understood to-day in France. When a question is referred to the "people" at an election in England, it is not referred to a tithe of the population,

but to a particular portion of it. In South Carolina and Louisiana, in the popular sense of Mr. Webster, there is no "people" to refer to, a majority of the men of both states possessing no civil rights, and scarcely having a civil existence. Besides "people," in its broad signification, includes men, women and children, and no one will contend, that the two latter had any thing to do with the formation of our constitution. It follows, then, that the term has been used in a limited sense, and we must look to incidental facts to discover its meaning.

The convention was chosen not by any common constituency, but by the constituencies of the several states, which, at that time, embraced every gradation between a democratical and an aristocratical polity. Thirteen states existed in 1787, and yet the constitution was to go into effect when it was adopted by any nine of them. It will not be pretended that this decision would be binding on the other four, and yet it is possible that these four dissenting states should contain more than half of all the population of the confederation. It would be very easy to put a proposition, in which it might be demonstrated arithmetically, that the constitution could have been adopted against a considerable majority of whole numbers. In the face of such a fact, it is folly to suppose the term "people" is used in any other than a conventional sense. It is well known, in addition to the mode of its adoption, that every provision of the constitution can be altered, with a single exception, by three-fourths of the states. Perhaps more than half of the entire population, (excluding the Territories and the District,) is in six of the largest states, at this moment. But whether this be so or not, such a combination could easily be made, as would demonstrate that less than a third of the population of the country, can at any time alter the constitution.

It is probable that the term "we the people," was used in a sort of contra-distinction to the old implied right of the sovereignty of the king, just as we idly substituted the words "God save the people," at the end of a proclamation, for "God save the king." It was a form. But, if it is desirable to affix to them any more precise signification, it will not do to generalize, according to the argument of one party; but we are to take the words, in their limit-

ed and appropriate meaning, and with their accompanying facts. They can only allude to the constituencies, and these constituencies existed only *through* the states, and were as varied as their several systems. If the meaning of the term "we the people" was misconceived, it follows that the argument which was drawn from the error was worthless. The constitution of the United States was not formed by the *people* of the United States, but by such a portion of them as it suited the several states to invest with political powers, and under such combinations as gave the decision to any thing but a majority of the nation. In other words, the constitution was certainly formed by the *states as political bodies*, and without any necessary connection with any general or uniform system of polity.

Any theory based on the separate sovereignties of the states, has, on the other hand, a frail support. The question was not *who* formed the constitution, but *what* was formed. All the great powers of sovereignty, such as foreign relations, the right to treat, make war and peace, to control commerce, to coin money, &c. &c. are expressly ceded. But these are not, after all, the greatest blows that are given to the doctrine of reserved sovereignty. A power to *alter* the constitution, as has just been remarked, has been granted, by which even the *dissenting states* have become bound. The only right reserved, is that of the equal representation in the senate, and it would follow, perhaps, as a legitimate consequence, the preservation of the confederated polity; but South Carolina could, under the theory of the constitution, be stripped of her right to control nearly every social interest; every man, woman and child in the state dissenting. It is scarcely worth while to construct a sublimated theory, on the sovereignty of a community so situated by the legitimate theory of the government, under which it actually exists!

No means can be devised, that will always protect the weak from the aggressions of the strong, under the forms of law; and nature has pointed out the remedy, when the preponderance of good is against submission; but one cannot suppress his expression of astonishment, at finding any respectable portion of a reasoning community, losing sight of this simple and self-evident

truth, to uphold a doctrine as weak as that of nullification, viewed as a legal remedy.

If the American statesmen, (*quasi* and real,) would imitate, the good curate and the bachelor of Don Quixote, by burning all the political heresies, with which their libraries, not to say their brains, are now crammed, and set seriously about studying the terms, and the nature of the national compact, without reference to the notions of men who had no connection with the country, the public would be the gainers, and occasionally one of them might stand a chance of descending to posterity in some other light than that of the mere leader of a faction.

LETTER IX.

To R. Cooper, Esq., Cooperstown.

I have said nothing to you of La Grange, though I have now been there no less than three times. Shortly after our arrival in Paris, Gen. La Fayette had the kindness to send us an invitation, but we were deterred from going, for some time, by the indisposition of one of the family. In the autumn of 1826 I went, however, alone; in the spring I went again, carrying Mrs. —— with me; and I have now just returned from a third visit, in which I went with my wife, accompanied by one or two more of the family.

It is about twenty-seven miles from Paris to Rosay, a small town that is a league from the castle. This is not a post-route, the great road ending at Rosay, and we were obliged to go the whole distance with the same horses. Paris is left by the *Boulevard de la Bastile*, the *Barrière du Trone*, and the *château* and woods of Vincennes. The second time I went into *Brie*, it was with the general himself, and in his own carriage. He showed me a small pavilion, that is still standing in a garden near the old site of the Bastile, and which he told me once belonged to the hotel that *Beaumarchais* inhabited, when in his glory, and in which

pavilion this witty writer was accustomed to work. The roof was topped by a vane, to show which way the wind blew, and in pure *fanfaronade*, or to manifest his contempt for principles, the author of Figaro had caused a large copper *pen* to do the duty of a weather-cock, and there it stands to this day, a curious memorial equally of his wit and of his audacity.

At the *Barrière du Trone* the general pointed out to me the spot where two of his female connexions suffered under the *guillotine*, during the reign of terror. On one occasion, in passing, we entered the castle of Vincennes, which is a sort of citadel for Paris, and which has served for a state prison since the destruction of the Bastile. Almost all of these strong old places were formerly the residences of the kings, or of great nobles, the times requiring that they should live constantly protected by ditches and walls.

Vincennes, like the tower of London, is a collection of old buildings, enclosed within a wall, and surrounded by a ditch. The latter, however, is dry. The most curious of the structures, and the one which gives the place its picturesque appearance, in the distance, is a cluster of exceedingly slender, tall, round towers, in which the prisoners are usually confined, and which is the *donjon* of the hold. This building, which contains many vaulted rooms piled on each other, was formerly the royal abode, and it has even now a ditch of its own, though it stands within the outer walls of the

place. There are many other high towers on the walls, and until the reign of Napoleon there were still more, but he caused them to be razed to the level of the walls, which of themselves are sufficiently high.

The chapel is a fine building, being Gothic. It was constructed in the time of Charles V. There are also two or three vast *corps de batiments*, which are almost palaces in extent and design, though they are now used only as quarters for officers, &c. &c. The *donjon* dates from the same reign. The first room in this building is called the *salle de la question*, a name which sufficiently denotes its infernal use. That of the upper story is the room in which the kings of France formerly held their councils. The walls are sixteen feet thick, and the rooms are thirty feet high. As there are five stories, this *donjon* cannot be less than a hundred and forty or fifty feet in elevation. The view from the summit is very extensive, though it is said that, in the time of Napoleon, a screen was built around the battlement, to prevent the prisoners, when they took the air, from enjoying it. As this conqueror was cruel from policy alone, it is probable this was merely a precaution against signals; for it is quite apparent, if he desired to torment his captives, France has places better adapted to the object than even the *donjon* of Vincennes. I am not his apologist, however; for, while I shall not go quite as far as the Englishman who maintained, in a laboured treatise, that Napoleon was the

beast of the Revelations, I believe he was any thing but a god.

Vincennes was a favourite residence of St. Louis, and there is a tradition that he used to take his seat under a particular oak, in the adjoining forest, where all who pleased were permitted to come before him, and receive justice from himself. Henry V. of England died in the *donjon of Vincennes*, and I believe his successor, Henry VI. was born in the same building. One gets a better notion of the state of things, in the ages of feudality, by passing an hour in examining such a hold, than in a week's reading. After going through this habitation, and studying its barbarous magnificence, I feel much more disposed to believe that Shakspeare has not outraged probability in his dialogue between Henry and Catharine, than if I had never seen it, bad as that celebrated love scene is.

Shortly after quitting Vincennes, the road crosses the Marne, and stretches away across a broad bottom. There is little of interest between Paris and Rosay. The principal house is that of Gros Bois, which once belonged to Moreau, I believe, but is now the property of the Prince de Wagram, the young son of Berthier. The grounds are extensive, and the house is large, though I think neither in very good taste, at least so far as one could judge in passing.

There are two or three ruins on this road, of some historical interest, but not of much beauty. There is usually a nakedness, unrelieved by trees

or other picturesque accessories, about the French ruins, which robs them of half their beauty, and dirty, squalid, hamlets and villages, half the time, come in to render the picture still less interesting.

At Rosay another route is taken, and La Grange is approached by the rear, after turning a small bit of wood. It is possible to see the tops of the towers, for an instant, on the great road before reaching the town.

It is not certainly known in what age the *château* was built, but, from its form, and a few facts connected with its origin, whose dates *are* ascertained, it is thought to be about five hundred years old. It never was more than a second-rate building of its class, though it was clearly intended for a baronial hold. Originally, the name was *La Grange èn Brie*, but by passing into a new family it got the appellation of La Grange Bléneau, by which it is known at present. You are sufficiently familiar with French to understand that *grange* means barn or granary, and that a liberal translation would make it Bleneau-farm.

In 1399, a marriage took place between the son of the lord of La Grange en Brie, with a daughter of a branch of the very ancient and great family of *Courtenay*, which had extensive possessions, at that time, in Brie. It was this marriage which gave the new name to the castle, the estate in consequence passing into the line of *Courtenay-Bléneau*. In 1595 the property, by another marriage with an heiress, passed into the well-known family

d'Aubussons, Comtes de la Feuillade. The first proprietor of this name was the grandfather of the *Marèschal de la Feuillade*, the courtier who caused the *Place de la Victoire* to be constructed at Paris, and he appropriated the revenues of the estate, which, in 1686, were valued at nine thousand francs, to the support and completion of his work of flattery. The property at that time was, however, much more extensive than it is at present. The son of this courtier dying without issue in 1725, the estate was purchased by M. Dupré, one of the judges of France.

With this magistrate commences, I believe, the connexion of the ancestors of the La Fayettes with the property. The only daughter married M. d'Aguesseau; and her daughter again, married the duc de Noailles-d'Ayen, carrying with her, as a marriage portion, the lands of Fontenay, La Grange, &c. &c., or in other words, the ancient possessions of M. de la Feuillade. The Marquis de La Fayette married one of the Mesdemoiselles de Noailles, while he was still a youth, and when the estate, after a short sequestration, was restored to the family, General La Fayette received the *château* of La Grange, with some six or eight hundred acres of land around it, as his wife's portion.*

* Mr. Adams, in his Eulogy on La Fayette, has called the duc de Noailles, the first peer of France. The fact is of no great moment, but accuracy is always better than error. I believe the duc de Noailles was the youngest of the old *ducs*

Although the house is not very spacious for a *château* of the region in which it stands, it is a considerable edifice, and one of the most picturesque I have seen in this country. The buildings stand on three sides of an irregular square. The fourth side must have been either a high wall, or a range of low offices formerly, to complete the court and the defences, but every vestige of them have long since been removed. The ditch, too, which originally encircled the whole castle, has been filled in, on two sides, though still remaining on the two others, and greatly contributing to the beauty of the place, as the water is living, and is made to serve the purposes of a fish-pond. We had carp from it, for breakfast, the day after our arrival.

La Grange is constructed of hewn stone, of a good greyish colour, and in parts of it there are some respectable pretensions to architecture. I think it probable that one of its fronts has been rebuilt, the style being so much better than the rest of the structure. There are five towers, all of which are round, and have the plain, high, pyrimidal roof, so common in France. They are without cornices, battlements of any sort, or, indeed, any relief to the circular masonry. One, however, has a roof of a square form, though the exte-

et pairs of France. The duc d'Uzés, I have always understood was the oldest.

rior of the tower itself is, at least, in part, round. All the roofs are of slate.

The approach to the castle is circuitous, until quite near it, when the road enters a little thicket of evergreens, crosses a bridge, and passes beneath an arch to the court, which is paved. The bridge is now permanent, though there was once a draw, and the grooves of a port-cullis are still visible beneath the arch. The shortest side of the square is next the bridge, the building offering here but little more than the two towers, and the room above the gate-way. One of these towers forms the end of this front of the castle, and the other is of course, at an angle. On the exterior, they are both buried in ivy, as well as the building which connects them. This ivy was planted by Charles Fox, who, in company with General Fitzpatrick visited La Grange, after the peace of Amiens. The windows, which are small and irregular on this side, open beautifully through the thick foliage, and as this is the part of the structure that is occupied by the children of the family, their blooming faces thrust through the leafy apertures have a singularly pleasing effect. The other three towers stand, one near the centre of the principal *corps de bâtiment*, one at the other angle, and the third at the end of the wing opposite that of the gate. The towers vary in size, and are all more or less buried in the walls, though still so distinct as greatly to relieve the latter, and every where to rise above them. On the open side of the court

there is no ditch, but the ground, which is altogether park-like, and beautifully arranged, falls away, dotted with trees and copses, towards a distant thicket.

Besides the *rez de chaussée*, which is but little above the ground, there are two good stories all round the building, and even more in the towers. The dining-room and offices are below, and there is also a small oratory, or chapel, though I believe none of the family live there. The entrance to the principal apartments is opposite the gate, and there is also here, an exterior door which communicates directly with the lawn, the ditch running behind the other wing, and in front of the gate only. The great stair-case is quite good, being spacious, easy of ascent, and of marble, with a handsome iron railing. It was put there by the mother of Madame La Fayette, I believe, and the general told me, it was nearly the only thing of value, that he found among the fixtures, on taking possession. It had escaped injury.

I should think the length of the house on the side of the square which contains the stair-case, might be ninety feet, including the tower at the end, and the tower at the angle ; and perhaps the side which contains the offices, may be even a little longer ; though this will also include the same tower in the same angle, as well as the one at the opposite corner ; while the side in which is the gate-way can scarcely exceed sixty feet. If my estimates, which are merely made by the eye, are

correct, including the towers, this would give an outside wall of two hundred and fifty feet, in circuit. Like most French buildings, the depth is comparatively much less. I question if the outer drawing-room is more than eighteen feet wide, though it is near thirty long. This room has windows on the court and on the lawn, and is the first apartment one enters after ascending the stairs. It communicates with the inner drawing-room, which is in the end tower of this side of the *château*, is quite round, of course, and may be twenty feet in diameter.

The General's apartments are on the second floor. They consist of his bed-room, a large cabinet, and the library. The latter is in the tower at the angle, on the side of the stair-case. It is circular, and from its windows overlooks the moat, which is beautifully shaded by willows and other trees. It contains a respectable collection of books, besides divers curiosities.

The only bed-rooms I have occupied are, one in the tower, immediately beneath the library, and the other in the side tower, or the only one which does not stand at an angle, or at an end of the building. I believe, however, that the entire edifice, with the exception of the oratory, the offices, the dining-room, which is a large apartment on the *rez de chaussée*, the two drawing-rooms, two or three cabinets, and the library, and perhaps a family-room or two, such as a school-room, painting-room, &c., is subdivided into sleeping apartments, with the necessary cabinets and dressing-

rooms. Including the family, I have known thirty people to be lodged in the house, besides servants, and I should think it might even lodge more. Indeed its hospitality seems to know no limits, for every new comer appears to be just as welcome as all the others.

The cabinet of La Fayette communicates with the library, and I passed much of the time during our visit, alone with him, in these two rooms. I may say that this was the commencement of a confidence with which he has since continued to treat me, and of a more intimate knowledge of the amiable features and simple integrity of his character, that has greatly added to my respect. No one can be pleasanter in private, and he is full of historical anecdotes, that he tells with great simplicity, and frequently with great humour. The cabinet contains many portraits, and, among others, one of Mad. de Stael, and one of his own father. The former I am assured is exceedingly like; it is not the resemblance of a very fascinating woman. In the latter I find more resemblance to some of the grand children than to the son, although there is something about the shape of the head that is not unlike that of La Fayette's.

Gen. La Fayette never knew his father, who was killed, when he was quite an infant, at the battle of Minden. I believe the general was an only child, for I have never heard him speak of any brother or sister, nor indeed of any relative at all, as I can remember, on his own side, though he often alludes

to the connexions he made by his marriage. I asked him how his father happened to be styled the *Comte* de La Fayette, and he to be called the *Marquis*. He could not tell me: his grandfather was the *Marquis* de La Fayette, his father the *Comte*, and he again was termed the *Marquis*. "I know very little about it," said he, "beyond this. I found myself a little *Marquis*, as I grew to know any thing, and boys trouble themselves very little about such matters; and then I soon got tired of the name, after I went to America. I cannot explain all the foolish distinctions of the feudal times, but I very well remember that when I was quite a boy, I had the honour to go through the ceremony of appointing the *curé* of a very considerable town in *Auvergne*, of which I was the *Seigneur*. My conscience has been quite easy about the nomination, however, as my guardians must answer for the sin, if there be any."

I was at a small dinner given by the *Comte de Ségur*, just before we went to La Grange, and at which Gen. La Fayette and M. Alexander de Lameth were also guests. The three had served in America, all of them having been colonels while little more than boys. In the course of the conversation, M. de Lameth jokingly observed that the Americans paid the greater deference to Gen. La Fayette because he was a *Marquis*. For a long time there had been but one Marquis in England, (Lord Rockingham) and the colonists appreciating all other Marquises by this standard, had at once

thought they would do no less than make the *Marquis* de La Fayette a general. "As for myself, though I was the senior colonel, and (as I understood him to say) his superior in personal rank, I passed for nobody, because I was only a *chevalier.*" This sally was laughed at, at the time, though there is something very unsettled in the use of those arbitrary personal distinctions on which the French formerly laid so much stress. I shall not attempt to explain them. I contented myself by whispering to M. de Lameth, that we certainly knew very little of such matters in America, but I questioned if we were ever so ignorant as to suppose there was only *one Marquis* in France. On the contrary, we are a little too apt to fancy every Frenchman a *Marquis.*

There was formerly a regular parish church attached to the *château,* which is still standing. It is very small, and is within a short distance of the gate-way. The congregation was composed solely of the inhabitants of the *château,* and the people of the farm. The church contains epitaphs and inscriptions in memory of three of the *d'Aubussons,* whose hearts were buried here, viz. Leon, Comte de la Feuillade, a lieutenant-general; Gabriel, Marquis de Montargis; and Paul d'Aubusson, a knight of Malta; all of whom were killed young, in battle.

The general has about three hundred and fifty acres in cultivation, and more than two in wood, pasture and meadow. The place is in very excel-

lent condition, and seems to be well attended to. I have galloped all over it, on a little filly belonging to one of the young gentlemen, and have found beauty and utility as nicely blended, as is often to be met with, even in England, the true country of *fermes ornées*, though the name is imported.

The third day of our visit, we all drove three or four leagues across the country, to see an old ruin of a royal castle called Vivier. This name implies a pond, and sure enough we found the remains of the buildings in the midst of two or three pools of water. This has been a considerable house, the ruins being still quite extensive and rather pretty. It was originally the property of a great noble, but the kings of France were in possession of it, as early as the year 1300. Charles V. had a great affection for Vivier, and very materially increased its establishment. His son, Charles VI., who was at times deranged, was often confined here, and it was after his reign, and by means of the long wars that ravaged France, that the place came to be finally abandoned as a royal abode. Indeed it is not easy to see why a king should ever have chosen this spot at all for his residence, unless it might be for the purpose of hunting, for even now it is in a retired, tame, and far from pleasant part of the country.

There are the ruins of a fine chapel and of two towers of considerable interest, beside extensive fragments of more vulgar buildings. One of these towers, being very high and very slender, is a stri-

king object; but, from its form and position, it was one of those narrow wells that were attached to larger towers, and which contained nothing but the stairs. They are commonly to be seen in the ruins of edifices built in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, in France; and, what is worthy of remark, in several instances, notwithstanding their slender forms, I have met with them standing, although their principals have nearly disappeared. I can only account for it, by supposing that their use and delicacy of form have required more than ordinary care in the construction.

The ruins of Vivier, belong to M. Parquin, a distinguished lawyer of Paris. This gentleman has a small country house near by, and General La Fayette took us all to see him. We found him at home, and met, quite as a matter of course, with a polite reception. M. Parquin gave us much curious information about the ruin, and took us to see some of the subterraneous passages that he has caused to be opened.

It is thought that some of these artificial caverns were prisons, and that others were intended merely as places for depositing stores. The one we entered was of beautiful masonry, vaulted with the nicest art, and seemed to communicate with the ruins, although the outlet was in the open field and some distance from the walls. It might have been intended for the double purpose of a storehouse and an outlet; for it is rare to meet with a palace, or a castle, that has not, more or less, of

these private means of entrance and retreat. The Tulieries is said to abound with them, and I have been shown the line of an under-ground passage, between that palace and one of the public hotels, which must be fully a quarter of a mile in length.

Du Laure gives an extract from a report of the state of the *château* of Vivier, made about the year 1700, with a view to know whether its condition were such as to entitle the place to preserve certain of its privileges. In this document, the castle is described as standing in the centre of a marsh, surrounded by forest, and as so remote from all civilization, as to be nearly forgotten. This, it will be remembered, is the account of a royal abode, that stands within thirty miles of Paris!

In the very heart of the French capital, are the remains of an extensive palace of one of the Roman Emperors, and yet it may be questioned if one in a thousand, of those who live within a mile of the spot, have the least idea of the origin of the buildings. I have inquired about it, in its immediate neighbourhood, and it was with considerable difficulty, I could discover any one who even knew that there was such a ruin at all, in the street. The great number of similar objects, and the habit of seeing them daily, has some such effect on one, as the movement of a crowd in a public thoroughfare, where images pass so incessantly before the eye, as to leave no impression of their peculiarities. Were a solitary bison to scamper through the

rue St. Honoré, the worthy Parisians would transmit an account of his exploits to their children's children, while the way-farer on the prairies takes little heed of the flight of a herd. As we went to La Grange, we stopped at a tavern, opposite to which was the iron gate of a small *château*. I asked the girl who was preparing our *gouter*, to whom the house belonged. "I am sorry I cannot tell you, sir," she answered; and then seeing suspicion in my face, she promptly added—"for do you see, sir, I have only been here *six weeks*." Figure to yourself an American girl, set down opposite an iron gate, in the country, and how long do you imagine she would be ignorant of the owner's name? If the blood of those pious inquisitors, the puritans, were in her veins, she would know more, not only of the gate, but of its owner; his wife, his children, his means, his hopes, wishes, intentions and thoughts, than he ever knew himself, or would be likely to know. But if this prominent love of meddling, which in its very nature must of necessity lead to what is worse than contented ignorance, gossipping error, and a wrong estimate of our fellow creatures, it has, at least, the advantage of keeping a people from falling asleep over their every day facts. There is no question that the vulgar and low bred propensity of conjecturing, meddling, combining, with their unavoidable companion, *inventing*, exists to a vice, among a portion of our people; but, on the other hand, it is extremely inconvenient when one is

travelling, and wishes to know the points of the compass, as has happened to myself, if he should ask a full grown woman whereabouts the sun rises in that neighbourhood, he is repulsed with the answer, that—"Monsieur ought to know that better than a poor garden-woman like me!"

We returned to Paris, after a pleasant visit of three days at La Grange, during which we had delightful weather, and altogether a most agreeable time. The habits of the family are very regular and simple, but the intercourse has the freedom and independence of a country-house. We were all in the circular drawing-room, a little before ten, breakfast being served between ten and eleven. The table was French, the morning repast consisting of light dishes of meat, *compôtes*, fruits, and sometimes *soupe au lait;* one of the simplest and best things for such a meal, that can he imagined. As a compliment to us Americans, we had fish fried and broiled, but I rather think this was an innovation. Wine, to drink with water, as a matter of course, was on the table. The whole ended with a cup of *café au lait.* The morning then passed as each one saw fit. The young men went shooting, the ladies drove out, or read, or had a little music, while the general and myself were either walking about the farm, or were conversing in the library. We dined at six, as at Paris, and tea was made in the drawing-room about nine.

I was glad to hear from General La Fayette, that the reports of Americans making demands on his

purse, like so many other silly rumours that are circulated, merely because some one has fancied such a thing might be so, are untrue. On the contrary, he assures me that applications of this nature are very seldom made, and most of those that have been made have proved to come from Englishmen, who have thought they might swindle him in this form. I have had at least a dozen such applications myself, but I take it nothing is easier, in general, than to distinguish between an American, and a native of Great Britain. It was agreed between us, that in future, all applications of this nature, should be sent to me for investigation.*

* Under this arrangement, two or three years later, an applicant was sent for examination, under very peculiar circumstances. The man represented himself to be a shopkeeper of Baltimore, who had come to England with his wife and child, to purchase goods. He had been robbed of all he had, according to his account of the matter, about a thousand pounds in sovereigns, and was reduced to want, in a strange country. After trying all other means, in vain, he bethought him of coming to Paris, to apply to General La Fayette, for succour. He had just money enough to do this, having left his wife in Liverpool. He appeared with an English passport, looked like an Englishman, and had even caught some of the low English idioms, such as, "I am agreeable," for "it is agreeable to me," or, "I agree to do so," &c. &c. The writer was exceedingly puzzled to decide as to this man's nationality. At length, in describing his journey to Paris, he said, "they took my passport from me, when we got *to the lines.*" This settled the matter, as no one but an American would call a *frontier*, the *lines.* He proved, in the end, to be an American, and a great rogue.

LETTER X.

To R. Cooper, Esq., Cooperstown.

We all went to bed, a night or two since, as usual, and awoke to learn that there had been a fight in the capital. One of the countless under-plots had got so near the surface, that it threw up smoke. It is said, that about fifty were killed and wounded, chiefly on the part of the populace.

The insecurity of the Bourbons is little understood in America. It is little understood even by those Americans, who pass a few months in the country, and in virtue of frequenting the *cafés*, and visiting the theatres, fancy they know the people. Louis XVIII. was more than once on the point of flying, again, between the year 1815 and his death; for since the removal of the allied troops, there is really no force for a monarch to depend on, more especially in and around the capital, the army being quite as likely to take sides against them, as for them.

The government has determined on exhibiting vigour, and there was a great show of troops the night succeeding the combat. Curious to see the effect of all this, two or three of us got into a carriage and drove through the streets, about nine o'clock. We found some two or three thousand

men on the *boulevards*, and the *rue St. Denis*, in particular, which had been the scene of the late disorder, was watched with jealous caution. In all, there might have been four or five thousand men under arms. They were merely in readiness, leaving a free passage for carriages, though in some of the narrow streets, we found the bayonets pretty near our faces.

An American being supposed *ex officio*, as it were, to be a well-wisher to the popular cause, there is, perhaps, a slight disposition to look at us with distrust. The opinion of our *travellers'* generally favouring liberty is, in my judgment, singularly erroneous, the feelings of a majority being, on the whole, just the other way, for, at least, the first year or two of their European experience; though, I think, it is to be noticed, by the end of that time, that they begin to lose sight of the personal interests which, at home, have made them any thing but philosophers on such subjects, and to see and appreciate the immense advantages of freedom over exclusion, although the predominance of the former may not always favour their own particular views. Such, at least, has been the result of my own observations, and so far from considering a fresh arrival from home, as being likely to be an accession to our little circle of liberal principles, I have generally deemed all such individuals as being more likely to join the side of the aristocrats, or the exclusionists in politics. This is not the moment to enter into an examination of the

causes that have led to so singular a contradiction between opinions and facts, though I think the circumstance is not to be denied, for it is now my intention to give you an account of the manner in which matters are managed here, rather than enter into long investigations of the state of society at home.

Not long after my arrival in France, a visit was announced, from a person who was entirely unknown to me, but who called himself a *littérateur*. The first interview passed off, as such interviews usually do, and circumstances not requiring any return on my part, it was soon forgotten. Within a fortnight, however, I received visit the second, when the conversation took a political turn, my guest freely abusing the Bourbons, the aristocrats, and the present state of things in France. I did little more than listen. When the way was thus opened, I was asked if I admired Sir Walter Scott, and particularly what I thought of Ivanhoe, or, rather, if I did not think it an indifferent book. A little surprised at such a question, I told my *littérateur*, that Ivanhoe appeared to me to be very unequal, the first half being incomparably the best, but that, as a whole, I thought it stood quite at the head of the particular sort of romances to which it belonged. The Antiquary, and Guy Mannering, for instance, were both much nearer perfection, and, on the whole, I thought both better books; but Ivanhoe, especially its commencement, was a noble poem. But did I not condemn the want of historical truth

in its pictures? I did not consider Ivanhoe as intended to be history; it was a work of the imagination, in which all the fidelity that was requisite, was enough to be probable and natural, and that requisite I thought it possessed in an eminent degree. It is true, antiquarians accused the author of having committed some anachronisms, by confounding the usages of different centuries, which was perhaps a greater fault, in such a work, than to confound mere individual characters; but of this I did not pretend to judge, not being the least of an antiquarian myself. Did I not think he had done gross injustice to the noble and useful order of the Templars? On this point I could say no more than on the preceding, having but a very superficial knowledge of the Templars, though I thought the probabilities seemed to be perfectly well respected. Nothing could *seem* to be more true, than Scott's pictures. My guest then went into a long vindication of the Templars, stating that Scott had done them gross injustice, and concluding with an exaggerated compliment, in which it was attempted to persuade me that I was the man to vindicate the truth, and to do justice to a subject that was so peculiarly connected with liberal principles. I disclaimed the ability to undertake such a task, at all; confessed that I did not wish to disturb the images which Sir Walter Scott had left, had I the ability; and declared I did not see the connection between his accusation, admitting it to be true, and liberal principles. My visitor soon after went away, and I saw no more of him for a week, when he came

again. On this occasion, he commenced by relating several *piquant* anecdotes of the *Bourbons* and their friends, gradually and ingeniously leading the conversation, again, round to his favourite Templars. After pushing me, for half an hour, on this point, always insisting on my being the man to vindicate the order, and harping on its connection with liberty, he took advantage of one of my often-repeated protestations of ignorance of the whole matter, suddenly to say—"well, then, *Monsieur, go and see for yourself*, and you will soon be satisfied that my account of the order is true." "Go and see what?" "The Templars." "There are no longer any." "They exist still." "Where?" "Here, in Paris." "This is new to me; I do not understand it." "The Templars exist; they possess documents to prove how much Scott has misrepresented them, and—but, you will remember that the actual government has so much jealousy, of every thing it does not control, that secrecy is necessary—and, to be frank with you, M. ——, I am commissioned by the Grand Master, to invite you to be present, at a secret meeting, this very week."

Of course, I immediately conjectured that some of the political agitators of the day had assumed this taking guise, in order to combine their means, and carry out their plans.* The proposition was

* Since the revolution of 1830, these Templars have made public, but abortive efforts, to bring themselves into notice, by instituting some ceremonies, in which they appeared openly in their robes.

gotten rid of, by my stating, in terms that could not be misunderstood, that I was a traveller, and did not wish to meddle with any thing that required secrecy, in a foreign government; that I certainly had my own political notions, and if pushed, should not hesitate to avow them anywhere; that the proper place for a writer to declare his sentiments, was in his books, unless under circumstances which authorized him to act; that I did not conceive foreigners were justifiable in going beyond this; that I never had meddled with the affairs of foreign countries, and that I never would; and that the fact of this society's being secret, was sufficient to deter me from visiting it. With this answer, my guest departed, and he never came again.

Now, the first impression was, as I have told you, and I supposed my visitor, although a man of fifty, was one of those who innocently lent himself to these silly exaggerations; either as a dupe, or to dupe others. I saw reason, however, to change this opinion.

At the time these visits occurred, I scarcely knew any one in Paris, and was living in absolute retirement—being, as you know already, quite without letters. About ten days after I saw the last of my *littérateur*, I got a letter from a high functionary of the government, sending me a set of valuable medals. The following day, these were succeeded by his card, and an invitation to dinner. Soon after, another person, notoriously connected with court intrigues, sought me out, and overwhelmed me with

civilities. In a conversation that shortly after occurred between us, this person gave a pretty direct intimation, that by pushing a little, a certain decoration that is usually conferred on literary men, was to be had, if it were desired. I got rid of all these things, in the straight-forward manner, that is the best for upsetting intrigues; and having really nothing to conceal, I was shortly permitted to take my own course.

I have now little doubt that the *littérateur* was a *spy*, sent, either to sound me on some point connected with La Fayette and the republicans, or possibly to lead me into some difficulty, though I admit that this is no more than conjecture. I give you the facts, which, at the time, struck me as, at least, odd, and you may draw your own conclusions. This, however, is but one of a dozen adventures, more or less similar, that have occurred, and I think it well to mention it, by way of giving you an insight into what sometimes happens here.*

My rule has been, whenever I am pushed on the subject of politics, to deal honestly and sincerely with all with whom I am brought in contact, and in no manner to leave the impression, that I think the popular form of government an unavoidable evil, to which America is obliged to submit. I do not shut my eyes to the defects of our own system, or to the

* A conversation, which took place *after* the revolution of 1830, with one of the parties named, leaves little doubt as to the truth of the original conjecture.

bad consequences that flow from it, and from it alone; but, the more I see of other countries, the more I am persuaded, that, under circumstances which admit but of a choice of evils, we are greatly the gainers by having adopted it. Although I do not believe every other nation is precisely fitted to imitate us, I think it is their misfortune they are not so. If the inhabitants of other countries do not like to hear such opinions, they should avoid the subject with Americans.

It is very much the custom here, whenever the example of America is quoted in favour of the practicability of republican institutions, to attribute our success to the fact of society's being so simple, and the people so virtuous. I presume I speak within bounds, when I say that I have heard the latter argument urged a hundred times, during the last eighteen months. One lady, in particular, who is exceedingly clever, but who has a dread of all republics, on account of having lost a near friend during the reign of terror, was especially in the practice of resorting to this argument, whenever, in our frequent playful discussions of the subject, I have succeeded in disturbing her inferences, by citing American facts. "*Mais, Monsieur, l'Amérique est si jeunes, et vous avez les vertues que nous manquons,*" &c., &c., has always been thought a sufficient answer. Now, I happen to be one of those who do not entertain such extravagant notions of the exclusive and peculiar virtues of our own country. Nor, have I been so much struck with the

profound respect of the Europeans, in general, for those very qualities that, nevertheless, are always quoted as the reason of the success of what is called the "American experiment." Quite the contrary: I have found myself called on, more than once, to repel accusations against our morality of a very serious nature; accusations that we do *not* deserve; and my impression certainly is, that the American people, so far as they are at all the subjects of observation, enjoy any thing but a good name, in Europe. Struck by this flagrant contradiction, I determined to practice on my female friend, a little; a plan that was successfully carried out, as follows.

Avoiding all allusion to politics, so as to throw her completely off her guard, I took care to introduce such subjects, as should provoke comparisons on other points, between France and America; or rather, between the latter and Europe generally. As our discussions had a tinge of philosophy, neither being very bigoted, and both preserving perfect good humour, the plot succeeded admirably. After a little time, I took occasion to fortify one of my arguments by a slight allusion to the *peculiar virtues* of the American people. She was too well-bred to controvert this sort of reasoning at first, until, pushing the point, little by little, she was so far provoked as to exclaim, "you lay great stress on the exclusive virtues of your countrymen, Monsieur, but I have yet to learn that they are so much better than the rest of the world!" "I beg a thousand pardons, Madame, if I have been led into an indiscretion on

this delicate subject; but you must ascribe my error to your own eloquence, which, contrary to my previous convictions, had persuaded me into the belief that we have some peculiar unction of this nature, that is unknown in Europe. I now begin to see the mistake, and to understand *que nous autres Américains*, are to be considered *virtuous*, only where there is question of the practicability of maintaining a republican form of government, and, as great rogues on all other occasions." Madame de —— was wise enough, and good tempered enough, to laugh at the artifice, and the allusion to "*nous autres vertueux*," has got to be a *mot d'ordre* with us. The truth is, that the question of politics is exclusively one of personal advantages, with a vast majority of the people of Europe; one set selfishly struggling to maintain their present superiority, while the other is as selfishly, and in some respects as blindly, striving to overturn all that is established, in order to be benefited by the scramble that will follow; and religion, justice, philosophy, and practical good, are almost equally remote from the motives of both parties.

From reflecting on such subjects, I have been led into a consideration of the influence of political institutions on the more ordinary relations of society. If the conclusions are generally in favour of popular rights, and what is called freedom, there can be little question that there are one or two weak spots, on our side of the question, that it were better did they not exist. Let us, for the humour of the thing, look a little into these points.

It is a common remark of all foreigners, that there is less social freedom in America than in most other countries of Christendom. By social freedom, I do not mean as relates to the mere forms of society, for in these we are loose rather than rigid; but that one is less a master of his own acts, his own mode of living, his own time, being more rigidly amenable to public opinion, on all these points, than elsewhere. The fact, I believe, out of all question, is true; at least it appears to be true, so far as my knowledge of our own, and of other countries extends. Admitting then the fact to be so, it is worth while to throw away a moment in inquiring into the consequent good and evil of such a state of things, as well as in looking for the causes. It is always a great assistant in our study of others, to have some tolerable notions of ourselves.

The control of public opinion has, beyond question, a salutary influence on the moral *exterior* of a country. The great indifference which the French, and indeed the higher classes of most European countries, manifest to the manner of living of the members of their different circles, so long as certain appearances are respected, may do no affirmative good to society, though at the same time it does less positive harm than you may be disposed to imagine. But this is not the point to which I now allude. Europeans maintain that, in things, *innocent in themselves,* but which are closely connected with the independence of action and tastes of men, the American is less his own master than the inhabitant

of this part of the world; and this is the fact I, for one, feel it necessary to concede to them. There can be no doubt that society meddles much more with the private affairs of individuals, and affairs too, over which it properly has no control, in America than in Europe. I will illustrate what I mean, by an example.

About twenty years since there lived in one of our shire-towns a family, which, in its different branches, had numerous female descendants, then all children. A member of this family, one day, went to a respectable clergyman, his friend, and told him that he and his connections had so many female children, whom it was time to think of educating, that they had hit upon the plan of engaging some suitable instructress, with the intention of educating their girls all together, both for economy's sake and for convenience, as well as that such near connections might be brought up in a way to strengthen the family tie. The clergyman warmly remonstrated against the scheme, assuring his friend, *that the community would not bear it, and that it would infallibly make enemies!* This was the feeling of a very sensible man, and of an experienced divine, and I was myself the person making the application. This is religiously true, and I have often thought of the circumstance since, equally with astonishment and horror.

There are doubtless many parts of America, even, where such an interference with the private arrangement of a family would not be dreamt of; but there

is a large portion of the country in which the feeling described, by my clerical friend, does prevail. Most observers would refer all this to democracy, but I do not. The interference would not proceed from the humblest classes of society at all, but from those nearer one's own level. It would proceed from a determination to bring all within the jurisdiction of a common opinion, or to be revenged on delinquents, by envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness. There is no disposition in America, to let one live as he or she may happen to please to live; the public choosing, though always in its proper circle, to interfere, and say *how* you must live. It is folly to call this by terms as sounding as republicanism or democracy, which inculcate the doctrine of as much personal freedom as at all comports with the public good. He is, indeed, a most sneaking democrat, who finds it necessary to consult a neighbourhood before he can indulge his innocent habits and tastes. It is sheer *meddling*, and no casuistry can fitly give it any other name.

A portion of this troublesome quality is owing, beyond question, to our provincial habits, which are always the most exacting; but I think a large portion, perhaps I ought to say the largest, is inherited from those pious but exaggerated religionists who first peopled the country. These sectaries extended the discipline of the church to all the concerns of life. Nothing was too minute to escape their cognizance, and a parish sat in judgment on the affairs of all who belonged to it. One may easily live so

long in the condition of society that such an origin has entailed on us, as to be quite unconscious of its peculiarities, but I think they can hardly escape one who has lived much beyond its influence.

Here, perhaps, the fault is to be found in the opposite extreme, though there are so many virtues consequent on independence of thought and independence of habits, that I am not sure the good does not equal the evil. There is no canting, and very little hypocrisy, in mere matters of habits, in France; and this, at once, is abridging two of our own most besetting vices. Still the French can hardly be called a very original people. Convention ties them down mercilessly in a great many things. They are less under the influence of mere fashion, in their intercourse, it is true, than some of their neighbours, reason and taste exercising more influence over such matters, in France, than almost any where else; but they are mannerists in the fine arts, in their literature, and in all their *feelings*, if one can use such an expression. The gross exaggerations of the romantic school that is, just now, attracting so much attention, are merely an effort to liberate themselves. But, after allowing for the extreme ignorance of the substratum of society, which, in France, although it forms so large a portion of the whole, should no more be taken into the account in speaking of the national qualities, than the slaves of Carolina should be included in an estimate of the character of the Carolinians, there is, notwithstanding this mannerism, a personal independence here, that certainly

does not exist with us. The American goes and comes when he pleases, and no one asks for a passport; he has his political rights; talks of his liberty; swaggers of his advantages, and yet does less as he pleases, even in innocent things, than the Frenchman. His neighbours form a police, and a most troublesome and impertinent one it sometimes proves to be. It is also unjust, for having no legal means of arriving at facts, it half the time condemns on conjecture.

The truth is, our institutions are the result of facts and accidents, and, being necessarily an imitative people, there are often gross inconsistencies between our professions and our practice; whereas the French have had to struggle through their apprenticeship in political rights, by the force of discussions and appeals to reason, and theory is still too important to be entirely overlooked. Perhaps no people understand the *true* private characters of their public men so little as the Americans, or any people so well as the French. I have never known a distinguished American, in whom it did not appear to me that his popular character was a false one; or a distinguished Frenchman whom the public did not appear to estimate very nearly as he deserved to be. Even Napoleon, necessary as he is to the national pride, and dazzling as is all military renown, seems to me to be much more justly appreciated at Paris, than any where else. The practice of meddling can lead to no other result. They who wish to stand particularly fair before the public, re-

sort to deception, and I have heard a man of considerable notoriety in America confess that he was so much afraid of popular comments, that he always acted as if an enemy were looking over his shoulder. With us, no one scruples to believe that he knows all about a public man, even to the nicest traits of his character; all talk of him, as none should talk but those who are in his intimacy, and, what between hypocrisy on his part — an hypocrisy to which he is in some measure driven by the officious interference with his most private interests — and exaggerations and inventions, that ingenious tyrant, public opinion, comes as near the truth as a fortune teller who is venturing his prediction in behalf of a stranger.*

In France the right of the citizen to discuss all public matters is not only allowed but *felt*. In

* I can give no better illustration of the state of dependence to which men are reduced in America, by this spirit of meddling, than by the following anecdote. A friend was about to build a new town house, and letting me know the situation, he asked my advice as to the mode of construction. The inconveniences of an ordinary American town house were pointed out to him,—its unfitness for the general state of society, the climate, the other domestic arrangements, and its ugliness. All were admitted, and the plan proposed in place of the old style of building was liked, but still my friend hesitated about adopting it. "It will be a genteeler and a better looking house than the other." "Agreed." "It will be really more convenient." "I think so, too." "It will be cheaper." "Of that there is no question." "Then why not adopt it?" "To own the truth, I *dare not build differently from my neighbours!*"

America it is not *felt*, though it is allowed. A homage must be paid to the public, by assuming the disguise of acting as a public agent, in America; whereas, in France, individuals address their countrymen, daily, under their own signatures. The impersonality of *we*, and the character of public journalists, is almost indispensable, with us, to impunity, although the mask can deceive no one, the journalists notoriously making their prints subservient to their private passions and private interests, and being *impersonal* only in the use of the imperial pronoun. The *representative*, too, in America, is privileged to teach, in virtue of his collective character, by the very men who hold the extreme and untenable doctrine of instruction! It is the fashion to say in America, *that the people will rule*; it would be nearer the truth, however, to say, *the people will seem to rule.*

I think that these distinctions are facts, and they certainly lead to odd reflections. We are so peculiarly situated as a nation, that one is not to venture on conclusions too hastily. A great deal is to be imputed to our provincial habits; much to the circumstance of the disproportion between surface and population, which, by scattering the well-bred and intelligent, a class at all times relatively small, serves greatly to lessen their influence in imparting a tone to society; something to the inquisitorial habits of our pious forefathers, who appear to have thought that the charities were nought, and, in the very teeth of revelation, that Heaven was to be

stormed by impertinences; while a good deal is to be conceded to the nature of a popular government whose essential spirit is to create a predominant opinion, before which, right or wrong, all must bow until its *cycle* shall be completed. Thus it is, that we are always, more or less, under one of two false influences, the blow or its rebound; action that is seldom quite right, or reaction that is always wrong; sinning heedlessly, or repenting to fanaticism. The surest process in the world, of "riding on to fortune" in America, is to get seated astride a lively "reaction," which is rather more likely to carry with it a unanimous sentiment, than even the error to which it owes its birth.

As much of this weakness as is inseparable from humanity exists here, but it exists under so many modifying circumstances, as, in this particular, to render France as unlike America as well may be. Liberty is not always pure philosophy nor strict justice, and yet, as a whole, it is favourable to both. These are the spots on the political sun. To the eye which seeks only the radiance and warmth of the orb, they are lost, but he who studies it, with calmness and impartiality, sees them, too plainly, to be in any doubt of their existence.

LETTER XI.

To James E. De Kay, M. D.

Although we have not been without our metaphysical hallucinations in America, I do not remember to have heard that "animal magnetism" was ever in vogue among us. A people who are not very quick to feel the poetry of sentiment, may well be supposed exempt from the delusions of a doctrine which comprehends the very poetry of physics. Still, as the subject is not without interest, and as chance has put me in the way of personally inquiring into this fanciful system, I intend, in this letter, to give you an account of what I have both heard and seen.

I shall premise by saying that I rank "animal magnetism" among the "arts" rather than among the "sciences." Of its theory I have no very clear notion, nor do I believe that I am at all peculiar in my ignorance; but until we can say what is that other "magnetism" to which the world is indisputably so much indebted for its knowledge and comforts, I do not know that we are to repudiate this, merely because we do not understand it. Magnetism is an unseen and inexplicable influence, and that is "metallic" while this is "animal;" *voilà tout.* On the whole, it may be fairly mooted which most

controls the world, the animal or the metallic influence.

To deal gravely with a subject that, at least, baffles our comprehension, there are certainly very extraordinary things related of animal magnetism, and apparently on pretty good testimony. Take, for instance, a single fact. *M. Jules Cloquet* is one of the cleverest practitioners of Paris, and is in extensive business. This gentleman publicly makes the following statement. I write it from memory, but have heard it and read it so often, that I do not think my account will contain any essential error.

A woman, who was subject to the magnetic influence, or who was what is commonly called a *somnambule*, had a cancer in the breast. M. ——, one of the principal magnetisers of Paris, and from whom, among others, I have had an account of the whole affair, was engaged to magnetise this woman, while M. Cloquet operated on the diseased part. The patient was put asleep, or rather into the magnetic trance, for it can scarcely be called sleep, and the cancer was extracted, without the woman's *manifesting the least terror, or the slightest sense of pain!* To the truth of the substance of this account, M. Cloquet, who does not pretend to explain the reason, nor profess to belong, in any way, to the school, simply testifies. He says that he had such a patient, and that she was operated on, virtually, as I have told you. Such a statement, coming from so high a source, induced the

Academy, which is certainly not altogether composed of magnetisers, but many of whose members are quite animal enough to comprehend the matter, to refer the subject to a special committee, which committee, I believe, was comprised of very clever men. The substance of their report was pretty much what might have been anticipated. They said that the subject was inexplicable, and that "animal magnetism" could not be brought within the limits of any known laws of nature. They might have said the same thing of the comets! In both cases we have facts, with a few established consequences, but are totally without elementary causes.

Animal magnetism is clearly one of three things: it is what it pretends to be, an unexplained and as yet incomprehensible physical influence; it is delusion; or it is absolute fraud.

A young countryman of ours, having made the acquaintance of M. C——, professionally, and being full of the subject, I have so far listened to his entreaties as to inquire personally into the facts, a step I might not have otherwise been induced to take.

I shall now proceed to the history of my own experience in this inexplicable mystery. We found M. C—— buried in the heart of Paris, in one of those vast old hotels, which give to this town the air of generations of houses, commencing with the quaint and noble of the sixteenth century, and ending with the more fashionable pavilion of

our own times. His cabinet looked upon a small garden, a pleasant transition from the animal within to the vegetable without. But one meets with gardens, with their verdure and shrubbery and trees, in the most unexpected manner, in this crowded town.

M. C—— received us politely, and we found with him one of his *somnambules*, but as she had just come out of a trance, we were told she could not be put asleep again that morning. Our first visit therefore went no farther than some discourse on the subject of "animal magnetism," and a little practical by-play, that shall be related in its place.

M. C—— did not attempt ascending to first principles, in his explanations. Animal magnetism was animal magnetism—it was a fact, and not a theory. Its effects were not to be doubted; they depended on testimony of sufficient validity to dispose of any mere question of authenticity. All that he attempted was hypothesis, which he invited us to controvert. He might as well have desired me to demonstrate that the sun is not a carbuncle. On the *modus operandi*, and the powers of his art, the doctor was more explicit. There were a great many gradations in quality in his *somnambules*, some being better and some worse; and there was also a good deal of difference in the *intensity* of the *magnetisers*. It appears to be settled that the best *somnambules* are females, and the best *magnetisers* males, though the law is not absolute. I was flattered with being, by nature, a first-rate mag-

netiser, and the doctor had not the smallest doubt of his ability to put me to sleep; an ability, so far as his theory went, I thought it was likely enough he might possess, though I greatly questioned his physical means.

I suppose it is *primâ facie* evidence of credulity, to take the trouble to inquire into the subject at all; at any rate, it was quite evident I was set down as a good subject, from the moment of my appearance. Even the *somnambule* testified to this, though she would not then consent to be put into a trance in order to give her opinion its mystical sanction.

The powers of a really good *somnambule* are certainly of a very respectable class. If a lock of hair be cut from the head of an invalid, and sent a hundred leagues from the provinces, such a *somnambule*, properly magnetised, becomes gifted with the faculty to discover the seat of the disease, however latent; and, by practice, she may even prescribe the remedy, though this is usually done by a physician, like M. C——, who is regularly graduated. The *somnambule* is, properly, only versed in pathology, any other skill she may discover being either a consequence of this knowledge, or the effects of observation and experience. The powers of a somnambule extend equally to the *morale* as well as to the *physique*. In this respect a phrenologist is a pure quack in comparison with a lady in a trance. The latter has no dependence on bumps and organs, but she looks right through

you, at a glance, and pronounces *ex cathedrâ* whether you are a rogue, or an honest man; a well disposed, or an evil disposed child of Adam. In this particular, it is an invaluable science, and it is a thousand pities all young women were not magnetised before they pronounce the fatal vows, as not a few of them would probably wake up, and cheat the parson of his fee. Our sex is difficult to be put asleep, and are so obstinate, that I doubt if they would be satisfied with a shadowy glimpse of the temper and dispositions of their mistresses.

You may possibly think I am trifling with you, and that I invent as I write. On the contrary, I have not related one half of the miraculous powers which being magnetised imparts to the thoroughly good *somnambule*, as they were related to me by M. C——, and vouched for by four or five of his patients who were present, as well as by my own companion, a firm believer in the doctrine. M. C—— added that *somnambules* improve by practice, as well as *magnetisers*, and that he has such command over one of his somnambules that he can put her to sleep, by a simple effort of the will, although she may be in her own apartment, in an adjoining street. He related the story of M. Cloquet and the cancer, with great unction, and asked me what I thought of that? Upon my word, I did not very well know what I did think of it, unless it was to think it very queer. It appeared to me to be altogether extraordinary, especially as I knew

M. Cloquet to be a man of talents, and believe him to be honest.

By this time I was nearly magnetised with second-hand facts; and I became a little urgent for one or two that were visible to my own senses. I was promised more testimony, and a sight of the process of magnetising some water that a patient was to drink. This patient was present; the very type of credulity. He listened to every thing that fell from M. C—— with a *gusto* and a faith that might have worked miracles truly, had it been of the right sort, now and then turning his good-humoured marvel-eating eyes on me, as much as to say, "what do you think of that, now?" My companion told me, in English, he was a man of good estate, and of proved philanthropy, who had no more doubt of the efficacy of animal magnetism than I had of my being in the room. He had brought with him two bottles of water, and these M. C—— *magnetised*, by pointing his fingers at their orifices, rubbing their sides, and ringing his hands about them, as if washing them, in order to disengage the subtle fluid that was to impart to them their healing properties, for the patient drank no other water.

Presently a young man came in, of a good countenance, and certainly of a very respectable exterior. As the *somnambule* had left us, and this person could not consult her, which was his avowed intention in coming, M. C—— proposed to let me see his own power as a magnetiser, in an experi-

ment on this patient. The young man consenting, the parties were soon prepared. M. C—— began by telling me, that he would, *by a transfusion of his will*, into the body of the patient, compel him to sit still, although his own desire should be to rise. In order to achieve this, he placed himself before the young man, and threw off the fluid from his fingers' ends, which he kept in a cluster, by constant forward gestures of the arms. Sometimes he held the fingers pointed at some particular part of the body, the heart in preference, though the brain would have been more poetical. The young man certainly did not rise; neither did I, nor any one else in the room. As this experiment appeared so satisfactory to every body else, I was almost ashamed to distrust it, easy as it really seemed to sit still, with a man flourishing his fingers before one's eyes.

I proposed that the doctor should see if he could pin me down, in this invisible fashion, but this he frankly admitted he did not think he could do *so soon*, though he foresaw I would become a firm believer in the existence of animal magnetism, ere long, and a public supporter of its wonders. In time, he did not doubt his power to work the same miracle on me. He then varied the experiment, by making the young man raise his arm *contrary* to his wishes. The same process was repeated, all the fluid being directed at the arm, which, after a severe trial, was slowly raised, until it pointed forward like a finger-board. After this, he was made

to stand up, in spite of himself. This was the hardest affair of all, the doctor throwing off the fluid in handsful; the magnetized refusing for some time to budge an inch. At length he suddenly stood up, and seemed to draw his breath like one who finally yields after a strong trial of his physical force.

Nothing, certainly, is easier than for a young man to sit still and to stand up, pretending that he strives internally to resist the desire to do either. Still if you ask me, if I think this was simple collusion, I hardly know what to answer. It is the easiest solution, and yet it did not strike me as being the true one. I never saw less of the appearance of deception than in the air of this young man; his face, deportment, and acts being those of a person in sober earnest. He made no professions, was extremely modest, and really seemed anxious not to have the experiments tried. To my question, if he resisted the will of M. C——, he answered, as much as he could, and said, that when he rose, he did it because he could not help himself. I confess myself disposed to believe in his sincerity and good faith.

I had somewhat of a reputation, when a boy, of effecting my objects, by pure dint of teasing. Many is the shilling I have abstracted, in this way, from my mother's purse, who, constantly affirmed, that it was sore against her will. Now, it seems to me, that M. C——, may, very easily, have acquired so much command over a credulous

youth, as to cause him to do things of this nature, as he many fancy, against his own will. Signs are the substitutes of words, which of themselves are purely conventional, and, in his case, the flourishing of the fingers are merely so many continued solicitations to get up. When the confirmation of a theory that is already received, and which is doubly attractive by its mysticisms, depends, in some measure, on the result, the experiment becomes still less likely to fail. It is stripping me of all pretensions to be a physiognomist, to believe that this young man was not honest; and I prefer getting over the difficulty in this way. As to the operator himself, he might, or might not be the dupe of his own powers. If the former, I think it would, on the whole, render him the more likely to succeed with his subject.

After a visit or two, I was considered sufficiently advanced to be scientifically examined. One of the very best of the *somnambules* was employed on the occasion, and every thing being in readiness, she was put to sleep. There was a faith-shaking brevity in this process, which, to say the least, if not fraudulent, was ill-judged. The doctor merely pointed his fingers at her once or twice, looking her intently in the eye, and the woman gaped; this success was followed up by a flourish or two of the hand, and the woman slept; or was magnetised. Now this was hardly sufficient even for my theory of the influence of the imagination. One could have wished the *somnambule* had not

been so drowsy. But there she was, with her eyes shut, giving an occasional, hearty gape and the doctor declared her perfectly fit for service. She retained her seat, however, moved her body, laughed, talked, and, in all other respects, seemed to be precisely the woman she was before he pointed his fingers at her. At first, I felt a disposition to manifest that more parade was indispensable to humbugging me (who am not the Pope, you will remember,) but reflection said, the wisest way was to affect a little faith, as the surest means of securing more experiments. Moreover, I am not certain, on the whole, that the simplicity of the operation is not in favour of the sincerity of the parties, for, were deception deliberately planned, it would be apt to call in the aid of more mummery, and this, particularly, in a case in which there was probably a stronger desire than usual to make a convert.

I gave the *somnambule* my hand, and the examination was commenced, forthwith. I was first physically inspected, and the report was highly favourable to the condition of the animal. I had the satisfaction of hearing from this high authority, that the whole machinery of the mere material man was in perfect order, every thing working well and in its proper place. This was a little contrary to my own experience, it is true, but as I had no means of seeing the interior clock-work of my own frame, like the *somnambule*, had I ventured to raise a doubt, it would have

been overturned by the evidence of one who had ocular proofs of what she said, and should, beyond question, have incurred the ridicule of being accounted a *malade imaginaire.*

Modesty must prevent my recording all that this obliging *somnambule* testified to, on the subject of my *morale.* Her account of the matter was highly satisfactory, and I must have been made of stone, not to credit her and her mysticisms. M. C—— looked at me, again and again, with an air of triumph, as much as to say, "what do you think of all that now; are you not *really* the noble, honest, virtuous, disinterested, brave creature, she has described you to be?" I can assure you, it required no little self-denial to abstain from becoming a convert to the whole system. As it is very unusual to find a man with a good head, who has not a secret inclination to believe in phrenology, so does he, who is thus purified by the scrutiny of animal magnetism, feel disposed to credit its mysterious influence. Certainly, I might have gaped, in my turn, and commenced the moral and physical dissection of the *somnambule,* whose hand I held, and no one could have given me the lie, for nothing is easier than to speak *ex cathedrâ,* when one has a monopoly of knowledge.

Encouraged by this flattering account of my own condition, I begged hard for some more indisputable evidence of the truth of the theory. I carried a stop-watch, and as I had taken an opportunity to push the stop on entering the room, I was particularly de-

sirous that the *somnambule* should tell me the time indicated by its hands, a common test of their powers I had been told; but to this M. C—— objected, referring every thing of this tangible nature to future occasions. In fine, I could get nothing during three or four visits, but pretty positive assertions, expressions of wonder that I should affect to doubt what had been so often and so triumphantly proved to others, accounts physical and moral, like the one of which I had been the subject myself, and which did not admit of either confirmation or refutation, and often repeated declarations, that the time was not distant when, in my own unworthy person, I was to become one of the most powerful magnetisers of the age. All this did very well to amuse, but very little towards convincing; and I was finally promised, that at my next visit, the *somnambule* would be prepared to show her powers, in a way that would not admit of cavil.

I went to the appointed meeting with a good deal of curiosity to learn the issue, and a resolution not to be easily duped. When I presented myself, (I believe it was the fourth visit,) M. C —— gave me a sealed paper, that was not to be opened for several weeks, and which, he said, contained the prediction of an event that was to occur to myself, between the present time and the day set for the opening of the letter, and which the *somnambule* had been enabled to foresee, in consequence of the interest she took in me and mine. With this sealed revelation, then, I was obliged to depart, to await the allotted hour.

M. C —— had promised to be present at the opening of the seal, but he did not appear. I dealt fairly by him, and the cover was first formally removed, on the evening of the day endorsed on its back, as the one when it would be permitted. The *somnambule* had foretold that, in the intervening time, one of my children would be seriously ill, that I should magnetise it, and that the child would recover. Nothing of the sort had occurred. No one of the family had been ill, I had not attempted to magnetise any one, or even dreamed of it, and of course, the whole prediction was a complete failure.

To do M. C —— justice, when he heard the result, he manifested surprise rather than any less confident feeling. I was closely questioned, first, as to whether neither of the family had not been ill, and secondly, whether I had not felt a secret desire to magnetise any one of them. To all these interrogatories, truth compelled me to give unqualified negatives. I had hardly thought of the subject during the whole time. As this interview took place at my own house, politeness compelled me to pass the matter off as lightly as possible. There happened to be several ladies present, however, the evening M. C —— called, and, thinking the occasion a good one for him to try his powers on some one besides his regular *somnambules*, I invited him to magnetise any one of the party who might be disposed to submit to the process. To this he made no difficulty, choosing an English female friend as the subject of the experiment. The lady in question raised no

objection, and the doctor commenced with great zeal, and with every appearance of faith in his own powers. No effect, however, was produced on this lady, or on one or two more of the party, all of whom obstinately refused even to gape. M. C —— gave the matter up, and soon after took his leave, and thus closed my personal connection with animal magnetism.

If you ask me for the conclusions I have drawn from these facts, I shall be obliged to tell you, that I am in doubt how far the parties concerned deceived others, and how far they deceived themselves. It is difficult to discredit entirely all the testimony that has been adduced in behalf of this power; and one is consequently obliged to refer all the established facts to the influence of the imagination. Then testimony itself is but a precarious thing, different eyes seeing the same objects in very different lights.

Let us take ventriloquism as a parallel case to that of animal magnetism. Ventriloquism is neither more nor less than imitation; and yet, aided by the imagination, perhaps a majority of those who know any thing about it, are inclined to believe there is really such a faculty as that which is vulgarly attributed to ventriloquism. The whole art of the ventriloquist consists in making such sounds as would be produced by a person, or thing, that should be actually in the circumstances that he wishes to represent. Let there be, for instance, five or six sitting around a table, in a room with a single door; a ventriloquist among them, wishes to mislead his companions, by making

them believe that another is applying for admission. All he has to do is to make a sound similar to that which a person on the outside would make, in applying for admission. "Open the door, and let me in," uttered in such a manner, would deceive any one who was not prepared for the experiment, simply because men do not ordinarily make such sounds when sitting near each other, because the words themselves would draw the attention to the door, and because the sounds would be suited to the fictitious application. If there were *two* doors, the person first moving his head towards one of them, would probably give a direction to the imaginations of all the others; unless, indeed, the ventriloquist himself, by his words, or his own movements, as is usually the case, should assume the *initiative*. Every ventriloquist takes especial care to *direct* the imagination of his listener to the desired point, either by what he says, by some gesture, or by some movement. Such, undeniably, is the fact in regard to ventriloquism; for we know enough of the philosophy of sound, to be certain it can be nothing else. One of the best ventriloquists of this age, after affecting to resist this explanation of his mystery, candidly admitted to me, on finding that I stuck to the principles of reason, that all his art consisted of no more than a power to control the imagination by imitation, supported occasionally by acting. And, yet I once saw this man literally turn a whole family out of doors, in a storm, by an exercise of his art. On that occasion, so complete was the delusion, that

the good people of the house actually fancied sounds which came from the ventriloquist, came from a point considerably beyond the place where they stood, and on the side *opposite* to that occupied by the speaker, although they stood at the top of a flight of steps, and he stood at the bottom. All this time, the sounds appeared to me to come from the place whence, by the laws of sound, except in cases of reverberation, and of the influence of the imagination, they only could appear to come; or, in other words, from the mouth of the ventriloquist himself. Now, if the imagination can effect so much, even in crowded assemblies, composed of people of all degrees of credulity, intelligence, and strength of mind, and when all are prepared, in part at least, for the delusion, what may it not be expected to produce on minds peculiarly suited to yield to its influence, and this, too, when the prodigy take the captivating form of mysticism and miracles.

In the case of the patient of M. Cloquet, we are reduced to the alternatives of denying the testimony, of believing that recourse was had to drugs, of referring all to the force of the imagination, or of admitting the truth of the doctrine of animal magnetism. The character of M. Cloquet, and the motiveless folly of such a course, compel us to reject the first; the second can hardly be believed, as the patient had not the appearance of being drugged, and the possession of such a secret would be almost as valuable as the art in question itself. The doctrine of animal magnetism we cannot receive, on ac-

count of the want of uniformity and exactitude in the experiments, and I think, we are fairly driven to take refuge in the force of the imagination. Before doing this, however, we ought to make considerable allowances for exaggerations, colouring, and the different manner in which men are apt to regard the same thing. My young American friend, who *did* believe in animal magnetism, viewed several of the facts I have related with eyes more favourable than mine, although even he was compelled to allow that M. C—— had much greater success with himself, than with your humble servant !

LETTER XII.

To Richard Cooper, Esquire, Cooperstown.

We entered France in July, 1826, and having remained in and about the French capital, until February, 1828, we thought it time to change the scene. Paris is effectually the centre of Europe, and a residence in it, is the best training an American can have, previously to visiting the other parts of that quarter of the world. Its civilization, usages, and facilities, takes the edge off of our provincial admiration, removes prejudices, and prepares the mind to receive new impressions, with more discrimination and tact. I would advise all our travellers to make this their first stage, and then to visit the north of Europe, before crossing the Alps, or the Pyrenees. Most people, however, hurry into the south, with a view to obtain the best as soon as possible, but it is with this, as in most of our enjoyments, a too eager indulgence defeats its own aim.

We had decided to visit London, where the season, *or winter*, would soon commence. The necessary arrangements were made, and we sent round our cards of p. p. c., and obtained passports. On the very day we were to quit Paris, an American

friend wrote me a note to say that a young connexion of his was desirous of going to London, and begged a place for her in my carriage. It is, I believe, a peculiar and a respectable trait, in the national character, that we so seldom hesitate about asking, or acceding to, favours of this sort. Whenever woman is concerned, our own sex yield, and usually without murmuring. At all events, it was so with W——, who cheerfully gave up his seat in the carriage to Miss ——, in order to take one in the *coupé* of the *diligence*. The notice was so short, and the hour so late, that there was no time to get a passport for him, and, as he was included in mine, I was compelled to run the risk of sending him to the frontiers without one. I was a consul at the time: a titular one, as to duties, but, in reality as much of a consul, as if I had ever visited my consulate.* The only official paper I possessed, in connection with the office, the commission and *exequatur* ex-

* There being so strong a propensity to cavil at American facts, lest this book might fall into European hands, it may be well to explain a little. The consulate of the writer was given to him solely to avoid the appearance of going over to the enemy, during his residence abroad. The situation conferred neither honour nor profit, there being no salary, and, in his case, not fees enough to meet the expense of the office opened by a deputy. The writer suspects he was much too true to the character and principles of his native country, to be voluntarily selected by its government as the object of its honours or rewards, and it is certain he never solicited either. There are favours, it would seem, that are reserved, in America, for those who most serve the interests of her enemies! A day of retribution will come.

cepted, was a letter from the *Préfet* of the Rhone, acknowledging the receipt of the latter. As this was strictly a French document, I gave it to W——, as proof of my identity, accompanied by a brief statement of the reasons why he was without a passport, begging the authorities, at Need, to let him pass as far as the frontier, where I should be in season to prove his character. This statement I signed as consul, instructing W—— to show it, if applied to for a passport, and if the *gensd'armes* disavowed me, to show the letter, by way of proving who I was. The expedient was clumsy enough, but it was the best that offered.

This arrangement settled, we got into the carriage and took our leave of Paris. Before quitting the town, however, I drove round to the *rue d'Anjou*, to take my leave of General La Fayette. This illustrious man had been seriously ill, for some weeks, and I had many doubts of my ever seeing him again. He did not conceive himself to be in any danger, however, but spoke of his speedy recovery as a matter of course, and made an engagement with me for the ensuing summer. I bade him adieu, with a melancholy apprehension that I should never see him again.

We drove through the gates of Paris, amid the dreariness of a winter's evening. You are to understand that every body quits London and Paris just as night sets in. I cannot tell you whether this is caprice, or whether it is a usage that has arisen from a wish to have the day in town, and a desire to re-

lieve the monotony of roads so often travelled, by sleep; but so it is. We did not fall into the fashion, simply because it is a fashion, but the days are so short in February, in these high latitudes, that we could not make our preparations earlier.

I have little agreeable to say concerning the first forty miles of the journey. It rained, and the roads were, as usual, slippery with mud, and full of holes. The old *pavés* are beginning to give way, however, and we actually got a bit of *terre* within six posts of Paris. This may be considered a triumph of modern civilization; for, whatever may be said and sung in favour of Appian ways and Roman magnificence, a more cruel invention for travellers and carriage wheels, than these *pavés*, was never invented. A real Paris winter's day is the most uncomfortable of all weather. If you walk, no device of leather will prevent the moisture from penetrating to your heart; if you ride, it is but an affair of mud and *gras de Paris.* We enjoyed all this until nine at night, by which time we had got enough of it, and in Beauvais, instead of giving the order *à la poste*, the postilion was told to go to an inn. A warm supper and good beds put us all in good humour, again.

In putting into the mouth of Falstaff, the words "shall I not take mine ease, in mine inn," Shakspeare may have meant no more than the drowsy indolence of a glutton, but they recur to me with peculiar satisfaction, whenever I get unbooted and with a full stomach, before the warm fire of a hotel,

after a fatiguing and chilling day's work. If any man doubt whether Providence has not dealt justly by all of us, in rendering our enjoyments dependent on comparative rather than on positive benefits, let him travel through a dreary day, and take his comfort at night, in a house where every thing is far below his usual habits, and learn to appreciate the truth. The sweetest sleep I have ever had, has been caught on deck, in the middle watch, under a wet pee-jacket, and with a coil of rope for a pillow.

Our next day's work carried us as far as Abbeville, in Picardy. Here we had a capital supper of game, in a room that set us all shivering with good honest cold. The beds, as usual, were excellent. The country throughout all this part of France is tame and monotonous, with wide reaches of grain-lands, that are now brown and dreary, here and there a wood, and the usual villages of dirty stone houses. We passed a few hamlets, however, that were more than commonly rustic and picturesque, and in which the dwellings seemed to be of mud, and were thatched. As they were mostly very irregular in form, the street winding through them quite prettily, they would have been good in their way, had there been any of the simple expedients of taste to relieve their poverty. But the French peasants of this province appear to think of little else but their wants. There was occasionally a venerable and generous old vine, clinging about the door, however, to raise some faint impressions of happiness.

We passed through, or near, the field of Cressy. By the aid of the books, we fancied we could trace the positions of the two armies, but, it was little more than very vague conjecture. There was a mead, a breadth of field well adapted to cavalry, and a wood. The river is a mere brook, and could have offered but little protection, or resistance to the passage of any species of troops. I saw no village, and we may not have been within a mile of the real field, after all. Quite likely no one knows where it is. It is very natural that the precise sites of great events should be lost, though our own history is so fresh and full, that to us it is apt to appear extraordinary. In a conversation with a gentleman of the Stanley family, lately, I asked him if Latham-house, so celebrated for its siege in the civil wars, was still in the possession of its ancient proprietors. I was told it no longer existed, and that, until quite recently, its positive site was a disputed point, and one which had only been settled by the discovery of a hole in a rock, in which shot had been cast during the siege, and which hole was known to have formerly been in a court. It is no wonder that doubts exist as to the identity of Homer, or the position of Troy.

We have anglicized the word Cressy, which the French term *Crécy*, or, to give it a true Picard orthography, *Créci*. Most of the names that have this termination are said to be derived from this province. Many of them have become English, and have undergone several changes in the spelling.

Tracy, or Tracey; de Courcy, or de Courcey; Montmorency, and Lacy or Lacey, were once *Traci, Courci, Montmorenci* and *Laci.** The French get over the disgrace of their ancient defeats, very ingeniously, by asserting that the English armies of old were principally composed of Norman soldiers, and that the chivalrous nobility which performed such wonders were of purely Norman blood. The latter was probably more true than the former.

As we drew nearer to the coast, the country became more varied. Montreuil and Saumer are both fortified, and one of these places, standing on an abrupt, rocky eminence, is quite picturesque and quaint. But we did not stop to look at any thing very minutely, pushing forward, as fast as three horses could draw us, for the end of our journey. A league or two from Boulogne, we were met by a half dozen mounted runners from the different inns, each inviting us to give our custom to his particular employer. These fellows reminded me of the wheat-runners on the hill at Albany, though they were as much more clamorous and earnest, as a noisy protestation-making Frenchman is more obtrusive than

* The celebrated Sir William Draper was once present when the subject turned on the descent of families, and the changes that names underwent. "Now my own is a proof of what I say," he continued, with the intention to put an end to a discourse that was getting to savour of family pride—"my family being directly derived from King Pepin." "How do you make that out, Sir William?" "By self evident orthographical testimony—as you may see—Pepin, Pipkin, Napkin, Diaper, Draper."

a shrewd, quiet calculating Yankee. We did not stop in Boulogne, to try how true were the voluble representations of these gentry, but, changing horses at the post, went our way. The town seemed full of English, and we gazed about us, with some curiosity, at a place that has become so celebrated by the great demonstration of Napoleon. There is a high monument standing at no great distance from the town, to commemorate one of his military parades. The port is small and crowded, like most of the harbours on both sides of the channel.

We had rain, and chills and darkness, for the three or four posts that succeeded. The country grew more and more tame, until after crossing an extensive plain of moist meadow land, we passed through the gate of Calais. I know no place that will give you a more accurate notion of this celebrated port than Powles Hook. It is, however, necessary to enlarge the scale greatly, for Calais is a town of some size, and the hommock on which it stands, and the low land by which it is environed, are much more considerable in extent than the spot just named.

We drove to the inn that Sterne has immortalized, or, one at least that bears the same name, and found English comfort united with French cookery and French taste. After all, I do not know why I may not say French comforts, too; for in many respects they surpass their island neighbours even in this feature of domestic comfort. It is a comfort to have a napkin even when eating a muffin; to see

one's self entire in a mirror, instead of *edging* the form into it, or out of it, sideways; to drink good coffee; to eat good *côtelettes*, and to be able to wear the same linen for a day, without having it soiled. The Bible says, "comfort me with flaggons or apples," I really forget which,—and if either of these is to be taken as authority, a *côtelette* may surely be admitted into the *carte de conforts*.

We found Calais a clean town, and possessing a certain medium aspect, that was as much English as French. The position is strong, though I was not much struck with the strength of the works. England has no motive to wish to possess it, now that conquest on the continent is neither expedient nor possible. The port is good for nothing, in a warlike sense, except to protect a privateer or two; though the use of steam will probably make it of more importance in any future war, than it has been for the last two centuries.

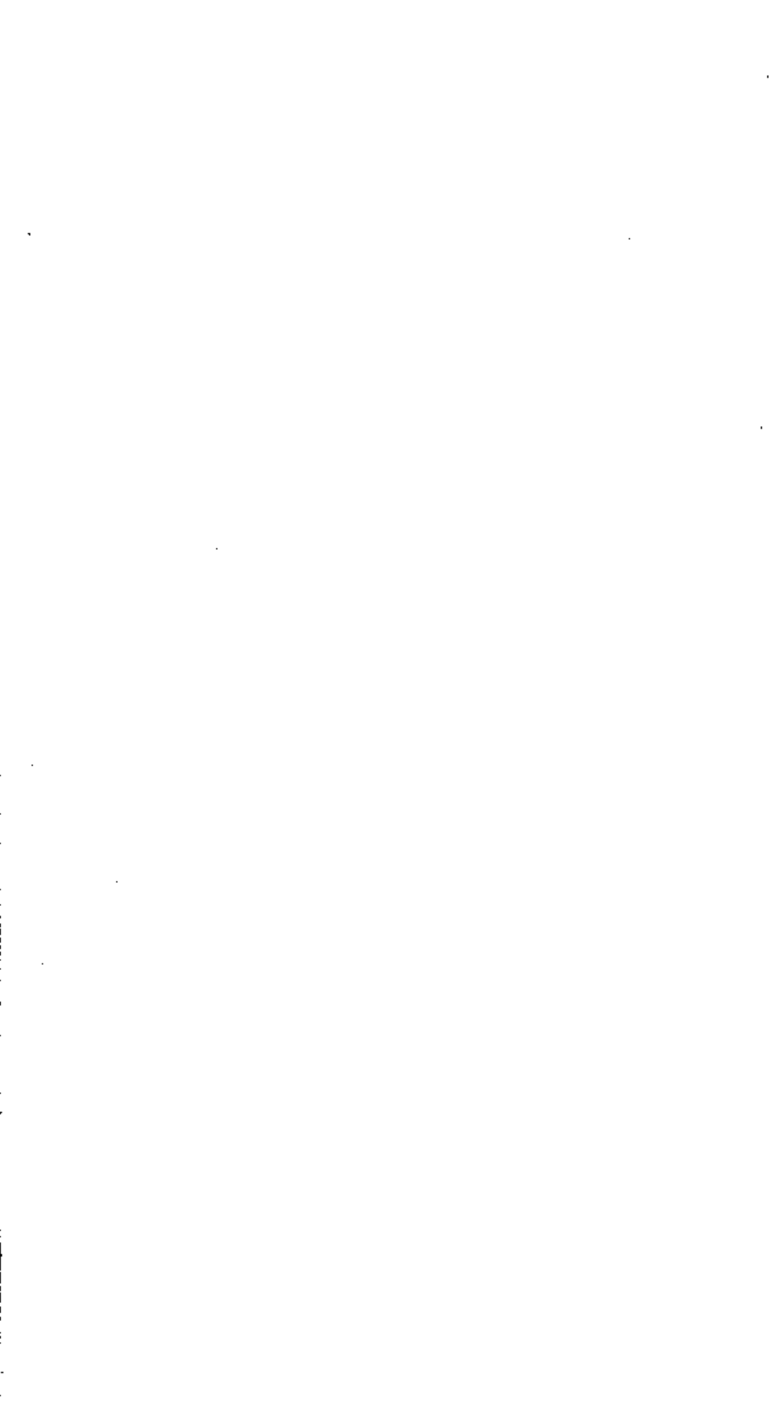
We found W—— safely arrived. At one of the frontier towns he had been asked for his passport, and, in his fright, he gave the letter of the Prefet of the Rhone, instead of the explanation I had so cleverly devised. This letter commenced with the words "*Monsieur le Consul*" in large letters, and occupying, according to French etiquette, nearly half of the first page. The *gensdarme*, a *vieux moustache*, held his lantern up to read it, and seeing this ominous title, it would seem that Napoleon and Marengo, and all the glories of the Consulate arose in his imagination. He got no further than

those three words, which he pronounced aloud, and, then folding the letter, he returned it with a profound bow, asking no further questions. As the *diligence* drove on, W—— heard him say—" *apparemment vous avez un homme tres considérable, là dedans, Monsieur le Conducteur.*" So much for our fears, for passports, and for *gens-d'armes!*

We went to bed, with the intention of embarking for England in the morning.

END OF VOL. II.

NT
HM



MAR 2 6 1940