

THE
HISTORICAL ESSAYS,
PUBLISHED
UNDER THE TITLE OF "DIX ANS D'ÉTUDES HISTORIQUES,"
AND
NARRATIVES
OF THE
MEROVINGIAN ERA;
OR,
SCENES OF THE SIXTH CENTURY.
WITH
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE.

BY
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AUTHOR OF THE "HISTORY OF THE CONQUEST OF ENGLAND BY THE NORMANS."

THIERRY'S MEROVINGIAN ERA. &c.—"In which we have a narrative uniting Walter Scott's liveliness of detail and dramatic effect with the observance of historical truth."—*Quarterly Review*

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

It may be necessary to say a word respecting the contents of the following pages, and their arrangement. In the original, the Narratives of the Merovingian Era are preceded by a very long and learned dissertation, entitled *Considérations sur l'Histoire de France*. This it has been thought advisable to omit. It is quite a distinct work from the "Narratives," although published with them. Very useful to professed students of French history, it could have little interest for any other class of readers.

The Essays originally entitled "*Dix Ans d'Etudes Historiques*," are of very great and very general interest; and devoted, as the greater portion is, to the history of our own country, will doubtless meet with proper attention. They are the best introduction to the study of their Author's great work, "The Conquest of England by the Normans."

The Autobiographical Preface has been transposed from the Historical Essays, where it first appeared in 1834. The last essay of the *Dix Ans d'Etudes Historiques*, being the first of the Merovingian Narratives, appears in its proper place. These are the only changes made in the arrangement; and the reasons for them are sufficiently obvious.

M. Thierry's general characteristics, together with some account of his works, have been sketched by the writer of an article on the state of historical science in France in the "British and Foreign Review,"* from which we borrow the following details:

"M. Thierry is chief of the descriptive school. He is an artist in a very high sense of the word: the art of M. Barante sinks into the feeblest trick, compared with that wider, deeper, well-proportioned work which Thierry raises from materials of the past. Inferior to Barante in style, he is immensely superior in point of construction. He is always animated; often eloquent and picturesque; but his language is not always commendable; it is frequently ambiguous and inelegant. His great power lies in artistic construction. He groups the masses of details with unrivaled ease and effect; he seizes all the points of interest or importance, and makes the others subservient to them in a manner almost unique. In this respect he is a great writer, and a model worthy to be studied.

"Thierry is a model also of unwearied energy and erudition. His life is a lesson to all men of letters: at once grand, thoughtful and affecting. In it may be read the triumph of a great intellect, when fortified by a noble purpose, over the painful ills that flesh is heir to.' He has prostituted his pen to no court or ministry: he has sacrificed his soul to no luxurious and ignoble idleness. History has been his passion and reward. Blindness, paralysis and helplessness have been the fatal consequences of his too great application: the eyes that read so eagerly, gradually dimmed until they lost all power; the very hand that traced the narrative of his country's struggles refuses now to

hold a pen. Nothing remains of him but the great heart and intellect, '*de faire amitié avec les ténèbres*,' as he pathetically says. It is a sad spectacle. The visitor goes expecting to see the animated enthusiastic author of the 'Norman Conquest;' and he sees the servant bearing in his arms a helpless creature, who, however, when gently placed in his chair, begins to talk with all the faith and enthusiasm of youth. The spirit-sighted countenance of the 'old man eloquent,' warms into a glow as he speaks of his favourite study. You forget, as you hear him talk, that he is so afflicted. He does not forget it, but he does not repine. . . .

"The 'Narratives of the Merovingian Era,' is the production of the matured and practised hand of its author: it is essentially a work of art, though important ideas relative to the science of history are implied in it. As a portraiture of the sixth century it is unequalled; it joins the picturesqueness, animation and exciting interest of a novel by Scott, to the minute fidelity of exhaustive erudition. The way in which the various elements of society, the highest and the meanest, are selected and grouped round certain individuals and certain events, so as both to illustrate the characters and the times, reveals the hand of a profound artist. The details of social life, minute yet unostentatious, are brought forward to elucidate the various points in the narrative, not to glitter as a vain display of learning.* The *couleur locale* is so well preserved, that you never for an instant doubt that you are reading of barbarians, and of barbarians corrupted by contact with Roman civilization, and modified by the Christian religion. Owing to the title, and to the want of interest generally felt for the Merovingians, Thierry's work seems to have had few readers in this country. Had the public been aware that these Narratives were explanatory of the social state of the sixth century—that they gave a vivid picture of the Roman, barbarian and Christian elements in a state of imperfect fusion—that they brought the vigour and wild energy of the Gauls face to face with the last remains of Roman greatness and luxury, kept in imperfect check by Christianity—then, indeed, more attention would have been bestowed upon the work."

Some portion of this translation has been submitted to M. Thierry, whose approbation and warm encouragement to proceed, have given the translator courage to appear before the public. Fidelity, as strict as the nature of the two languages would admit, has been the translator's aim; how far that has been achieved remains for others to decide.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE.

HISTORY OF MY HISTORICAL WORKS AND THEORIES.

THIS volume contains almost every thing I have written on historical subjects, with the exception of my History of the Conquest of England by the Normans, and thus completes the labours of ten years,* during which period I have been enabled to pursue, without interruption, the course of my studies. In this series of essays, placed chronologically according to the order of their composition, the ideas which, when ripened and developed by assiduous labour, produced as their final expression, the "History of the Conquest of England by the Normans," and the "Letters on the History of France," may be in some measure traced step by step. These stumblings of a young man endeavouring to open a new path for himself—the disentangling of a theory at first daring and confused, but which, by a patient study of facts, gradually arrives at scientific precision,—these simple pages, the first sketch of what afterwards formed volumes,—these various tentatives afterwards abandoned for something more complete or more final; all these, if I am not mistaken, will not be uninteresting either to those persons who, approving the result of my labours, might be curious to know every step of the road I traveled, or to those who delight in observing the human mind in its individual developments.

One thing will, perhaps, be remarked, which is, that from the commencement of my attempts in history, my attention became fixed as if instinctively on the subject which I afterwards treated most extensively. In 1817, I contributed to the *Censeur Européen*, the most serious, and at the same time most speculatively daring of all the liberal publications of that period. To a hatred of military despotism, a fruit of the reaction of the general spirit against the imperial government, I joined a profound aversion for revolutionary tyranny, and without a preference for any form of government whatever, I felt a certain disgust at English institutions, of which we then possessed only an odious and ridiculous imitation. One day when, in order to found this opinion on an historical examination, I had attentively read over some chapters of Hume, I was struck with an idea which seemed to me a ray of light, and exclaimed as I closed the book, "*All this dates from a conquest; there is a conquest underneath it.*" I instantly conceived the plan of re-writing the history of the revolutions of England, considering it from this new point of view; and the first part of my historical sketch, the first essay of that kind I had ever attempted, soon appeared in the *Censeur Européen*.

This essay, which was extremely brief, brought the reader from the Norman invasion in the eleventh century down to the death of Charles I. The Revolution of 1640 was presented in it under the aspect of a great national reaction against the order of things established six centuries previously by foreign conquest. I ought to have stopped there; there was sufficient courage,

* From 1817 to 1827.

or rather rashness in saying this: but my ardour in politics and inexperience in history, led me on further, and with the same formulas—*conquest and subjection, masters and servants*—I continued detailing minutely the political events to the end of the reign of Charles II. I saw in the elevation of Cromwell, and the triumph of the military party over the other parties of the Revolution, a new conquest traitorously brought about under the shadow of the national standard. The restoration of the Stuarts by Monk's army appeared to me a treaty of alliance, for the general good, between the old and new conquerors.* After a great deal of time and labour lost in thus obtaining factitious results, I perceived that I was falsifying history.

I resolved to change my plan, and to leave every period its peculiar form and colouring; but I did not give up the idea of tracing all the history of England from the fact of the Norman conquest. This great event, followed by all its social consequences, had struck my imagination as an unsolved problem, full of mystery, and of great importance in its political and historical bearings.

About the same time I began to occupy myself with another historical theory, the influence of which was not of less importance on my latter works; that of the revolution of the Commons. On merely reading the modern writers on French history, it appeared to me that the enfranchisement of the Commons was a perfectly different thing from their account of it; that it was a real social revolution, a prelude to all those which gradually raised the condition of the third estate; that it was the cradle of our modern liberty, and that the plebeians, as well as the nobility of France, had a history and ancestors. I wrote in 1817, in an article on the correspondence of Benjamin Franklin: "We are always told to imitate our ancestors; why do we not follow this advice? Our ancestors were those artisans who founded the Commons; who conceived modern liberty. Our ancestors were not far removed from the present habits of America; they possessed its simplicity, good sense, and civil courage. It was not the fault of these energetic men that all Europe did not become free six centuries ago; if what they wanted was not accomplished, it was the fault of their time, not theirs: barbarism was too strong; its roots were everywhere. When it attributed to itself alone, by exclusive right, liberty, riches, honour, was it easy to raise up another liberty, other riches, another honour, beyond its sphere, and antagonistic to it? A shriek was uttered by civilization, impatient at its shackles, and suddenly Europe was filled with new nations, strangers to all that surrounded them, and seeking to amalgamate with one another. But they could make no path for themselves through those masses of savages and warriors who surrounded them on all sides. They remained isolated; they perished. If, however, fortune was denied to our forefathers, they were not wanting in courage and virtue. . . ."[†]

To colour this picture of the golden age of the liberty of the Commons, my imagination applied to the towns of France what I had read of the Italian republics of the middle ages: it seemed to me, that in searching carefully our history, in looking over chronicles and archives, we should find something analogous to what the historians of the thirteenth century tell us of the Commons of Milan, Pisa, or Florence. It was thus that there arose in me the first regrets that France was deficient in a truly national history, and the first desire to devote myself to studies by the help of which I should be enabled to recover some lost features of that history. In 1818, I wrote as follows: "Who has not

* This continuation was published in the fifth, eighth, and eleventh volumes of the *Censeur Européen*, which appeared between 1817 and 1819. I do not print it here, although its suppression leaves a gap of one year (1818) in the series of my historical works. It is well to leave something to oblivion.

† *Censeur Européen*, tom. iv. p. 105.

heard of a class of men who, at the period when barbarians inundated Europe, preserved for humanity the arts and habits of industry? Daily outraged and despoiled by their conquerors and masters, they painfully existed, earning nothing by their labour but the consciousness of acting rightly; and keeping civilization as a trust for their children and the whole world. These saviours of our arts were our fathers; for we are the sons of those serfs, those tributaries, those citizens whom conquerors pillaged at pleasure: to them we owe all that we are. Virtue and glory are associated with their names; but these do not shine much; for history, which should have transmitted them was devoted to the service of the enemies of our forefathers. We should not find among them the frantic devotion of the savage warrior who sacrifices himself for his chief, and seeks death while dealing it, but the passion of personal independence, the courage of civilized man, who defends himself, but does not attack, and that perseverance in well-doing which triumphs over every thing. Such is our patrimony of national honour; such what our children ought to read of under our eyes. But, slaves only lately freed, our memory has for a long while carried us back only to the families and actions of our masters. Thirty years have not elapsed since we remembered that our fathers were the nation. We have admired every thing, have learned every thing, except what they were, and what they had done. We are patriots, and we leave in oblivion those who, during fourteen centuries, cultivated the soil of that country so often laid waste by other hands: the Gauls were before France. . . .”*

As the last words and other passages of this fragment indicate, the problem of the Norman Conquest had led me, by the power of analogy, to occupy myself with the great problem of the Germanic invasions, and the dismemberment of the Roman empire. My attention, hitherto absorbed by theories of social order, by questions of government and political economy, was directed with great curiosity to the disorder which, in the sixth century, succeeded Roman civilization in a great portion of Europe. I thought I perceived in that remote subversion, the roots of some of the evil belonging to modern society; it appeared to me that, notwithstanding the distance of time, some remains of the barbarian conquest still weighed upon our country, and that the present sufferings might be traced back, step by step, to the intrusion of a foreign race into the centre of Gaul, and its violent dominion over the natives. In order to confirm myself in this opinion, which would open to me, as I thought, an arsenal of new arms for the battle I was engaged in against the principles and tendencies of the government, I commenced studying and extracting every thing which had been written, *ex professo*, on the ancient French monarchy, and the institutions of the middle ages, from the researches of Pasquier, Fauchet, and other learned men of the sixteenth century, down to the work of Mably, and that of M. de Montlosier, the most recent one, at that time, on the subject.† The whole of the year 1819 was spent in this employment; I forgot nothing, neither *jurisconsults*, *feudists*, nor the commentators on common law. This long and fatiguing review ended by a book which was a real relaxation to me, “Ducange’s Glossary.”‡ In this admirable book I studied thoroughly the political language of the middle ages; and to trace this semi-Roman, semi-barbarous language to its root, I studied the ancient Germanic and Scandinavian idioms, aided by my knowledge of German and modern English.

I had been the round of all the authorities at second-hand; I was on the

* *Censeur Européen*, tom. vii. p. 250.

† The *Essais sur l’Histoire de France*, by M. Guizot, a work of such deep erudition, and of such superior generalization, appeared only in 1822.

‡ *Glossarium ad Script. mediæ et infimæ Latinitatis*. (6 vols. in fol.)

track of the sources of modern history; but I had not yet a very clear notion of what I was to derive from them. Always pre-occupied with political ideas and the triumph of the cause to which I had devoted my pen, if I thought of becoming an historian, it was after the fashion of the writers of the philosophical school, to abstract from the narrative a body of proofs and systematic arguments, to demonstrate summarily, and not to narrate with detail. However, in grouping my thoughts so as to form more or less logical sequences, I imposed a scruple on my conscience which my predecessors had not thought of, and which was absent from my *first* essays on the History of England. I laid down the law to myself never to confuse colours and formulas, to leave to every epoch its originality; in one word, strictly to respect chronological order in the moral physiognomy of history, as well as in the succession of events. Under the influence of this disposition, I changed my style and manner; my former stiffness gave way, my narration became more continuous; it even occasionally became coloured with some local and individual tints. The signs of this change may be remarked in my articles of the year 1819, on the Restoration of 1660, and the Revolution of 1688. These essays, with the three which precede them, and the first six of the second part, bear the stamp of my new studies, and that of the political opinions which I then professed with all the conviction of my soul; these were, as I have already said, an aversion to a military government, coupled with a hatred of aristocratic pretensions and the hypocrisy of the Restoration, without any precisely revolutionary tendency. I aspired with enthusiasm to a future, I did not know of what kind,—to a liberty, which, if it had a formula, had this one: *any government whatever, with the greatest possible amount of individual security, and the least possible administrative action.* I fell passionately in love with a certain ideal of patriotic devotion, of incorruptible purity, of stoicism free from pride and roughness, which I saw represented in the past by Algernon Sidney, in the present by M. de Lafayette.

The first use I made of my studies of the ancient northern languages, and the institutions of the middle ages, was with their help to return to the History of England, and plunge more deeply into it. I had only glanced my eye, so to speak, over the events which succeeded the Norman Conquest: this time I went much further, and began studying the Anglo-Saxon period, an occupation wonderfully facilitated to me by the very erudite work of the learned Sharon Turner. The prodigious quantity of details which this work contains respecting the customs and social state of the German conquerors of Great Britain, and the indigenous Britons, the numerous quotations of original poems, either by Celtic bards or northern Scalds, attracted me by a species of interest which I had not yet felt in my researches. The order of general and purely political considerations to which I had hitherto confined myself appeared to me for the first time dry and circumscribed. I felt within myself a strong tendency to descend from the abstract to the concrete, to consider national life in all its phases, and to take the study of the primitive races in their original diversity as a starting point in the solution of the problem of the antagonism of different classes of men in midst of the same society. I therefore turned my attention to the special history of each of the Britannic isles.

I commenced by the History of Ireland, of which I then only knew what the historians of England say of it; that is, very little. As the peculiar events of this history gradually unfolded themselves before my eyes, an unexpected light came to illuminate the grand problem, the solution of which was the object of all my researches, the problem of the conquests of the middle ages,

and their social results. In truth, the stamp of conquest is marked on every page of the annals of the Irish nation ; all the consequences of that first event, so difficult to recognize and trace in other histories, stand out in this one with striking clearness and relief. What can only be guessed at elsewhere, here presents itself under the least doubtful aspect, and in the most palpable form : the long persistence of two inimical nations on the same soil, and the variety of political, social and religious struggles, which spring, as from an inexhaustible source, out of the original hostility ; the antipathy of race surviving all the revolutions of manners, laws and language, perpetuating itself through centuries, sometimes smouldering, more frequently flaming, at intervals giving way to the sympathies caused by community of habitation, and an instinctive love of their native land, then suddenly starting up, and separating men once more into two hostile camps. The grand and sad spectacle of which Ireland had been the theatre for seven hundred years, placed before me in a somewhat dramatic manner, what I confusedly saw at the bottom of the history of all European monarchies. It was a living commentary, which placed reality face to face with my conjectures, and pointed out to me the road which I ought to follow if I wished, without endangering truth, to call imagination to the assistance of the reasoning faculties, and unite some little divination to the search after, and analysis of, events.

The History of Scotland, although less rich in views of this kind, likewise presented to me a solid basis for inductions and similarities, the eternal hostility between Highlanders and Lowlanders, an hostility which has been dramatized in so spirited and original a manner in several of the novels of Walter Scott. My admiration for this great writer was profound ; it increased gradually as I confronted in my studies his prodigious understanding of the past, with the narrow and dry erudition of the most celebrated modern writers. It was with a transport of enthusiasm that I hailed the appearance of that master-piece "Ivanhoe." Walter Scott had cast one of his eagle-glances at the historical period toward which for three years all the efforts of my mind had been directed. With that boldness of execution which distinguishes him, he had placed on the soil of England, Normans and Saxons, conquerors and conquered, still trembling before one another, a hundred and twenty years after the conquest. He had coloured like a poet one scene out of the long drama which I, with the patience of a historian, was labouring to construct. All the reality of his work, the general characteristics of the epoch in which the fictitious action was placed, and in which the personages of the novel figured, the political aspect of the country, the different manners and mutual relations of the various classes of men, all was in accordance with the outlines of the plan which I was then sketching. I confess, in the midst of the doubts which accompany all conscientious work, my ardour and confidence were redoubled by the species of indirect sanction which one of my favourite statements thus received from the man whom I consider the greatest master of historical divination that has ever existed.

Ever since the commencement of 1820, I had begun reading an immense collection of original historians of France and the Gauls. As I advanced in my studies, the lively impression of pleasure derived from the cotemporaneous painting of the men and things of our ancient history, was joined to a feeling of anger against modern historians, who, instead of reproducing this spectacle faithfully, had disguised facts, misconstrued characters, and given every thing a false or undecided character. My indignation increased at every comparison I made between the real history of France, such as I saw it in the original documents, and the flat compilations which had usurped that title, and propagated

in the world and in the schools the most inconceivable blunders as articles of faith. Anxious to carry out the examination of this strange contrast, I no longer confined my researches as formerly to a series of determined facts, and the search after the elements of a single problem; I touched upon all questions, corrected all errors, and gave free course to my mind in the vast field of erudition and historical controversy.

From the calmness of mind with which I traversed this labyrinth of doubts and difficulties, it appeared to me that I had at last met with my true vocation. This vocation, which from that period I embraced with all the ardour of youth, was not only to bring a little truth into some obscure portion of the middle ages, but to plant for France in the nineteenth century the standard of historical reform. Reform in the study, reform in the manner of writing history; war against the writers without erudition, who were unable to see, and against the writers without imagination, who were unable to describe; war against Mézerai, against Velly, against their continuators and disciples;* war, in fact, against the most noted historians of the philosophic school, on account of their intentional dulness, and disdainful ignorance of national origin. I was about to give this rallying cry, and make an appeal in the columns of the "*Censeur Européen*" to all men disposed to hear and sympathize with me, when the tribune from which I spoke, or in less ambitious terms, when the politico-literary enterprise, which had been conducted during six years in spite of numerous persecutions, by my honourable friends Messrs. Comte and Dunoyer, fell under the censure which had just been re-established.

A month later, I sent to propose to the Editors of the *Courrier Français* a series of letters on the history of France, and was accepted as a contributor. The first of these letters, which I might have called my manifesto, appeared the 13th of July, 1820. As it has almost entirely disappeared from the subsequent editions, I give, in the present volume, the primitive text, excepting a few corrections of style. The renovation of the history of France, of which I strongly pointed out the necessity, presented itself to me under two phases; the one scientific, the other political. I demanded a complete restoration at once of the altered or misconstrued truth, and a sort of restitution for the middle and lower classes, for the ancestors of the third estate, forgotten by our modern historians. Born a plebeian, I demanded that the common people should have their share of glory in our annals; that the memory of plebeian honour, of the energy and liberty of citizens, should be preserved with respectful care; in a word, that, by the help of science, joined to patriotism, narratives capable of moving the popular fibre should be made from our old chronicles. Doubtless I exaggerated the possibility of placing on the scene the people at all periods of our history; but this very illusion gave my words more warmth and enthusiasm. Immediately on the appearance of my second letter, I was treated as an enemy by the journalists of the anti-liberal party. I was accused of wishing to bring about the dismemberment of France, and shaking the foundations of the French monarchy, by maliciously depriving it of five centuries of antiquity. The censure mutilated several of my pages, and erased with its red ink my dissertation on the real epoch of the establishment of monarchy.†

Notwithstanding these official attacks, I quietly pursued my road, when I was assailed by unexpected obstacles. As I gradually entered more deeply into the discussion either of the method followed by our historians, or of the very basis of our history, the political colouring disappeared, erudition showed itself

* No portion of the *Histoire des Français*, by M. de Sismondi, had then appeared; the three first volumes of this great work were published in 1821.

† Ninth Letter in the three last editions.

more plainly; the interest of my articles became special, and restricted to the few minds curious in the science. At Paris I was always read with pleasure, but I raised up against me part of my connections in the provinces. Several letters, full of displeasure, arrived one after the other: I do not remember where they came from; but they spoke with so much bitterness about those long articles, *fit only for the Journal des Savans*, that the editors of the *Courrier* feared a loss of subscribers. I was begged to change my subject, mentioning very politely the variety of my publications in the *Censeur Européen*. I replied that I had made a vow to write only on historical matters; and in the month of January, 1821, I ceased to contribute to the *Courrier Français*.

It was not without regret that I saw myself compelled to interrupt my weekly publications. This sort of work, without continuity, without any precise order, suited perfectly the daring impetuosity of my criticism, and, I should add, the want of maturity, at that time, of my studies on the history of France. I was far from feeling sufficiently prepared to treat the same questions in a long work, conceived with calmness and executed with deliberation. But if I felt myself weak on that point, I already had confidence in my views on the history of England, and on the question of conquest which had never failed to extend itself in each new incursion I made in the field of the history of the middle ages. I therefore turned once more to my old subject of predilection, and approached it more boldly, with more knowledge of events, in a more elevated light, and with a firmer grasp. Every thing which I had read for the last four years, all that I knew, all that I felt, entered into the plan which I then conceived with firm and prompt decision. I resolved (let the expression be forgiven) to build my epic, to write the history of the conquest of England by the Normans, by going back to its first causes, and afterwards coming down to its last consequences; to paint this great event with the truest colours, and under the greatest possible number of aspects; not only to give England as the theatre of a variety of scenes, but all the countries which had more or less felt the influence of the Norman population, or the blow of his victory. In this extensive frame I gave a place to all the important questions which had successively pre-occupied me; that of the origin of modern aristocrats, that of the primitive races, their moral diversities and co-existence on the same soil; finally, the same question of historical method, of form and style, which I had recently attacked in my letters on the history of France. I wished to put in practice what I had been advising, and attempt, at my own risk and peril, the experience of my theory: in a word, I was ambitious to display art as well as science, to write dramatically with the aid of materials furnished by sincere and scrupulous erudition. I set to work with zeal proportioned to the difficulties of the enterprize.

The catalogue of books which I had to read and extract from was enormous; and as I could only have a very small number at my disposal, I was forced to seek the rest in the public libraries. In the depth of winter, I made long sittings in the icy galleries of the Rue de Richelieu; and later, under a summer sun, I ran in one day from Sainte Geneviève to the Arsenal, from the Arsenal to the Institute, the library of which, as an exceptional favour, remained open until nearly five o'clock. Weeks and months passed rapidly to me in the midst of these preparatory researches, in which neither the thorns nor discouragements of editorship are to be found; in which the mind, soaring freely above the materials it assembles, composes and recomposes at will, and constructs in a breath the ideal model of the edifice which must later be built piece by piece, slowly and laboriously. While exercising my mind amidst the thousands of facts scattered through hundreds of volumes, and which pre-

sented to me naked (so to speak) the times and men which I wished to paint, I felt some of the emotion which an eager traveler feels at the aspect of the country he has long wished to see, and his dreams have revealed to him.

By devouring the long folio pages to extract one phrase, and sometimes one word out of a thousand, my eyes acquired a facility which astounded me, and of which it is impossible for me to give an account, that of reading in some sort intuitively, and of finding almost immediately the passage which would interest me. The vital force seemed entirely directed to one object. In the species of ecstasy which absorbed me internally, whilst my hand turned over the leaves of a book, or took notes, I had no knowledge of what was passing around me. The table at which I sat was surrounded and abandoned by students; the clerks of the library or the visitors came and went from the room; I heard nothing, I saw nothing; I saw only the apparitions which my reading called up before me. This remembrance is still present to me; and since this period, I have never had so keen a perception of the personages of my drama, of those men of various races, manners, physiognomies, and destinies, which presented themselves successively to my mind; some singing to the Celtic harp the eternal expectation of the return of Arthur; others sailing through the tempest as regardless of themselves as the swan playing in a lake; some, in the intoxication of victory, heaping up the spoils of the conqueror, measuring by line the land to divide it, counting over the families by heads, like cattle; others, again, deprived by a single defeat of all that makes life valuable, resigning themselves to the sight of strangers sitting as masters at their own hearths, or, frantic with despair, rushing to the forest to live there like wolves on rapine, murder, and independence.

As it has often been observed, all real passion requires an intimate confidant: I had one to whom, almost every evening, I rendered an account of my acquisitions and discoveries of the day. In the always difficult choice of a literary friendship, my heart and reason had fortunately agreed to attach me to one of the most amiable of men, and one worthy of the highest esteem. He will, I trust, forgive my placing his name in these pages, and giving him, perhaps, indiscreetly, a token of strong and profound recollection: this friend, this sure and faithful counsellor, from whom I daily regret being separated by absence, was the wise, the ingenious M. Fauriel, in whom sagacity, justness of mind, and elegance of language, seemed united. His judgments, full of acuteness and circumspection, were my rule when in perplexity; and the sympathy with which he followed my labours stimulated me to go on. I rarely got up from one of our long conversations without my mind having made a step, without its having gained something in clearness and decision. At the end of thirteen years I still remember our evening walks, which in summer were extended over a great portion of the outer *boulevards*, and during which I told with unceasing abundance the minutest details of the chronicles and legends, all which brought the conquerors and conquered of the eleventh century living before me; all the national miseries, all the individual sufferings of the Anglo-Saxon population, and even the affronts experienced by men dead seven hundred years before, and whom I loved as if I had been one of them. Sometimes it was a Saxon bishop turned out of his see for not knowing French; sometimes monks whose charters were destroyed as of no value, because they were in Saxon; sometimes a prisoner whom the Norman judges condemned without a hearing, because he only spoke English; sometimes a family despoiled by the conquerors, and receiving from them as charity a small portion of its own inheritance: things of but little importance when considered in themselves only, but from which I drew the strong tinge

of reality, which would, if the power of execution did not fail me, colour the whole of the picture.

Thus passed the year 1821, of which the least recollections have a charm for me, perhaps because in the mysterious union which is formed between the author and his work, this year answered to the honeymoon,—the sweetest month of marriage. In 1822, I commenced a period of harder and less attractive work; I began to edit. In truth, it is in that operation of the mind, in which no longer fancy but calculation predominates, by which you endeavour to render clearly to the eyes of others what you see clearly yourself; it is there the writer finds his fatigues and misreckonings. The difficulty of finding a form for the ideal work hatched in my brain was the greater, as I refused myself designedly the help which the imitation of a model generally affords. I chose to reproduce in history neither the manner of the philosophers of the last century, nor that of the chroniclers of the middle ages, nor even that of the narrators of antiquity, however great my admiration for them. I proposed to myself, if I had the strength to do it, to unite by a sort of mixed work, the grandly epic movement of the Greek and Roman historians with the *naïve* colouring of the writers of legends, and the grave reasoning of our modern writers. I aspired, perhaps rather ambitiously, to create for myself a style grave without oratorical emphasis, and simple without affectation, of *naïveté* and archaism; to paint the men of the past with the physiognomy of their time, but speaking myself the language of my own; finally, to multiply details so as to exhaust the original texts, but without scattering the narrative, and interrupting the unity of the whole.

In this attempt to conciliate such different methods, I was incessantly buffeted about between two rocks; I journeyed between two dangers, that of giving up too much to classical regularity, and thus losing the strength of local colouring and picturesque truth, and the still greater one of burdening my narrative with a multitude of little facts, poetical, perhaps, but incoherent and wanting in seriousness, wanting in significance, even for a reader of the nineteenth century. One of my chapters had the first fault, another had the second, according to the nature of the materials, sometimes poor, sometimes superfluous, and which I had great trouble to reduce, to conquer, if I may express myself thus, in order to make them enter their moulds. Sometimes, after long efforts, and erasures without number, I had recourse to my last resource, striking the thing out altogether. I essayed, not without new troubles, fresh combinations; I did and undid incessantly: it was Penelope's work; but thanks to an immovable will and ten hours of daily labour, this work did advance. I loved it with a truly passionate affection, and attached myself to it more and more, as much from the trouble it cost me, as from my hopes, and the dreams of remote success which cradled my hours of repose.

The years 1821 and 1822 were marked in politics by a violent agitation, from which I could not and would not escape. That stroke of policy, the double vote, prelude to that other blow directed against the Charter—executed and punished ten years later, had provoked the least fanatic to illegal resistance. A secret association, borrowed from Italy, united and organized under chiefs placed high in the esteem of the country, a great portion, and that the most enlightened portion of the youth of the middle classes. But we were not long in becoming convinced of the inutility of our efforts to bring about events which were not ripe, and all the affiliated, renouncing action, returned to their counters or their books. It was an act of good sense and civic resignation; and, what is remarkable, a period of serious study succeeded, almost without interval, to this revolutionary effervescence. Dating from the year 1823, a breath of renovation commenced, making itself felt, and reviving simultane-

ously all the branches of literature. The ambition to attain truth under all its forms, in art as in science, then was seen dawning in a crowd of young and distinguished minds; an ambition which for seven years has never ceased to show its fruitfulness, giving great and noble hopes for the future. I had the happiness to see, what I most desired, historical works taking a high place in popular favour, and writers of the first class devote themselves to them in preference. The number and importance of the publications which appeared successively from 1824 to the end of 1830; so many extensive works, each of which presented in a new light, and re-established in some sort, an epoch either ancient or recent of the past; such a concourse of efforts and talents gave rise to the opinion, then a probable, now unfortunately a very doubtful one, that history would be the stamp of the nineteenth century, and would give it its name, as philosophy had done for the eighteenth. Such a belief was well calculated to excite zeal into enthusiasm. I believed myself, according to the fine expression of M. de Chateaubriand, to be one of the first to run down the declivity of the century, and every step I took with this thought seemed to me firmer and more certain. I reached my aim in the spring of 1825, after four years and a half of unceasing toil. The success I obtained surpassed my hopes; but this joy, great as it was, had a sad compensation; my eyes had worn themselves in work; I had partly lost my sight. My task ended, I listened, but too late perhaps, to the advice of taking some repose; it was urgent, for I had become perfectly incapable of reading or writing. My eyesight continued to diminish notwithstanding the use of the strongest remedies; and as a last medical prescription, I was ordered to travel. I went to Switzerland, and thence to Provence, where M. Fauriel soon came to join me. He had a scientific end in view in this journey; it was the last complement of long and patient researches on the political and literary history of Southern France, a work worthy in my opinion of the most flourishing time of historical erudition. Condemned to idleness, I followed from city to city my laborious traveling companion, and not without envy saw him scrutinize all the relics of the past, searching archives and libraries, to put the finishing stroke to the work which was to fill up an immense vacuum in our national history.* Thus we traveled together for some months through Provence and Languedoc. Unable myself to read, not only manuscript, but the finest inscription engraved on stone, I endeavoured to derive some benefit from my travels by studying in the monuments the history of the architecture of the middle ages. I had just enough sight to guide me, but when in the presence of edifices or ruins, of which it was necessary to find out the epoch, and determine the style, I know not what inward sense came to the help of my eyes. Animated by what I would willingly call the historic passion, I saw farther and more clearly. None of the principal lines, no characteristic feature escaped me, and the promptness of my glance, so uncertain in ordinary circumstances, was a cause of surprise to the person who accompanied me. Such are the last ideas that the sense of sight procured me; a year afterwards this slight, although to me keen enjoyment, was no longer permitted me; the remains of vision had disappeared.

On my return to Paris in the first months of 1826, I again began to follow what I considered to be my destiny, and almost blind, found again all my zeal for new studies. The necessity of reading with the eyes of another, and dictating instead of writing, did not alarm me; I had been broken into this kind of work by the editing of the last chapters of my book. The always

* I cannot help keenly regretting, that other occupations—those of instruction—have interfered, to defer, for a long while, perhaps, a publication which science demands.

painful transition from one method to the other, was rendered less so to me by the eager attentions of a friendship which is very dear to me. It is to M. Armand Carrel, whose name is now celebrated, that I am indebted for having overcome without hesitation this difficult step. His firm character and judicious mind came to my assistance in the days of discouragement; and perhaps I returned service for service, in being the first to guess and reveal to himself the futurity awaiting his great talents. I first occupied myself with a project long before conceived and decided on; it was that of a great history, or rather of a great chronicle of France, uniting in the frame of a continuous narrative all the original documents of our history from the fifth to the seventeenth century. The almost universal favour *which the collections of chronicles and memoirs then enjoyed, had seduced and somewhat misled me.* I thought it would be possible to join together all the clashing materials by filling up gaps, suppressing repetitions, but preserving with care the contemporaneous expression of facts. It seemed to me that from this work, in which, so to speak, each century would relate itself, and speak with its own voice, must result the true history of France; that which would never be altered, never would belong to any other writer, and which all would consult as the repertory of our national archives.

By a singular coincidence, the same idea presented itself at the same time to one of my friends, whose great understanding exercised the more power over me, because the character of his mind least resembled my own; this was M. Mignet, the idealist historian of the new school, gifted with a wonderful talent for the generalization of facts and historical induction. We associated together for the execution of our mutual thought. We both made for several months preparatory studies, he on the thirteenth and following centuries, I on the preceding period. Every thing went right as long as there was nothing to do but to notice and pass in review the large masses of narrative which were to unite in the composition of our work. There was apparently something imposing in it; but when it became necessary to set about the final editing, our illusions vanished, and we each on our side perceived that a labour, in which art did not enter, was repugnant to us. I for my share ended a volume, the one which was first to appear; fortunately the enterprise was abandoned before any thing had been published.

When it became necessary to choose another subject for a book, the propensity of my mind to look back and take former ideas and former sketches into my hands again, made me think of the ten letters on the history of France, published in 1820. Six years had elapsed since that period, and the reform of historical studies no longer needed preaching; it spoke for itself, and advanced with giant strides. However, if the revolution was accomplished for the select few, it was not yet so for the body of the public. If MM. Guizot, de Sismondi and de Barante found enthusiastic readers, Velly and Anquetil had still the advantage over them of far more numerous patrons. I therefore recommenced my polemic of 1820, not against those men, guilty only of having possessed the science of their time, but against that science itself, which, old and worn out for us, ought to make way for a new science. I corrected all that was doubtful in my first work; I widened the field of controversy, and stated the historical questions in a firmer and clearer manner; finally, I substituted a calm language for my youthful style, stamped with a certain febrile ardour, and a superabundance of will which often went beyond the mark. My recent studies were put to use; they helped me to complete the criticism of the fundamental bases of the history of the two Frankish dynasties, and to fix the precise point at which the history of France, properly so called, begins. When, after treating the question of the accession of the third race, I came to that of

the enfranchisement of the Commons, this problem, which had occupied me ever since the opening of my historical career, detained me by an irresistible attraction: it was impossible for me to leave it before I had treated it under all its phases, by dissertation and by narrative; a subject in which, so to speak, were reflected all my plebeian sympathies. I seemed fulfilling a duty of filial piety, in relating the stormy life of the ancestors of French citizens; in reviving for my cotemporaries the obscure names of some outlaws of the twelfth century. It is thus that a point of discussion, touched upon in 1820, in a newspaper article, became this time the subject of half a volume. The first edition of the "*Lettres sur l'Histoire de France*" was published towards the end of 1827; the second edition appeared the year following. It was not a mere reprint, but a completely new arrangement, in which part of the work underwent such changes, that entire chapters, replaced by others, remained unemployed. During the course of the year 1828, I divided my time between this scrupulous revision and a project, the execution of which is still only prospective, but which will be, if it please God, the crown of my historical works. My brother Amédée Thierry was then finishing his history of the Gauls, one of those works of great and conscientious erudition, in which original documents are exhausted, and which remain the last result of science. He was going to give the public one half of the prolegomena of the history of France, the Celtic origin, the picture of Gallic migrations and that of Gaul under the Roman administration. I undertook for my share the other half, that is, the Germanic origin, and the picture of the great invasions which caused the downfall of the Roman empire in the west. I experienced heartfelt pleasure at the idea of this brotherly association, at the hope of attaching our two names to the double basis on which the edifice of our national history must repose. My brother's work has seen the light, and has made great way in the literary world; mine remains incomplete. I had entered with ardour into a series of researches quite new to me: had sought in the collection of Byzantine historians for the history of the Goths, Huns, Vandals, and other nations that took part in the dismemberment of the empire, when I found myself stopped by an obstacle stronger than myself. However extended these labours, my complete blindness would not have prevented my going through them: I was resigned as much as a courageous man can be; I had made a friendship with darkness. But other trials came; acute sufferings and the decline of my strength, announced a nervous disease of the most serious kind. I was obliged to confess myself conquered, and to save, if it was still time, the last remains of my health. I gave up work, and left Paris in October, 1828.

Such is the history of the ten most active and laborious years of my literary life. I have never found similar ones since, and have only been able to glean a few hours of work here and there amid long days of suffering. The period of rest which opened for me the year 1829 marks the limit of these two epochs, so different from one another. There is the end of my youthful career, and the commencement of a new one, which I pursue with courage, but with slow steps, much slower than formerly, but perhaps more surely. I began it by the definitive revision of my principal work, "*The History of the Conquest of England by the Normans*." I wished afterwards to resume and finish my history of "the Germanic invasions, and the dismemberment of the Roman empire." I attempted it; I exhausted all the resources of a provincial library, and I stopped for want of books. Then, making choice of a book, the materials of which were within my reach, I undertook a new "*Series of Letters on the History of France*," a work no longer of criticism, but of pure narrative, which should embrace in all its details of events, manners and characters, the

dramatic period in which the names of Frédegonda and Brunehilda predominated.

If, as I delight in thinking, the interest of science is counted in the number of great national interests, I have given my country all that the soldier, mutilated on the field of battle, gives her. Whatever may be the fate of my labours, this example I hope will not be lost. I would wish it to serve to combat the species of moral weakness which is the disease of our present generation; to bring back into the straight road of life some of those enervated souls that complain of wanting faith, that know not what to do, and seek everywhere, without finding it, an object of worship and admiration. Why say, with so much bitterness, that in the world, constituted as it is, there is no air for all lungs, no employment for all minds? Is not calm and serious study there? and is not that a refuge, a hope, a field within the reach of all of us? With it, evil days are passed over without their weight being felt; every one can make his own destiny; every one employ his life nobly. This is what I have done, and would do again if I had to recommence my career; I would choose that which has brought me where I am. Blind, and suffering without hope, and almost without intermission, I may give this testimony, which from me will not appear suspicious: there is something in the world better than sensual enjoyments, better than fortune, better than health itself; it is devotion to science.

VESOUL (HAUTE-SAÔNE),
Nov. 10, 1834.

HISTORICAL ESSAYS.

ESSAY I.

REVOLUTIONS OF ENGLAND.

THE situation of civilized men varies and renews itself incessantly. Every century that passes over a people leaves a different mode of life, different interests, different wants from what it found. But in this succession of different states, language does not change so rapidly as things, and it is rare that new facts meet at any given point with new signs which express them. The interests which have just arisen are forced to explain themselves in the idiom of those which have disappeared and are not properly understood; present conditions are disguised beneath the expression given to former conditions, and either deceive or escape observation. Truth, truth is demanded of all who write on law, as if he who undertakes to speak to men about what they are, and what they have to do, had only to will to be truthful. But at every instant we are conquered by conventional formulas, and truth is buried beneath words. It is not astonishing that our ideas in politics should be still imperfectly fixed, when we only find to express them words twenty centuries old.

Sovereignty, submission, government, people, prince, subject, these words, with a few others in use for the last two thousand years, keep our ideas so thoroughly enthralled, that our most varying theories are in fact only words differently arranged. To speak of the *sovereignty* of the *prince*, or the *sovereignty* of the *people*; to prescribe the submission of the *people* to the *prince*, or the *prince* to the *people*; to say that *subjects* are made for *governments*, or *governments* for *subjects*, is always revolving in the same circle though in different directions; this is speculating equally on the supposition that these collected terms still represent something real and necessary, and that the relations which they have expressed subsist in our social state in accordance with our present nature and wants. It is equally a mistake, if the supposition is ungrounded; and this is what we must first examine. As men of the same civilization, we ought all to have but one voice on our civil relations, and on what each of us has the right to require from others. Why then are there so many controversies, quarrels, and social hatreds? It is because we want an exact language, fit to render our particular desires in a manner which

should make itself understood by all. Wishes variously expressed appear opposed, when they best accord: the hostility of words is transferred to men. We think we are enemies, when in truth we are brothers, that is to say, yielding to the same interests, and carried away by the same inclinations. *Long live the republic!* says one; *long live the monarchy!* says the other; and at these words they cut one another's throats. Both doubtless meant to say, *long live the welfare of mankind!* They would have embraced, had they been able to understand one another.

When new wants come to us, instead of studying them, and accounting for them to ourselves, we find it more convenient for our idleness to seize by chance some vague resemblance, between what we seek, what we wish to be, and what others have been before us. Because we feel ourselves driven out of our present condition by a modification of our faculties, because we are drawn forward, we throw ourselves backward. Instead of thinking that we are tending toward a new mode of being, new as the interests that excite us to change, we think ourselves rather called back to a past state from which our species has degenerated. Ancient wisdom, the instinct of primitive times, is loudly invoked, instead of appealing to the enlightenment of the present time, and our own inspirations.*

And no one agrees as to the times to which we must look back to find a right spirit and prudence; each has his favourite epoch to which he confines himself; and thence proceed quarrels. What is proclaimed as a necessary law is not the want which torments us, and which others feel also; it is the example we love and

* The American revolution is the only recent one which the love of antiquity has not led astray. The English adopted the customs of the Hebrews and primitive Christians; the French those of the Greeks and Romans. The degeneration of the human species in politics has been the favourite doctrine of writers, because it is more easy to praise the past than to explain the present; memory alone is required for it. Rousseau has said that the art of living in society was disappearing daily; Machiavelli had said it before him. Montesquieu himself was not far from entertaining this opinion.

that others reject. Let us go twenty centuries back; no, only ten; no, only a few years; this is what the various parties say; but reason says: Be what your nature demands; consult yourselves, and believe only yourselves.

The victorious party in this war of words and authorities, having become sole masters of the territory, *constitutes*, that is to say, history in hand, reorganizes certain arrangements of men, of which some remains subsist, or which centuries have completely destroyed. These scaffoldings raised up in spite of time, which destroys nothing in vain, no longer find their foundations, and fall down of themselves: this order imposed by violence is soon broken up by men who are not formed of a lifeless substance, flexible in all directions, and obedient to the hands of the artist.* When nature has resumed the superiority, and demolished the work of the lawgiver; when we return to this first question, *what do we want?* we have had experience; have received a caution. But of what profit is experience alone? What will be the use of having learned that good is not where it was sought, if we do not reflect in ourselves to learn where it is? On escaping from one path of error we should fall into another; and this is what happens in revolutions. After long and useless efforts, the weak man accuses necessity, and slumbers in expectation; the strong man reproaches himself and starts up, indignant at not having done enough. He vows to perish in the task; but let him beware; if the labour in which he persists is the same which has already deceived him, he will perish uselessly. Towards the end of the last century we experienced a kind of uneasiness in our social state; by observing ourselves attentively, by interrogating our wants, we might have discovered whence the evil came, and whence the remedy would come. But we never thought of this examination. We were, it was said, in a *monarchy*; we attacked that word; and then, instead of promising ourselves that our wants should be satisfied, and our faculties have their liberty, we resolved, as our only project, to get rid of a *monarchy*. We then reasoned thus: "Since a monarchy is very bad for us, the contrary of a monarchy will be very good; now, it is certain that a democracy is, in every respect, the reverse of a monarchy; therefore we want a democracy."

Scarcely were we settled into a democracy, when we were astonished at being worse off; a second reasoning was obvious, and we did not fail to make it: "If we get no good either by monarchy or democracy, which are two extremes, we must necessarily find it in a middle term, in a system composed of these two systems." Full of confidence in this syllogism, we

hastily organized a mixed system of democracy and monarchy. We soon felt its effect. . . . Thus the effort of our revolution was made for vain formulas, and almost for a quibble; the sensible, the real interest remained forgotten. Vainly would any one have endeavoured to represent to us the shallowness of the objects we were pursuing; unfortunately history was there, and we could bring that forward to speak for us, and confound reason. We could demonstrate that some nations had found themselves happy under the democratic system, and others under the mixed system. But there were two previous questions over which we passed. Were we of the same nature as those nations? And if so, was it really owing to the social machine in which they were employed as materials, that their well-being resulted? One cry arises from all antiquity: "democracy is the life of society; apart from democracy the civilized man vegetates and becomes extinct." This unanimous consent, the little figure which has been made in these days by those who could not say, *we are members of the sovereignty*, all these have led us to regard the discipline of the Romans and Spartans as a sort of law of human nature, the violation of which was followed by an infallible misfortune. All that we desired, all that we wanted, we expected from this discipline. We revived all the rules, all the forms; we laid them down for ourselves, we declared them our imprescriptible right. To conquer our degenerated nature, which submitted with difficulty to these strange practices, we decreed the most terrible of sentences against ourselves, *democracy or death*.

But what pleased the men of antiquity was the full and free exercise of their active faculties; if they loved their democracy, it was because it favoured this exercise. The faculties and inclinations of these men were far from having any similarity to ours. In circumstances in which their disposition excited them to action, ours demand repose; there, where they did not like to act, activity is necessary to us. Therefore we require to be free in actions, in which they could bear constraint, and we can bear constraint, where they could not bear to be curbed. Therefore their rules of right and wrong, of privileges and duties, their laws of command and prohibition, ought to have been reversed to be applicable to us. Peace and industry were interdicted to them, and they bore it willingly; perhaps we should be willing for war to be interdicted to us. The prohibition to emigrate did not trouble them, they wished to be attached to their native land; we require our steps to be free: for them independence existed only within the limits of their country; out of it were slavery and enemies; whilst with us, oppression may come from our neighbours, and liberty from elsewhere; for us there are friends as well as enemies everywhere. Let a city take all its inhabitants and make them fractions of itself; reduce a man who can act personally, to the state of a passive member of a body which moves, animates, and destroys him at will; if this nullity of existence is not the only state in which he can live, it will be the state in which

* It is false that assembled men ever gave themselves up to one amongst them, permitting him to arrange, and, as it is expressed, to constitute them in his own way. "We must," says Ferguson, "somewhat mistrust what tradition teaches us respecting ancient legislators and founders of kingdoms. The plans which are supposed to have proceeded from them, were probably only the consequences of an anterior situation." (Essay on the History of Civil Society, book iii. chap. ii.)

he will live least. If disposing of what I possess, and regulating its quantity and use, is not the sole means of preserving it for me, it is an encroachment on my existence. To imagine that it is rendering these regulations more supportable, by leaving to each one the power of decreeing them against others by decreeing them against himself, is a most absurd folly, unless in times when despotism is more attractive to men than prosperity.

It was no doubt useful to remind us, that formerly, when, in the name of the state, men were disturbed in the enjoyment of their private life, it was not the welfare of a few families, but a social necessity, which demanded privation and constraint; but at the same time the wants of our present nature ought to have been recognized, restraints which the ancients bore as the lesser evil should not have been inflicted on us, nor ought we to have been duped by this deceitful alliance of words *a government which gives liberty*.

On the faith of one example, we have vainly awaited liberty from the democratic government; on the faith of another example, we now await it from a mixed government.

For the last hundred and fifty years in England, the people which practises industry, the people which has no patent for living on the work of others, the people civilized after our modern manner, declares it is happy, and that it owes its happiness to its *constitution*.

This national voice, the pride with which Englishmen compare their social condition with that of the rest of Europeans, a government lauded by others besides those who live under it; all this necessarily produced a great effect on our minds, still wavering in consequence of an unfortunate experiment.

Public opinion seized on the *constitution* of the English, as on that of the Romans; and we never thought of inquiring further what the people really meant, when it said that was the cause of its happiness. "The *constituted* are happy, if we are to believe them; their happiness must be the result of an equal working of all the parts of the *constitution*; every division must play its part; to insure the same prosperity for ourselves, let us not forget the smallest detail." It was with this idea that, after regarding *tribunes, orators, comitia, ostracism* and the *agrarian laws*, as machines with which to produce the welfare of men in society, we invested *peers, county members, a nobility, pensions, and rotten boroughs* with the same marvellous property.*

There is nothing absolute for the human species either in good or evil. A shipwrecked man, thrown by the sea upon some desert coast, exclaims that he is happy; yet he is naked and hungry: in the same way a nation long restrained in the use of its faculties, finding itself suddenly more free, may proclaim that it is happy; which means nothing then, except that its condition is more bearable. Those would

be mistaken who understood thereby that its situation is altogether propitious, that no action exercised over it, troubles, restrains, or displeases it: that it accepts its condition entirely, maintains itself in it with pleasure, and interdicts itself all change.

We enthusiastically admired the instinct with which the English people raised its constitution piece by piece, adding, curtailing, filling up gaps, harmonizing the parts until the systematic perfecting of the whole: we congratulated ourselves on living at a period when this masterpiece of modern wisdom was completed, and ready for imitation; we only inspired to know it, and to transport it amongst us.

But the English have not made their constitution. They never had in view the design of dividing by generations the successive labours which were to *complete their organization, finish their social condition, and bring them to the best system*.* They did not perceive that there were three essential elements which had to be combined without being confounded, namely, monarchy, aristocracy and democracy. It is not true, that by a premeditated design they reared over them a monarchy, and at the same time an aristocracy to oppose it; that they afterwards introduced a dose of democracy, which they increased little by little until it was on an equality with the other two principles, and symmetry was attained. These abstract speculations may delight a few thinkers by profession, but they occupy but little, people who are more material in their interests.

To live, enjoy their work, and exercise freely their faculties and industry, these are the objects of assembled men, and to which the English people, like all others, have endeavoured to attain. The way it has followed has been simple; it was only attacking all obstacles which interfered with its desires; it destroyed what it could. Such is its work, such its success; beyond that, it has no merit.

We must mistrust history. Too frequently the writer, instead of simply relating what passes before his eyes, represents to us what he imagines, and substitutes his ideas for facts, or perverts facts by connecting them with other foreign facts. It can be proved that for seven hundred years, all the minds of England were occupied in reconciling together the king, the peers and the commons, in order to rest afterwards and enjoy the spectacle; it can be proved, that this idea proceeded from the Romans, whose institutions they wanted to obtain, and finally, have two consuls in the person of a king, a senate in an upper chamber, and comitia in small in a lower one; it can be proved that they took for models the Germanic barbarians...

Every thing may be proved by facts with the help of systems and allusions. Frequently history is nothing but one continuous lie, and un-

* It has been written in France, that the rotten boroughs were one of the main-springs of the English constitution.

* *The expressions of some writers.* It is well to remark, that these magnificent terms of perfect society, and incomparable constitution, are signs of the little progress of political science. It is in this grand style that in all times ignorance has spoken of the first steps of the arts; true knowledge has a more modest tone.

fortunately, whilst writers turn it at their pleasure, and make it a clothing for their thoughts, they present it to men as the true rule of action, as the instructress who teaches them how to live, *magistra vite*; it is because they know that they are concealed behind it, and that, in extolling history, it is truly their own cleverness which they are praising.

Without proposing to the French the example of the English nation, without, however, denying that this example is applicable to them; without bringing forward any species of resemblance in the situation of the two nations, but also without condemning the opinion of those who find some connection between them, we will endeavour to describe simply and truthfully the principal revolutions which have changed the condition of men in England. In this narrative we will

throw off as much as we are able, all political bias; we will take no notice of the current ideas, or even of the words which are exchanged daily without their truth having been ascertained; finally, we will endeavour always to go back to facts, and let them speak for themselves.

We shall not be astonished if something odd and extraordinary is found in this history: the notions of the events have been so obscured, that truth will probably appear strange. We shall likewise not be astonished if some persons exclaim at our ill-nature. But we warn those who think themselves wounded, that they must lay the blame, not on the narrator, who is not free, and has no choice as to what he must say, but on the events which guide his pen, and of which he is only the interpreter.

• CONQUEST OF ENGLAND BY THE NORMANS.—ORDER OF THINGS THEY ESTABLISHED.—THIS ORDER OF THINGS DEGRADED AND MODIFIED. STRUGGLE BETWEEN CLASSES OF MEN AND OPPOSITE INTERESTS.—GREAT NATIONAL REACTION.

THE soil which the English nation inhabits, was invaded in the eleventh century by an army of Normans, who forced their entrance and settled on it. This army took possession of the soil and of the men who lived on it, as of an encampment, and of machines fitted to cultivate it. It spread over the country to support itself more easily; but it was divided without being dissolved; grades, military subordination, and all the means of assembling an army for a campaign were preserved. The army was even continued in the sons of those who composed it, and even in their sons' sons. Many centuries after the conquest, the descendants of the conquerors were encamped in the country, and organized in the same way as their ancestors: there was a principal chief, the heir of him who had conducted the expedition, and secondary chiefs and soldiers, descended from the officers and soldiers of the conquest.

The new captain, descended from the first one, either in the male or female line, took the name of *king*. The subordinate commanders had the title of *barons*. The remainder were called in Latin *milites*, and in English, *knight*s or *esquires*.

The primitive division of the soil had maintained itself with the distinction of ranks. The captain possessed several portions of land which his predecessor had taken for himself; and moreover, he had the power to dispose of the possession of all the rest, according to certain laws established by discipline, a privilege which he expressed by adding to his title the name of the country, calling himself *king of England*. In the same manner, the officers, who, according to their rank, occupied more or less extensive districts, and the soldiers who were settled in them, were distinguished by the names of their provinces or their domains.

The chief of the victorious army had declared himself proprietor of the soil and of the vanquished, in the name of God and of his sword; his successors called to witness God

and their right: their right was inheritance. The lieutenants had as the title of their possessions, their right, the inheritance of their ancestors, with the permission of the chief. But which of these titles was decisive of property, must frequently have been doubtful; and then the chief considered his will as supreme law, and the officers their succession. It was the cause of frequent disputes.*

Such was in England the state of the sons of the conquerors; as to the sons of the vanquished, who were designated by the name of *subjects*, that is to say subjugated;† they were also in the same condition as their fathers. They had to nourish the multitude encamped amidst them. Their life was only valuable inasmuch as it was useful to the conquerors. The greater or less profit to be derived from a man, was the measure of his good or bad treatment. If industry did not produce sufficiently, the body was sold. The aborigines of England formed an article of exportation to Ireland and foreign countries.‡ Each officer had at his command, agents entrusted with collecting the provisions he derived from his dis-

* Under the command of one of the successors of the conqueror, the Count de Varenne, who possessed twenty-eight towns and two hundred and eighty-eight manors, when interrogated upon his right of property, drew his sword, saying, "These are my titles. William the Bastard was not alone when he took possession of this soil; my ancestor was of the expedition." (Hume's History of England, vol. 1. Appendix 11.)

† *Subjects*, from *subjacere*. This word did not signify political subordination, but submission to the victors. Five hundred years after the conquest, this difference was still made. Queen Elizabeth, in her speeches to the Parliament, did not call *subjects* the men over whom she had only a pre-eminence of authority, but she gave the name to the members of the House of Commons, to express that she had another sort of power over them. The formula was: "My right loving lords, and you, my right faithful and obedient subjects." (Echard's Hist. of England.)

‡ Clarke, Glance at the Strength of England, chap. i.

strict, protecting their carriage, and opposing the resistance of those on whom the contribution was levied; with punishing abuses, preventing insurrections, and even suppressing the quarrels of the subjects: with repressing every offence, every insult on the person or on property, which they might commit against one another, in order that their bodies should be always fit to endure fatigue, that the capital on which they worked for their *lord* should not diminish, nor they be diverted from the care of producing what he wanted to take from them. These agents, who were clerks, judges and executioners, composed what the *lord* called his *court*. The general thus had a court, a company of purveyors stationed in each of his domains; and he had, moreover, a roving court which went before him, when on certain occasions he went with his *staff* to inspect the quarters. It was necessary for him and his suite to find sufficient for them in all the places through which they passed; and the purveyors acquitted themselves so punctually of their office, that frequently, at the king's approach, the inhabitants retired hastily, with every thing they could save, into the depths of forests or other remote places.

His domestics, too, when sent upon business into distant parts of the kingdom, claimed the same privilege, and demanded a supply of provisions, in every town through which they travelled.*

These customs, authorized by the functions of the chief, whose duty it was to watch over every thing, were onerous to his lieutenants, who had so much the less to gain from their dependents, as the general had more for himself: for those who might suffice for one contribution, could not suffice for two at once. The officers were, therefore, interested in moderating the exactions of the general and his agents; and the general on his side, and for his own interest, for the common interest of the whole army, over whose preservation he had to watch, was led to prevent each officer from devouring too much in his province, in order that the country should not be too suddenly exhausted, and famine enter the camp.

(A. D. 1100—1200.) Thence naturally resulted between the chief and his officers a struggle favourable in the end to the *subjects*, although neither the chief nor his officers thought of relieving them out of affection. The *barons*, more strongly interested, because their personal subsistence was in question, were the first to raise their voices, and required the king to subscribe to an act by which they restrained his power of recruiting their men for the repairing of fortresses, bridges and roads; which limited the quantity of grain and cattle which the purveyors were to levy in their journeys, and interdicted the seizure of beasts of burden, of waggon and of agricultural implements; three acts of authority, for which the proprietor of the province where they were enforced always had to suffer; for either the men were carried away from labour, or the implements of

labour were carried away from the men, or the fruits of labour perished. It was this compact, imposed by the lieutenants on their captain, which was called *Magna Charta*.*

The king then retaliated, and constrained the *barons* only to exact regular taxes from the conquered; he insisted that they should leave merchants liberty to travel; favoured the assemblage of those who wished to practise their industry in common; took cities under his protection; gave men safe conducts, not from compassion, but for his own interest, and because every *subject*, whose labour was impeded, or who perished in it, to satisfy the wants of one person, caused a loss to the entire community of the conquerors.

Magna Charta and the statutes which succeeded it, were thus to the advantage of the conquered; but the terms alone show that their advantage was not the direct object, and that they were esteemed only like beasts of burden, whose preservation is desired. One article of *Magna Charta* forbids the destruction of houses, woods or *men*, without the special license of the proprietor.†

At certain epochs, either fixed or determined by the captain, there was a general meeting, and a sort of a review of the whole army. Every officer and soldier attended it; the chaplains were present at it. This assembly was called *parliament*, which means conference, because explanations were made there, and counsel taken on the movements to be made both in and out of the country, on the distribution of posts, the means of maintaining themselves in peace in the midst of their subjects, and of obtaining the greatest quantity of provisions and money.‡

(1200—1300.) The *subjects* had to support themselves as well as their masters; always kept on the alert, and their minds always intent on the desire of being rich, and the difficulty of becoming so, they had promptly increased the power of their industry: manufactures had been started, cities enlarged. The conquerors

* See Hume, ch. xi. Millar, vol. i. p. 80, and the text of *Magna Charta* in Blackstone's work.

† Remarks on the History of England, vol. ii. If any one wishes to convince himself that the war of the barons against John Lackland was in no wise made for the subjects, he should read how the two parties treated the country in their rage and fury of combat. "Nothing was to be seen but the flames of villages reduced to ashes and the misery of the inhabitants; tortures exercised by the soldiery, and reprisals no less barbarous committed by the barons on royal demesnes. The king marching the whole extent of England, from Dover to Berwick, laid the provinces waste on each side of him, and considered every state which was not his immediate property as entirely hostile, and the object of military execution." (Hume's Hist. of England, ch. xi.)

‡ All the barons were forced to attend Parliament; the order was less severe for the soldiers and knights; for whom the journey was too expensive; their officers answered for them. This occasioned the assembly to be generally only a meeting of the staff. It sometimes occurred that the entire army received orders to meet in some spot indicated by the chief. "There is also mention sometimes made of a crowd or multitude that thronged into the great council on particular interesting occasions." (Hume's Hist. of England, Appendix ii.)

* Remarks upon the Hist. of England, vol. i. p. 225.

then became unable to make the census of what each one possessed, and of what he might be deprived. As property was forever increasing, the accounts made soon ceased to be exact; it would have been frequently necessary to make new ones, or to resolve to lose on the receipts by putting on taxes according to former estimates. An expedient which should remove these difficulties, was naturally sought for, and found. It was in the cities that it was most difficult to estimate the value of movable riches; the *subjects*, therefore, inhabitants of towns, were compelled to choose a certain number among them to come to the Parliament, where the general, the lieutenants, chaplains and soldiers, were assembled, to reply to all the questions that might be made to them on the fortune of their borough, their city or their municipality; to say all that they could bear, and if there was any reason for exacting more. They were forced to sign the tax-deeds, in order that they should not afterwards resist the collectors, and defer or refuse payment, and were thus, in some measure, bound by their own oaths.*

The lowest class of the army, the knights, possessing only small portions of land, and unable, like their superiors, to take at discretion on the estates of the vanquished, had begun to practise industry, and to add the revenue of their own labour to their share of the revenues of the *subjects*. In taking these men's arts, they also assumed their manners, and gradually became mingled with them. At first, when they were summoned, they sat in common conference in the same place with their officers, with the *lords spiritual and temporal*; after citizens and members of municipalities had been summoned to Parliament, the soldiers separated from their leaders, and uniting with the citizens, deliberated with them in a separate place.†

Such is the origin of the House of Commons in the English Parliament. The cities did not willingly send deputies; for they were forced to take upon themselves the expense of their subsistence during this long stay, far from their work and their affairs. The deputies did not present themselves willingly, for they were forced to suspend the occupations which maintained their families, to go and declare exactly, before masters whose arm they always saw raised, how much might in future be taken from the produce of their trouble and industry, without ruining them.‡

* The first call of the deputies of boroughs was made by the twenty-third statute of Edward the First in 1295. "He issued writs to the sheriffs, enjoining them to send to Parliament two deputies from each borough within their county, and these provided with sufficient powers from their community, to consent in their name to what he and his council should require of them" (Hume's History, ch. xiii.)

† This union did not take place suddenly; and for some time the citizens who were called apart from the knights, as well as from the great barons and the court. Frequently, after answering the questions, and according to taxes, they returned home, although Parliament was not dissolved. (Hume's History, ch. xiii.)

‡ No intelligence could be more disagreeable to any borough, than to find that they must elect, or to any in-

(1300—1400.) The convocation of delegates from the commons was found convenient, and became a custom: they were called every time levies of money were required.* In the fourteenth century, the army commenced making excursions beyond the country, in order to acquire land and booty. For these enterprizes, arms, baggage, and provisions were required. The citizens were often consulted.†

From frequently seeing their conquerors, the citizens feared them less. They no longer beheld the conqueror armed, and exacting under pain of death; he appeared like an ill-assured robber ready to capitulate, and they began to think of making conditions. Engaged in more extensive industrial enterprizes, the more pressing want of available capital kept them alive as to the demands: they became more sensitive about their property. The deputies brought the complaints of their constituents, and began to plead for them. Thus an institution destined to favour the exactions, became turned against those who had called it to their assistance, and tended to preserve the conquered from the rapacity of their conquerors.‡

For a long period, the general of the army, the king, had only to appear or to speak, and the *subject people* at that aspect alone representing to itself all the horrors of invasion, pillage, burning, and massacre, quietly submitted and allowed itself to be struck, for fear that the least resistance should be punished by entire destruction.§ It was the natural subordination of the weak yielding to force. But when these times grew distant, when memory only feebly retraced them, when terror ceased to be the first impression, and men became able to reason before they feared, this subordination abated. The conqueror felt this; and that there might not be any thought of contending with him, and awaiting the effect after the threat, he called to the assistance of his will, instead of his determined authority, a mysterious power superior to all human force. From the moment that the idea of examining their masters'

dividual than that he was elected. (Hume's History, ch. xiii.)

* Richard the Second made a statute expressly to command the cities to name representatives. (Clarke, ch. i.)

† The invasions on France commenced about 1340, under the reign of Edward the Second.

‡ During the reign of Henry the Fourth (1400), the House of Commons began to assume powers which had not been exercised by their predecessors. They maintained the practice of not granting any supplies before they received an answer to their petitions; which was a tacit manner of bargaining with the prince. (Hume's History, ch. xviii.) The first example of the opposition of a member of the House of Commons to a demand for money, was given by Sir Thomas More, in 1509. (See Barrington, Remarks on the Ancient Statutes.)

§ The province of Northumberland, which had been punished by the conqueror, must still, after the lapse of several centuries, have presented a terrible example. This county, sixty miles in extent, had been so thoroughly chastised, that when the punishment was over, there was not a house, a tree, nor a living being to be found in it. The flocks had been seized, the implements of labour destroyed, and naked men driven into forests where they fell down by thousands, dead with hunger and cold. (Hume's History, ch. iv.)

actions entered the minds of the *subjects*, the masters conceived the idea of withdrawing their actions from all calculation.

(1500—1600.) They solemnly proclaimed their right as a sacred, a divine right. It was God who had drawn the sword, who had conquered by them, who purposed to maintain himself by means of them in his conquest. It was with this help that their commands presented themselves to the imagination of the vanquished. And all were then silent before a finger raised towards heaven, as formerly before a hand grasping the handle of the sword.

In the barbarism of the early periods, this divine sanction of conquered property had some use, by arresting with mysterious force the brigand seeking to possess, in presence of the brigand in possession; and thus ended wars, which, without this, would never have been ended. The Jewish customs consecrated these maxims, and the modern dogma of the divine right was founded on their tradition. But the new doctrine was far from resembling the ancient one. It was no longer the possessor turning to those who endeavoured to dispossess him, and saying "look not at my strength and yours; there is some one behind me stronger than you and I, who possesses these things of which I have only the usufruct, and it is with him you will have to deal."* A man said to another: "You are mine; you have fallen to my share by a will superior to us: he who wills that I should possess you, beholds you, and maintains me." Conviction was necessarily obtained with greater difficulty.

However, the unfortunate subjects, perfectly astonished, believed, at first, and humbled themselves; when a priest proclaimed these axioms, no one ventured to doubt. Could the man by whom God usually expressed himself ever open his mouth without his words coming from God? But the time arrived when those who insisted that they should be acknowledged masters, did not think themselves sufficiently supported by the clergy alone, and endeavoured in some sort to strengthen the authority of faith by the authority of reason. They called together the lawyers, without seeing that this defence was not suited to their cause, and that the ground on which they entrenched themselves would soon become the enemy's camp. Arranged in mysterious propositions, the divine right forbade all examination; to translate it into logical arguments was to provoke discussion and deliver it all up to controversy. The dogmatizers found no adversaries,—the reasoners were assailed by them. Every proposition put forward produced a contrary one. To those who proved by syllogisms that the conquerors had the right to possess the conquered, the conquered replied in the same form, that they had no right to be possessed. "But God," said the first, "has given you

to us;" "but God," replied the second, "had long before given us to ourselves."

Such was the situation of things, and the relations which existed between masters and *subjects*, when, in the year 1601, a lawyer, member of the House of Commons, speaking on the occasion of a subsidy demanded by Queen Elizabeth, thus commenced his discourse: "I marvel much that the House should stand upon granting of a subsidy, or the time of payment, when all we have is her majesty's, and she may lawfully at her pleasure take it from us: she hath as much right to all our lands and goods, as to any revenue of the crown." At these words he was interrupted by hootings and shouts of laughter. The speaker ordered silence, and the lawyer again rising, maintained his first assertion, and pretended "that he could prove his former position by precedents in the time of Henry the Third, King John, King Stephen, etc.:" the hooting then recommenced.*

Examples, indeed, would not have been wanting. But the murmurs of the House were a present example as affirmative as the others. In them could be seen that neither speeches nor evidences would ever be able to operate on English *subjects* the conviction which seized their ancestors at the sight of William the Bastard's sword in the hands of his son or grandson.

In those days, a swarm of juriconsults arose to demonstrate what cannot be demonstrated, power. Power declares itself by its exercise: it is a fact which reasoning neither creates nor destroys. All power that argues and maintains that it exists, decides that it has ceased to exist.

Already, in 1591, all the judges of England had made in concert a decree to transform into rights the deeds of the conquest, and revive by logic a material action, of which time had worn out the spring.

They declared what had declared itself three centuries before, that the conqueror was the lord and master, and that the conquered were at his mercy †

"That the soil, the inhabitants, and the industry of the country, existing for the wants, the subsistence, the comforts, and the luxuries of the conquering army, it was an incontestable right that the general, acting for the army, should dispose of the labour of the vanquished, should force it, prevent it, dispose of it in his own way; should have what he preferred manufactured, and prohibit what he did not like; that he should give exclusive privileges to those whose talent pleased him.‡

"That the king had a lawful right to prevent

* Hume's Hist. of England, ch. xlv.

† This act, which decreed that England was under absolute authority, did not specify the rights, fearing, doubtless, to limit them by naming them; it was simply affirmed in it, that nothing could limit the will of the *king*, neither statutes, nor customs. We will expose some of its implicit assertions, to show the various kinds of power which the decree sanctioned.

‡ That all trade was entirely subject to the pleasure of the sovereign; that even the statute which gave the liberty of commerce, admitted of all prohibitions of the crown. (Hume's History, ch. xl.)

* "The possession of what belongs to your god," said Jephtha to the chief of the Ammonites, "is it not legitimately yours? We possess by the same right the lands which our conquering God has acquired." Nonne ea quæ possidet Deus tuis tibi jure debentur? quæ autem Dominus Deus noster victor obtinuit, in nostram cedunt possessionem. (Judg. ch. xi. ver. 24.)

the transport of merchandize, to suspend sales, and to keep vessels prisoners in the ports, in order that exemption from these obstacles should afterwards be purchased.*

"That no subject was to leave the conquered country without his consent, for fear the property of the conquerors should be deprived of the industry or person of the emigrant.†

"That the lower chamber having been created only for the convenience of the conquerors, its interference in levies of money was not absolutely necessary; that the general alone, by an order of the day, might seize where it pleased him, and by whom it pleased him, the provisions he might require, in the same way as private property is used during a campaign.‡

"That he had the right of declaring war on any city or district he pleased, and of treating men and things as on the day of an invasion.§

"In a word, that the king, who was the supreme guardian of the conquest, having always to watch over its preservation, was to be the judge of whatever threatened it, and of the means of guarding it; that he consequently had the right to judge alone, to punish alone, to call to his assistance in his decision whoever he thought fit, and to establish at pleasure tribunals for the preservation of the order established by victory."||

"These acts of authority were called the royal prerogative; those who decreed this prerogative, decided at the same time that it was incontestable, and that it was a crime to doubt it; *prærogativam nemo audeat disputare*."¶

But their assertion had no power against revolted interests: if the sword of conquest, the arm even of God, presented to the minds of the subjects, no longer subdued them, to what could a jurist, armed with his pen, pretend? Therefore the defence was not noticed, and they dared to contest it.

It seems as if, in the depths of misery, the want of amelioration acts less strongly on us than in a more bearable condition. When the first wants absorb our attention, the mind, weary

with constantly thinking of them, unbends when they are satisfied, and is no longer capable of any other activity. But when we have not too much trouble for our existence, thought being less circumscribed, wanders elsewhere: we examine our situation more closely; we find more obstacles in it, because we have more desires, and torment ourselves for a change. As long as the subjugated men of England made only a pitiful income by their labour, they allowed themselves to be bound and despoiled without a murmur; they submitted to the prerogative. They were resigned under the Williams, when the conquerors had every thing, and the conquered nothing; they rebelled under James the First, when the riches of the commons were three times greater than those of the lords.*

It was then that the conquest began to be questioned, and that voices were raised against its natural acts. The most natural of all was doubtless the tax which the conquerors exacted for their subsistence; they were the measures by which they acted on industry, on the property and the persons of the subjects, in order to increase their annual revenue, and make extraordinary profits: the struggle began by an attack on these measures.

The conquered first desired to free their property and industry; on all sides their industry was hindered; the prohibitions stopped all undertakings; the monopolies discouraged labour, and destroyed the establishments already founded; the tribunals, by their decrees, suspended all affairs; a man imprisoned suddenly was ruined, and ruined his correspondents; the arbitrary justice which struck one industrious man, was hurtful by its consequences to those whom it spared. When the subjects had reached the point of feeling these relations between independence and riches, of feeling the ties of interest which bound them to one another, by the want which each one felt of the liberty of all, they united; they became a nation, they became a power.

For we must not imagine that there existed an English nation before this period. There was in England an encamped nation, a nation of strangers; but the natives had nothing but their misery in common. Each one, apart, served his master; he did nothing for his equals, who did nothing for him. It was a scattered multitude. Industry united them by mutual services rendered; industry inspired them with the desire of their common liberty.†

(A. D. 1603.) In this conjuncture, the king at the head, not of his warriors, but of his chaplains, rose to strengthen the threatened conquest. Armed with theology, he maintained with his own lips, in the face of the commons, that God had declared victorious generals and their sons to be gods like himself: *Dixi quod Dii estis*.‡

* Embargoes on merchandize were another engine of royal power, frequent as late as the reign of Elizabeth. (Ibid. Appendix iii.)

† No man could travel without the consent of the prince. (Ibid.) "If a peasant takes refuge in a town," says the 34th statute of Edward the Third, "the principal officer must give him up; and if he is taken setting off to another country, he must be marked on the forehead with the letter F."

‡ The orders of the day, which were called proclamations, might extend to every thing which concerned the relation of the conquerors and the conquered; every thing ordered in them was executed with the greatest rigour by a court called the Star Chamber. (Hume's Hist. Appendix iii.)

§ This was martial law. Whenever there was any insurrection or public disorder, the crown employed martial law. (Ibid.)

|| When the king himself was present, he was the sole judge, and all the others could only interpose with their advice. This court, composed of the privy council and the judges, possessed an unlimited discretionary authority of fining, imprisoning, and inflicting corporeal punishment. (Ibid.)

¶ Ibid. ch. xlv.

* Ibid. ch. li.

† They formed no community; were not regarded as a body politic; and were really nothing but a number of low dependent tradesmen, living without any particular civil tie in a neighbourhood together. (Ibid. Appendix ii.)

‡ This was said in Parliament by an advocate of the

By advancing such pretensions, he drew upon himself alone the anger and efforts of the *subjects*; he devoted himself or his successor for the cause of which he was the leader. The quarrel thus became engaged between the House of Commons, the deputies of the *subject people*, and the king, who put himself forward, only leaving to the privileged nation the care of assisting him on pressing occasions. The commons declared in the name of all the *subjects*, their unanimous will no longer to endure either the monopolies or taxes imposed on provisions. They represented that the taxes went on increasing, and the impediments growing greater; that it was necessary to stop at last, and to reflect that if the *subjects* exhausted themselves with labour, it was not only to furnish materials for taxes; that they wished also to live for themselves, to work for themselves, and to enjoy themselves the fruits of their labour.*

To all requests of the subjects, the king answered only by one word, the only one which he could answer, *I use my prerogative*.† The commons then drew up bills, in which, by abolishing customs which constrained them, they touched the prerogative. But the House of masters, or *lords*, took care not to sanction these resolutions: they stood at their post, assembled round their leader, and supported him by their resistance. The same classes of men who had formerly met, sword in hand, now, after the lapse of six centuries, found themselves in presence of one another, fighting a war of words and intrigues, before coming to force, the last of reasons.

The commons did not give way; bills followed each other in crowds; the power of the *orders of the day*, or proclamations, and the authority of the tribunals were attacked; but it was useless labour. The *lords* stopped every thing by their refusal to sanction the decisions; and the king, on his side, imprisoned the members who raised their voices, in virtue of that very authority which they were labouring to destroy.‡

(A. D. 1614—1621.) However, these debates wearied him; he dissolved the Parliament, hoping that the new members would be more docile. In order to prepare them, he instructed them in these words at the beginning of the session: "Your privileges were derived from the grace and permission of our ancestors and us, (for the most of them grew from precedents, which shows rather a toleration than inheritance;) yet we are pleased to give you our royal assurance, that as long as you contain yourselves within the limits of your duty, we will be as careful to maintain and preserve your lawful liberties and privileges as ever any of our predecessors were; nay, as to preserve our own royal prerogative."§

The commons might have answered, "The facts which you mention are exact: we do not mean to deny them. Your ancestors conquered us: we were a plunder of war for them; they

found it convenient that we should become more free; they loosened our bonds, as they would have drawn them tighter, in the view of their sole interest; they granted us some freedom; now we require more. Do you think yourselves strong; refuse, and we shall then see. If you feel yourselves weak, submit to the fate of all worn-out authority, and give way. There are here neither rights to claim, nor rights to defend; it is the destiny of all human things which have limits."

But instead of expressing themselves with this truthfulness, and braving the event, the commons eluded them. They found it better to reply to the king in his own language, and, like him, to attribute rights to themselves. They protested "that the liberties, franchises, and jurisdictions of Parliament," which they demanded for themselves and their constituents, "are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England."* It was a fiction similar to that practised by the advocates of the conquerors, when they sought their reasons against the conquered elsewhere than in the eternal fact of the conquest, the will to maintain it, and the strength to sustain this will. Either party left the realities behind, and confined itself to abstractions; this rendered the war less open, and its objects less precise: we shall see its consequences.

Each party recruited itself under names which indicated its nature, origin and pretensions; those who sided with the conquered, called themselves the *country party*; the others, the *court party*.†

James I. left his son, not what he had received at his accession, that is to say, the direction of a plunder but slightly contested as yet by those who suffered it, but what the conqueror had formerly bequeathed to the first of his successors, the command of a party which was to subsist on the labour of the inhabitants, and to whom the inhabitants were perfectly ready to refuse subsistence.

Force alone could entirely end this quarrel, and yet each party deferred the struggle. They endeavoured mutually to convince each other, and to make their adversary agree to what was required of him. The partisans of the *country* pretended that they had never been conquered, and that they had supported the others out of kindness, and not from constraint. Those of the *court* maintained that the former had always been their *subjects*, that it was their natural condition, and that nothing had, nor should in future mitigate for them the rigour of that state, except the will of their masters. But interest which did not rest, from time to time mixed up some more decisive assaults with this conflict of argument and replies. Men's wills were harshly expressed.

(A. D. 1625.) The first subsidy which the new king, Charles I., demanded of the Commons, was granted so sparingly, that it was rather, says Hume, a cruel mockery than a support; the second was formally refused.‡

The king declared to the Commons that, "if

regal power; the king himself maintained this doctrine in his speeches and writings. (Ibid. ch. xiv. and xvi.)

* Ibid. ch. xvi.

† Ibid. ch. xlviii.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

* Ibid.

† Ibid. ch. 1.

‡ Ibid.

they should not do their duties, in contributing to the necessities of the state, he must use those other means which God had put into his hands.*

These words, wants of the state, made the members of the Commons reflect: were the wants of the party of the ancient conquerors simply in question, or was it some interest which they had in common with the subjugated? What was the state? It was necessary that this question should first be put and solved.

(A. D. 1628.) In order to find out what he who had pronounced the word *state*, really meant by it, the House drew up a bill, in which it assumed the power of controlling all demands for money and of refusing or granting, according as it saw the interests of its constituents included or not in the interest of the state. This bill was called the *Petition of Rights*.

The Commons demanded, "that all manner of raising money which should appear like a requisition of war, should be abolished; and that if in the expenses, the affairs of those who paid were not entirely disregarded, the king would please to subject himself to the indispensable condition of all public contributions, to the free consent of the taxed or the causers of that consent; and thus, that no one could be forced to assist any tax, loan or benevolence, which had not been granted by the House of Commons."†

This petition struck a decisive blow. If the victorious class did not accede to it, fighting must ensue; if it did accede, it was deprived of every thing, its means of existence, of pleasure, of luxury, of its very honour, which it made to consist in skirmishing in foreign lands. All this must have been renounced; for it would have been too difficult a task to persuade the subjects that they derived any profit from it. The energy which the Commons displayed, determined the conquerors to adopt the latter alternative, but it was not without trouble. The Lords, in approving the *Petition of Rights*, endeavoured to annul it by a clause in which the sovereign power was recognized. The king hesitated long before signing this compact, which his situation forbade him to maintain.‡

(A. D. 1629.) A few months later, he recommended raising of his own private authority, the rights of tonnage and poundage, declaring to the Commons that he was compelled to it by necessity. The merchandizes of those who, trusting in the *Petition of Rights*, refused to pay, were seized and confiscated.§ The Commons were indignant at this violation of a treaty, which, however, could not fail of being violated; "those who levied tonnage and poundage were declared capital enemies. And even merchants who should voluntarily pay these duties,

were denominated betrayers of English liberty, and public enemies."¶ The king, provoked, saw no help but in force. He dissolved the house, imprisoned some members, summoned others before the privy council: on their refusal to appear, he inflicted fines on them, and gave his collectors orders to violate private dwellings.‡

The existence of those whose only means of support was the taxes raised on the subjects, became daily more difficult. This council of citizens which had been established to render accounts, now demanded them; it chose to scrutinize the wants it had to supply. The king resolved to call no more of these inconvenient assemblies. One of his ancestors had made a decree enjoining the cities not to fail to elect, and the elected men not to fail to assemble. Things had changed since the Richards.‡

(A. D. 1630.) A statute of Edward II. ordered that every subject possessing an income of twenty pounds sterling, was bound, at the king's command, to enter the order of knighthood, that is to say, to enlist himself in the militia, or pay his exemption from that service. This was a means of recruiting for the conquerors, who thus compelled the conquered to become the instruments of their own oppression. Charles I. revived this decree: he expected from it either a reinforcement of men, or some assistance of money to his party; but he was deceived in this hope. The time was past when the conquered, rendered selfish by the excess of their misery, esteemed themselves happy in obtaining some security against oppression, by betraying the cause of their brethren in misfortune. This cause had become sacred to them ever since they had hoped to make it triumph. They no longer sought for safety in escaping from the ranks of those who were perishing; they were determined that all should be saved, or all die.§

(A. D. 1634.) It was necessary for the army encamped in England to maintain fleets for its expeditions and defence. The money which these expenses required was levied on the inhabitants of the coast and seaports, under the name of ship-money. The king levied this tax on the whole country at once, and decreed this new measure in the name of the national honour and safety.¶

National honour and safety....; what did these words, addressed to subjects, mean? That it was to their advantage that those who possessed the country should be preserved by their naval force from being driven out of the kingdom, and be enabled to acquire possessions in foreign lands! The subjects did not require much reflection to feel that this interest might affect the nation of the conquerors, but in no degree affected them. Their national safety consisted in being worked no longer; their national honour consisted in succeeding in the design they were prosecuting: ships were not wanted for this.

The king, anxious to discourage the opposition by all possible means, had proposed this

* "Take not this for a threatening," added the king, "for I scorn to threaten any but my equals." (Ibid. ch. li.)

† That no man hereafter be compelled to make or yield any gift, loan, benevolence, tax, or such like charge, without common consent by act of Parliament. and that none be confined, or otherwise molested or disquieted, for the refusal thereof. (Ibid.)

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

* Ibid.
§ Ibid.

† Ibid. ch. lii.
¶ Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

question to the judges: "Whether, in a case of necessity, for the defence of the kingdom, he might not impose this taxation, and whether he were not sole judge of the necessity?" The judges replied in the affirmative.*

But notwithstanding the king's expressed will, notwithstanding this declaration, which gave his will some sort of logical foundation, courageous minds would not give way. It was then that Hampden appeared: he refused to submit to the tax. He was accused and condemned.†

At this condemnation, the subjects were all roused. Hampden had roused them, at the peril of his fortune and his life. "We have been children," was everywhere exclaimed; "formerly we were struck, and we hung down our heads: we are now men. We have lived so many centuries for others, is it not time to live for ourselves? We are millions, and they, how many are they!"‡

(1640.) The king was making war against the Scotch; the English people showed itself discontented with this war, and disposed to refuse every thing as long as it was carried on. The king, in a speech to the House of Commons, in speaking of the Scotch, pronounced the word *rebels*; § the Commons were greatly offended.

Justice was the weapon employed against the subjects; the Commons employed it for their benefit; they declared *delinquents* all military commanders, who, under pretext of the public safety or repose, had exercised military power in the counties; all who had levied ship-money and taxes on provisions; all who had concurred in the decrees of the extraordinary tribunals; all who possessed monopolies by the king's patent, and those who had judged Hampden.||

Since its institution, the House of Commons had frequently presented petitions, in which it exposed the sufferings of the conquered, humbly requesting that attention should be paid them, and that they should be treated with a lighter hand. In 1640, the Commons drew up a general remonstrance on the state of the people of England; but it was not addressed to the king or the Lords, but appealed to the nation itself. It was the first time that such a signal of rallying had been raised. This composition contained a recapitulation of all the abuses of power, which they were not disposed to suffer any longer; those whom they had supported until then, were spoken of in it as of insatiate men always receiving gifts, and who, far from being thankful, returned those benefits by outrage and oppression. Every thing in it breathed of hatred and anger. The House of Commons had it printed and published without submitting it to the Upper House, the affairs of which they

looked upon as quite apart from their own, and those of their constituents.*

To establish a barrier between the interests which it considered inimical, it ordered resistance to the power which the king exercised, of giving places to the subjects and recruiting his armies among them. It demanded that, in the event of a war, each man should find himself at the disposal of his party, and that there should be no forced coalition between the conquered and the conquerors.†

The bills containing these dispositions were not carried up to the House of Lords, who were careful not to change any of the ancient customs, on which their existence depended, and who rallied round their chief, the representative of their common interests. It was their duty to press round him, and make a body together against the revolt of their dependants.‡

A remarkable thing was, that the House of Commons went so far as to sanction by its will the lords' refusal to participate in the acts it drew up: "It is in the name of the inhabitants of this land," said they, "and for them that we act, and we have the mission to do it; we are their representatives, chosen by them. But by what right should you mix yourselves up with their affairs? What is there in common between you and the nation? You are nothing but individuals. We will act alone, we will decide alone; you will see our decisions; and if they offend you, you can demand an account of them, and we will answer you."§

Meanwhile, parties were growing more exasperated; the hour of force was about to strike. The House of Commons ordered a guard; the king dismissed it; and as they murmured, in order not to declare himself too soon their enemy, he offered them a new guard, under the command of one of his officers; but "they absolutely refused the offer, and were well pleased to insinuate that their danger chiefly arose from the king himself."||

(1642.) Five members of the Commons were accused, in the king's name, of having wished to overthrow the established order of things in this country, to deprive the king of his power, to render him odious to his subjects, and to withdraw *part of his soldiers from their allegiance*. Hampden was among the accused. The house took the liberty of its members under its protection, and refused to deliver them up to the sergeant-at-arms. The king came in person, and the House repeated its refusal. The accused retired to the city, and the armed citizens guarded them all night.¶

The next day the king attended the common council, and in passing through the streets, he heard the cry, "*Privilege of Parliament! Privilege of Parliament!*" resounding from all quarters. This was the way in which the people

* Ibid.

† Ibid.

‡ Iniquitous taxes, they said, are supported by arbitrary punishments; and all the privileges of the nation transmitted through so many ages, and purchased by the blood of so many heroes and patriots, now lie prostrate at the feet of the monarch. He is but one man; and the privileges of the people, the inheritance of millions, are too valuable to be sacrificed to him. (Ibid.)

§ Ibid. ch. liv.

|| Ibid.

* Ibid. ch. lv.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ That they themselves were the representative body of the whole kingdom, and that the peers were nothing but individuals, who held their seats in a particular capacity. (Ibid.)

|| Ibid.

¶ Ibid.

expressed itself when it agreed with the House of Commons.*

The inhabitants of the counties sent numbers of addresses to the Commons; they demanded to arm; they swore to live and die for their defence.†

Things had gone to such an extent, that the sword alone, which judges without appeal, could decide between the parties. It was necessary that the event of a combat should destroy or revive what a combat had formerly founded. The Commons made magazines of ammunition; they enjoined the officers of the paid army to receive no orders but from themselves, that those who were subjects by birth should return to their natural party. They sent similar messages to the governors of sea-ports and fortresses. The king retired to York.‡ He sought a favourable encampment, and assembled his forces. Those whose birth made them his companions in arms, flocked to him from all quarters, and exhorted him to save himself and them from that ignominious slavery with which they were threatened.§ The Commons attempted, for the last time, an impossible arrangement; they wanted a bill passed, of which the first clause was that subjects should be allowed arms. The king refused. "Should I grant these demands," said he, "the title of majesty may be continued to me; but as to true and real power, I should remain but the outside, but the picture, but the sign of a king. War on any terms was esteemed, by the king and all his counsellors, preferable to so ignominious a peace.¶"

All transaction was then broken off. The subjects armed, invoking their wants, their wills, and their union. The king, attesting his past fortune and long rule, *God and his right*, erected near Nottingham the standard of the Norman chief, the signal of the war declared to the country.¶

Each man, whose ancestors had made a part of the invading army, left his castle to go to the royal camp, and assume the command which his title assigned him. The inhabitants of the towns and seaports flocked to the opposite camp. It might be said, that the rallying cries of the two armies were, on one side, *idleness and power*; on the other, *industry and freedom*: for all those without employment, all those who desired no other occupation than that of enjoying themselves without trouble, enlisted, whatever their race, in the royal troops, where they were about to defend interests similar to their own; whilst those families of the race of the ancient conquerors, who practised industry, joined the party of the Commons.**

It was for these positive interests that the war was kept up on either side. The rest was all appearance or pretence. Those who engaged in the cause of the subjects were mostly Presbyterians, that is to say, that they would bear no yoke, not even in religion. Those who supported the opposite cause were Episcopalians

or papists; they liked to find, even in the forms of worship, power to exert and taxes to levy on men.*

(1643—1646.) The royal party was victorious at Stratton, Roundway Down, and Cropredy Bridge, and defeated at Edge Hill, Marston Moor, Newbury, and finally at Naseby.†

In every province which the royal army passed through, it made the inhabitants feel that they were re-conquered; it took their property: the parliamentary army respected men and property; its presence freed them.‡

Severe discipline, the subordination of the ancient conquerors, reigned among the first: each man had his place marked out beforehand; he remained in it, acknowledging his superiors as well as his inferiors. Amongst the others there frequently were divisions and disobedience. This was, because each, devoted to the independence of all, endeavoured to anticipate it for himself, and at least taste of liberty when on the point of dying for it. "They were not," they said, "mere janizaries; mercenary troops enlisted for hire, and to be disposed of at the will of their paymasters;"§ and these disorderly troops overthrew disciplined battalions.

Conferences were several times attempted, but without success. The subjects always demanded to remain armed; the king persisted that this right should belong to himself and his own party alone. The war continued.

(A. D. 1648.) At last, after a defeat, the king, pursued by the parliamentarians, fell into the camp of the Scotch subjects who delivered him up to the subjects of England. He took refuge in the Isle of Wight; he was seized there and imprisoned.¶ The leader of the enemy was a captive; what was the victorious party to do?

Every officer of the defeated army interposed in this war, not only on account of the leader, but also on his own account: the war was to continue; moreover, the son of the leader was there, and custom appointed him his successor.

Thus, in whatever manner the prisoner was disposed of, the same state of events remained: it was still necessary to fight the quarrel out. The strangers who had invaded England, had massacred all those who would not consent to become machines to feed them. The English, freeing themselves at the end of six centuries, were not to see in that an example for themselves. Their duty was to offer an asylum and labour to the defeated conquerors; and if such offers were refused by them, to send them out of the country.

(A. D. 1649.) Unfortunately, in the quarrels of men, humanity rarely makes itself heard; useless reprisals follow the necessary violence. The king was judged and condemned to death.

There was no other natural motive for that sentence than the will of those who had con-

* Ibid.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

¶ Ibid.

¶ Ibid.

** Ibid.

* The Whigs considered all religious opinions with a view to politics. Even in their hatred of Popery they did not so much regard the superstition or imputed idolatry of that unpopular sect, as its tendency to establish arbitrary power in the state. (Fox's History of the Reign of James the Second.)

† Hume's Hist. ch. lvi. lvii. lviii.

‡ Ibid. ch. lviii.

¶ Ibid.

§ Ibid. ch. lix.

quered him. *We will that the captive should perish*: no answer was possible to such a decree; submission alone remained.

But moved, perhaps, by the necessity which conscience feels to justify itself by reason, "the solicitor, in the name of the Commons, represented that Charles Stuart, being admitted King of England, and intrusted with a limited power; yet, nevertheless, from a wicked design to erect an unlimited and tyrannical government, had traitorously and maliciously levied war against the present Parliament, and the people whom they represented, and was therefore impeached as a tyrant, traitor and murderer."* Such was the speech of the solicitor, speaking in the name of the Commons. These few words were entirely false.

It was not the subjects who had made Charles Stuart king of England; his birth had transmitted to him the title of his father. No compact had been made between him and those over whom he had exercised his power. Power had come to him by chance, and not by agreement.

The prisoner knew the facts better. He knew "that he himself was their *native hereditary king*; nor was the whole authority of the state entitled to try him, who derived his dignity from the Supreme Majesty of Heaven. That those who arrogated a title to sit as his judges, were born his subjects."*

This supposititious treaty which the subjects advanced, was of a kind to be turned against them some day. The son of the prisoner might in his turn, if he was the conqueror, say, "The tacit contract which existed between you and my father, on the sole ground that he was James's son, exists between you and me, because I am his son. I have, on your own confession, the right to dispose of you and your property in the same measure that you had prescribed to my predecessor. I take this right according to your words. The justice which you exercised against him I shall exercise against you. He died justly, you say, for having aspired to more power; you, also, shall die justly, if you aspire to more liberty."

ESSAY II.

ON THE CHARACTER OF THE GREAT MEN OF THE REVOLUTION OF 1640, A PROPOS OF THE HISTORY OF CROMWELL, BY M. VILLEMAIN.

UNDER the title of the history of Cromwell, M. Villemain has written a complete history of the revolutions of England, from the commencement of the debates between public opinion and King Charles the First, until the return of Charles the Second. Cromwell figures in that great scene amongst many other men. The author could not present him alone; and if Cromwell does not appear to command all that surrounds him, it is the fault of facts, not his. To a just and sincere historian, Cromwell is not the hero of his own history. Cromwell has a rival, whose fortunate or unfortunate destiny affects the mind of the reader more than victories, stratagems, or blows; this rival is liberty; liberty, already full of life in the hearts of energetic men, when Cromwell was nothing; liberty, greater than Cromwell in his greatness even when he trampled her, faint and expiring, under his feet.

Some critics have poetically lamented that the *great figure* (thus they call Cromwell) did not appear sufficiently in this work. To give some value to this remark, the precise places in the book should have been pointed out where he ought to have appeared and did not; to speak clearly, the altered facts, or omitted circumstances, should have been placed under the eyes

of the public. Without these, the reproach made to the historian is void, and it seems only to have been made for the pleasure of venturing the pompous expression of the *great figure*, which is an insult to the Revolution of 1640, and to those which have had the same fate.

There is, perhaps, no country where the events of the history of Cromwell have been read less than in France; and there is no country where it is so intrepidly affirmed that Cromwell was a great man. Very little memory is required to discover whence comes this respected opinion, and that it is with us a part of the traditions of the old *régime*. At the time that the Englishman Sydney daily called Cromwell a tyrant, and acted consistently with this repeated malediction, at that very time the French minister Mazarin acknowledged him to be the genius of the century, and the King of France, Louis XIV., spoke to his ambassadors with uncovered head. Such are the imposing opinions which have doubtless formed our own. Sydney's judgment has disappeared before these great authorities. What is indeed a *rebel* in presence of two great statesmen? Of what weight can be the reason of him who only knew how to die for liberty, compared with the reason of those who knew how to govern long and

* Ibid.

* Ibid.

peacefully? Sydney, it is true, has a guarantee of his judgment on Cromwell in the real sentiments of the English people, expressed by ten years of continual insurrections. But Louis XIV. and Mazarin had on their side Christina, Queen of Sweden, who admired Cromwell for having turned out the Parliament; the King of Portugal, who tenderly called him his brother; the King of Spain, who tried to persuade him to make himself king, and offered his assistance; and the Prince of Conti, who spoke of Richard, Cromwell's son, as of the meanest of mankind, because he only knew how to be a citizen. It is not a paradox to say, that the *prestige* which attaches itself to the name of Cromwell in the mind of those who know nothing of him but his name, is the work of the men in authority, and the writers in support of that authority. Clarendon, absent from England during all the revolution, admires on returning with Charles II. the destruction of liberty, the dejection of the general mind, the easy obedience, and the enormity of the taxes and army; and seeing this, he celebrates in a book written for the king, the great things which the usurper has done. The poet Cowley, who had been present at the creation of these great things, and had suffered his share of them, does not rejoice quite so much as Lord Clarendon; when he wants to speak of the Protector, his pen only finds these words of gloomy energy: "That man made a jest of our sufferings." The name of Mazarin's hero was during his lifetime very much the fashion at courts, and very little so among the nations. We were not a nation then; but the people of Holland were; and it may be seen in the books of the period, what was thought and said there respecting the destroyer of English liberty. We are a nation at the present day; this is doubtless not a reason for us to believe what others have believed, but it is one for us to read seriously, to think for ourselves, and throw off the yoke of the admiration of Louis XIV. and the anathemas of the Prince of Conti.

We love liberty, we seek it; yet the names of those who have loved and sought it are as unknown to us as if they had never existed. How many of us know Ludlow, Harrison, Vane, Haslerig, and even the great Sydney. A French mouth would find a difficulty in pronouncing these foreign names; but our children learn to lisp the name of the Protector Cromwell. The Gauls had said truly: "Woe to the conquered!" Human opinion is often unfaithful to the cause of humanity. In the presence of the victorious chief of a revolution, when the field of battle is cleared, when the victor is the only man displaying himself, the remembrance of this great defeat is reduced in our minds to a few deceived hopes, a few convictions belied, a few vanished chimeras. Our interest, which always requires to be excited by some perceptible being, is easily lost on metaphysical subjects; and for want of food, is bestowed on the success of the conqueror, on the success of our own enemy. We rejoice in his joy; we join our voice to the acclamations which proclaim our nothingness. Such is the fatal force of human feeling; the French have experienced it.

But we must know that these hopes are not pure abstractions or chimeras of liberty, with the destinies of which we find it so difficult to sympathize. They had taken root in the hearts of men; they had fastened themselves invincibly there; they could not cease to exist without those hearts having ceased to beat. This is what we should never forget.

M. Villemain's merit is that of having been more just than blind fate, and having raised up those she had thrown down; historian of the conqueror, he has made himself the friend of the conquered; he has placed under our eyes, by the side of the sad spectacle of the overthrows of liberty, the picture of its various struggles, and of the virtues which defended it. The constancy and misfortunes of patriots, the energetic protestations of cities, the resistance of a simple merchant, the obscure sufferings of a writer, occupy a great place in his pages. He has not forgotten to celebrate the great characters and perilous enterprises of those who were indignant that English liberty should be lost after so much blood shed in its cause. Those who have crucified his work have little noticed this care, which is one of the author's best titles to public esteem. Among so many happily sketched characters, the only one which appears to have struck any body is that of Admiral Blake. Is it because Blake commands, is victorious, and runs down Dutch ships? Is it because he said to his sailors, "that they ought not to meddle with what was passing in London, but only occupy themselves about foreigners." Is it that in effect the type of a public man is a general gaining battles, and bearing in him that political passiveness which illustrates the despotism of a master in the name of the glory of his native land? We think not; and woe to France if she still thought it.

Why has not Bradshaw been remarked sooner, who, when Cromwell had turned out the Parliament, said to him openly: "Parliament is not dissolved; know, that beneath heaven there is no authority but its own which has the power to dissolve it?" Ludlow, who said to Cromwell's own son, "I should detest my own father, if he were in the place of yours;" who, when threatened by Cromwell with being sent to the Tower, calmly contested his right to order an arrest, and said: "A justice of the peace might do it, for he is authorized by the law; but you are not;" who thought himself guilty in having a place as soon as liberty was destroyed, and replied to the trivial objection, that by abandoning his post he lost the opportunity of doing good, "It is wrong to aid the usurpation of Cromwell; and I will not do evil, even that good may come of it?" Harrison, who for his part determined to be poor and persecuted; who braved Cromwell's hatred without yielding, and without complaining? Hutchinson, who, pressed by Cromwell to accept a place and favours, replied: "I will not enrich myself by assisting to enslave my country!" Colonel Rich, who, called before Cromwell's council of state, obstinately refused the oath to undertake nothing against his person and power? Sydney, inflexible under Cromwell as under Charles the First? Lilburn, mu-

tilated by order of King Charles the First for having dared to write, and who thus marked with the reprobation of tyranny, braved it again by writing under Cromwell? Tyranny did not forget him; "he died in prison," eloquently says M. Vilemain, "a martyr to liberty under all authorities, and treated as a chimerical and senseless mind by those who cannot conceive resistance to the strongest."

All these men, and many others whose names might be mentioned, inhabited prisons under Cromwell; and those among them who survived the sufferings of imprisonment, and were unable to escape from their country, stained with blood the scaffolds under Charles the Second.

Such are those who suffered: does any one wish to know what he was in comparison, who had fortune on his side, and for whom glory is now to be demanded? It suffices to follow him in his actions, and to repeat some of his words; the reader can decide between them.

Already, in 1644, Cromwell, then only an officer, endeavoured to prejudice the cause of liberty by exciting an ill-feeling between the English and the Scotch, who had come to assist the English against the designs of Charles the First. In 1645, he was lieutenant-general; clubs of armed citizens had assembled to preserve property from the pillage inseparable upon war; Cromwell put them down in several places; and when he met with any resistance, he caused his soldiers to attack them. In 1648, when the Parliament, seeing hostilities at an end, and the king a prisoner, wished to disband the army, Cromwell openly excited sedition among the troops; he sought to corrupt the officers, telling them that it was a disgraceful thing to serve a Parliament, and that it was preferable to be in a general's pay; he indecently repeated that the Commons would not keep themselves quiet, until the army had pulled their ears for them. In 1647, Cromwell took possession of King Charles the First, the prisoner of the English, and negotiated with him to sell him the support of the army against the nation. He promised to *purge* the House of Commons, so as to give it the constitution necessary to the interests of his majesty.

In 1648, when some young citizens of London came to the bar of the House of Commons to present petitions against the military power, and to demand that the House should make a treaty with Charles the First, in the name of the nation, Cromwell, at the head of his dragoons, drove them through the streets, ordering the soldiers to spare neither women nor children. In the same year, irritated at the king's negotiating with some Scotch envoys, he raised up the army against him, and after having driven all the energetic men out of the House of Commons, and subdued the rest by terror, he sent to

the scaffold, in virtue of a sentence of the Parliament, the man with whom he had negotiated against that very Parliament.

In 1649, he caused those men of his army to be put to the sword and shot, who, remembering that they had fought for liberty, claimed it in England's name. In 1650, he exercised in Ireland the right of war of barbarian times, putting to the sword all the garrisons which surrendered: become master of the country, he banished all its inhabitants into one single, deserted, and uncultivated province, in which they were ordered to remain under penalty of death; and he divided the rest of the soil among his soldiers. In 1652, he wished to make himself king: "Your plan," answered those to whom he confided it, "is opposed to the wishes of the nation; you will have nine persons out of ten against you." "Probably so," said Cromwell; "but if I disarm the nine first, and put a sword into the hands of the tenth, will not that answer?" In 1654, the Tower of London was full of republican prisoners. In 1655, in a trial in which Cromwell was interested, he suborned the jury by his particular orders; a judge dismissed this illegal jury; the protector loaded this courageous man with reproaches, and let fall these words: "You are not made to be a judge." In 1656, he circulated threats against the electors who should give their vote to men who were not devoted to him. He five times drove away by armed force the representatives of the nation; he first imprisoned eleven members, then thirty-nine, at last all those of the former patriots who would not join his tyranny, and the officers who, after having served the Parliament, became suspicious from their inaction.

He trampled pitilessly on the two fundamental securities of social existence, liberty of thought, and justice of judgment. He was deaf to the complaints of the friends of the nation, who when he took his first steps in power, said to him, through the lips of Milton: "Respect the hope of the country, respect the presence and the wounds of so many brave men, who have fought for liberty with thee; respect the opinion of other nations, and the great idea they entertain of this republic, which we have so gloriously erected." But those whom he persecuted were calm in the midst of their adversity, and he was restless, as if he had thought himself condemned to death by a decree of humanity binding to all men, and had expected the executioner every moment. His mother could never hear the sound of fire-arms without starting and naming him, and he never went out except armed under his clothes.

In the following article, we shall consider the general character of parties in the English Revolution, as we have first considered the character of individuals; M. Vilemain's work appears to us remarkable also in this point of view.

ESSAY III.

CONTINUATION OF THE SAME SUBJECT.—CHARACTER OF POLITICAL PARTIES.—THE DEISTS.—THE PRESBYTERIANS.—THE INDEPENDENTS.—THE ROYALISTS.—THE SOLDIERS.—THE PEOPLE.

WHAT was Cromwell's talent? what were Charles I.'s faults? How did one gain power? how did the other lose it? Was it hypocrisy or fanaticism which made the fortune of the first? was it too sudden a recourse to force, or the ill-advised employment of cunning, which destroyed the fortune of the second? These are questions which are often proclaimed as the fundamental points which the history of the English Revolution ought to solve. These various problems would doubtless furnish good precepts on the art of becoming a despot, and on that of maintaining despotic power: but it is not easy to say what profit those would derive from it who are anxious only to live in peace with themselves and others. Moreover, it was neither Charles Stuart nor Oliver Cromwell who was concerned in the Revolution of England; it was the English nation and liberty.

Royal misfortunes! Genius of the founders of empires! These are the words which still have the strongest hold on our pity or admiration. That the misfortunes of a king should be more affecting to kings than those of another man; that in the eyes of Cæsar's courtiers, the genius of Cæsar, which enables them to grow fat in inactivity, should be the greatest of geniuses, this can be understood; but we, citizens and the sons of citizens, by what other standard can we measure our interests and enthusiasm, than by the greatness of misfortunes and the morality of actions? What are the personal miseries of Charles Stuart, compared to the collective miseries of the English people? What is Cromwell's craftiness compared to the great idea of liberty? The king has perished: but how many men have perished for the other cause! The families of patriots have dearly paid for one single hope. The king is dead: but the nation, which could not die, was forced to contemplate within itself the instrument of its own servitude; it saw the insignia of its father land trampled upon by traitors, and the name of liberty derisively inscribed on the swords of its conquerors.

We must say that M. Villemain has not been blind to the existence of the English people, as the primary agent and object in the Revolution of England. This people had long groaned under the weight of a government which existed over them but not for them. They implored relief, and received threats as their sole answer. They made efforts which were punished as crimes. In 1640, strong from their long indignation, they rose at last, confronted their masters, and proposed to them, as equals to equals, a compact of reason and justice in exchange for

the hostilities of oppression: they were dismissed and deceived; and they then appealed to the sword as to the last of arbitrators. War ensued, and liberty was victorious. The chief of the power surrendered; he then became more tractable, and his conquerors commenced stipulating with him the conditions of peace. Such was the first epoch of the English Revolution.

But during the distractions of war, liberty was forgotten, even by those who fought for it. They insisted on remaining armed, and making the citizens obey them. These became indignant, and as their only answer, the former offered their resistance to the enemy; they proposed to the king to retrieve his defeats, and restore his authority, on condition that they should share it. The debates produced by this plot fill up the second epoch. The army wanted to sell itself dear; the king wanted to buy it cheap. The king secretly attempted other alliances; but he was weak, the army was strong: the army resolved to punish him; and taking on itself alone the care of ruining the dawn of liberty, sacrificed to its own fortune him with whom it had endeavoured to ally itself. From that period, the army reigned as the court had reigned; it reigned with a variety of license for the soldiers, and of despotism for their leaders; but the oppression of the citizens was uniform and constant: such was the third epoch.

The fourth epoch commenced at the death of Cromwell, with divisions in the army; the spirit of liberty re-appeared among the people; but the army, upon this menacing resurrection, returned to their old plan of a league with the Royalists; a leader had the honour of accomplishing it, and he also had the honour only to include himself in the treaty, and of selling his companions in arms at the same time that he sold the people. Such are the events, the course of which filled up the twenty years of the English Revolution, from the year 1640 to the 29th of May, 1660, the day of Charles II.'s entry.

It was in this circle of events that the various parties which history has distinguished, acted, namely, the Deists, the Presbyterians, the Independents, the Royalists, the soldiers, and finally the people, a party composed of the vulgar portion of all the others, a species of common centre to which they all tended, and in which the weakest of each sect met. The sect of the Deists was the least numerous, the most reasonable, and not the least energetic; it numbered Sydney in its ranks. Its idea of liberty was great and elevated. Liberty appeared to it both simple and universal, belonging to no government,

but possible under several ; the result of reason and human will, not of a fortuitous and temporary arrangement. The Presbyterians believed liberty to be necessarily excluded from a people who were under Episcopal discipline, and especially from those who professed the Roman Catholic faith ; with these exceptions, they acknowledged it to be compatible with various forms either political or religious. But the Puritans or Independents believed it to be compatible with but one form, religion without priesthood, and government without a head. Of these three sects, the first was always equally calm and firm ; there could be no fanaticism among those who excluded nothing. The doctrines of the Presbyterians, on the contrary, were not without danger ; their proscription of episcopacy rendered them malevolent and violent ; their tolerance on other points, unphilosophical because not universal, easily degenerated into an indolent skepticism, and a cowardly tendency to follow fortune. Whitelocke deserted to Cromwell, Hollis to Charles II. ; whilst Sidney, from a more elevated position, neither hoped nor feared any thing from the chance which disposed of power : neither of the Parliaments, the dictator, the military councils, nor the king, were able for one moment to arrest his eyes, fixed as they were on liberty. The Puritans, who confined the idea of independence within the narrow circle of a precise formula, and kept it captive there, would with too great facility make the false equation of liberty with the exclusive symbol in which they placed it. It is true that from incessantly aspiring after a fixed and sensible object, the minds of most of these men contracted a remarkable habit of determination and energy. They were the dupes of the confusion of their ideas ; but they nobly accepted the persecutions under the republic, and the scaffold under Charles II. The Royalists, enemies to all these parties, opposed them, either from a hatred of liberty, from the fear of a concurrence of ambition, or from affection for the person and family of Charles Stuart. This last species of Royalists appeared the most rare. What the generality of them liked, was not the king ; it was royalty ; it was the pleasure of signing commissions and giving pensions. Their secret worship was for this power ; their idolatry adored the crown which was its visible sign. "My son," said old Windham, "be faithful to the crown ; I charge you never to abandon the crown, even should you see it suspended on a bush."

Such were the parties : as for the people, whom we have reckoned amongst them, and which participated at the same time in the nature of each, it appeared successively, and according to the chances of fortune, entirely Presbyterian, entirely Independent, entirely Royalist. The necessity for making acclamations, caused it to celebrate all the victories ; but if each formula figured in its language, none penetrated into its conviction. The people was egotistical, as it was natural that it should be. It had no regard but for its own interest ; in return, its interest was equally despised by all those who governed, and whom it applauded by turns.

Let us return to the history of Cromwell.

The indication of some passages of the book which forms the subject of this article, will render more striking the four epochs which we have distinguished in the twenty years of the English revolution. At the period of the defeat of the Royalists, and the surrender of Charles I., M. Villemain shows us the parliamentary army, unaccustomed to civil life, and wanting nothing but war and rank. When the king was carried off by the army, the Parliament claimed its prisoner ; General Fairfax requested Charles to return of his own accord ; the king refused : "General," said he, "I have as much credit in the army as you have." The king, indeed, found friendship and attentions in the camp. The officers paid court to him, and he paid court to the soldiers. It was treating between equals. "I must play my game as much as I can," he said. But he played his game so ill, that he raised against him his future allies : it was the cause of his ruin. After the death of Charles I., the oppression of the army made itself felt by the people, and the oppression of the chief by the army. Pamphlets denounced to the citizens the *second chains* of Great Britain, whilst Cromwell had those soldiers shot who dreamed of claiming their rights as free men ; but the Royalists were protected and welcomed. Ludlow, when imprisoned in the Tower, received a visit from a noble Irishman, who offered him his influence with the *Lord Protector*. The project of a reconciliation occupied at the same time the son of Charles I., and Cromwell's family ; a duchess was mediatrix : Cromwell condescended to excuse himself to the ancient nobles for not agreeing with Charles, and he gave them to understand that their fortune would not suffer from it ; but everywhere the public cry was, *Down with the courtiers and the soldiers!* The arms of the Protector, placed over the gates of Somerset-house, were covered with mud at his death. Richard Cromwell had not courage to continue the tyranny, and he was disliked by the officers ; he was deposed ; the army was divided, and the patriots rallied ; movements were preparing : the officers then thought of renewing the compact already attempted in vain with Charles II. and the Royalists. Fleetwood, Cromwell's son-in-law, and several others, conceived this idea. George Monck executed it.

Monck, first a deserter from the royal army, afterwards a creature of Cromwell's, succeeded in this enterprize by means of mystery and lies. "His policy," says M. Villemain, "was a profusion of false oaths ; it must even be admitted that he carried to excess the precaution of perjury." Whilst conducting his manœuvres, he said to Ludlow, "We must live and die for the republic ;" and placing his hand in that of the inflexible Haslerig, he swore to oppose the elevation of Charles Stuart, or of any one else. We find in M. Villemain's work great truth of character, and the talent of bringing forward events as yet unperceived. For example, we are indebted to him for being the first to remark, that the odious epithets of *abominable and factious, men capable of every crime, and worthy of all contempt*, with which the most philosophic historians have loaded the party of the *levellers*,

were productions of Cromwell's mind, and the ordinary accompaniment of the insults with which he pursued those who resisted him, whilst condemning them to death. It is from his lips that these words passed into history. M. Villemain has likewise discovered that the denomination of *madmen and fanatics*, with which Hume and Voltaire branded the most noble patriots, was really the invention of Monck; that he was the first who used it, and brought it into fashion to assist the restoration.

The history of Cromwell is written with gravity, clearness, and elegance without effeminacy. It has the entirely novel merit of being composed from memoirs and original documents, and of reproducing with perfect exactness the tone of the period. More precision and unity in the political views might be desired; but in our opinion, there is no other work which presents so complete a picture, and gives so accurate an idea of the great revolution of 1640.

ESSAY IV.

ON THE LIFE OF COLONEL HUTCHINSON, MEMBER OF THE LONG PARLIAMENT, WRITTEN BY HIS WIDOW LUCY APSLEY.

TOWARDS the middle of the fourteenth century, twenty English knights, returning together from the wars in Flanders, passed through France on their way into Aquitania. Arrived near Meaux, they met on their road one of those bands of peasants who were at that time in rebellion against their masters, in order to constrain them to be just. The English nobles, instead of quietly proceeding, thought themselves obliged to spare the lords of the place the trouble of massacring their rebellious serfs; they rushed, mounted on their war horses, and in complete armour, into the midst of these almost unarmed men; they killed a great number, and pursued their road, says the simple chronicler, congratulating themselves on the bravery they had displayed *for the ladies*.

Thus, in spite of their quarrels, the nobles of all countries considered themselves brothers, and the gentleman belonged above all things to the nation of gentlemen. We ourselves, as freemen, belong above all things to the nation of freemen, and those who, at a distance from us, struggle for independence, and those who fall in its cause, are our brothers and our heroes.

By this standard, the life of Colonel Hutchinson, an English patriot of 1640, belongs to us as much as to England; for it was our cause struggling in the war which Charles I. declared against the Parliament; it was to testify to our cause that Hampden, Sydney, Henry Vane, and Colonel Hutchinson himself perished. His memoirs, long unknown, ought to have the same value in our eyes, that the discovery of some legend relating the merits and courage of a martyr in foreign lands had for the early Christians. The work which is now occupying us has another interest in addition to this: it is, that the life of the patriot is described by his wife; it is, that the mind of the historian is nobly developed

therein by the side of the mind of the hero, and that in the simple narrative of the actions of one mind, we find two great models.

In the struggling and perilous times of infant Christianity, the wife of the Christian was the most touching of characters. Now that resistance, danger, and moral strength exist for patriotism, the most touching of characters is that of the woman who has shared the austere life of the patriot. Mrs. Hutchinson seems to have felt this in writing his memoirs, and this sentiment contributes to give her narrative an air of grandeur which extends without effort to the smallest circumstances. Natural attachments, increased by the power of a great mutual conviction, one thought uniting two existences, domestic afflictions effaced before the prospect of a great future, liberty appearing in the horizon as an infallible providence, such are the great ideas and images of happiness presented by this book; and there is no enthusiastic exaggeration in it; there is nothing in it but what is simple and intelligible to minds capable of feeling and delighting in the truth.

Colonel Hutchinson's distinguishing traits were like those of all great characters, calmness and strength. Deprived of his fortune by the sacrifices he had made in the cause of liberty, driven from his post by Cromwell, calumniated by the pamphleteers whom the Protector employed, denounced to the people sometimes as a traitor, sometimes as a fanatic, his constancy was immovable. The despot, who had no conception of any great thoughts apart from ambition, thought one day that he had done sufficient to conquer him, and sent to ask him in his retreat, if he persisted in keeping himself aloof from affairs, and living useless to the public. "When the moment for being useful shall arrive," answered the colonel, "I will not keep myself aloof. I await that moment. I will not share the mis-

my of those who, for gold, are concerned in the servitude of their country."

This energetic answer was a sentence of proscription for him who had pronounced it; Colonel Hutchinson was destined by the Protector to share the fetters of Henry Vane. But before Cromwell had sent his satellites to seize the patriot, death overtook himself, and soon after, the restoration threw into other hands the inheritance of his power and his revenge. Those whom Cromwell had hated were summoned to appear before Cromwell's courtiers, disguised as royal judges; several were condemned to death either as judges of the late king, or as incorrigible patriots; a great many were banished and deprived of their estates: Colonel Hutchinson was exempted from all these sentences: "But," says the author of the *Memoirs*, "he complained bitterly of being spared on that fatal day, when the cause to which he had devoted his life was betrayed and condemned. He looked upon himself as judged and executed in the persons of his friends. Although grateful to God for his deliverance, he was doubtful whether he ought to accept it: 'Never,' said he, to his wife, whose care and anxious services had contributed to save him from this peril, 'have you done any thing which has displeased me more.' Had it not been for the tears of his family, he would willingly have given himself up to death: one thought alone determined him to endure life, which was that he believed his days to be reserved for greater sacrifices."

When Charles II., not to violate his word too shamelessly, had proposed a law of amnesty which restricted the course of retaliation, which the restoration naturally would pursue, he said confidentially in the House of Lords, that other means would be employed to get rid of the intractable patriots. These words had their effect: after a year's repose, Colonel Hutchinson was carried away from his country house, and conducted to the Tower of London. He requested to be informed of the order by virtue of which he was imprisoned; this was refused, and all that he could learn was, that a ministerial despatch had enjoined the governor of the province in which he resided to comprehend him in any conspiracy whatsoever. The colonel, condemned without motive to an indefinite period of imprisonment, forbade his wife and friends taking any steps for his liberation. "I am now happy," said he; "I no longer owe these men

any thing; they had bound my hands by sparing me; their injustice restores me my liberty. I have no longer any thing but my courage and prudence to take counsel of." It seemed as if his misfortune had lightened him of a painful burden, and his natural gaiety was increased by it. When he saw his wife grieve over him and weep, "Do you then forget," said he, "for what cause I suffer? do you forget that this cause is God's cause, and will not perish." "The cause will live, I know," answered she, "but you will die in this dungeon, deprived of air and light." "I shall die; but what does that matter to me, provided the cause triumphs, provided my blood hastens its victory, by falling upon our enemies." Colonel Hutchinson sank under it after eleven months' imprisonment.

There are singular resemblances between this character and that of one of our countrymen, whose name must live amongst us as long as the name of liberty. M. de Lafayette has preserved the same calmness and imperturbable serenity in all the vicissitudes of his long political career. In America, in his triumphs; in Germany, in the depths of his prison; when a whole nation adored him, when that same nation called him a traitor, M. de Lafayette was the same; no success has been able to elate him, no reverse to damp him. It was with smiles that he learnt in his fields of Lagrange the plots which a suspicious despot was contriving to implicate him in. This even mind, thoroughly devoted without apparent exaltation, seems attached to liberty as we all are to life, by a kind of involuntary inclination. Whoever saw M. de Lafayette without knowing him, would at once say of him that he was an amiable man, and be surprised to learn afterwards that this man, of so mild a nature, bears within him forty years of resistance to all the seductions and all the threats of power.

Colonel Hutchinson has found the most worthy historian of his life in the woman who was his companion in it. She understood all the secrets of that life of patriotism and devotion. She is proud of having shared it; she believes in the infallible advent of human liberty; and it is with scorn that from the loftiness of this great thought, she looks upon the pitiable malice of despots, and their vain and odious crimes. "They were able to kill the body of him whom I loved," she exclaims; "but they have killed neither his glory nor his example."

ESSAY V.

ON THE RESTORATION OF 1660, A PROPOS OF A WORK ENTITLED "AN HISTORICAL ESSAY ON THE REIGN OF CHARLES THE SECOND, BY JULES BERTHEVIN."

AT the death of Cromwell, discord broke out in the army which had inherited his power, and the hope of liberty, after ten years of oppression, became general in England. General George Monck's presence of mind soon destroyed these hopes. He adopted the plan of calling in Cromwell's former rivals in support of Cromwell's government; a treaty was concluded between Monck for the army and Charles II., for the Royalists; and the son of Charles I. was brought back in triumph to London by the very troops which had escorted Charles I. to the scaffold. This is what the writers of the history of England have called the restoration. During those days of noisy festivity and debauchery, whilst the populace, forgetting vanquished liberty, got drunk with the conquerors, the patriots, pursued in the king's name, as they had been in the Protector's, concealed themselves or took flight: Sydney and Ludlow crossed the seas; Vane and Harrison were imprisoned.

After the first rejoicings, after the division of places, pensions, titles, profits and honours, after the faithful servants of the usurped tyranny had received, according to the terms of the treaty of alliance, commissions signed with the royal seal, the king, regardless of this same treaty, desired to shed blood and revenge the affront of his defeats, under pretence of revenging his father. His new courtiers, those whose fortune had been made by the death of Charles I., offered no resistance to this excess of filial piety. They even had the infamy to sit among the judges of those who were called regicides, and send to the scaffold ten men who had been their friends, and who, in judging the king, had only executed their orders, intimated at the edge of the sword. It was with that blood that they signed the promise of fidelity to the new as well as to the old authority.

But this was not all; it was requisite for the nation to learn that patriotism without regicide, and even averse to regicide, was not the less deserving of death. Henry Vane and Sydney had disdained to be concerned in the ignoble murder of a captive king; Henry Vane was given up to the executioner; and hired assassins pursued Sydney even into exile. It was the Princess Henrietta, the sister of Charles II., the ornament of Louis XIV.'s balls, the Princess Henrietta, young, beautiful, and sensitive, who, from her residence in France, was better able to direct these expeditions, and who took upon herself to give orders and a salary to the murderers. Every head of an outlaw was to be paid thirty crowns.

The inviolable asylum which the people of Holland offered to the English patriots, kindled the hatred of the rulers of England against this free nation; Charles II. declared war with it under false pretexts of commerce. His fleets attacked unexpectedly the ships of the Batavian merchants, who, far from revenging themselves by cowardly reprisals, avowed that the English were their friends, and that in arming against their despot, they were fighting for them. The English nation prayed for their victory, and when Ruyter and de Witt burned Charles II.'s ships within view of London, when Charles, frightened, demanded assistance of the Parliament, Parliament for sole answer drew up a bill which disbanded all the troops. Superficial minds will fail to understand this conduct, inspired by a grander patriotism than what is vulgarly so called. The king was not astonished to see those whose liberty was destroyed by his power, united by hope and interest with the free people whose ruin he was endeavouring to consummate. He suspended the execution of his projects; but, during the truce, he meditated a vaster plan. He reflected that he was not the only king in Europe, and that consequently there were men as annoyed as he was by the sight of Dutch independence; he thought of Louis XIV.

The ray of light which appeared to Charles II., also struck the King of France; a secret alliance was concluded, and the two monarchs engaged to unite with all their might against the United Provinces, to destroy the government of those provinces, and to restore to the princes of Orange a nominal authority. After having implored God to *bless* this enterprise, undertaken *for his sole glory*, the two kings sent out a hundred and thirty ships of war, and a hundred and thirty thousand men, against the handful of free-men who enriched by their labour, and honoured by their independence, the provinces of Batavia.

The merchantmen of the Dutch were pursued on the seas, and surprised by means of infamous stratagems; that nation was insulted in manifestos filled in advance with all the pride of the victory which despotism promised itself over the only men who were without masters; and this people, as at first, answered only by protestations of friendship towards the nations whose pretended representatives outraged it and burned its cities. But fortune did not attend the good cause; the soldiers of Louis XIV. encamped at the gate of Amsterdam. The citizens burst the dykes of the sea, and inundated their own dwellings to preserve them from slavery. Unfortunately there were still ambitious men and traitors

in Holland; these took part with the aggressors; and the Prince of Orange, to whom these kings destined the supreme authority, received it at the hands of the populace which had risen against its magistrates. The two greatest citizens of modern times, the brothers de Witt, perished beneath the blows of traitors. Liberty perished with them; the design of the kings was fulfilled.

During these combats against the liberty of a foreign nation, Charles II. did not forget that he was to efface every vestige of independence in the three countries which fate had placed under his rule. Scotland, like England, had seen some heads fall; but soon it was struck in the mass. The religion of the Scotch was Presbyterianism, a religion without pomp, without prelates, and the somewhat harsh austerity of which inspired the mind with pride and daring. A decree issued in London, ordered the Scotch to cease to be Presbyterians; judges, executioners and soldiers were sent to compel to obedience men whose most sacred right was violated by this decree. Thousands of half-savage mountaineers were sent against them; pillage, burnings, and massacres spread everywhere. Women even were not spared; and for fear that the recital of these horrors should, from compassion, rouse the courage of the English nation, it was forbidden, under pain of death, to cross the frontiers of Scotland.

All these exploits, so well calculated to insure power, promised it long years of repose; and it would doubtless have enjoyed them had it been able to keep united within itself. But the plague of internal discord afflicted it in the midst of its successes. The government of the restoration was divided between two classes of men formerly enemies. In the first days of this great union, the more lively sentiment of their common interests, and the fumes of wine, had entirely reconciled them; they had embraced like brothers; but soon afterwards, relapsing under the weight of habit, they hated each other as rivals. Charles II. affected a difficult impartiality towards all. Too skilful not to feel that the traitors to liberty are the best instruments against it, he gave the Cromwellites the greatest portion of authority, reserving pensions to indemnify his old friends. These were indignant at their experience being despised; they complained of the king; they murmured; and from murmurs they came to plots. They undertook to dethrone Charles II. and to make his brother, the Duke of York, who was better disposed for their interests, king. Such was the origin of this popish conspiracy, so celebrated in the history of England, and so called because the principal parts were played by Catholics. Charles II., experienced and discreet, wished to stifle all rumour of the plot, feeling that it was in his power to disarm the conspirators without violence. The imprudence of a minister rendered his efforts useless; and he then hastened to put an end to the inquiries, by the punishment of some Jesuits and a lord, whom he might have saved. Then immediately changing his policy, he brought back to himself by new favours, the Papists, the nobles, and the heads of the clergy. This faction

was satisfied; but the other murmured in its turn: the apostates of the revolution, those who had quelled it first, feared to see the fruit of their victories pass into other hands. In their alarm, they ventured to speak of patriotism, and to invoke the assistance of the patriots. The patriots, led on by a vague hope, replied to their call. Thus arose the famous opposition of 1678, the first example of that systematic opposition which has perpetuated itself in England. Charles II. was irritated by this league, which confounded all his ideas; less enlightened than his successors, he thought his government in danger, when he heard the Shaftesburys once more attesting the independence which they had abjured, and hold out their hands to the citizens whom they had sold for places. Made fierce and cruel by fear, he surrounded himself with spies, false witnesses, and corrupt judges, and with their assistance filled the prisons and stained the scaffolds with blood. In return for this violence, the opposition conspired; it conspired, not after the manner of the English people, not for liberty, but in the way of the Popish malecontents, to have a king of their own choice. These had laboured for the Duke of York; the new malecontents laboured for the Duke of Monmouth, Charles II.'s natural child. Whilst the better to insure their projects, they increased in attentions to the friends of the nation, Sydney, just returned after twenty years of exile, on his side thought of rallying the true partisans of that ancient cause, so often defeated and never despaired of. The chiefs of the opposing party sought him; Sydney did not conceal his plans from them; and they, without agreeing with him as to the object of the war to be undertaken, showed themselves disposed to pursue in concert two plans very different from one another, the awakening of liberty, and a change of master. The death of the king did not enter into Sydney's plan, nor even into the plan of those malecontents who, like Lord Russell, had any grandeur of soul; this murder, secretly plotted by a few subaltern malecontents, was imputed to them both. Russell and Sydney perished.

Equally intrepid on the scaffold, both offered an example of greatness of soul; but Lord Russell, whilst accusing despotism, reproached it with levelling: "There are no more nobles," said he; whilst Sydney conceived no greatness but that of virtue and genius: he had armed himself only to acquire the peace of independence.*

Such are the events which compose the period of the history of England, which bears the name of Charles II. M. Jules Berthevin has told them simply, exactly, but without understanding them. His work is full of sincerity, but weak. The author blames Charles II. for having broken his promises and made unjust wars; for having persecuted, surrounded himself with hired villains, and having been false and cruel; and in the same page he praises him for the ambitious enterprises which led him to this infamy; he

* Sidney had taken for his motto the following verses:—

..... Manus hæc inimica tyrannis
Ense petit placidum sub libertate quietem.

praises him "for having sought to possess himself of the noble appanage of his fathers, for having endeavoured to find in authority the right of forcing the people to be happy, and withdrawing his subjects and himself from the caprices of tumultuous assemblies." The author begs to be forgiven, because he ventures "to throw some interest over Sydney's last moments." We do not see to whom M. Jules Berthevin offers these apologies. No man of feeling,

whatever his party or situation, will owe him ill-will for not calumniating the great Sydney. Besides, a writer owes nobody an account of his own conscience; and the writer who is not liberal, requires more than any other to appear to depend on himself alone. As his opinions have no logical value, it is only by the force of moral dignity that they can pretend to any respect.

ESSAY VI.

ON THE REVOLUTION OF 1688.

It is a custom now in fashion to cry up the English revolution of 1688, and desire William the Third for the salvation and vengeance of nations. This admiration and these wishes, however patriotic they may be proclaimed, are both ignorant and cowardly. Firstly, it is false that the deliverance of oppressed nations can proceed otherwise than by the nations themselves; and if liberty could really be the result of the mere fortune of some enterprising adventurer, without industry, and without public virtues, liberty would not be worth wishing for. But it is not so; the dethroners of princes do not fail to make themselves princes; the people are little more in their eyes than the well-earned recompense of a hazardous expedition, and it is necessary that this people, which has not known how to take up the interest of its own destiny, has not known how to will and act for itself, and has not known how to individualize itself, should submit to the condition of things for which we will and act, and which are disposed, because they have been willed and acted for.

Such was, in the revolution of 1688, the destiny of the English people; a stranger to the struggle in which the Stuarts fell, it appears in it only as the passive object of the dispute. It was not by its strength that James II. fell; it was not by it that William III. was victorious; and if some good did accrue to it from this event, it has no greater reason to thank itself for it, than an estate has to thank itself for thriving under the more prudent heir of a first indolent proprietor.

If it is objected that many born Englishmen lent their aid to this revolution, and called it the *salvation of England*, we shall answer, that before reasoning on the words of these men, we must examine what they really signified from their lips; if patriotism and liberty were concerned in them, or if the salvation of the country, when they spoke of it, did not merely signify the safety of their places, their titles, their pretensions, and their ambitious hopes. They

may legitimately be suspected, when we see contrasted with the violence of their transports the sullen and cold aspect of that body which is never agitated by narrow and private interest, of that all which is called the nation, formerly so animated, active, and full of life in the movement of 1640. It was with the air of a disgusted spectator, that the nation beheld this dethronement, and solemn coronation, which the proclamations and newspapers of the new authority called liberty, it is true; singular liberty, which had come over on the ships of the favourite of Charles II., of the murderers of the De Witts, and sworn in his camps by lords with monopolies, officers with commissions, and prelates with benefices. If too exclusive a preference for the Roman Catholics had not made the Stuarts forget their first impartiality in the distribution of places, William III. would have found no friends; those who at his voice rose against the power of James II. would have been as immovable as in the times when Henry Vane was quartered alive, and as dumb as when the dragons of Charles II. massacred the Presbyterian women. But after having coolly beheld these horrors, after living twenty years under the government which committed them, they could not endure James II. giving to Catholics all the places at court, in the church, and in the army. This is the entire secret of William's popularity, and the pretended deliverance of 1688.

The cause which triumphed in this revolution, was not therefore the great cause of 1640, the cause of Hampden, the cause of human rights; if we seek its origin, it dates from 1683, from the first conspiracy of the ambitious malecontents. Its first patrons and victims were a candidate for the throne, and a disgraced minister; they were Monmouth and Shaftesbury. It is true, that from its birth, it boldly displayed the ensigns of patriotism; it is true that it claimed Sydney; but Sydney, a faithful depositary of the old secret of 1640, while rebelling with it, distinguished himself thoroughly from

it; it was in vain that the same proscription confounded him with the partisans of this new cause; in vain the same axe cut off his head and theirs; his crime was not their crime; Sydney was guilty towards despotism; they were guilty only towards the despot.

Sydney's cause perished with him; the other promptly recovered from its first reverse, grew and strengthened in silence. At the end of six years came its day of triumph, a day in which was seen the strange alliance of high places, large profits, and all the trappings of excessive power, with the words liberty and country; a day in which men loaded with titles stretched out their hands to men to whom titles were an insult, exclaiming, "what you have desired is obtained; liberty is come, for we reign." In what act of this government, calling itself the offspring of the complete and perfected revolution, has a liberal and generous spirit been shown? The answer is, the Bill of Rights; a slight collection of a few principles delivered without warrant to the discretion of power; a vain and fruitless remonstrance which has been falsely called a contract, and of which power has since torn every page with impunity. It is not even true that William had the merit of accepting the Bill of Rights as a condition of royalty; royalty was without conditions for him; he left to no one, except those who had hired themselves to him, the right of reckoning with him. When the Bill of Rights was drawn up, William was king; every thing was ratified for him, even to the succession of his heirs. The Bill of Rights, at first rejected by the peers, and suddenly adopted by them on account of its insignificance, was published with the Coronation Act; and this is the slight foundation on which the fable was built of a treaty between the English people and King William.

The first act of this government, not after its definitive institution, when it might, under the shelter of authority, disregard public opinion, but before its existence had been legally decreed, at the period when it would have shown delicacy, if it had thought delicacy necessary, the first act of this government was to interdict, by a simple proclamation, all discussion on public affairs; a formal avowal that all which had been done until then, and all which was going to be done, was contrary to the will, the interest, and the reason of the people. Later, it maintained with insolent obstinacy the law of the Stuarts which established the censorship of books and the slavery of the press; it preserved this law until the precise time when, to continue it longer, it must have been newly decreed, until 1695, the term which the not-to-be-mistrusted wisdom of Charles II. had assigned to this law. All the spirit of the revolution was openly developed by the renewal of the statutes which gave the Anglicans alone the exclusive right of occupying places: thus the energetic sect of Protestant Nonconformists, the most patriotic of sects, was repudiated by the men of 1688. The men of 1688 aspired to a monopoly of places; the great crime of the Catholics in their eyes, therefore, was having endeavoured to set up one monopoly against another; and it

was to repress that one ambition, that the drama of civil insurrection was played with so much ceremony. By an infamous mockery, at the same time that the people's eternal gratitude was demanded for their deliverance from the Stuarts and the agents of the Stuarts, it was those very agents who were sought to compose the new cabinet; they were Danby, Nottingham, and Halifax. Kirke, the most ferocious of soldiers and executioners, the executor of Jefferies' sentences, received honours and employment. And when the victims of these men presented themselves to demand against their crimes and those of their subordinates, not reprisals, but the vengeance of the laws, government, by an act of amnesty, shamelessly extended its all-powerful protection over them.

These times bore their fruits; under the woman who succeeded the Prince of Orange, the most shameless corruption became general; there was no energy but for intrigue; that repose was sought in the favours of a court, which the Sydneys sought only in proud independence. Twenty years had barely elapsed since the revolution of 1688, before the English nation cursed it; it cried, Down with the Whigs! as it had cried, Down with the Stuarts! and the Whigs, like the Stuarts, answered only by sentences of high treason, executions, new taxes, and new decrees for the support of titles and places. The pretended national succession was on the point of being violated by eminently national insurrections; the odious assistance of a foreign power was obliged to be invoked. It was the cannon of the stadtholder of Holland which protected the landing of the first George.

The Stuarts would not have done more; perhaps they would not have done so much; their power was of a nature promptly to wear itself out. They had not, to revive it, the prestige of those sonorous words, national dynasty, princes of the people's choice, deliverers of their country; their despotism had no popular root: therefore, the independent income, the standing army, the servitude of the Parliament, which had previously been enjoyed in idea only, all these were realized under the Georges. Then, when any honest man dared to become indignant, they had means of rendering him odious, and calumniating his conduct, besides the scaffold, to awe him into silence; he could be accused before the people themselves of having indiscreetly or wickedly threatened the authority of the saviours of the nation, of having a design against the king of the public choice, against the Protestant and national dynasty.... Charles II. was able to kill Sydney; but it would not have been in his power to disgrace him as a traitor to the people.

It was in the reign of Charles the Second, about the year 1683, as we have said above, that we find in history the first sketch of the revolution, which, in 1688, placed a new family in the place of the family of the Stuarts. The spirit of this revolution reveals itself entirely in the conspiracy which was hatched five years before, to make the Duke of Monmouth, a natural son of Charles the Second, king, on condition, that he should be king to the profit of the dis-

graced Presbyterians, and of those who had sold the nation to the Stuarts, for places which the ungrateful Stuarts bestowed on others. The plot was betrayed; Monmouth, with great difficulty, obtained his life, and those of the conspirators who survived the king's vengeance, saved themselves only by exile. Having taken refuge in Holland, they continued their projects and manœuvres; but they chose a new leader; and it was one very different from the young and weak Monmouth whom they pointed out, to take the place of the King of England, and be the protector of their interests. Their choice fell on the Prince William of Orange, stadtholder of Holland, the nephew of Charles the Second, and son-in-law of the Duke of York, powerful, active, experienced, a zealous Protestant, and immoderately ambitious; an undoubted enemy of English liberty; for, in 1680, he had protested as an ally of the royal family, and for his own part interested in the inviolable preservation of the inheritance of regal power, against the barriers which the parliament attempted to oppose to the authority of a Catholic successor. Monmouth had returned to Holland to his former partisans. From the moment that William had been adopted in his place, and when his presence became inconvenient to the faction which repudiated him, Monmouth was turned out of Holland.

This misfortune, which disconcerted the hopes of all his life, led him suddenly to venture on a very violent determination. With the assistance of the few friends who remained to him, and of some adventurers whom he hired, he made an invasion into England. James the Second was just beginning his reign. Monmouth, in his first proclamations, accused the new king of being a tyrant, and announced himself as the revenger of outraged liberty: at this patriotic voice, the citizens flocked in crowds to his camp; but the men with titles, places and power, did not come, and they were those whom Monmouth desired. In order to engage them in his cause, he made new manifestos, in which he called James the Second an usurper of the throne: he proclaimed himself the legitimate king, and threatened with his vengeance those who were incredulous to his words, and the rebels against his authority.

The citizens who had followed him immediately quitted him, and the nobles and the powerful did not come, the more perhaps because Monmouth had the misfortune of having for a moment been popular. The royal army encountered him almost without an army; he was taken and put to death. On learning this enterprise, the Prince of Holland had hastened to offer to James the Second to take himself the command of the royal troops against Monmouth, against that rival whose indiscreet audacity, by opening the eyes of the King of England, might have caused the failure of the other plot, and spoil the fortune which William had promised himself.

But James the Second's security was boundless; he nowadays doubted the future; full of blind confidence, he pursued his plans in favour of the Catholics; already had most of the places

passed into their hands; they filled the council, the fleet and the army. The Episcopal clergy, whose authority was still intact, aided him in his measures; this assistance, adroitly regained by Charles II., was of great importance to the royal power: James forgot this, and had the imprudence to deprive himself of it. He brought over to London a Roman nuncio: he established Catholic bishoprics. At the sight of these new rivals, the heads of the clergy deserted the royal cause; and instead of the maxims of passive submission, and the divine right, with which the pulpits had resounded, nothing was heard but a cry of alarm on the dangers of the Church, and the duty of resisting. These sacred voices encouraged the murmurs; manifestos were published against the inroads of the Papists into public offices; leagues were formed to maintain employments in the hands of the Protestant families; engagements were made to employ all forces, even the most extreme, that of strength, to change the mind of the king. The want of Catholic heirs gave some hopes of succeeding in this extremity. But the sudden birth of a son of James the Second opened the war and hastened the blows. Messages were instantly interchanged between the refugees in Holland, and the malecontents in England; men were recruited; arms prepared: this was the event which produced in the year 1688 the catastrophe of the revolution, which had been hatching during the last five years.

James the Second persisted in his carelessness; he was especially far from suspecting the Prince of Orange, whose friendship for the English exiles appeared to him only a sympathy of religion. Such were his feelings, when a dispatch from his minister at Hague announced to him suddenly that great preparations were making in the ports of Holland for an invasion of England; he turned pale as he read it, the paper fell from his hands, and he understood for the first time his dangers and his weakness. He called the people to arms; the people remained deaf to his voice; whilst lords, nobles, bishops and men paid from his treasury, enlisted on the side of his rival. William, detained some time by a contrary wind, landed on the 5th of September, 1688, at Torbay, in Devonshire. The inhabitants of the neighbouring towns covered the shore, contemplating the spectacle of these vessels and soldiers; they were silent, passionless and joyless, like people witnessing the preparations for a combat which does not concern them. The army of the opponents directed its march towards Exeter, and published its manifestos. Much was said in them about the interests of Protestantism, a little about the interests of liberty, and above every thing, they endeavoured to persuade that King James's new-born son was a supposititious child. These manifestos were read; but no citizen was roused. During nine whole days William advanced without finding either friends or enemies. But friends soon flocked to him; these were the great men of the opposition, military officers, and all the nobility of the counties of Devonshire and Somersetshire. In the neighbouring counties, the same class of men

took to arms; compacts of association were sworn between them and the prince. The governors of towns hoisted his standards, men enlisted under him in virtue of his brevets, and the king's officers deserted to him with their troops. All the men whose patrimony was in the government, all those to whom a change of king was to be an immense gain, or an entire loss, agitated over all England: but those whose existence owed nothing to power, were at rest; the opposing army had gained only a small number, and the other army reckoned only in its ranks the militia assembled by force. The king, however, advanced, that he might not die without fighting; at every step of his march fresh defections diminished his forces, and to every order he gave, the officers replied by murmurs, reproaching him for his bad fortune, which compromised their situations. Those whom he had most loaded with favours, were the most impatient at being detained near him, being anxious to obtain from his rival the preservation of what they had. James the Second found nobody in whom he could confide: unable to take any resolution of his own, he neither dared to act nor to wait, and the enemies did not stop. Instead of advancing, he retreated to London. At the first halt the royal army made in its retreat, Anne, the king's daughter, and George of Denmark, his son-in-law, left the camp and repaired to that of the enemy. At this news, he became dejected and despaired of his own cause, which even his children repudiated. He offered to capitulate with William; William refused to receive the bearer of this message: James the Second, uncertain of the projects of his rival, and fearing for his life, threw the royal seal into the Thames, and fled to the coast to insure himself a retreat. The royal troops were dispersed, and the other army advanced easily.

Meanwhile the nobles and royal agents who had not left London, thought that the people of that city, seeing the king gone, and the prince still distant, might think for itself, and make some struggle for liberty which might complicate the war. To prevent this danger, which menaced their places, and which, by an ingenious transposition, they called the danger of the town, they hastily informed the Prince of Orange that his competitor had taken flight, and that he should hasten his march; they also sent orders to the leaders of the disbanded troops: these troops rallied, and at the same period they did so, the lords availed themselves of the rumour of their dispersion to disturb the citizens by a salutary alarm, which was intended to dispel all ideas of independence. They spread the report that the Papists and Irish of the royal army were everywhere massacring the Protestants. In a few days this false report spread all over England; every one thought they heard in the distance the shouts of the murderers, and the groans of the dying; fires were lighted, bells were rung: every one thought himself in danger of his life,—had no feeling, no ideas, no cares, but for this danger; and if anything was desired, it was that the chances of insurrection should not be joined to present dangers; it was that

William's victory should swiftly put an end to such anxieties.

James the Second was escaping in disguise; he was recognized at Feversham by some men, who insulted him and kept him captive. From his prison he wrote to the nobles, who had been exercising his power in London, to demand liberty and an escort; his letter was brought them by a countryman, who wept as he delivered it. The lords showed themselves less feeling, and their first reply was, that this affair did not concern them. Some few, more sharp-sighted than the rest, represented that this useless harshness might be ill rewarded by the future king, who would wish to appear humane, if it were only from propriety. All gave way before such an argument; and they sent two hundred soldiers to deliver James, and accompany him to the sea. But the king, having recovered his freedom, refused to follow his escort, and returned to London. He was applauded at his entry by some of those whom their obscure and private lives made strangers to the present war; deprived of his odious authority, he appeared to them only a man, and a man in distress; and on this account they pitied him. This was not the case with those who during his prosperity had enriched themselves with his bounty: reduced to the simple state of men, he was no longer anything to them; from them his reception was cold and contemptuous: his presence constrained them; for it rendered them suspicious to him to whom the power of enriching by pensions, and aggrandizing by commissions, was about to belong. Fortunately, this constraint did not last long; James was ordered to quit London. He was still at Whitehall when William's soldiers took up their abode in the palace. That prince entered the town as a conqueror, and triumphant, at the head of his troops, amidst the acclamations of those whose fortune was to increase with his own. Some satisfaction appeared on the faces of the citizens, who had been frightened by the idea of having their throats cut by the royal soldiers; but it was a quiet pleasure, and which showed the belief in a past danger rather than the feeling of actual prosperity.

James the Second had submitted to the orders of William of Orange; he had left London, and the troops of the conqueror were encamped in the town. The war was ended, the revolution was accomplished. Nothing was now required to insure to William and his friends all the profits of victory, but sanctioning it by legal acts. This was to be the work of a parliament. The lords in the town, united to the nobles of the victorious army, took upon themselves the responsibility of authentically recognizing in the prince the supreme right of assembling the Commons, and what was still more important to the conquerors of those days, the right of giving places, and raising taxes. For more regularity, the members of the two last Houses, which had sat under the Stuarts, were assembled at Westminster, and an address, similar to that of the Lords, demanded of them. They quietly repaired to the place of their sittings, and hardly had they taken their seats, when

they learned that a body of the seditious populace surrounded the hall, uttering imprecations and threats of revenge against those who should dare to vote against the interest of William of Orange. They did not resist the presence of this popular force, which the same William had known how to render so terrible to the de Witts, and the address was voted. This provisory Parliament was then dissolved; and those of its members who had already terminated their stipulations with power, dispersed themselves in the counties to influence new choices. Meanwhile, William appointed men to situations, maintained some in them, transferred places, raised five millions by taxes on London, and forbade all political discussion by proclamations made in his name alone.

It was on the 22d of January 1689, (1688 old style,) that the new Parliament assembled, and took the name of convention,—the name which thirty years before was borne by the assembly which legalized Monck's treachery and Charles the Second's royalty. In the address voted by the two Houses, William was called a deliverer doubtless on account of the number of men he had just saved from the danger of living without places; the House of Commons then voted that the throne was vacant, because James the Second had destroyed the mutual contract which bound him to the people. The Commons ought to have stated the date of this mutual contract and its clauses. In making the equation, a false one in this case, of the ideas of the king, and obliged by contract towards the people, they made an equation fatal for the future of the ideas of the people, and obliged towards the king; they established beforehand, that from the moment that William became king, there would be in virtue of that sole title of king, an obligatory compact between William and the English nation,—a mysterious and occult compact, without express condition, without stipulated security; the vain hypothesis of which, without in the slightest degree augmenting the effective force of the subjected party, was to arm the reigning party with a logical authority, capable of legitimizing violence, and making oppression a right founded on the consent of the oppressed. There is no more terrible argument against nations than the false attestation of national will; it is by the aid of similar fictions that the rebels against despotism, and the heroes of liberty, are with impunity branded with the name of traitors.

The nobles of that period were not deceived by it; in their examination of the votes of the Commons, they passed rapidly over the idea of the mutual contract, and only discussed seriously the proclamation of the vacancy of the throne. Several pretended that it was wrong to represent as destroyed, the continuity of succession which had been the strength of that regal power to which they were indebted for so many benefits. They were seconded in this by the men who, having been the last to join the Prince of Orange, had thus deserved little from him, and would have preferred the reign of his wife, the daughter of the deposed king. This article was nearly being suppressed, and passed

at last only by means of a capitulation between the friends of the prince and those of the princess. When the decisive question was put, "Who shall be king?" the reply was this: "The lords spiritual and temporal decide that William and Mary, Prince and Princess of Orange, shall be king and queen together; the prince only, in the name of both, shall exercise regal authority."

These debates lasted twenty days; and in the midst of so much care for the organization of the government, which called itself a national one, there had been no mention made either of the nation or of liberty. Once only, in a conference between the two Houses, some voices were raised to demand that certain limits to the power of the future king should be established. A messenger of William's came to the men who had spoken thus. "Do not insist," he said to them, "on the point of limiting a power which the prince wishes to possess entirely. I must tell you from him, that he has means of punishing you; and that he would enforce them. Fear lest by disgusting him with the success he has recently obtained, you should force him to retire, and abandon you to the mercy of King James." This insulting reply shows what William thought of the pretended compact violated by James II. and revenged by the English nation; if he had thought that the king had been dethroned by the nation, he would not have made to that nation, capable of ridding itself of King James, the threat of delivering it up to his anger. When all was ended, when the Commons had received from the Lords the act which declared the prince and princess king and queen, and their posterity after them, a kind of bashfulness came over the Houses, and they drew up in the form of a bill, a list of the excesses of power which had caused the last two reigns to be hated. Thence arose what was called the *Bill of Rights*, an exposition of principles without any security; a simple appeal to the humanity and reason of the rulers. In it, it is said, that elections *ought* to be free, that parliaments *ought* often to be assembled, that citizens *may* make petitions and have arms according to their condition, vague maxims, as easy to elude as to proclaim, and of which the most respected was not strictly observed in England for the space of ten years. The Bill of Rights still exists, and it is under its easy rule that the traffic of represented towns goes on, and parliaments last seven years.

Thus one quality was wanting to the revolution of 1688, and this quality is precisely the one with which it is gratuitously honoured; this revolution was not a national one, that is to say a revolution made by the hands, and for the profit of those who derive no advantage from public taxes, and none of the honour, none of the credit of public authority, whose life is perfectly private; who have no concern whether the government belongs to such or such a man, or has such or such a form; but are concerned in this, that the government, whatever it may be, or whoever exercises it, should be in the absolute impossibility of violating that which is eternally sacred, eternally inviolable, liberty. If

the revolution of 1688 had been made by and for these men, we should not at the present day, in England, see them besieging authority with their claims, and threatening it with their insurrections.

We also have had our revolution of 1688: it is no longer a trial we have to make; we know in what state of mind a similar revolution places a nation, and if, in undergoing it, it must blush for or glorify itself. When he, who was our William the Third,* was preceded, at his return to Paris, by pieces of cannon, burning matches, and naked swords, did we sincerely believe in our power and our wills, of which he called himself the work? Did we truly persuade ourselves that it was by us, and for us, that he once more trampled on us? It was his interest to inspire us with pride in the midst of our nothingness, to inflate us with that vanity which fiction has rendered ridiculous, with the foolish pride of the insect that boasts of guiding the chariot, when the chariot is carrying it away,

and about to crush it. Despotism has especially free play, when it can reply to the murmuring people: It is you who have chosen me.

God forbid that such a reply should again be made to us. If we have the misfortune to be oppressed, let us never have the shame of being called willing slaves; we shall escape one and the other, by pursuing calmly and with constancy the work of liberty so happily begun by our fathers, and of which the foundations were dispersed by the first head of a pretended national dynasty. What matter the form and substance of the rock he lifts to the Sisyphus of fable? In the same way, what matter the form and origin of power to nations? It is by its weight and their weakness that power crushes them. Let us raise up in our laws and especially in our minds, inviolable barriers and forts against all tyranny, whether of ancient or modern form, whether of ancient or modern date: let us leave the rest to time, and never disgrace ourselves by conspiring with fortune.*

ESSAY VII.

ON THE NATIONAL SPIRIT OF THE IRISH, A PROPOS OF THE IRISH MELODIES BY THOMAS MOORE.

THERE are nations with retentive memories, whom the thought of independence does not abandon even in servitude, and who, resisting against habit, which is elsewhere so powerful at the end of centuries, still detest and abjure the condition which a superior power has imposed upon them. Such is the Irish nation. This nation, reduced by conquest to submit to the English government, has refused for six hundred years to consent and give its approbation to this government; it repulses it as in its first days; it protests against it as the former population of Ireland protested in the combats in which it was defeated; it does not consider its revolts as rebellious, but as just and legitimate war. It is in vain that English power has exhausted itself in efforts to overcome that memory, to cause forgetfulness of the conquest, and make them consider the results of armed invasion as the exercise of a legal authority; nothing has been able to destroy Irish obstinacy. Notwithstanding seductions, menaces and tortures, fathers have bequeathed it to their sons. Ancient Ireland is still the only country which the true Irish acknowledge; on its account, they have adhered to its religion and to its language; and in their insurrections, they still invoke it by the name of Erin, the name by which their ancestors called it.

To maintain this series of manners and traditions against the efforts of the conquerors, the Irish made for themselves monuments which neither steel nor fire could destroy; they had recourse to the art of singing, in which they gloried in excelling, and which, in the times of independence, had been their pride and pleasure. The bards and minstrels became the keepers of the records of the nation. Wandering from village to village, they carried to every hearth memories of ancient Ireland: they studied to render them agreeable to all tastes and all ages; they had warlike songs for the men, love ditties for the women, and marvellous tales for the children of the house. Every house preserved two harps always ready for travellers, and he who could best celebrate the liberty of former times, the glory of patriots, and the grandeur of their cause, was rewarded by a more lavish hospitality. The kings of England en-

* There is this difference between the revolutions of 1688 and 1830, that the latter is really a national revolution, since all classes of the nation, one only excepted, assisted in it. The people saved itself, fought for its own cause, and all the power of the new royalty is derived from the popular victory. If I had found myself with the opinions I held at the age of twenty-four years, in presence of this revolution and its political results, I should certainly have pronounced as one-sided and contemptuous a judgment; age has rendered me less enthusiastic in ideas, and more indulgent for facts.

* Napoleon, in 1815.

deavoured more than once to strike a blow at Ireland in this last refuge of its regrets and hopes; the wandering poets were persecuted, banished, delivered up to tortures and death; but violence served only to irritate indomitable wills: the art of singing and of poetry had its martyrs like religion; and the remembrances, the destruction of which was desired, were increased by the feeling of how much they cost them to preserve.

The words of the national songs in which Ireland has described its long sufferings, have mostly perished; the music alone has been preserved. This music may serve as a commentary on the history of the country. It paints the recesses of the soul, as well as narratives paint actions; we find in it a great deal of languor and dejection; a profoundly-felt but vaguely-expressed grief, like sorrow which becomes hushed when it is observed. Sometimes a little hope or levity betrays itself; but even in the most lively melodies, some melancholy chord comes in unexpectedly, some change of key which hastily brings back more gloomy feelings, as we see on a cloudy day a sunbeam appear for one minute and instantly vanish again. Mr. Moore is both a poet and a musician, like the old bards of his native land; but instead of their wild inspirations, he has all the graces of cultivated talent, and his love of independence, enlarged by modern philosophy, does not limit all his hopes to the deliverance of Erin and the return of the *old green standard*.* He celebrates liberty as the right of all men, as the charm of all the countries of the world. The English words which he has composed upon the rhythm of the ancient Irish airs, are full of generous sentiments, although generally stamped with local forms and colouring. These forms, almost always mysterious, have moreover a charm peculiar to themselves. The Irish love to make their country into a loving and beloved real being; they love to speak to it without pronouncing its name, and to mingle the love they bear it, an austere and perilous love, with what is sweetest and happiest among the affections of the heart. It seems as if, under the veil of these agreeable illusions, they wished to disguise to their mind the reality of the dangers to which the patriot exposes himself, and to divert themselves with graceful ideas while awaiting the hour of battle, like those Spartans who crowned themselves with flowers, when on the point of perishing at Thermopylae.

We will give as an example the following poem, which the author supposes to be addressed by a peasant to his mistress:—

Through grief and through danger thy smile hath cheer'd
my way,
Till hope seem'd to bud from each thorn that round me
lay:
The darker our fortune, the brighter our pure love
burn'd,
Till shame into glory, till fear into zeal was turn'd;
Yes, slave as I was, in thy arms my spirit felt free,
And bless'd even the sorrows that made me more dear to
thee.

* The ancient standard of the Irish chiefs.

Thy rival was honour'd, while thou wert wrong'd and
scorn'd,
Thy crown was of briers, while gold her brows adorn'd;
She woo'd me to temples, while thou lay'st hid in caves,
Her friends were all masters, while thine, alas! were
slaves;
Yet cold in the earth, at thy feet, I would rather be,
Than wed what I loved not, or turn one thought from
thee.

Another poem of a more elevated tone is placed in the mouth of one of the old wandering poets, who travelled over Ireland, bewailing the fate of the land:—

Oh! blame not the bard if he fly to the bowers
Where Pleasure lies carelessly smiling at Fame;
He was born for much more, and in happier hours,
His soul might have burn'd with a holier flame.
The string, that now languishes loose o'er the lyre,
Might have bent a proud bow to the warrior's dart;
And the lip, which now breathes but the song of desire,
Might have pour'd the full tide of a patriot's heart.
But alas for his country!—her pride is gone by,
And that spirit is broken, which never would bend,
O'er the ruin her children in secret must sigh,
For 'tis treason to love her and death to defend.
Unpriz'd are her sons, till they've learn'd to betray;
Undistinguished they live, if they shame not their sires.
And the torch, that would light them thro' dignity's way,
Must be caught from the pile were their country ex-
[pires.

But tho' glory be gone, and tho' hope fade away,
Thy name, loved Erin, shall live in his songs;
Not ev'n in the hour, when his heart is most gay,
Will he lose the remembrance of thee and thy wrongs.
The stranger shall hear thy lament on his plains;
The sigh of thy harp shall be sent o'er the deep,
Till thy masters themselves, as they rivet thy chains,
Shall pause at the song of their captive, and weep!

Mr. Moore frequently returns to the times of Irish independence, and sings of the heroes of his free country:—

Let Erin remember the days of old,
Ere her faithless sons betray'd her.—

Oh for the swords of former time!
Oh for the men who bore them!

Sometimes he invokes the memory of battles, the fate of which decided liberty: he paints the nocturnal march of the conqueror, and the last vigil of the soldiers of the country, intrenched on the declivity of a hill:—

While mute they watch'd, till morning's beam
Should rise and give them light to die.

Forget not the field where they perish'd,
The truest, the last of the brave,
All gone—and the bright hopes we cherished
Gone with them, and quench'd in their grave!

Oh! could we from death but recover
Those hearts as they bounded before,
In the face of high heav'n to fight over
That combat for freedom once more.

Could the chain for an instant be riven
Which tyranny hung round us then,
No; 'tis not in man, nor in Heaven,
To let Tyranny bind it again!

But 'tis past—and, tho' blazon'd in story
The name of our victor may be,
Accurst is the march of that glory
Which treads o'er the hearts of the free.

Far dearer the grave or the prison,
 Illumed by one patriot name,
 Than the trophies of all who have risen
 On liberty's ruins to fame.

It is a great title to the gratitude of a nation to have sung its present or past liberty, its secured or violated rights, in verses capable of becoming popular. He who would do for France what Mr. Moore has done for Ireland, would be more than rewarded by the knowledge of having served the most holy of all causes. In the times of despotism, we had satirical burdens to arrest injustice by the frivolous fear of ridicule; why, in these times of dubious liberty, should we not have nobler songs to express our wills, and to present them as a barrier to a power always tempted to encroach? Why should not the prestige of art be associated with the powers of reason and courage? Why should we not make a fresh poetry, inspired by liberty and consecrated to its defence, poetry not classical, but national, which should not be a vain imitation of geniuses which no longer exist, but a vivid painting of the minds and thoughts of the present day which should protest for us, complain with us, and should speak to us of France and of its destiny, of our ancestors and of our descendants.

We have succeeded in our love elegies, ought we to fear undertaking patriotic elegies, not less

touching, not less sweet than the former? What image more worthy of pity and of love, than the land of our fathers, so long the plaything of fortune, so often vanquished by tyranny, so often betrayed by its own supporters, now reviving but still tottering, and in a feeble voice claiming our assistance and our devotion? What more poetical than its long existence, to which our temporary existence is bound by so many ties? We that are called new men, let us prove that we are not so; let us rally round the banners of those watch-words popular to the men who formerly wanted what we now want, to the men who understood as we do the liberty of the French soil. The spirit of generous and peaceful independence far preceded us on that soil; let us not fear to stir it deeply to find that spirit: our researches will not be in vain, but they will be sorrowful; for we shall oftener meet with tortures than with triumphs. Let us not deceive ourselves; it is not to us that the brilliant things of past times belong; it is not for us to sing of chivalry: our heroes have more obscure names. We are the men of the cities, the men of the villages, the men of the soil, the sons of those peasants whom a few knights massacred near Meaux, the sons of those citizens who made Charles the Fifth tremble,* the sons of the rebels of the Jacquerie.

ESSAY VIII.

ON THE CONQUEST OF ENGLAND BY THE NORMANS, A PROPOS OF THE NOVEL OF IVANHOE.

On the day that William the Bastard, *Duke of Normandy*, favoured by an east wind, entered the Bay of Hastings, with 700 ships and 60,000 soldiers, to invade the country of the Anglo-Saxons, a death-struggle commenced between the natives and invaders. Property, independence, life, were at stake, the contest would naturally be a long one; it was so: but vainly should we seek a faithful account of it in the modern historians of England. These historians represent, once for all, the Saxons at war with the Normans; they detail one combat, and after that, neither Normans nor Saxons, conquerors nor conquered, re-appear in their pages. Without troubling themselves about ulterior contests, nor the various destinies of the bodies of men who fought to dispute the country with one another, they pass, with admirable calmness, to the narration of the life and death of William, first of that name, King of England, successor of Harold, last King of the Anglo-Saxons. Thus the consequences of the invasion seem to confine themselves for the conquered nation to a mere change of dynasty. The subjection of

the natives of England; the confiscation of their property, and its division among the foreign invaders; all these acts of conquest, and not of government, lose their true character, and assume improperly an administrative colouring.

A man of genius, Walter Scott, has presented a real view of these events, which have been so disfigured by modern phraseology; and, what is singular, but will not surprise those who have read his preceding works, it is in a novel that he has undertaken to clear up this great point of history, and to represent alive, and without ornament, that Norman conquest, which the philosophic narrators of the last century, less truthful than the illiterate chroniclers of the middle ages, have elegantly buried under the common formulas of *succession, government, state measures, suppressed conspiracies, power, and social submission*.

The novel of *Ivanhoe* places us four generations after the invasion of the Normans, in the reign of Richard, son of Henry Plantagenet,

* In 1358, when he was regent of the kingdom.

sixth king since the conqueror. At this period, at which the historian Hume can only represent to us a *king* and *England*, without telling us what a *king* is, nor what he means by *England*, Walter Scott, entering profoundly into the examination of events, shows us classes of men, distinct interests and conditions, two nations, a double language, customs which repel and combat each other; on one side tyranny and insolence, on the other misery and hatred, real developments of the drama of the conquest, of which the battle of Hastings had been only the prologue. At this period, many of the vanquished have perished, many yielded to the yoke, but many still protest against it. *The Saxon slave* has not forgotten the liberty of his fathers, and found repose in slavery. His masters are still foreign usurpers to him: he feels his dependence, and does not believe it to be a social necessity: he knows what were his rights to the inheritance which he no longer possesses. The conqueror, on his side, does not yet disguise his domination under a vain and false appearance of political aristocracy; he calls himself *Norman*, not *gentleman*; it is as a Norman soldier that he reigns, commands, and disposes of the existence of those who yielded to the swords of his ancestors. Such is the real and perfectly historical theatre on which is placed the fable of *Ivanhoe*, of which the fictitious personages serve to render still more striking the great political scene in which the author makes them figure.

Cedric of Rotherwood, an old Saxon chief, whose father was a witness of the invasion, a man brave, and moreover proud to excess, has been enabled to preserve his inheritance by making himself feared by the conquerors. Cedric, free, and a proprietor in the midst of his subjugated and landless nation, believes himself under the obligation to free his countrymen; he has cherished all his life the vain dream of independence. After a thousand various projects, and a thousand fruitless attempts, his mind, weary of following this high flight, has become fixed on one last plan, and one last very feeble and uncertain hope. He is the guardian of a young maiden named Rowena, who is descended from the race of Alfred; and he is persuaded that the marriage of his ward with Athelstan of Coningsberg, the last descendant of Edward the Confessor, by uniting in the eyes of the Saxon people the blood of two of its ancient chiefs, will present to the people a rallying point for a decisive insurrection. This idea, in which all Cedric's activity is absorbed, occupies and ferments in him incessantly; he has disinherited his own son, Wilfred, who has dared to cross his projects by loving Rowena, and succeeding in pleasing her. Wilfred, more amorous than patriotic, has, in his despair, deserted the house of his ancestors for the palace of the Norman king; he has received from Richard Cœur de Lion, dignities, favours, and the title of Knight of *Ivanhoe*. The incidents which arise from his return, and the return of Richard to England, fill the body of the novel. Every thing ends favourably for Wilfred of *Ivanhoe*: he is united to Rowena; and old Cedric sees without indig-

nation the daughter of Alfred follow Wilfred to the court of the chief of the conquerors. This conclusion satisfies the human heart; it is sad for the patriotic one. But the author could not falsify history; it is too true that the Saxons did not find the way to free themselves from their yoke.

This Cedric, the last representative of Saxon liberty, is described as a man of kind disposition, but inflexible in his aversion to the foreign usurpers. He makes an immense display of his ancient name of Saxon in the midst of people who disown him from cowardice: he has a proud and jealous mien, the sign of a life passed in defending daily, rights daily encroached on. Weary of the present, he constantly looks back beyond that fatal day at Hastings which opened England to the Normans and to slavery. He detests the language of the conquerors, their customs, their diversions, their arms, every thing which was not on the English territory when the English people were free. By his side are two of his serfs, the sons of the serfs of his ancestors. These men wear the badge of slavery, on which is inscribed the name of their master; yet they love this master, because he is surrounded by enemies who are also their enemies, because the insolence of strangers, which weighs over him and them, creates a resemblance between his destiny and theirs, and in some sort confounds, in one common cause, two formerly clashing interests. Bands of outlaws without asylum, obliged to inhabit the forests and become brigands to earn a livelihood, point out the remains of the ravages of the conquest, and paint the fate of those whom the prohibition of hunting arms, ordered by a suspicious conqueror, compelled to choose between hunger and crime. But the gloomiest and most energetic picture of the consequences of the invasion, is that of a Saxon woman, who, after seeing her father and seven brothers killed while defending their inheritance, alone remained to minister ignominiously to the pleasures of the murderer of her family. Bringing into her master's bed an implacable hatred and an ardent thirst for revenge, she has used the seductions of her beauty to arm the son against the father, and stain with a parricide the banquet hall of the conquerors. Grown old in her servitude, she has by degrees lost her empire, and contempt has become her portion; but in the midst of opprobrium and insults, she has not forgotten revenge. Cedric, a prisoner in the castle of the Norman, meets her, and learns her history. "My life has been base and atrocious," she says; "I will expiate it by serving you." At the moment when the friends of the Saxon attack the castle, when the men-at-arms are on the walls, and the master of the castle, who has been wounded in the combat, is laid on his bed, far from the ramparts and the combatants, the old Saxon woman accomplishes her last and terrible project: she sets fire to the wood heaped up under the building; then rushing to the room in which her enemy is stretched out deprived of strength, but full of life, she ironically reminds him of his father's last repast; she makes him aware of the smoke of the

fire which burns beneath the apartment; she sneers at the impotence of his efforts, and shrieks; she gives him a foretaste of death; and when the conflagration bursts forth, she gains the summit of the highest tower, stands there with dishevelled hair, singing in a loud voice one of those war hymns which the heathen Saxons used in the field of battle.

Such are the personages who represent to us the vanquished. As to the conquerors, as to the sons of the adventurers who followed the fortunes of the bastard, they are portrayed in Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, Philip-de-Malvoison, Hugh-de-Bracy, and Prince John Plantagenet. We find in them the vain and distrustful conqueror, attributing the origin of his fortune to the superiority of his nature, believing himself of a better race and purer blood; qualifying his race with the title of *noble*; employing on the contrary the name of Saxon as an injurious epithet; saying that he kills a Saxon without scruple, and *ennobles* a Saxon woman by disposing of her against her will! pretending that his *Saxon subjects* possess nothing which is not his, and threatening, if they become *rebellious*, to scalp them.

Besides these characters, which proceed from the political state of the country, the author of *Ivanhoe* has not failed to introduce others which proceed from the opinions of the period. He paints the free-thinking templar, full of ambition and projects, despising the cross whose soldier he is, killing Saracens as a means of making his fortune; and as a contrast to this, the fanatical templar, the passive slave of his rules and faith; the hypocritical and sensual priest; the humble, submissive, and patient Jew, surrounded with contempt and perils, obliged to deceive to defend himself, and an adroit rogue, because the powerful ones of the world may be so to him openly and with impunity. But there is one personage who throws all others into the shade, and to whom the mind of the reader attaches itself by an irresistible attraction; it is that of Rebecca, the daughter of the Jew Isaac of York. Rebecca is the type of that moral grandeur, which develops itself in the soul of the weak and oppressed in this world, when they feel themselves superior to their fortune, superior to the prosperous who triumph over them. All the calm dignity that ever possessed the soul of a Cato, or a Sydney, is united in her with

a simple modesty, an uncomplaining patience, and that touching endurance of suffering, which is the attribute of women. This character, so much elevated beyond our nature, is made natural by the author with such perfect art, he introduces it so naturally into the scenes in which it is developed, that however ideal it may be, we are seduced into believing it, and feel ourselves the better for doing so. One admirable scene, of which we should vainly attempt to give the effect, is that in which Rebecca, a prisoner of the templar Brian-de-Boisguilbert, is visited by him in the tower in which she is confined. Alone, in presence of this man, violent in his passions, and unconquerably wilful, who openly declares that she is his prisoner by the sword, and that he will make use of his strength, she is able to inspire him with a respect for her person, and to throw down before her, like an arrow which has missed its aim, all the vehemence of that ungoverned soldier, who, in battle, mowed down whole ranks of men, and in the intercourse of life, bent them before him like reeds before the wind.

There are in this novel many other things of which we give no account. There are scenes of such simplicity, of such living truth, to be found in it, that notwithstanding the distance of the period in which the author places himself, they can be realized without effort. It is because in the midst of the world which no longer exists, Walter Scott always places the world which does and always will exist, that is to say, human nature, of which he knows all the secrets. Every thing peculiar to the time and place, the exterior of men, and aspect of the country and of the habitations, costumes, and manners, are described with the most minute truthfulness; and yet the immense erudition which has furnished so many details is nowhere to be perceived. Walter Scott seems to have for the past that second sight, which, in times of ignorance, certain men attributed to themselves for the future. To say that there is more real *history* in his novels on Scotland and England than in the philosophically false compilations which still possess that great name, is not advancing any thing strange in the eyes of those who have read and understood "Old Mortality," "Waverley," "Rob Roy," the "Fortunes of Nigel," and the "Heart of Mid Lothian."

ESSAY IX.

ON THE LIFE OF ANNE BOLEYN, WIFE OF HENRY THE EIGHTH, A PROPOS OF MISS BENDER'S WORK,
ENTITLED "MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF ANNE BOLEYN, QUEEN OF HENRY THE EIGHTH."

THIS book is one of the witnesses in the action which morality and reason ought to bring against the sixteenth century. If the violent death of Anne Boleyn belongs to Henry the Eighth alone, the circumstances of what are called the rise and fall of this woman, belong to the manners of the time, and especially to the spirit of courts, a spirit which in the France of that age, was the same as in England. Anne was the great grandchild of Geoffrey Boleyn, a London merchant, whose credit and acquired fortune had raised him to the situation of lord mayor of that city. The children of this man, abjuring the paternal condition, dispersed his property among the noble houses to which they allied themselves; they bought patents to be courtiers with the riches of their family; and thus it was that the descendant of the rich plebeian was born both poor and noble. The father and mother of Anne Boleyn lived as parasites in the court of King Henry the Eighth, by whom they were both much liked, one for his talents, the other for her graces. No sooner was Anne out of her cradle, no sooner had she given the first promise of that beauty which rendered her afterwards so celebrated and so unfortunate, than her parents destined her for the life they themselves led. There were then at court places for complaisants and beauties of every age. Anne was a maid of honour at seven years old; with this title she went to France in the train of Mary, sister of the King of England, whom a diplomatic treaty united by force to old Louis XII., at the moment when she had a violent and declared passion for another man. But in the same way that Anne Boleyn's parents cared very little at seeing their child exposed to the dangers of a foreign education, and deprived of their care and caresses, provided she became a court lady, Henry the Eighth did not hesitate to drive his young sister into the bed of an infirm old man, provided she became Queen of France.

Anne spent the years of her childhood in continual studies of the art of pleasing; she was early able to figure gracefully in those puerile masquerades which helped the powerful of that century to bring to a close their blank and idle days; she learnt to captivate all eyes, and to encourage flattery; she learnt to listen to the admiration of men, before she was old enough to understand it; she learned moreover to excite by her successes the envy of her young companions; not that envy of emulation which arises from the sentiment of what is right, and doubles the desire of attaining it, but that hateful jealousy, which is indignant at seeing ano-

ther advancing more rapidly towards the common end; for goodness and personal graces were esteemed only as means for acquirement and advancement. Amongst the envious hatreds which Anne Boelyn excited when she returned to her native land, there were some violent and implacable ones which pursued her till death. She was on the point of fortunately escaping the fortune which awaited her, by marrying a young Lord Percy, who loved her, and whose love she returned; but the father of this young man, informed by a cardinal, that Henry the Eighth had cast his eye on the betrothed, threatened to disinherit his son if he persisted in hindering the king. The young man was compelled to give way; and Anne, left by her lover, became accessible to Henry the Eighth. He came to visit her in the country house purchased by the labour of her ancestor, a spot to which she had retired to cure her wounded love. Tradition still points out the hill whence the sound of a hunting horn proclaimed the approach of the king, and caused the drawbridge to be lowered which separated him from the woman he expected to obtain at the price of a few transient attentions. Anne, prouder or more skilful than he had himself expected, repeated to him the words of Elizabeth Grey to Edward the Fourth; "I am too good to be your mistress, not good enough to be your wife."

Henry VIII. was irritated by the obstacle; he had been married several years to a woman of irreproachable virtue and tenderness; he solicited a divorce, that remedy for ill-assorted unions, which the Romish church obstinately refused to the wants of the people, but granted easily to the lightest caprices of the great. History has transmitted to us the details of the trial of Queen Catharine, whom this time the court of Rome hesitated to sacrifice, because she was related to Charles V. Shakspeare's pen has immortalized the noble resistance of this woman to the despot who rejected her like a piece of worn-out household furniture. Instead of the voice of the pope, Henry VIII. bought that of the Catholic universities: the divorce was pronounced, and Anne Boleyn, in return for her youth, delivered herself up to a man older than her father, and received the title of queen, which from her childhood she had learned to envy.

Her father, satisfied until then with the favour he enjoyed, became irritated and discontented, because he did not obtain an increase of fortune proportionate to the elevation of his fami-

ly; the grief it occasioned him was such that he left the court, abandoning her whom he ought to have protected, to the mercy of the numerous enemies which her new rank created. Amongst all the new queen's relations, there was one alone, one of her brothers, who preserved any affection for her; the others detested her out of envy, or accused her bitterly of the mischances of their own ambition. She herself, in the first month of her pretended triumph, saw herself humiliated under her purple canopy by a poor Franciscan friar, who, in the very chapel of Henry VIII., and in his presence, reproached this prince with having broken his faith towards his faithful wife. All the monks of that order were banished from England; but their banishment was unable to efface remorse from the heart of the despot, and blushes from the cheek of his partner. Men of no consequence who did not fear death, more than once repeated this outrage to her whom they called an usurper, and seasoned with bitterness to her the dishes of the royal table: her gentle spirit became gradually soured; she conceived a cowardly and unjust hatred against her whose place she occupied, against poor Catherine, who lived retired in a cloister, disenchanted with the pleasures of this world; she wished for the death of that woman whom she had formerly loved, and who had loved her exceedingly. On the day of her death, she was unable to refrain from betraying her joy, and exclaiming, *At last I am queen!*

But she was no longer, for she no longer possessed the heart of the man who disposed of that title; a young girl presented to the king, had effaced in his eyes all the graces of Anne Boleyn. Anne surprised her husband in adoration of the object of his new worship; she dared to utter a complaint; and, from that moment, she was devoted to death, as guilty of offending his power. At the first symptoms of her disgrace, her secret enemies declared themselves; and at their head appeared the Duke of Norfolk, her own mother's brother. She was surrounded with spies; her thoughts were attempted to be discovered; her sighs were registered; she was accused of adultery with two men whose society she had been partial to, and of incest with her own brother, the only protector she had left. More revolting still, it was this brother's wife who dared to bear witness against her sister-in-law and husband. The accusation could not be carried on; they then threw them-

selves upon a conversation in which Anne had expressed fears about the king's weak health; the evidence of a formal conspiracy against the sacred majesty was founded upon a few innocent words: the brother and the other two accused were condemned as accomplices, and the tribunal of the English aristocracy pronounced their sentence of death. The day on which Anne Boleyn was beheaded in a room in the Tower of London, Henry VIII., who was at Richmond, repaired to a height whence he could hear the discharge of artillery, and discover the black flag which were to announce to the citizens that the execution was over. Some years afterwards, he had the impudence to put forth, in the name of the woman he had assassinated, claims to the inheritance of her family, to the ancient habitation of the merchant Geoffrey Boleyn. Thus ends this history of misfortune, infamy and cruelty; such was the fate of the woman who had aspired to unite herself to an absolute monarch. The authoress of the *Memoirs of the Life of Anne Boleyn* has not confined herself to exciting the human interest which these events present; she has drawn from them great lessons on the life of courts, on the ambition of women, and on those false positions which the vulgar call great: it has not sufficed her to present numberless piquant details, and descriptions full of life, to give the colouring of the period to an always animated narrative; as a woman, Miss Benger has not neglected to give moral opinions on the destiny of the wife of Henry VIII. These serious and grave opinions give as much value to her book as the literary talent which is displayed in it. After so many centuries of bad laws and bad customs, when human nature, long thrown out of its right place, seeks painfully to regain it, women have, as well as we, examples to observe, and meditations to make. When the ambition of men was to crush their fellow-men, the ambition of women was to share the pleasures and profits of power: now humanity, better understood, offers very different careers. One sex no longer looks on domination and avarice as their supreme objects; the other, in its turn, will doubtless prefer the fortune of honest men to that of the rulers of the world; and however loaded with brilliants the diadem of a queen may have been, the young maiden of the nineteenth century will not hesitate to pronounce that the wife of a Henry VIII., is nothing by the side of the wife of a Sydney.

ESSAY X.

ON THE HISTORY OF SCOTLAND, AND THE NATIONAL CHARACTER OF THE SCOTCH.

Is it by a simple effect of chance that Scotland has produced the first writer who has undertaken to represent history under an aspect at once real and poetical? I do not think so; and in my opinion it was the strong shade of originality cast over all the history of his country, which early striking the imagination of Walter Scott, has rendered him so ingenious in seizing every thing characteristic in foreign histories. Notwithstanding his immense talent for describing all the scenes of the past, it is from the history of Scotland that he has drawn most interest and fresh emotions.

Perhaps it may be thought that it is the picturesque aspect of the country, its mountains, lakes, and torrents which give so much attraction to the historical novels, the scene of which is laid in Scotland; but the profound interest they inspire, proceeds far less from this material cause, than from the living spectacle presented by a series of political commotions, always bloody, yet never exciting disgust, because passion and conviction form a larger share in them than intrigue. There are countries in Europe in which nature has a grander aspect than in Scotland; but there is none in which there have been so many civil wars with such good faith in hatred, and such earnest zeal in political affections. From the first enterprizes of the Kings of Scotland against the independence of the mountaineers, down to the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the Jacobite insurrections of the eighteenth, we always find the same spirit, and almost the same characters which appeared to us so picturesque in Rob Roy and Waverley.

No history deserves more to be read with attention, and studied at its original sources, than the history of this little kingdom, so long an enemy to England and now reduced to the condition of a mere province of the Britannie empire. The best written histories of England by no means suffice for this study; they give too small a share to Scotland; and in the presentiment of a future union of the two portions of Great Britain, they give to the northern one, beforehand, something of the political nullity to which we now see it reduced. On the other hand, the most celebrated and detailed histories of Scotland, Dr. Robertson's for example, have another kind of fault. However praiseworthy that work, the author neglects in it too much the ancient times, and appears to think too little about national origins. He passes rapidly over all that preceded the Reformation, and the religious dissensions; it is there alone that he begins to develop his narrative, and endea-

vours to exhaust the original texts. Far from bestowing a like importance on the other epochs, he treats them with levity and a kind of philosophic disdain, which does not forgive the ignorance of ancient times in favour of the poetry, and even instruction they contain. It seems as if, in Robertson's eyes, no History of Scotland, nor even a Scottish nation, had existed, before the fourteenth century; this nation appears ready formed, ready constituted, at the precise moment at which he judges it worthy of figuring on the historic scene. The numerous and incontestable facts which relate to the origin of the population, and the races of which it is composed, all those facts of which the traces are visibly imprinted in its social organization, those changes of political destiny, those parties at later epochs, are neglected by the historian. Not knowing the primitive nature of the Scottish people, we do not understand how it acts, and how its conduct is in accordance with the national character; we attribute to fortuitous causes, to mere accidents of chance, to personal influence, what had profound root, in the moral instincts and hereditary passions of the great masses of men.

One fact predominates in the history of Scotland; this is the primitive difference of races, not only between the Scotch and English, but between the two branches of the Scottish population. Although the inhabitants of the two portions of Great Britain, separated by the river Tweed and the gulf of Solway, have long ceased to form two distinct and mutually hostile states, they are still distinguished by differences of manners and character, which are the sign of a different origin. To the north of the Tweed, a greater quickness of intellect, a stronger taste for music, poetry, and intellectual labour, a more marked disposition for all kinds of enthusiasm, indicate an originally Celtic population; whilst on the English frontier, the Germanic character predominates in the habits as well as in the language.

The new physiological researches, together with a profound examination of the great events which have changed the social state of divers nations, prove that the physical and moral constitution of nations depends far more on their descent and the original race to which they belong, than on the influence of the climate in which chance has placed them. It is impossible not to recognize, in what still remains of the Irish population, a race of men of the same origin as those who now inhabit the warm countries of the south of Europe, although its emigration to the damp and cold climate of Ireland

must be traced to an uncertain epoch. The case is the same with the population of the mountains of Scotland. All the *brusquerie* and passion that are to be found in the language, the friendships and the hatreds of the southern French, all, even to the rapid dance of the peasants of Auvergne, are to be found among the Scottish Highlanders. The oldest of the populations which, at various times, came to inhabit the plains of Scotland, and people them by their mixture, they carry to the highest degree that southern impression, which is only found very much weakened amongst the Scotch of the south, although it still suffices to distinguish these from their neighbours in the north of England. Finally, and this is what gives a peculiar physiognomy to the history of Scotland, the race of Highlanders who remained free from all mixture with foreign races, preserved, until within a short period, against the population of the Lowlands, whose language differs from its own, an instinctive hatred, which has in all epochs kept the country in a state of civil war.

To this division of Scotland between two nations, nominally governed for a long series of centuries by the same royal authority, but completely distinct in language, customs, and political constitution, must be attributed most of the revolutions, which, in the course of centuries, have changed the condition of that country. They are all, notwithstanding the differences of epoch and of subject, whether political or religious, only scenes of the great struggle between the Highlanders and Lowlanders, a constant and obstinate struggle, which reproduces itself in history under the most varied aspects, and gives energetic strength to the various parties born of the simple diversity of opinions. Thence result a remarkable development of political activity, great contrasts of manners and beliefs, a great variety of original characters; in a word, all that constitutes the dramatic and picturesque interest of history.

Walter Scott has not been ignorant of this; although only a simple novelist, he has cast on the history of his country a keener and more penetrating glance than that of the historians themselves. He has carefully studied, at every period, the essential composition of the Scottish nation; and it is thus that he has succeeded in giving the highest degree of reality to the historical scenes on which his sometimes imaginary personages figure. He never presents the picture of a political or religious revolution, without tracing what rendered it inevitable, and what must afterwards produce analogous ones, the mode of existence of the people, its division into distinct races, rival classes, and hostile factions.

The most important of these divisions, that of races, and the native hostility of the Highlanders and Lowlanders, is the groundwork upon which he has founded most willingly the fictitious adventures of his heroes. While only seeking, perhaps, some means of striking more strongly the imagination by contrasts of manners and characters, he went to the sources themselves of historic truth. He has made evident the fixed point, round which have revolved, so to speak, all the great revolutions accomplished or attempted in Scotland; for we find the Highlanders opposed to the Lowlanders in the wars for a dynasty, in which one pretender struggles against another; in the aristocratic wars, in which the nobility fights against kings; in the religious wars, in which Catholicism is struggling with the Reformation; finally, in the revolts vainly attempted to destroy the bond of union of Scotland and England under one government. This species of historic unity, which is not to be met with in the same degree in any other country, following through scenes of detail apparently detached from one another, has produced, in a great measure, the strong interest which has for the first time attached itself to love-tales framed in scenes of national history.

ESSAY XI.

ON THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION, A PROPOS OF MR. HENRY HALLAM'S WORK, ENTITLED
"THE CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND."*

MR. HENRY HALLAM is the author of a work called "Europe during the Middle Ages," of which a French translation appeared some years ago. It is one of those historical compositions, very common in England, in which the changes of the government and the legislation of the country are endeavoured to be described

in an abstract manner. These kind of writings, seductive at the first glance, are far from really giving the instruction they seem to promise. They have one essential fault, that of supposing the civil and even the political history to be well known, and thus presenting the legislative acts apart from the circumstances which gave rise to them, and a faithful picture of which can alone give their true signification. The author

* This Essay was published in 1827.

of a *constitutional history* directs all his attention to the study of laws and administrative documents; and for the series of historical facts, he generally trusts to the first narrator he finds, without submitting the facts to a fresh examination, and without making the least effort to penetrate more deeply into the social state, the revolutions of which have brought about the different phases of the legislative constitution. It is thus that Mr. Hallam, when writing his "Europe during the Middle Ages," ten years ago, in the part of that work which relates to France, has hardly risen above Velly and his continuators, who appeared to him to have given a satisfactory idea of the national manners of the French people, from the sixth to the sixteenth century. The same faults, quite as remarkable in the chapters devoted to the empire of Germany, to Italy, and the other states of Europe, are less felt in those which treat of England. In this part of his work, the author, naturally better informed of the history of his own country, required less special studies; he ought therefore to be congratulated on having renounced his former plan, and having limited himself to continuing the constitutional history of England from the sixteenth down to the middle of the eighteenth century. Mr. Hallam's vast erudition as a lawyer renders his work the most complete and accurate catalogue of the English parliamentary acts; but the real motives of these laws and acts can be but feebly discerned in the small number of historical facts which fall by chance from the pen of the historian. We see the constitution of the English people, in its various stages; but the English people itself never appears.

It is against abstraction in history, that the new school which has commenced the regeneration of historical studies in France, has principally raised its voice. This school has struck a mortal blow at the monarchical version of the history of France. We believe that it is likewise destined to strike hard blows at the constitutional version of the history of England. Already have three French writers presented in a new light three of the principal events of the political history of Great Britain, the Norman Conquest, the popular Revolution of 1640, and the aristocratic Revolution of 1688.* Certainly, nothing in their works can take the place of Mr. Hallam's voluminous work on English legislation; but the works of the historians, connected with that of the lawyer, might give this immense compilation the life it requires. For, we repeat, the comprehension of events is not Mr. Hallam's predominant faculty; and generally speaking, this quality by no means predominates among English writers. Whatever there is characteristic in the different periods of their national history, is smothered by them under a covering of conventional formulas and metaphysical expressions. The word parliament has done more harm to the history of Eng-

land than the thing itself has done good. It has been the cause of a number of anachronisms of the grossest sort, those which transpose from one period to another, not material circumstances, but moral facts and political situations; it is owing to it that the English constitution prolongs its existence in the writings of historians, from the invasion of William the Conqueror to the present day. And the invasion itself, the most important event in the history of England, figured in modern narratives only as a change of succession, feebly contested and quickly accomplished until Walter Scott, in one of his poetical creations, showed his countrymen, for the first time, what the Norman Conquest really was.

The false aspect under which the historians of England have considered this conquest, not only prejudices the truth of their narratives during the short space of time which separates the battle of Hastings and the last Saxon insurrection; but it gives great inexactness to the judgments pronounced on most of the great succeeding events. It is truly impossible that a country in which there really were for several centuries, two distinct and mutually hostile nations, although the strangers confounded them all under one name, should not present something peculiar in its political revolutions, something not to be found in states in which society is homogeneous. The words aristocracy, democracy, and even monarchy, which we have borrowed from the books of the ancients, to apply them, properly or improperly, to the different forms adopted by the social state of our time, are incapable of giving an exact idea of the various changes which have taken place in the institutions of the middle ages. The most certain plan would be to abandon them entirely, when it is necessary to bring on the scene men who employed perfectly different formulas to express their ideas, their wants or their political passions. The most certain, but the most difficult way, would be to get at the facts, and describe them just as they present themselves, without endeavouring to give them any general qualification, and bringing them into frames traced out beforehand.

By applying this method to the history of England, it would be deprived of that species of philosophical marvellousness, which seems to surround it, to the exclusion of all other modern histories. If, turning away our eyes from the present, that we may not remain under its influence, we look back dispassionately, if we cease to colour the past with a reflex of contemporaneous opinions, we shall perceive entirely different things under the same names. The words Parliament, House of Peers, House of Commons, will lose the prestige with which the present liberty of the English people surrounds them. We shall see liberty, that fruit of modern civilization, spring, at a recent period, out of an order of society, the principle of which was the most illiberal that can be conceived, in which the powerful portion of the nation boasted of its foreign origin, and of having usurped its inheritance, titles and nobility, at the edge of the sword; in which, disunion between va-

* *The History of the English Revolution* by M. Guizot. *The History of the counter Revolution in England*, under Charles the Second and James the Second, by M. Armand Carrel.

rious classes was only the expression of the distance between the conqueror and the conquered, in which all social authority was tainted by this violent origin, and in which, royalty, belonging by right to the line of the chief of the conquest, was not, properly speaking, an institution, but a fact. From the midst of all this has arisen modern England, which is, in almost every point, the reverse of ancient England. The interval which separates them one from the other, presents rather the gradual decay of a violent order of things, than the slow formation of a society, destined to serve as a model to others. The latter opinion, however, has prevailed; it reigns almost universally among the historians of the English constitution, not that they appear to have preferred it to the other after a ripe examination, because they all forget to place at the head of their constitutional history the great fact of a territorial conquest. The conquest is the common source of all the political powers which have continued to exist in England ever since the twelfth century: we must keep our attention to this primitive fact, before following its progressive alterations down to the present time. We will endeavour to apply this method to the history of *royalty*, the *Parliament*, and the *elective system* in England.

§ 1.—On the nature of the Regal Power.

The Saxon population, having lost by its subjection all political existence, and the power of its ancient kings having passed into the hands of a stranger, the title of king changed its signification to the vanquished, and only preserved its ancient meaning to the conquerors.* To the first, the Saxon word *king*, which the Normans translated by that of *rey*, expressed only a violent and illegitimate authority: and it was only when applied to the new inhabitants of England that this title conveyed the idea of a delegated authority. The singular ambiguity of these two entirely different significations, soon rendered uncertain the extent of the prerogatives of the person who bore the title of king. The Saxon, trembling before a master, was disposed to unlimited submission and to servile complaisances, which the son of the Norman, prouder because he was stronger, did not reckon amongst his duties to his lord. By a natural tendency, the kings inclined to believe, and endeavoured to make others believe, that the title they bore gave them a right to an equal submission on the part of all their inferiors, and they aspired to level to the same condition with respect to themselves, the two races of men who inhabited the country with such different destinies. Thence proceeded, among the Anglo-Norman kings, a tendency to egotism and isolation, which early offended the sons of the companions of Duke William.† They were indignant that, confounding together the two distinct parties of his royal power, their chief pretended to treat them as he treated the Saxons who peopled his towns and boroughs. Their

resistance to this pretension brought about troubles and wars. The different events which distinguished this struggle, inclined the undecided authority of the kings, sometimes towards its violent, and sometimes its legal side. There were fluctuations on this subject which had never occurred in the time of the Anglo-Saxon royalty, when all was simple, because the nation was one.*

In the debates which this singular situation gave rise to, when hostilities were suspended, and each party exposed his rights in order to prevail upon the opposite party to acknowledge them, the Normans invoked the traditions of Anglo-Saxon royalty against the ambition of their chief. They maintained that the ancient limits of royal power ought to be re-established, and collected every thing that tradition furnished for fixing these limits. The Norman jurists drew up methodically from verbal information, the customs which had ruled England before the Conquest, and adorned this collection with the name of *Laws of King Edward the Confessor*. Such was the origin of that clamour for the laws of Edward, so often reproduced in England in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by the Anglo-Norman barons against the kings. The object of their complaints and insurrections was not to obtain for all the inhabitants of the country, without distinction of origin, securities against a common oppression. The charters which resulted from a momentary agreement of the two parties, prove that it was a question of security only for the possessors of the lands distributed after the Conquest; those who dwelt on domains that did not belong to themselves, remained in the class over which the royal power was absolute, and could only change their class by means of personal emancipation. Indeed, the customs which had existed in the times of Saxon independence, could be revived beneficially only for those who were, after the Conquest, in the position of the former Saxon freemen; and the Anglo-Saxon race was almost entirely fallen from this position. In losing its landed property, it had also lost the privilege of freedom, which, during the middle ages, had belonged exclusively to it; it had fallen into that class of farmers and tributaries which the old laws of the country called *keorls*, and for whom these same laws, previous to the conquest, had been extremely severe. The Saxons, inhabitants of towns, were in the condition of servitude which weighed upon the non-proprietors in the country; for they were regarded as simple farmers of the city which was their common domicile. The possession of most of the towns, distributed at the partition of the conquest, like great undivided shares, was the principal attribute of the royal prerogative in its arbitrary portion.

The first charter of liberty which the Anglo-Norman nobles forced their chief to Consent to, was that of Henry I. This charter, drawn up less than forty years after the Conquest, seems to have had for its sole object the better pre-

* 1066.

† From the year 1074.

* The reigns of William Rufus, Henry the First, and Stephen, 1087—1154.

servation to the sons of the conquerors of their natural right to be exempted from all the vexations which the natives were forced to submit to. It declared that all proprietors (and no right of property anterior to the conquest was then recognized) should inherit their possessions entirely and freely, without paying the king any sort of duty. It insured, moreover, to all the barons and knights, that is to say, to the men of Norman birth, the liberty of marrying their daughters and relations without the king's permission, and of retaining the guardianship of their near relations during their minority, a right which was refused to the Saxons, or from which they were forced to buy their exemption by more or less heavy taxes. This act, thus destined to distinguish, in a more certain manner, the two opposite phases of the royal prerogative, was solemnly sworn, then openly infringed, on account of the tendency of the kings towards an order of things in which the conquest should exist for their benefit alone, and in which the entire population should be degraded to the same level. But thirty-six years after the signing of the charter of Henry I., the barons demanded of King Stephen the oath to observe this charter, and moreover exacted from him securities against the king's endeavours to interdict to Normans as well as to Saxons the bearing of arms in the forests. These new acts were signed and deposited in Westminster Church, near London. But they soon disappeared, and the royal power recommenced confounding together the two orders of men which it ought to have distinguished. An armed opposition and a civil war were the consequences of this new attempt. A confederation of the descendants of the companions of William was formed against King John.* They represented to him Henry I.'s charters, and threatened, that if he persisted in forgetting his duties toward them, they would seize his castles, possessions, towns, every thing which he had inherited of the fruits of the great victory gained in common by their ancestors. The quarrel was bloody; more than once the king promised, and violated his promise; at last a truce was concluded, and a treaty signed in the plain of Runnymede, near Windsor, between the two armies.† The treaty of peace consisted of two distinct charters, one called the *charter of common liberties*, the other called the *forest charter*. The latter only reproduced the contents of the old charter of King Stephen; but the other, which has become so celebrated in the history of England, under the name of the *Magna Charta*, is expressed in a more formal and more detailed manner than all preceding charters.

The charter of common liberties established the strict obligation the king was under, not to raise money on the class of landed proprietors, unless it had itself consented to it by the free vote of its chiefs and representatives. Three cases only were reserved, in which the king, without a previous vote, might of his own authority levy a moderate contribution. On all other occasions, the archbishops, bishops, ab-

bots, counts, and chief barons were to be summoned by letters addressed to each individually, and a certain number of inferior barons and knights domiciled in the provinces, were to receive from the royal officers a collective warning to assemble on a day fixed, as a deliberative assembly. This warning was to precede the meeting forty days. It was determined that no man of rank should be fined but by the judgment of his peers; that no free man should in any way be destroyed or ruined in body or estate except by the same judgment; that, without judgment, he should not be banished, imprisoned, or despoiled of his inheritance. The securities granted to free persons extended even over their domains, and the agricultural implements they used in their improvements. The carts and harness which belonged to the lord of the manor, could not be put in requisition for the repairing of fortresses, bridges, and roads, the expense and labour of which thus necessarily fell on the sons of the Saxons, the vassals of low estate, farmers and cottagers, in a word, on that numerous class of men whom the Normans designated by the name of *villains*. One clause only moderated the king's administrative and judiciary acts towards them; the implements of labour, which the charter calls their *gagnage*, or, as we would call it, their means of gaining a livelihood, were excepted from the seizure of effects, which they frequently incurred for delay in the payment of taxes, or for contests of interests with the bailiffs of their lords. In this treaty of peace there is no mention made of the citizens of England, excepting those of London, a city in which a great number of Norman families had taken up their residence, and the inhabitants of which, for this reason, participated in some measure in the privileges of foreign descent. The citizens of London, who took the title of barons like the proprietors of estates, obtained as well as they, the assurance of never being taxed but with the consent of the great national council, which, in the Norman or French language, was called *Parliament*. No similar concession was made for the other towns and boroughs: only a declaration was made, that the immunities of various kinds which the royal authority had granted them, must be maintained. In confirmation of the contents of this act, the insurgents, that is to say, all the barons of England, except seven, chose twenty-five from amongst them to form a permanent commission, entrusted with watching the exact observation of the tenour of the Great Charter; moreover, the free proprietors of each county were to name twelve knights entrusted with seeking and denouncing to the twenty-five *preservers of liberty*, all bad customs which required to be extirpated.

The old tendency to assimilate the proprietors of estates to the citizens, and the sons of the conquerors to those of the conquered, manifested itself anew, although the Great Charter had been solemnly deposited in most of the churches. The successor of King John raised up against himself a confederacy similar to that which had armed against his father.* These

* 1214

† The 15th of June, 1215.

* 1255, Henry the Third.

treaties gained by the sword, were represented to him at the point of the sword; he swore to maintain them, his hand on the New Testament, in presence of the assembled bishops, who, holding lighted tapers, threw them all down at once, saying, "May he who violates this oath be thus extinguished in hell!" Notwithstanding this anathema, the king soon forgot what he had so solemnly promised, and the sons of the Normans were forced a second time to have recourse to arms to claim the rights of their ancestors. They compelled Henry III. to give them an act signed with his seal, in confirmation of the charter;* but, whether the fatigue of these wars led them to avoid their return, or whether the energy of the Anglo-Norman barons was overcome by the perseverance of royal authority, they relinquished some of the privileges which the Great Charter insured to them, and allowed their condition gradually to share the character of uncertainty and dependence which predominated in that of the descendants of the conquered. In the course of a century and a half, their fathers and themselves had imposed five charters on the kings. Edward I., Henry III.'s son, confirmed the last;† but after him commenced the reaction of royalty against the power and independence of the baronage. Richard II. went too hastily to the point of annihilating political rights for the benefit of the royal prerogative; he was defeated and made prisoner by the army of barons raised against him.‡ Meanwhile, the doctrines on which the prerogative was founded, were already passing from the privy council into the Parliament, where a second assembly, partly composed of citizens accustomed to regard royalty as an absolute authority, had taken its place by the side of the great council of barons. Moreover, it was difficult to lower the sovereign and free class, without raising a little the subject and despised class. This felt it, and its present interest led it to lend all its forces in the service of royalty. The tendency to the assimilation of the two races under the absolute power of one man, was equivalent to the gradual overthrow of the order at first established by the Conquest. And as the masses, once put in motion by political interest, never stop but at the end of their progress, from the moment that the citizens or sons of the conquered became, under the king's auspices, members of the House of Commons, from that moment commenced, although feeble and uncertain in the beginning, a great reaction of the inferior against the superior classes, with the intention of effacing from England all trace of the Norman Conquest, and of destroying all power which derived thence its origin, even royalty itself.

During the fourteenth century, the fusion of the least rich class among the men of Norman race with that portion of the other race which had enriched itself by industry and commerce, as well as the progress of a great number of citizens of the class of capitalists to that of territorial proprietors, had taken place with great activity, owing to the assistance of several laws or statutes relative to the possession of lands.

Until then, the different divisions made at the time of the Conquest, had remained unalienable in the family of the original possessor, and moreover, were unable to pass from one race to another, on account of the customs which forbade the sale of a titled estate to a person who was not decorated with an equivalent title of nobility. New statutes compelled the feudal superior to receive as a vassal, the buyer, whoever he was, of the land of one of his vassals, and elevated to the same rank the proprietors of domains with equal titles, whatever their origin.* These measures, destructive of the ancient political order, did not pass without opposition on the part of the sons of those barons who had twice made war on the kings to maintain their privileges of the Conquest; but their resistance was far from being as energetic as that of their ancestors; they confined themselves to soliciting legislative measures capable of attenuating the effect of those that displeased them. Entails, and the privilege of rendering a portion of land eternally unalienable, were established to resist the movement which was about to throw all the domains into the hands of whoever was able to purchase them. By the help of this privilege, a few fragments of the ancient race of conquerors was enabled to float up through centuries, and remain distinct from the rest of the population.

The kings did not entirely succeed in executing the project of the fresh conquest which they meditated against all the inhabitants of England, without distinction of race; they soon stopped willingly in their pursuit of this enterprise. Frightened at seeing their authority separated from the ancient supports which had surrounded it for several centuries, they changed their policy in time, and worked to re-establish part of what they had destroyed; they created orders of knighthood and other aristocratic corporations; they reproduced the distinction of races under new forms. It was very unwillingly, however, that they yielded to this necessity. Their conduct during the fifteenth century often presented disparities, and a mixture of two opposite tendencies, according as they were led by the desire of reigning alone, or the fear of being nothing if they remained alone. The nobility of the sixteenth century, a class of mixed origin, showed no remains of the spirit of independence of the ancient Norman nobility against the extension of the royal prerogative; but the will and power to act began to manifest themselves among the citizens represented in Parliament by the House of Commons. This immense class, issuing at the end of five centuries from the state of humiliation into which the Conquest had plunged it, made its revolution with the energy which is the characteristic of great masses of men when they appear for the first time on the political scene. It drew into its movement a part of the heirs of the privileges, domains, and titles which the Conquest had founded, whether Normans or English by origin. But these men, whom their position attached to

* 1265.

† 1274.

‡ 1399.

* Statutes of the reign of Edward the Third, 1327—1377.

the ancient order of things, surprised and grieved to see their project of moderate reform far surpassed by the violence of a multitude anxious to change every thing, mostly deserted the cause which they no longer understood, and ranged themselves against it, with the king and the descendants of the nobles of the fourteenth, the barons of the thirteenth, and the conquerors of the twelfth century under the Norman standard with three lions.* Nothing external indicated there a quarrel of race; but, to see the animosity with which war was still carried on against all ancient political existences, any one would have said that an old leaven of national hostility was still fermenting in the depths of the hearts of the sons of the Anglo-Saxons, and that the shade of Harold had appeared to the adversaries of Charles I.

§ II.—On the Transmission of the Regal Power

The appropriation of the royalty of England by William the Conqueror, by altering the nature of that royalty, naturally influenced the mode of its future transmission.† The royal authority among the Saxons was essentially elective. In endeavouring to make good, armed against the last king elected by the Saxon nation, a pretended will of a predecessor of that king, the Duke of Normandy, setting aside the slavery of the Saxons, gave an entirely new character to the title he claimed; he made it dependent on the will of the titular, and no longer on that of the nation. The electoral right, which participation in the conquest seemed to confer on the Norman warriors with regard to their chief, was even attacked by his usurpation of royalty over the vanquished. The Duke of Normandy felt it, and put in action all the stratagems of his policy to persuade his companions in fortune that they would gain rather than lose, if he took the title of King of England. He endeavoured even to make them believe that it was on his side a sacrifice made for the common interest of the entire victorious army. William the First disposed of royalty, as he pretended that Edward the Confessor had disposed of it for him, and at his death he bequeathed it to his second son, William Rufus. Robert, the eldest, relying on the tendency of the Anglo-Norman chiefs to repossess themselves of the right of election which they had hoped to enjoy, placed himself at the head of a party which made war on the king by succession; this war was that of the elective against the hereditary principle. The latter triumphed, owing to the support William the Second found among the Saxon population, to whom he made false promises, and who, with singular sincerity placed at his service the animosity it entertained against all the Normans.‡ The struggle was not ended, however, in a single combat; it was long renewed at the commencement of every reign.

During several centuries, the Anglo-Norman royalty remained wavering between inheritance and election; a sort of compromise between the

two principles limited the competitors to the sole descendants of William the Conqueror, either by the male or female line; and it was among these that the dispute took place. Almost always at the death of a king, two or three competitors arose out of the same family; thence periodically resulted the most frightful of civil wars, that of brother against brother, of relations against relations, the war of men against children in the cradle, a struggle of murders and treachery. The chronicles relate, that William the Bastard, at the moment when he felt himself in presence of the terrors of the next life, was seized with fear at the remembrance of the actions which had procured royalty for him; and said, that he dared to bequeath to God alone that kingdom of England, acquired at the price of so much blood.* The possession which caused him so much remorse, seemed cursed in the hands of his family. His sons fought for it; and more than once, the male posterity becoming extinct in the civil wars, the title descended to that of the females. In consequence of these revolutions, William's crown devolved to an Angevine family, then to the children of a Welshman, and finally to a Scotchman. During several generations, two families of brothers cut one another's throats, and according as each had the upper hand, the kings were seen proscribing as traitors the friends of their predecessors, and branding them with the name of usurpers, or *kings in fact*.† The assembly of the barons, or Parliament, which had been unable to establish its right of election, could only divide itself between the pretensions of the rival families, and render their feuds more bloody by drawing more men into them. Its legislative authority was exercised only to sanction the right acquired by victory, and fixing it in the posterity of him who was strongest. Parliament still sometimes pronounced the ancient formula, — *We elect or we depose*; but, in fact, it had no share in the changes which were the effect of war, and it was reduced to the discussion of genealogies and titles of succession, and the declaring them good or bad, according to the events of the day. Such was the order of things which lasted through the long disputes of the houses of York and Lancaster; and ceased only because Henry the Seventh, the collateral descendant of one of these royal branches, married the sole remaining heiress of the other branch.‡

The peace that was suddenly enjoyed under the domination of the grandsons of the Welsh Tudor, suggested the idea of preventing the return of the quarrels respecting the succession, which had so often disturbed it; and an act of Parliament gave Henry the Eighth the absolute power of bequeathing the royal authority to whoever he thought fit.§ He transmitted the crown to his son Edward, and by this new law rendered it similar to personal property. Thenceforward the ancient ceremony observed

* Orderic Vital. p. 659.

† From the reign of Henry the Fourth to that of Henry the Eighth, 1399–1485.

‡ 1485.

§ 1509.

* 1642.

† 1066.

‡ 1088.

at the coronation of the kings was reformed; and at Edward the Sixth's, Henry the Eighth's first successor, instead of presenting the new king to the assembly, demanding if they accepted him as their lord and master, and awaiting their answer although only for the sake of form, this remaining mark of a right completely abolished, was banished, and a ready-made king presented to the people, with the request that he should be saluted by their acclamations.* Edward the Sixth died young, and his elder sister Mary succeeded him, according to the orders of his father's will. It was the first time that a woman occupied, uncontested, the throne of the conqueror of England: this novelty indicated a great change in the nature of the royal power, if not with regard to the class of citizens, at least with regard to the nobles descended from those Norman barons who violated the oath sworn to the daughter of Henry the First, "because, they said, warriors could not obey a woman." The accession of Mary as Queen of England was a sign of the extension of royal prerogative, which had reached the point of rendering the government similar to a domain, and of confounding the two classes of inhabitants under a rule, analogous if not equal.† Some ambitious nobles vainly attempted to form a party for Lady Jane Grey, a great niece of Henry the Eighth: this young and interesting woman was punished with death after her defeat, like all the unfortunate competitors of the race of William the Conqueror. It was the last time that blood flowed in England for a dispute of succession; it was to be shed only in a far graver struggle, and in which were involved with royalty itself all the institutions which emanated from the Conquest.

The political movement which had separated from their own nation, that is to say, from the ancient nobility, the kings of the House of Tudor, that revolution which placed all real power in their hands, and caused every oppression to proceed from the royal prerogative, had also the effect of directing him against them all the complaints of the lower classes. Moreover, the perhaps gratuitous popularity which royalty had enjoyed in its struggle with the nobility, the feeling which induced the peasants of 1382, when rebelling against the latter, to exclaim, "Let us go to the king and expose our wrongs to him," had vanished, in the expectation of a succour which never came. The royal seal impressed upon all sufferings since the royal mantle had been spread over all authority, roused against royalty alone the remains of hereditary hatreds, which the violent order established by the Conquest had perpetuated. When Charles the First had perished, a victim to the fearful responsibility to which the royal power was liable on becoming universal and uncontrollable, and presenting itself alone before all the hatreds produced by centuries of oppression, his son, Charles the Second, took the title of king, according to the principle which subjected royalty to the same rule of succession established for private inheritance.‡ This taking posses-

sion signified nothing, because the new king was out of England; but when he returned, the conqueror of the revolution, there was for the first time under one royalty, two aristocracies, the ancient nobility, and those who, to ennoble themselves, had betrayed the popular cause.* Jealousy divided them; but royalty having endeavoured to make a party for itself, and destroying them by means of one another, interest finally united them under the mantle of the established religion, and twenty-eight years after its restoration, the royal power was taken away from Charles the First's second son. The conqueror of that day, William, Prince of Orange, bore the same name as the conqueror of Hastings; but the new William was far from occupying so simple a position as that of the first one. He had announced himself beforehand as the disinterested auxiliary of the antagonists of James the Second; he had written on his standards, *I will maintain*. He had therefore a long space to clear between the royalty of fact, which he possessed as a victorious general, and the royalty of right, which he had imposed on himself the necessity of awaiting. A long period had elapsed since royalty had been bestowed by a body, free in its choice; it belonged to him whom his rank assigned it to, when the titulary was dead; and in the present case civil and not natural death was in question; for James the Second was only exiled. Unanimity existed, it is true, against James, but not in favour of William. He therefore found himself in moments of doubt and perplexity. In the conference between the members of the Parliament in what was called, by a word borrowed from the last revolution but little applicable to this one, *the establishment of the nation*, opinions were not all favourable to the new candidate. The lawyers compared him to Henry the Seventh, who dethroned Richard the Third, and following the example of that king, they counselled him to take the crown as the conqueror of the king his rival. Taking certain other historical precedents as authorities, others maintained that James the Second had given proof of madness by his bad administration; that a regent, a guardian of the kingdom, ought to be named, but that the regal title should remain to him. Others wished royalty to pass to the nearest heir, that was, to Mary, daughter of James the Second, and wife of the Prince of Orange. Others, also, though in a small number, spoke of proposing conditions to James the Second, such as the barons of the thirteenth century had imposed on King John and his successors. These various opinions covered positive interests. Those who had crossed the sea with the Prince of Orange, who had heard him develop his plans of future conduct, and thought themselves certain of his good graces, desired him as king; but those who had not come with him were less eager for his interests; the upper clergy especially and their dependents wished for a king who should not forget them, to favour the nobility of the sword; some men of this party inclined again to King James; but most

* 1547.

† 1553.

‡ 1649.

* 1660.

of them joined the Princess of Orange, who had the advantage over her husband of not being a Calvinist. William was alarmed by the preference for his wife manifested by the Anglican Church, the credit of which was immense, and the rebellion of which against James the Second had decided the Revolution. He kept Mary in Holland, that he might act the more efficaciously in her absence; he even uttered against those who refused what they had tacitly promised him in return for his assistance, the threat of retiring and leaving them alone to struggle with King James. Placed between the fear of alarming by his ambition the minds of those with whom he had drawn the sword, and the danger of remaining long without title, abandoned to political discussions, he called together, as a species of House of Commons, the members of the three last Parliaments of the Stuarts, with the mayor and other municipal magistrates of the city of London; he demanded of that assembly, and of the peers of the realm, the right of summoning a Parliament in the legal form. Here the authority of precedents again presented obstacles to his progress. It was objected that no convocation of Parliaments could be made except by the king's letters, and that the lawful king was still James the Second; but the majority set this aside, and it was decided that the Prince of Orange might send letters not signed by him to the sheriff and other officers, to make elections in the old way, and name deputies of boroughs and knights of counties.

The new Parliament conciliated all opinions, and ended all difficulties, by proclaiming the husband and wife king and queen together. They were crowned with all the pomp of the ancient ceremony, and the details of what was done for them resemble in every point what had taken place exactly five hundred years before, at the coronation of Richard Cœur de Lion. This revolution of 1688 changed nothing either in the external appearance, or in the nature of the royal power in England. In their essential acts of royalty, that is to say, when they approved or rejected the laws voted by the Parliament, the successors of William the Third continued, like him, to employ no other language than old French language, which was that of the Conquest. *Le roy le veult, le roy s'avisera; le roy merite ses loyaux subjects, et ainsi le veult.* These formulas of an idiom which for the space of four centuries has ceased to exist on the other side of the Channel, seem to have been preserved by those who still pronounce them, when no one around them understand them, to remind the nation they govern of the origin of their power, and the foundation of their right over it.

§ III.—On the Constitution of the Parliament.

William the Conqueror summoned during his reign several assemblies of the Normans settled in England: some of them, which might be compared to staff meetings, were composed only of the chiefs of the conquering army, and bishops of the country; the others, much more nume-

rous, united the generality of those whom the Conquest had made proprietors of domains, whether great or small. It was an assembly of this kind that was held at Salisbury in the year 1086, after the compilation of the famous territorial register (Domesday book,) which was to serve as an authentic title to all the new possessors of estates. Under the successors of the Conqueror, there were in the same way two sorts of national assemblies or *parliaments*; for that word, a generic one in the French language of that period, expressed only a vague idea of political conferences. At the four great yearly festivals, most of the counts, barons and prelates of England repaired to the royal residence to celebrate the day's solemnity, and occupy themselves with the king, about diversions and affairs; moreover, if any great political event took place—a war to undertake, a treaty to conclude, or if the treasury had any extraordinary demands on it—the king specially convoked his vassals and liege men into a parliament. On these important occasions he wished to assemble round him the greatest number possible, in order that the decision taken in common might appear more imposing to those who had taken no part in it, and acquire in the eyes of the kingdom the character of a law consented to by the majority of men enjoying political rights. But except in times of revolution, the generality of men feel repugnance at being diverted from their private interests, to occupy themselves actively with regard to general interests. The change of place and expense are dreaded, and participation in the legislative power is regarded more as an onerous duty than as a right which it is necessary to preserve. This was what happened to the men of Norman race in England, when they felt themselves safe in their new settlement, and without fear of being obliged to cross the sea again, and restore the manors, fiefs and tenures to the natives.

The richest among them, those who exercised in their provinces part of the military or civil authority, those who, possessing a large patronage over vassals and retainers, saw the career of ambition and honours open before them, rarely missed the assemblies in which great political questions were decided. Thus at the Parliament, or at the king's court, either at the periodical convocations, or in the extraordinary assemblies, were seen many counts, viscounts or barons, but few of those knights, who, heirs of the moderate patrimony acquired by one of the soldiers of the Conquest, were anxious not to leave the domain they were improving with all their endeavours, nor to spend in one day in the company of men of rank, the income of a year. The impossibility for all of them to go personally to the great council caused them to have recourse to a practice which has been preserved to our days, that of the election of certain proxies chosen by the free tenants of each county under the name of knights of the shire, which they still bear. During the Norman period, when it was necessary to assemble a new Parliament—and generally they only lasted the time of their sessions—the royal chancery addressed personal invitations to men

in office, and the great landholders; at the same time, orders were given to the different governors of provinces, who were called viscounts in Norman, and sheriffs in English, to summon all those freeholders who had not received special summons. United under the presidency of the sheriff of their county, they chose a certain number amongst them to represent them in parliament, and fill there the political functions which their small fortunes compelled them to renounce. This difference in the manner of summoning the members of Parliament according to the degree of their riches and importance, soon created a distinction, although they were all assembled together, between those who came in their own name, and those who were sent to vote for the community of freemen. The distinction between the great barons and the representatives of the community of baronage, as it was then expressed, was the foundation of the separation into two houses, to which it is difficult to assign a certain date. The name of the assembly of the commonalties or commons of England belonged to the elective portion of the great national council. When citizens or deputies of the towns were called to this council, the method of their convocation, as well as their inferior situation, gave them more affinity with the representatives of the small landholders than with the great nobles of the counties, the king's officers, and the courtiers. Perhaps the habit of joining them to the knights of the shire gave rise to the formation of two distinct assemblies; perhaps this separation might have taken place, even if the English Parliament had never been composed but of territorial proprietors: this cannot now be decided, as events followed another course.

The history of the election of knights of the shire offers but one interesting fact, namely, that from the period at which the mixture of races betrayed itself by the uniformity of the language, the possessors of lands originally designated in authentic acts as lands either free or occupied by men of Norman race, were the only ones who enjoyed the privilege of voting for the election of representatives. As to the domains subjected to services or duties towards the seigniorial manor, and which announced by that very subjection that they formed part of the lands abandoned to the Saxon population after the division of the Conquest, they did not enjoy the privilege of freeholds, although often more extensive. The statutes of the sixteenth century limited this right to the proprietors of free lands, producing, at least, an annual income of forty shillings. Thus, although the mixture of the two races caused the domain which invested their possessor with the right of voting for the representation of the counties, to pass several times into the hands of men of Saxon descent, this part of the House of Commons was essentially Norman.

Respecting the other part, the representation of the boroughs and cities, we must have recourse to history to find its origin and understand its nature. The cities of England at the period of the Conquest could not be divided into small portions like the country; their popula-

tion could not be divided or despoiled like the population of the fields. Considered as indivisible property, it entered into the king's domain, or into that of the principal Norman chiefs. The shopkeepers and artisans who peopled the cities were not expelled from their humble dwellings by strangers who did not envy them: they were first given up to plunder, and subjected to the perquisitions of suspicious tyranny; but they were afterwards able to sleep in peace on condition of paying a heavy tribute. Frequently the steward of the king or noble, who was called mayor or bailiff in Norman, came with an escort of armed men to inspect the merchant's stores, inform himself what he was able to pay, and impose a poll-tax proportioned to his revenue. In this new state of dependence, the condition of the citizens changed, but not to the same extent as that of the inhabitants of the country, who were turned out of their dwellings, if large and in good condition, received out of charity as labourers on the fields they had possessed, and attached by force to the land which no longer belonged to them, to suffer all the chances of its destiny, to be sold, given up, and bequeathed with it. This steward, whatever his title, had a discretionary power over the government of the city, which was entrusted to him as a kind of farm, and sometimes even confirmed by lease. As the Conquest had no intention of giving one form of government an advantage over the other, the bailiffs of the conquerors found no advantage in destroying the municipal institutions, the associations and meetings of shopkeepers and artisans, which in Saxon were called *guilds*, but only placing them in harmony with the new order of things. It was even felt that the way of maintaining the value of the towns at its highest rate, (these are the expressions of ancient acts,) was, to alter the usages and customs of the inhabitants as little as possible, provided they contained nothing which could favour a spirit of rebellion. Thus, after the Conquest, the cities of England partly preserved their ancient commercial corporations, their periodical assemblies in the *guild-hall* or *hustings*, and the election of their *aldermen*, or elders of the city. Members of a species of small political body, assembled in fraternity with men of the same race, the English citizens' only slavery was that of paying heavy taxes, capriciously imposed, and exacted with severity. The peasants, therefore, who were called in Norman *villains* or *natives*, descendants of the men whom the Conquest had deprived of their lands, took refuge, as soon as they were able, in the cities and boroughs, to enjoy there a more favourable destiny. In this manner the king and counts who possessed the cities, gained subjects at the expense of the barons of the country. There even were royal edicts favouring this emigration of the serfs, by according them a year's exemption from the pursuit made after them by their natural lords. In the great insurrection of the peasants of England in 1382, a great number of men took refuge in the cities to escape the anger of their masters. A law was made to oblige the municipal corporations to denounce and deliver

them up. This was not the only time that the royal power, though unwillingly (for the enlargement of the towns increased their revenue), consented, at the demand of the landed barons, to laws directed against the tendency of the sons of the peasantry to settle in towns. Every man exercising any trade whatever was forbidden to receive as an apprentice a child who, up to the age of twelve years, had been employed on the soil.*

Notwithstanding these concessions made to the interests of the great rural property, the kings, who were the largest possessors of boroughs, occupied themselves in ameliorating the revenues of their property, by rendering the habitation of commercial towns more and more convenient to the labouring classes. They went so far as to withdraw certain cities from all administration derived from the Conquest. London, Bristol, Coventry, and Lincoln had the right of being governed by their Saxon magistracy alone, and of electing the men commissioned to raise and send the taxes and subsidies to the royal exchequer. Some of the cities freed in this manner, and which, in the language of the ancient laws, were called *incorporated cities*, had the privilege of extending their municipal jurisdiction without the walls, and ruling a certain extent of territory withdrawn from the power of the bailiff and royal officers. The cities which had received this privilege (the greatest of all) were called counties by themselves, and the territory thus annexed to the municipal jurisdiction was called *liberty*. According to some acts, the king let, on a perpetual lease, a city to its own inhabitants, on the condition of certain fixed rents, payable by the local magistrates under their responsibility. In other places, he agreed to the subscription of a certain tax, in consideration of which the city was delivered from the pursuit of the collectors; finally, in other places, by a more singular contract, he made a double arrangement with the proprietor of the castle which ruled a town, and with the town itself, in order that the citizens should possess the castle and have no fear, on condition of a rent payable to the king and the ancient lord of the place. In one word, interest varied endlessly the combinations of the arrangements: the result was, that municipal corporations arose everywhere in the hearts of cities, under the security of solemn acts and charters sealed with the royal seal. But these charters were more than once infringed; and if the cities showed themselves exact in paying their rent, the kings, who were the stronger, unscrupulously exacted more than was due to them. Under the specious names of *assistances*, *subsidies*, and *benevolences*, the cities that owed nothing more than the rent stipulated by their contract of freedom, saw themselves entirely plucked like the serfs of the soil; they complained, and they were sometimes attended to, when the want of money was over.

When, at the close of the thirteenth century, royal mandates cited delegates from the principal freed towns, to appear before the king and

the barons of the Parliament, to answer demands of money, violent despair must have seized those men who paid each year the price of their municipal liberty, and could only see in this novelty an attempt to render legal the extraordinary exactions which were committed against them in despite of the sworn charters. Such was, in fact, if we are to judge from the complaints expressed in the acts of the period, the impression produced by the birth of that portion of the House of Commons which later struggled so nobly for the liberties of England. The deputies of the cities and boroughs, summoned to appear before the king, nobles, and knights assembled in Parliament, did not come there to be consulted on the public affairs, to which they were considered strangers, and the discussion of which took place in a language which they did not speak, the language of the Conquest. Their part, an entirely passive one, was limited to consenting for their constituents to the new taxes demanded; and when the demand for a subsidy was at the same time addressed to the knights of the shire, the latter always voted less considerable sums, the fifteenth, for example, of the revenue of their constituents, whilst the citizens unwillingly granted a tenth. It would be a false way of viewing history, to suppose that the first election of deputies in the boroughs of England was accompanied with as much popular rejoicing as is seen every seven years round the hustings of London. When the aldermen and common council of each town had named as many deputies as were prescribed in the royal order transmitted by the sheriff, these deputies gave securities for their appearance before the king in his Parliament, a certain sign of their want of alacrity in going there.

The order of electing was not at first intimated to all boroughs. Those from whom the crown had most money to hope for, were those summoned to appear in the persons of their representatives: this was, it is true, a milder way than open force, to obtain an extraordinary contribution from the commercial population; but this population had more reason to fear it, because force is temporary, whilst institutions last and perpetuate themselves. For some time the boroughs were thus assembled singly and without rule; their deputies, who appeared invested with the right of granting in their name, granted whilst disputing on the sum. The following year, either new representatives were called, or the taxes were levied according to the votes of the preceding year, or else commissioners were sent to renew the votes on the spot itself. The assembling became gradually general and regular. From the close of the fourteenth century, the royal letter which commanded the election of two knights for each county, joined to this demand that of two of the *most discreet* and experienced merchants of each borough. The great cities, notwithstanding their repugnance, were forced to comply with the summons thus made them; but the unimportant boroughs endeavoured to elude the law, representing that they were too insignificant to be consulted in Parliament, and too poor to supply the ex-

* Statutes of Richard the Second, 1382—1399.

penses of the journey and return of the deputies demanded of them. The first orders of the election sent to the sheriff did not bear the names of the different boroughs of their counties; it was permitted to that officer to extend or suppress certain names in the list of places considered of sufficient consequence to be represented. Far from complaining of his neglect on their account, or of these voluntary omissions, the citizens thanked him as for some kind action; and often those whom he remembered, after appearing to forget them for some time, exclaimed against this attention, and lamented that they were constrained *by malice* to send men to Parliament.

The boroughs who sent no deputies expected not to be overcharged with taxes; but although there was really no other profit in not electing representatives, save the exemption from the expense of removing and the journey, the inhabitants of boroughs continued to seize with alacrity all occasions of freeing themselves from this uselessly expensive obligation. But the government managed to lose nothing by the omissions; they made all the boroughs pay, as if all had consented to it, whatever had been voted by the deputies of the majority of them. There was thus no more refuge against extraordinary subsidies; and thence proceed the interruptions which the public acts of England present in the sending of the deputies of boroughs to Parliament. These interruptions, frequently renewed and of long duration, were afterwards opposed as a motive of prescription, to the cities without representatives who wished to name some when representation became of use. The same power which had compelled them to be represented opposed itself to their having representatives, and this inability still exists for some of them.

The deputies of boroughs were at first called simply to consent to their share of taxes and then retire; whilst the landed deputies, representatives of the Norman race, who deliberated with their lords on the affairs of the state, obtained gradually by their habitual presence, and especially by the decay of the French language, the faculty of voting legislatively on all sorts of matters. Thenceforth their votes became precious to the different parties who governed or aspired to govern. The kings, better known to the boroughs which owed their existence to the royal charters and still felt some gratitude for their often violated privileges, had more credit with the deputies of the citizens. This portion of the House of Commons rendered them frequent services in the constantly renewed disputes between the power of the king and that of the nobility. Views different from those which had first caused them to assemble the deputies of the boroughs, made them then augment the House of Commons by a fresh supply of deputies. They gave many cities which had none, *charters of incorporation*, and granted them all the freedoms, privileges and immunities of the royal boroughs, which contained for them the power of being represented in Parliament. A number of insignificant places, without revenues and almost without inhabitants, were thus obliged to

send deputies. The kings of the sixteenth century frequently put this expedient in practice. The small boroughs on their domains, on whose devotion they could rely, helped them to procure votes, which had then acquired great political importance.

Henry the Seventh gave the example; and Henry the Eighth in following it, confirmed as a principle, that a royal charter conferred, on any part of the kingdom whatsoever, the right of naming representatives in Parliament. He conferred this right on twelve counties and twelve boroughs of the recently conquered country of Wales, where submission to the royal power was more absolute than in England. In his domains he created twenty boroughs, each sending two deputies; and not content with that, he restored the right to several small places which had lost it from not making use of it. Edward the Sixth and Mary created twenty-five new Parliamentary boroughs; Elizabeth created thirty-one; James the First and Charles the First created twenty-three.

Such is the origin of that famous House of Commons which, in the seventeenth century, undertook so energetically the struggle of liberty against power. At this period, the most ardent of its members were the sons of those same citizens who, three hundred years before, considered as onerous the right of being represented; and the king they dethroned was the successor of those who had forced the cities to send deputies to Parliament against their will.

Thus a great mistake would be made, if, separating some institution from the great cotemporary events and the political state of the country, the same effects were attributed to it at all periods of its existence. The name of parliament predominates in the entire history of England, from the Norman Conquest to the present day; but what a diversity of things there are under this unaltered name! When a man wishes to be an historian, he must penetrate things, and discern their real variety under the uniformity of language; he must especially avoid proceeding by abstraction, and separating political establishments from the circumstances which formerly accompanied them in the midst of which they swam, so to speak, and which has impregnated them with its colour. The parliaments of barons and knights sitting entirely armed in the centuries which succeeded the Conquest, the subsidiary parliaments of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the revolutionary parliament of 1640, have nothing but the name in common. Nothing of their nature is known unless we enter deeply into an examination of the special epoch to which they correspond; unless, in one word, we are able clearly to distinguish the three great periods of the history of England since the Conquest; namely, the Norman epoch, ending with the mixture of races which was complete under Henry the Seventh; the epoch of the royal government, from Henry the Seventh to Charles the First; and finally, the epoch of social reforms, which commenced in 1640.

§ IV.—*On the mode of Electing the Representatives of Cities and Boroughs.*

Amongst the cities anciently represented, and to which this antiquity serves as a title, the number of representatives was never proportioned to the population. The idea of proportioning the number of representatives to the population of the localities sending them, this idea, which appears so simple to us according to our modern opinions on the nature and object of national representation, could not present itself to the minds, either of the kings who first assembled the deputies of the English cities, or of the inhabitants of those cities. The deputies of early times, properly speaking, played no other part than that of diplomatic agents entrusted with a pecuniary negotiation; their number was unimportant to the two contracting parties; and if on one side there existed a tendency to demand a larger number of representatives, it was on the side of the kings, rather than on that of the cities, which complained very much of the expense. This disposition changed only at a comparatively modern epoch, and when, from the heart of the society formed of the mixture of the two races, theoretic opinions arose on the rights of citizens, and the source of government. If, during several centuries, the right of sending representatives was little desired by the cities, and if the right of being elected as a representative was rarely contended for, the right of voting as an elector was as little desired as the two others. In whatever manner the municipal administration chose, or caused to be chosen, those who were to plead for the borough before the king and nobles assembled in Parliament, it was always supposed to do right, and that it entrusted with a mission of which it was the best judge, the men most capable of fulfilling it. Besides, these men were not elected to discuss great political questions; they were not going to represent any opinions, and minds could not be divided on the fact of paying more or less.

The municipal administration, which was called corporation, had therefore almost every where the discretionary choice of deputies; there where the administration was more numerous, the electors were more numerous; and sometimes the electors employed to name the municipal magistrates also named the deputies. In this latter case there was still but a small number of active citizens; for, in the heart of those small societies which had no independent existence, and in which the common interest could hardly have two sides, negligent confidence was almost always the only rule of internal policy; the richest, the most ancient citizens, the men of certain employments, possessed almost always the privilege of elections without opposition and without jealousy. When the part of the representatives of the boroughs became quite different, when the smallest city could not choose its deputies without influencing the country for good or for evil; in a word, when the principle of deputation had completely changed, opinions turned towards an analogous change in the principle of election. But authority un-

dertook the defence of old customs, and found an auxiliary in habit, a tyrannical power which often makes itself heard above interest. Those into whose hands the neglect of the citizens had allowed the right of election to pass, became the sole electors by exclusive privilege. In those places where election had been allowed to fall into the hands of some magistrates, this invariably transmitted privilege was attached to that magistracy, to that class of inhabitants to the exclusion of the others; and what is still more singular, to that spot, to that part of the town, to those houses inhabited by the ancient voters. Political right ceased to belong to men; it resided in some measure in old walls, often in ruins, which had the power of communicating it to their proprietors. Sometimes, when the tide of civilization or a change in habits had changed the situation of a city, the privilege of naming members of Parliament for it remained outside its new walls, attached to certain lands covered with its ancient remains, and divided into as many compartments as the old city had votes. Great personages and rich men bought these lands and the hovels that covered them; they name a deputy for it, and dispose of his vote in Parliament.

The nomination of the deputies of the cities of England by a small number of electors, although it may seem an abuse by the care authority takes to maintain it, reaches back therefore to the early times of the assembling of boroughs in Parliament. Few then cared to send deputies chosen by the majority or universality of the citizens; and none could be cited as having formerly followed a contrary custom, excepting the five large maritime cities nearest to the coast of France, and still designated by the French name of *Cinque Ports*, which the Normans had given them. But this peculiarity is the consequence of the existence of these cities after the Conquest. Hastings, Dover, Sandwich, Hythe, and Seaford, were the places of landing and passage of the Norman troops, who, after the first battle, successively attacked England. These towns were the marts of their ammunition, their points of observation between their native country and the recently conquered land. The first occupied in the invasion, it is probable that their population was in a great measure renewed by the soldiers, the artisans, and the merchants from the other side of the Channel. This population, sprung from the conquerors, could never be reduced to the same level as the Saxon population of the other towns. It became equal in condition and privileges to the most numerous class of the new proprietors. When the great council of men of Norman race assembled, it was called there, not simply to grant taxes, but to deliberate on affairs; not to pay, but to discuss. Unable to transport itself entirely, it sent deputies chosen with the formalities of a general assembly, a course which men have always adopted whenever they have had to name real representatives of their will. These representatives bore the common title of men belonging to the victorious nation; they called themselves in Norman *barons of the Cinque Ports*; and this name, a rem-

nant of the Conquest, they bear at the present day.

The inhabitants of the Cinque Ports were even formerly regarded as of a superior condition to that of the citizens of London: these had required a charter from William the Conqueror to reinstate them in their rights destroyed by the Conquest, to exempt them from the servitude which weighed over all the inhabitants of the conquered cities; that is to say, they were allowed to remain possessors of their property, and transmit their inheritances to their sons. But no act of freedom is found for the Cinque Ports. The Great Charter stipulates for their rights by the side of those of the barons of the country, and all the acts destined to fix the condition of the free men of England mention this original liberty, always scrupulously maintained on account of its origin being owing neither to concession nor tolerance. Two other places, Winchelsea and Romney, and later the town of Rye, were annexed to the condition and privilege of the first five, and notwithstanding the increase of number, the old name of Cinque Ports still existed to designate them collectively. But these towns, privileged during the Norman period, saw their importance decrease when the mixture of the two races and the progress of English industry had raised the condition of the other boroughs; the mass of their inhabitants lost the title of baron, which became in some sort monopolized to the profit of a minority of landed proprietors. During the long system of commercial prohibitions, these maritime cities became peopled with officers and custom-house clerks, and the representatives they sent were almost always ministerial.

The history of the English cities may convey an idea of what the royal government had to do when it wanted to make sure of the deputies of such or such a borough. It annulled under various pretexts the ancient charter of the corporation, and gave it a new one, which distributed the electoral right in a manner more conformable to its views. Several kings laboured successively at this reformation of the charters.

James the First, and Charles the Second especially, made great efforts to place throughout England the choice of the municipal magistrates and the representatives of the cities, into the hands of their creatures. The latter, with one single blow, put in doubt the legitimacy of the immemorial organization of most of the cities and boroughs; he compelled them to produce before justice the legal title in virtue of which they enjoyed them. Two hundred cities were thus deprived of a privilege consecrated by several centuries of existence, and forced to trust for the future to the king's decision.

The city of London was not forgotten in this tentative of reform; an attempt was made to obtain by intrigues the consent of the municipal council to a surrender of charters, apparently against the wish of the city. The members of this council were found immovable, and an action was brought before the Court of King's Bench. The council of the city was accused of having signed a seditious petition, and it was said that for this conduct the entire city had transgressed the conditions of its freedom. To make the sentence more certain, several judges were replaced by others, and the city of London was condemned. This measure, the results of which were neither complete nor lasting, had not the object of rendering uniform for all England the mode of election of the members of the House of Commons. Since that time, the English government has not thought about it any more; and it is one of the points on which it struggles with the greatest obstinacy against the opposite party. To this project of reform we can retrace all those which the two revolutions of 1640 and 1688 seem to have left in reserve for a third revolution, more fundamental, or, as it is now called in England, more *radical* than the two first. Delayed perhaps half a century by the ill-success of the French revolution, will it be long in coming? This is as impossible to guess at the present moment, as it is to be blind to the causes which render it inevitable.*

ESSAY XII.

ON M. DAUNOU'S HISTORICAL COURSE AT THE COLLEGE DE FRANCE.

THE ancients required of him who offered himself for the defence of the accused, the quality of a man of worth and that of an eloquent orator. We have likewise a right to demand of whoever presents himself to a professorship of public instruction, the double security of patriotism and knowledge. It was thus that M.

Daunou appeared before the College de France. He had acquired the name of sage and patriot, not in virtue of a patent of authority, or by the

* It must be borne in mind that this Essay was written in 1827, several years before Lord Grey's ministry and parliamentary reform.

caprice of fashion, but by long labours and hard trials. Contemporaneous with liberty at his birth, he has served it at the peril of his head; he has seen his friends fall by strokes of policy. Escaped with a small number of men to repeat to us, a new generation, how dear the care of our destiny cost our fathers, he has reappeared at once on the bench of the representative and in the tribune of the professor. In the latter, as in the former place, his purpose is to fulfil with dignity and without ostentation the compact by which he has devoted his life to truth and reason; his opening discourse is but the proclamation of this noble devotion. M. Daunou has declared himself subjected to a sacred obligation towards science, to the obligation of professing it entirely, such as it is, without disguise as well as without reserve. "I demand," said he, "in the name of the pupils who are to listen to me, the liberty never to deceive them: to tell them pure and entire truth is a respect due to their age, a duty and a right of mine. I know, moreover, that they would soon have deserted a school of slavery and falsehood."

The course of history and morals began by learned dissertations on the different degrees of value of historical testimonies, according to their nature and epoch. In the exposition and criticisms of traditions and monuments of all kinds, the professor understood how to unite the exactitude of a scholar with the views of a philosopher and the talent of a writer. Ingenious fancies, piquant reflections, and fragments of generous eloquence, varied and sustained the attention of his young hearers. After marking with impartial justice the credit which men owe to the testimonies of men, M. Daunou directed the attention of the students to themselves, and began the inquiry of "What is man, who is the subject of history?" Here presented itself the vast picture of human affections, whether just or unjust, reasonable or foolish, benevolent or ill-natured, generous or mean. Such was the subject of several lessons breathing the mildness of a philanthropist and the austerity of a citizen. M. Daunou has pointed out some germs of good in the passions which so often disturb the peace and good sense of societies; the sole warrants, however, of their progress in ambition, the love of applause, and anger, which induces men to brave death. He has showed that these passions, so fatal when they are egoistical or fanatical, may, when governed by reason and tempered by goodness, likewise produce the desire of being useful, the devotion to others, and that calm indignation which renders the soul of the patriot inflexible before gold, honours, or executioners; with which Sidney disconcerted his judges, and ascended the scaffold as a deputy ascends the tribune.

From the application of history to the morals of individuals, M. Daunou advanced to its application to the morals of society; for he has thus defined politics. He has banished far from the field of science all policy which was not morality itself, and has rejected it for ever to the empirical catalogue of the proceedings of those quacks and cutpurses who know no other. He has exposed, in a manner worthy of such a sub-

ject, the imprescriptible rights of men, and the equally imprescriptible rights which things derive from their connection with persons; in other words, the sacredness of human liberties, and the sacredness of human property. The productions of industry (and every thing which the hand of man has touched is a production of industry) ought, like the men themselves, to find all roads free: their carriage, as well as their existence, is always the act of the liberty of a man; on this account it is sacred and inviolable. M. Daunou has proclaimed, that if it is true that no society can exist without laws, without authority, without public strength, and without taxes, it is also true that no society can fail to perish under these very institutions, when they are imposed on it in excess, that is to say, when the laws sanction any thing besides the mutual respect of the liberty of all; when the authorities have sufficient methods of constraint to compel obedience to such laws; when the taxes exceed the measure prescribed by the necessities of a repressive and not preventive administration towards citizens, defensive and not hostile towards foreign nations; when the public strength exceeds in intensity the mass of possible internal offences, or possible external perils. From the period at which these things occur, society is no longer governed, it is possessed; or, to speak more properly, it is no longer society, but a flock under masters, either one, several, or a great number; their quantity is of no importance.

A philosopher in whom our epoch glories, was the first to establish this profound and luminous distinction; and it was in quoting him that M. Daunou reproduced it. There are, said M. de Tracy in his commentary on *l'Esprit des Lois*, but two sorts of government; that in which those who govern are for the nation, and that in which the nation is for those who govern: in briefer terms, there are *a national government*, and *a special government*. The various numerical forms expressed by Montesquieu, and rendered famous by his genius, are all absorbed into this great division, the only real one. Without perverting M. de Tracy's formula, the word *government* might be suppressed in the expression of the second sort; and then there would remain on one side the government, properly so called, and on the other, possession, conquest, and despotism, whether collective or individual: government, marked with the invariable seal of justice and common utility; despotism, possessing a thousand characters, a thousand methods, figures and degrees, according to the different chances of the strength of the masters and the cowardice of the subjects: government, the produce of reason and the object of science; despotism, the produce of fortune, and abandoned to history as a fact, the existence of which can be narrated and not qualified.

Thus brought back to the consideration of the *national government*, the only one which ought to bear that name to enable science to speak an exact language, M. Daunou has exposed the moral rules of conduct which weigh at once upon the governors and the governed. He has rejected Machiavelianism from the science of

government; he has numbered only as the bases of this science, the firm conviction of the inviolability of human liberty, under whatever form it may appear, and the knowledge of what is useful to the community of associated men. In treating of the conduct and spirit of nations, the professor in the same way left turbulence, restless hatred, bitter satire, that consolation of weakness, and insult, that mask for cowardice, to the subjects of despots; but he has reserved as the first, or rather as the only duties of the citizen, the inflexible conscience of his rights and an equal conscience of the rights of others; a continual mistrust of those who govern, a calm and austere mistrust, which should not exhale itself in aggressions, but should keep eyes awake and hearts prepared for defence. In the progress of a nation towards liberty, its march should be solemn and regular, like that of the close-pressed battalions which, by the mere force of their order, advance, bearing down all obstacles before them, and are victorious without striking a single blow: the tactics of the Parthians, sudden irruptions, pretended flight, false truces, and daggers, belong to escaped slaves.

M. Daunou thinks that the French nation is now worthy of embracing the morality of nations; he believes that we have at last attained the social state, that state in which, as he says himself, there is nothing certain but good faith, nothing powerful but truth, nothing skilful but virtue. We heard him address this consoling assurance to the young men of his audience; to those new generations that have not had time to complete their apprenticeship to servitude under despotism. "May they," nobly exclaimed the professor, "may they, these generations, eager of instruction, of liberty, and of happiness, become a generous and wise people, incapable of enduring the yoke of despotism, and of shaking off that of the tutelary powers! May they understand that there is no pure knowledge but that which perfects manners; that we cease to be enlightened when we become depraved; that a nation is free in proportion only as it is just, virtuous and courageous; that arts and sciences only preserve from slavery those whom they preserve from vice; and that a corrupt people is a prey promised to tyranny, like those dead bodies which are abandoned to wild beasts!"

Noble and pure exhortations like these render far distant from us the time, really so recent, when elegant servitude alone professed in the schools; when Virgil was made to predict the birth of the son of a despot; when the great

words "native country and honour" were profaned before youth; when the phrases of an empty rhetoric, and the frozen figures of algebra, were the sole pasture offered to the mind of a young French citizen; when in meetings of pomp, the benches of youth were covered with men in office invited by a courtier professor, to render a good account to Cæsar of the minds of the sons of the partisans of Marius.

M. Daunou is now following up his course of history by learned discussions on the two bases of historical science, geography and chronology: it is by accustoming his young audience to the gravity of these studies, that he will induce it to forget the imperial futilities and meannesses. Let the spirit of youth be serious and upright, and France will be saved from the future chances of despotism; for such minds are the terror of tyrants, far more than the unsteady ardour of popular clubs.

The author of this article has listened, as a pupil, to M. Daunou's lessons: a young man himself, he had his share in the councils which the professor gave young men; if he ventured himself to explain the principles of conduct which these eloquent lessons appeared to him to prescribe to those who are now engaging in the career of patriotic interests, he would say, that at the present epoch, which is that of a great renovation, in this time of transition, when old forms no longer exist, and new ones have not yet arisen, when the human species seeks and doubts, the activity of each of us should be internal, to be wise and fruitful. Each of us should propose to himself the great question which entire humanity endeavours to solve for itself, "What ought I to be?" Our conscience, if calmly consulted, will reply; "that we shall have accomplished our destiny, if we know how to maintain ourselves always reasonable, courageous and free." Here is all the political problem. It is within ourselves, in the solitude of our chambers, in the midst of the grave meditations of science that we shall find its secret, and not in the noise of the world and of parties, on that sea of disputes where passions come in collision, and from which peaceful and timid reason shrinks back. Let us not be seduced into the indiscreet ambition of making France do what is right; let us do it ourselves: are not we France? We have admired M. Daunou; let us inquire what power has created his character, elevated his soul, and enlarged his mind? he will himself tell us—forty years of retreat and study.

ESSAY XIII.

ON THE ROMAN EMPIRE, THE CAUSES OF ITS RUIN, AND THE DOUBLE CHARACTER OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE MIDDLE AGES IN THE EAST AND WEST, A PROPOS OF THE HISTORY OF THE LOWER EMPIRE, BY M. DE SEGUR.

WHEN Cæsar's legions passed the Rubicon, they had conquered for Cæsar all the Roman magistracies; this conquest, which the first favourite of the treacherous soldiers did not, owing to Brutus, enjoy very long, was, by fresh acts of treachery, afterwards secured to those who inherited military favour after him. It was thus that the simple title of general beloved by the troops, *imperator*, contained within itself all powers and rights; it was thus that in Rome the fortunate chief whom the legions of Germany or Pannonia had elevated on their bucklers, became the sole protector and revenger of all civil interests, the representative of the comitia, the elector of the consuls, and the president of the senate: whilst outside the walls, an image of entire Rome, he exercised, for his sole benefit, the collective despotism which the sovereign, formerly the people, had assumed over the nations conquered by its arms. Their tributes found their way into his fisc, their arms were at his orders. However, after this revolution, the Roman citizen, deprived of the share he had possessed in the power of Rome or the Roman empire, did not the less preserve the passive privilege of the Roman condition, the freedom of his person and property, and the exemption from all arbitrary tribute. The man of the provinces was still distinguished from the man of the city; but this distinction did not last long. Under the humane pretext of gratifying the world with a flattering title, an Antoninus, in one of his edicts, called by the name of Roman citizens the tributaries of the Roman empire, those men whom a proconsul might legally torture, flog with rods, or crush with labour and taxes. Thus the power of that formerly inviolable title, before which the most shameless tyranny stopped short, was contradicted; thus perished that ancient safety-cry which made the executioners fall back: *I am a Roman citizen*.

From that period Rome no longer existed; there was a court and provinces: we do not understand by that word what it now signifies in the vulgar languages, but what it signified primitively in the Roman language, a country conquered by arms; we mean to say, that the primitive distinction between conquering Rome and those it had conquered, then became established between the men in the palace and those out of the palace; that Rome itself lived only for one family, and a handful of courtiers, as formerly the nations it had conquered had only lived by it. It was then that the name of subjugated, *subjecti*, which our language has corrupted into

that of *subjects*, was transported from the conquered inhabitants of the East or Gaul, to the victorious inhabitants of Italy, attached in future to the yoke of a small number of men, as these had been attached to their yoke; the property of those men, as well as the others, had been their property, worthy, in a word, of the degrading title of subjects, *subjecti*, which must be taken literally. Such was the order of things which had been gradually forming since the time of Augustus; each emperor gloried in hastening the moment of its perfection; Constantine gave it the finishing stroke. He effaced the name of Rome from the Roman standards, and put in its place the symbol of the religion which the empire had just embraced. He degraded the revered name of the civil magistrature below the domestic offices of his house. An inspector of the wardrobe took precedence of the consuls. The aspect of Rome importuned him; he thought he saw the image of liberty still engraved on its old walls; fear drove him thence, he fled to the coasts of Byzantia, and there built Constantinople, placing the sea as a barrier between the new city of the Cæsars and the ancient city of the Brutus.

If Rome had been the home of independence, Constantinople was the home of slavery; from thence issued the dogmas of passive obedience to the church and throne; there was but one right—that of the empire; but one duty—that of obedience. The general name of citizens, which was equivalent, in language, to men living under the same law, was replaced by epithets graduated according to the credit of the powerful or the cowardice of the weak. The qualifications of *Eminence*, *Royal Highness*, and *Reverence*, were bestowed on what was lowest and most despicable in the world. The empire, like a private domain, was transmitted to children, wives and sons-in-law; it was given, bequeathed, substituted; the universe was exhausting itself for the establishment of a family; taxes increased immoderately; Constantinople alone was exempted; that privilege of Roman liberty was the price of its infamy. The rest of the cities and nations were treated like beasts of burden, which are used without scruple, flogged when they are restive, and killed when there is cause to fear them. Witness the population of Antioch, condemned to death by the pious Theodosius; and that of Thessalonica, entirely massacred by him for a tax refused, and an unfortunate creature secured from the justice of his provosts.

Meanwhile savage and free nations armed against the enslaved world, as if to chastise it for its baseness. Italy, oppressed by the empire, soon found pitiless revengers in its heart. Rome was menaced by the Goths. The people, weary of the imperial yoke, did not defend themselves. The men of the country, still imbued with the old Roman manners and religion, those men, the only ones whose arms were still robust and souls capable of pride, rejoiced to see among them free men and gods resembling the ancient gods of Italy. Sulico, the general to whom the empire entrusted its defence, appeared at the foot of the Alps; he called to arms, and no one arose; he promised liberty to the slave, he lavished the treasures of the fisc; and out of the immense extent of the empire, he only assembled forty thousand men, the fifth part of the warriors that Hannibal had encountered at the gates of free Rome. Rome enslaved was taken and sacked twice in the space of half a century. Italy was soon traversed in all directions by the Northmen; they settled there, and seized upon the principal portion of the lands. Gaul, Spain, Great Britain and Illyria were similarly invaded and divided; the Roman name was abolished in the west.

Thus the dominion, of which Julius Cæsar's treacheries laid the foundation, and which Augustus Cæsar established, was banished far from its first abode, and limited to the coasts of Greece, Asia Minor and Africa. Its second limits were soon forced; other barbarians, no less feebly repulsed by the nations than the Goths and Franks had been, invaded Thrace, and attacked the empire in Asia. Belisarius, a man worthy of re-conquering the Roman world to liberty, attempted, in spite of human nature, to re-conquer it for his masters. Everywhere he found men unmoved by his voice. Italy itself became indignant at the efforts he made to place it by violence under a yoke which it did not prefer to the other, and at its territory becoming the field of battles which did not concern it. Belisarius in tears left the country which repudiated the name of Roman with as much eagerness as it formerly showed in claiming it, when that name was synonymous with independence.

The Slavonic nations occupied Thrace and Mæsia; the Persians advanced: all the tribes of Arabia, assembled under the same standard, animated by the same fanaticism, led by the same chief, at once a warrior, a priest and a demi-god, seized upon all the country between the Euphrates and the Red Sea. The nations accepted this new servitude without resistance; and as Montesquieu tells us, it was the excessive taxes, and the vexatious of the empire, which made Mahomet's fortune. The generals who succeeded him conquered Phenicia and Egypt, then Numidia and Mauritania; their fleets appeared on the coasts of Asia, in sight of Constantinople. The emperors, in the midst of their voluptuousness and the intrigues that occupied their days, were indignant that their subjects were not as brave as free men. In their despicable fits of anger they decreed tortures to those who did not devote themselves to their cause, imagining that terror would be a substitute for

patriotism. But in the same way that the waves of the sea did not become more calm under the rod of Xerxes, so, at the sight of scaffolds, the slaves of the Roman empire did not become more faithful.

It was not that the sentiment of independence had then perished in the hearts of men; but those in whom it still appeared did not range themselves under the standards of any master: enemies both of the barbarians and the empire, they erected ensigns which belonged to themselves alone, and shut themselves up with liberty in some places of difficult access, and some abandoned fortresses. It was thus that the islands of Venetia became peopled, and the free city of Venice arose. Rome, an unwilling prey to its reminiscences, bore the conquest impatiently; no longer having strength to become free, it founded the hope of its freedom on imposture and cunning; it encouraged the pretensions of its bishops to an universal authority, which was to turn to its profit. It was by their mediation that it obtained the assistance of the Frank, Karl Martel, against the chief of the Lombards, its last conquerors, who were leagued for its ruin with the Greek despot. It was also in virtue of a summons of the pontiff of Rome, that the grandson of that Karl, having become king of the Franks, passed the Alps and compelled the Lombards to respect the once more menaced city. As a return, Rome proclaimed this son of its former tributaries a Roman emperor. It was in the year 800 that the name of *imperator*, a sad sign of Roman servitude, after having been banished during four centuries out of the western countries, was thus brought back into Gaul; from Gaul it passed into Germany; and what is still more singular, still exists there. Words also have their destiny.

The ninth century shows us Europe divided into two political zones; one comprehended the countries still remaining under the ancient dominion, founded by the conquests of Rome; the other contained the countries recently invaded by the Northmen, conquerors of the Roman subjects. The relative conditions of these men, either as masters or subjects, conquerors or conquered, differed very much in those two different regions. On one side, all the power acquired by centuries of conquest, was the property of a single person, who dispensed it around him at his own pleasure; on the other, that power was the regular share of all the families sprung from the conquerors. The Saxons in Britain, the Franks in Gaul, and the Lombards in Italy, were all singly proprietors of a portion of the territory which their ancestors had invaded, all governors and sovereign arbiters of the men conquered by their ancestors. In Greece there was but one master, and under that master different degrees of service; in the west, there were thousands of masters free under a chief who was but the first among equals. In the empire of the Roman despot, no order went out but from the palace, no tribute was raised but for the palace, no judgment given but by the palace; whereas in the regions which submitted to the warriors of the north, the tribute of every conquered family was the patrimony of all the conquerors.

The supreme chief had but his share of men and lands, which he managed and governed at his own pleasure. If he was a despot, it was within his domain; and the commonest soldier could be equally so in his. The conquered men, whom fate had not placed in the portion of the chief, of the *king*, as he was called in the Roman language, had no relations with him; they constituted a private domain; they formed with the trees, plants, animals, and houses, what the charters of that period called the *clothing of the earth*; they were under the jurisdiction of the family, and not that of society. As to the men of the victorious race, they lived under a social order and rules. None spoke to them as a master; the *king*, created by their choice, or confirmed by their suffrages, called them all his *companions*. He imposed no laws on them; he assembled them that they might make them for themselves; he did not execute against them judgments decreed by him; he lent them assistance for the maintenance of a mutual police, and for the protection of justice, which free men dispensed among themselves under security of an oath.

Victorious Rome did not spread itself over the lands of the conquered nations; these nations were not entirely separated by its conquests. Possessed in masses, worked in masses, they still preserved the name of nation. This name perished for the subjects of northern warriors; violently separated from one another by the interposition of the conquerors, possessed singly or in small groups, they exchanged the name of their race or common society, for that of their individual condition. Those who before their defeat were called Gauls, Romans, or Britons, took the name of labourers, serfs, hinds and slaves; whilst their territory, occupied by them with their conquerors, took the name of the country of the Franks, the Angles, or the Lombards. In times of war they did not fight in the manner of the auxiliaries that Rome derived from its provinces, under the standard of their nation united to that of their chief nation; they were assembled at hazard, without order, without ensigns, almost without arms, to throw them like a sort of rampart in front of the battle, or to use them for the labours of the road and encampment. The army consisted of the conquerors, subordinate to one another in different grades, and whose respective domains, marked with the military title of their first possessor, had preserved, by the maintenance of that title, which was, so to speak, consolidated with the soil, the order and regular arrangement which the dispersion of the conquerors tended naturally to dissolve or weaken. The domains having grades, the call of the domains was made in place of the call of men; the men who came from lands of an equal title, grouped themselves round those who came from superior lands; those ranged themselves under chiefs chosen from necessity, or under the sons of the first chief, if the race had not degenerated. Things passed in this way, when there was an enterprise of equal danger to all freemen, or a danger menacing to all; when a portion of territory was in peril, its defence was abandoned

to those who inhabited it. Private injuries were revenged by private wars; the *king* himself could not bring into his own quarrels, and into wars which the community had not decreed, other men besides his own friends, or those who had bound themselves to him by engagements of fidelity independent of social duty and common discipline. In the eastern empire, on the contrary, no portion of the territory had the right of defending itself; being nothing in itself, it could not right itself, and the quarrels of the emperor were to be embraced by each inhabitant of the empire under the penalties which free Rome had ordered for traitors to their country. Such were the varieties of political organization which distinguished the eastern from the western countries of Europe, when towards the twelfth century, a great movement drew together the men of these countries, and placed in contact on the same soil their various manners and situations. This movement was produced by the Crusades.

From the moment that the incursions of the Saracens threatened Europe, the fear of their progress and the hatred of their religion armed against them from all parts those Northmen who lived idle on the territory of Gaul, Spain, and Italy. Frankish adventurers went to defeat them more than once on the coasts of Calabria and Sicily; and when a pope, seconded by the eloquence of the monk Peter, raised up against them entire Christian Europe, this great insurrection was only the complement of those partial and obscure enterprises which had so long been preparing it. The Greek emperor entreated the warriors of the west to turn towards his threatened dominions a portion of those armies which were about to inundate Asia and Africa: He obtained it, and an unrestrained and irregular multitude spread itself over Greece; every thing was plundered for its subsistence; the exhausted empire repented having drawn these inconvenient auxiliaries upon itself; and hatreds sprung up between the Greeks and the western Christians, who were called Latins in Greece. Treaties reconciled them for a time; but their mutual aversion soon broke out with so much violence, that Constantinople was besieged and pillaged by the allies of the empire. The conquest did not stop with these commencements; and soon the greatest portion of the cities and provinces was divided between the soldiers and chiefs of the Latin army. Its general, Baldwin of Flanders, established his quarters in the imperial city, and with the consent of the troops, took the title of Greek emperor, which changed none of his power over them, nor of their independence of him. The portion of Greece occupied by this army then took the same aspect as the rest of Europe. The subordination of estates sprang there from the establishment of the army, which distributed them without dissolving itself. The warriors of every rank elected their principal chiefs under the name of emperors, as they did formerly under that of generals. The common affairs were decided by the common suffrage. The Greeks despoiled, but not driven away, became the farmers and tributaries of the con-

querors; feudality passed into Greece. But the Greek empire had not entirely perished by this conquest. Intrenched at Nice, it daily strengthened itself by the hatred which was inspired by the exactions of the new masters, and their harsher because more closely felt yoke, which crushed them without distinction. Not knowing how to make themselves free, the Greeks conspired to return to their first slavery: they succeeded; and the Latins, driven out after a reign of sixty years, ascended their vessels, bearing away from Greece the love of luxury, of vain titles, and the idea of despotic unity, leaving in return some sentiments of independence of which their example had given a conception. On seeing his palace once more, the Greek emperor found, for the first time, wills in presence of his own. His courtiers separated themselves from him; his delegates pretended to a personal authority; the bonds of the empire were loosened. If independence for all had then been acquired, if social equality had succeeded the distinction between courtiers and slaves, doubtless the population of these countries would have found in that moral change a strength and resources which the empire had never possessed. But the dignitaries and courtiers who appropriated the power, took care to preserve it as it had always been, hostile and harsh towards the people; and the people had no more interest than before to expose themselves to the perils of resistance against foreign invasions. Thus these semi-liberal manners became a new cause of ruin to the empire; they disunited it as a power, without uniting it as a society. As to the West, it was thence that it derived the system of ideas which served to create the mystical scaffolding of an absolute royal power the centre of every thing, the object of every thing being its own reason, and its own end; it was with the assistance of the manners and political dogmas imported from the imperial city, that the power of a Henry the Eighth or a Louis the Eleventh succeeded under the same political denominations to the authority of the Saxon chief Hengist, or the Sicamber chief Chlodowig.

We will not relate the melancholy events which preceded the Turks to the very walls of Constantinople. What had taken place in all conquests made by the barbarians on the empire, once more took place in these last moments; the people allowed themselves to be invaded, and the sons of the Greeks were enlisted among the barbarian soldiers; the mountain-

eers of Albania, the only men whom Roman servitude had never found docile, were the only ones who resisted this yoke. At the siege of the city of the emperors, were seen, sword in hand, and turbans on their heads, Greek legions armed against that Roman name, which had weighed so heavily upon them for so many centuries. Constantinople was sacked; Constantine Dragoses, its last emperor, perished on the walls. Those who were called the great, the courtiers, the powerful men of the palace, acknowledged the authority of the conquerors; they preserved under other titles their employments and meanness. The rest of the nation was tributary, and like every country inhabited by its invaders, Greece lost its ancient name.

In this last struggle of the ancient against the modern world, says M. de Segur, the arms of antiquity and those of modern times seemed to unite for the attack and defence of the city of the Cæsars. The air, darkened by clouds of javelins and arrows, re-echoed at once the hollow sound of heavy rocks hurled by catapults, the whistling of bullets, and the terrible roar of the cannon.

The victorious Mussulman army enter and spread in torrents throughout the conquered city; the day before, Constantinople, a deposit of the trophies and riches of the universe, presented a living image of Rome and Greece. Cæsars, Augustus, patricians, a senate, lictors, fasces, a tribune, amphitheatres, assemblies of the people, lyceums, academies, and theatres, were to be seen there. In one instant the sword of Mahomet has destroyed every thing, and the ruins of the ancient world have disappeared.

The correct and elegant style of this history is varied with great art according to the nature of the narratives. Young people will like it, and minds already formed will often derive improvement from it. The study of liberty is almost entirely contained in the study of history; it is there that we must observe in order to recognize it, and not to pursue its shadow by mistake. Those who from the present epoch are casting fresh glances on the anterior situations of the human species, prepare for us the thread which is to guide us through the uncertain roads of the future: let us especially address ourselves to them; they do not give those vague encouragements which lead astray inexperienced activity; they offer no counsels of which they do not adduce experience; they do not lead us onward without pointing out an object to be attained.

ESSAY XIV.

ON THE PRIMITIVE MEANING AND EXTENT OF THE TITLE OF KING, A PROPOS OF THE WORK ENTITLED, "ON ROYALTY, ACCORDING TO THE REVEALED DIVINE LAWS, NATURAL LAWS, AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHARTER," BY M. DE LA SERVE.

AMONGST the singular things which ought, yet do not astonish us, perhaps one of the most singular, is the prejudice which attaches an universal signification to the Latin word *king*, and the absolute idea of the destruction of all liberty for men into whose laws this fatal word has once been introduced. Yet if we seek the real meaning of this word in the language which has created it, we shall find that in itself, and according to its primitive destination, it in no way implies the idea of the annihilation of all independence for the sake of a single person, and that it simply and vaguely means the *conductor*, *the one who leads*, *the one who goes before*. This is proved by the Latin locutions, *rex gregis*, *rex avium*, *rex sacrorum*. When amongst nations of whose idioms they were ignorant, the Romans saw a man enjoying a pre-eminence over other men, either as a leader of war, or a magistrate of peace, they qualified him in their language with the vague title of *rex*; or the equally vague one of *dux*, by which they did not pretend to translate exactly the titles of the foreign language, or to express a precise degree of authority, but only the general fact of pre-eminence and command.

The emigration of the Gothic, Germanic and Saxon tribes into countries speaking the Roman language, was the accident which attached the Roman names of *reges* or *duces* to the chiefs of various grades and variously limited power, who guided these tribes during the conquest or governed them after their establishment. These two words continued to be used indifferently by the conquered Roman population, which also indifferently designated by the ancient word *regnum* and the modern word *ducatus*, the lands possessed or governed by the superior chiefs, or the subalterns of the conquering nation. If those words, then, had in the mouths of those who spoke Roman a more decided signification, it was because they designated to them an enslaved nation, the magistracy or jurisdiction of their conquerors and masters. But this new authority added to the titles of *rex* and *dux* by the fact of the conquest, was a real one only for the conquered; for the conquerors nothing had changed. The chiefs of their various tribes, dreaded as masters by the men whom the sword had brought down to the rank of subjects, were not on that account placed over the victorious society; and when a member of that society, a Frank for example, or the son of a Frank, pronounced in Gaul one of those Latin words which to the sons of the Gauls expressed the domina-

tion of the conquest, he did not attach more meaning to them than to the words of his own language, which designated to him the social authority of the magistrates whom he had consented to or chosen.

In order, therefore, to discover the measure of the authority of those who, after the dismemberment of the Roman empire, were called *reges* or *kings* in Western Europe, we must set aside the Latin language, and have recourse to the Germanic ones.

These languages, which are little more than the diverse dialects of one same idiom, amid several titles of command peculiar to themselves, present one common to them all, perhaps because more expressive and more conformable to the idea these nations entertained of social authority; it is the word *koning* or *kæning*, now corrupted in high German into the word *könig*, and in English into that of *king*. This title, constantly rendered in the Latin chronicles by the word *rex*, and therefore translated by the word *roi* in our semi-Latin language, was nothing more than the generic name which expressed the fact of command, without distinction of degree or attributes. The director of every enterprise of war, the president of every commission of the public peace, was called *koning*; this name was applied to a great many chiefs of various orders and functions; there were the superior *kings*, *oberkoning*; the inferior *kings*, *unterkoning*; the *semi-kings*, *halfkoning*; *kings* for maritime expeditions, *seekoning*; *kings* for the army, *heereskoning*; and *kings* for the people, *folkeskoning*. This variety of applications of the same word will not astonish, when it is known that this title of *koning*, now absolute in the north, as *mal à propos* as the name of *rex* or *roi* is in the south, is probably nothing more than the active participle of a verb which signifies *knowledge* or *power*, and that consequently it signifies in itself nothing but an able or *capable* man, whom the others obey from their conviction of his recognized ability. Such is the idea which presented itself to the mind of the Franks of Gaul, when they pronounced the words *Frankodo koning** in Latin, *rex Francorum*; such was the authority of the *Chlodowigs* and *Karls*, chiefs of the Franks, whom our modern historians, at once laming proper names and titles, call *Clovis* and *Charles*, *kings of France*.

The man whom the Franks called chief or king, even in the first rank, never acted without

* Poems of the monk Otfred in the ninth century.

their advice, and submitted to their judgments upon his actions. Several kings of the first and second race were degraded from the supreme command on account of inability or bad conduct. But since the election of Hugh, surnamed Capet, the race of Franks finding itself invincibly established on the Gallic territory, indolently relaxed the bonds of its ancient discipline; it isolated itself, and allowed its chiefs to become isolated from it, to perpetuate themselves at pleasure in their command and transmit it without control to their sons. It is true that this command itself then became nothing more than a mere title without real rights; but the public likewise had no longer any command over him who possessed this title. Freely quartered like each member of the victorious nation, in the portion of territory which belonged to himself, he was able, with the assistance of his personal authority, to machinate the slavery of his companions, and the ruin of their social state. This is what the *kings* of the Franks undertook; and this plan, pursued by them for several centuries, was crowned with entire success. They strengthened themselves in their hereditary domain, by bribing, through a better condition of servitude, the men of whom the division of the conquest had made them possessors. The desire of similar concessions procured them a sort of confidence from all the conquered nation, and by the help of that confidence and their own strength, they attributed to themselves the exclusive possession of this nation, declaring as an axiom of ancient law, that the conquered territory belonged to the *king*. In the space of a few centuries, the men *subjects* of all the Franks, became nominally and legally the *subjects* of the chief of the Franks alone.

Too weak or too timid to shake off the name of servitude which the conquest had given them, they in revenge laboured to make the men whose fathers had conquered their fathers, share it; they assisted the *king* to subjugate the sons of free men; and those, in their turn conquered, descended ignominiously into the slavery which their ancestors had imposed. Thus the name of *subjects* became in French, the sole correlative of the name of king. The correlative of this title, in the language of Frankish liberty, had been the simple name of men, *leudes* or of companions, *ghesellen*, which the Latin transformed into two barbarian words, *leodes* and *vasalli*. To these names was also added that of the descendants of the free race, *gentiles homines*. This title, preserved by the men in whom perished, for the advantage of the chief, the ancient liberty of their fathers, served only to render their degradation more shameful. It pointed them out from all others as a degenerated race, more cowardly than the rest of the *subjects*, to whom their ancestors at least could make no reproach. Thus the name of *king* has signified in our language, a man for whose advantage the liberty of other men is abolished, only by the chance of an armed conquest, made first by nations over other nations, and then by the chiefs of the conquering nations upon the conquering nations themselves. This accident was unable logically to alter the primitive meaning

of a word which existed long before it. In itself the word *king* signifies nothing more than it did originally, that is to say, a director, a chief, or a magistrate: to examine the question of royalty, is not therefore treating of a special, precise, and determined authority, it is treating of authority in general. This settled, it will be more conformable to the rigour of logical principles to substitute the clear and universal terms of social power or authority, for the barely intelligible ones of *king* and *royalty*. Instead of endeavouring to prove that a *king* never has been the master of men, which is both true and false, according to the manner in which it is viewed, it would be better to declare plainly that a society of men has never had masters or absolute rulers but by violence and with unwillingness, which is in every way true. The real power of M. de la Serve's book lies in this demonstration. He proves the fact that despotism has nowhere been exercised without men's consciences protesting against it, and that in law, every man who freely and without constraint should submit to an irregular authority, would be guilty of having himself violated his conscience: that no society has the right of alienating itself to one or several of its members; and that historically, when similar alienations have appeared to take place, it has not been willingly, but by violence, not at the foundation of societies by human reason, but at their dissolution by conquests; that the French magistrate, to whom the constitutional charter gives the name of *king*, has for the inviolable limits of his power, the sacredness of individual liberties, which are the basis of French society, logically anterior and superior to the French government; that the power of raising armies, declaring war, executing the laws when made, and of proposing the laws which are to be made, by whatever title it is expressed, extends only to the point where the respect of rights and civil liberties ceased.

From the moment that any authority whatever has violated any one of these rights, by destroying the securities which protected them, from this moment society acquires the right of constraint and resistance to it. Let power reflect on this well; if human compassion consents to restrain itself in presence of the misery of the men whom jailers sequester, and the executioner seizes in the name of the law, it is not simply because the jailers and the executioner act in virtue of the decision of certain men called judges rendered on the authority of certain books called codes, it is because there is in every man a reason which pronounces that whoever has violated the sacred right of another, either in his person or in his property, is guilty and worthy of punishment. It is before this reason, and not before a certain judiciary formula, that human pity is silent; this is the law which sanctions laws; if we obey it when it commands us to abandon to the vengeance of authority whoever amongst us has injured another, shall we rebel against it when it commands us to abandon to the chances of public indignation those who have injured all, by endangering the rights of each? There is

nothing inviolable except these rights and the reason that proclaims them; whoever attempts their destruction and despises this reason, the supreme judge of human actions, excludes himself from humanity, and destroys with his own hands his title to the protection of men in his sufferings and distress. Such is the idea which predominates throughout M. de la Serve's work. We shall not follow it in its logical developments. We dismiss the reader to the book itself, and leave him the care of making the applications of the principle. M. de la Serve has especially brought out in a new and striking manner, the advantages of that law of elections, which our statesmen wish to bring as a criminal to the bar of the chambers which voted it. This apology, written previously to the attack,

is remarkable for a strong dialectic, and that warmth which conviction inspires. The author belongs to that young school of politics, the simple and honest dogmas of which abjure fanaticism and interests, which alone urge to changes of government. This school disdains the vain question of forms; it attaches itself only to pure liberty and its immediate securities. It will accept every thing with liberty without it, nothing. Retrenched in this principle, alone immutable in the perpetual movement of the world, it will see all the sophisms of false thinkers and ambition split against it: as to force, its only dangerous adversary, this school is likewise preparing to oppose to it courage as energetic as its views are upright and its hopes pure.

ESSAY XV.

ON THE REAL CONSTITUTION OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, A PROPOS OF THE WORK ENTITLED, "THE REVOLUTION OF CONSTANTINOPLE OF 1807 AND 1808," BY M. DE JUCHEREAU DE SAINT DENIS.

It is the common error of ancient lawgivers to believe that human nature is in itself indifferent to every species of social arrangement; that our political consciences are but the work of mere chance, and that despotism as well as liberty may exist by national consent. This opinion is entirely false. Human nature, free nature, has never spontaneously demanded any thing but independence; despotism has never put its foot on a corner of the world, but against the will of those who inhabited it: the history of all periods and of all countries reveals this. Liberty, the first social want and condition, has nowhere yielded but to force and to an armed conquest. It is terror alone which has made slaves amongst men of every race. Open history at any part you will, take at hazard the climate and the epoch, if you meet with a colony of men, whether enlightened or still savage living under a system of servitude, be certain that in looking back, you will find a conquest, and that these men are the conquered. Similarly, if you remark a population quartered in some inaccessible places which have preserved it against the invasion of a foreign race, be sure that, on visiting it, you will find liberty there. This perpetual distinction is the key of social history.

We are told that there now exists on the soil of ancient Greece, a nation in which no individual has any personal will or property, in which a single man disposes of all the others who abjure themselves before him. We must ask the narrator if the population whom he pretends is thus governed, is not a conquered one; if the

man of whom he speaks is not the chief of its ancient conquerors, the supreme representative of the conquest; and if by chance the reply should be, that this people, far from having been conquered, is itself a conqueror, that it lives on lands it has usurped, instead of its lands having been so by others; that the man under whom it cringes like a slave, is not a stranger to its race, but, on the contrary, is the descendant of the warriors who led on its ancestors to conquest; that, moreover, no period is to be found since the conquest, at which this chief armed against his nation, and subjugated a portion of it with the power and assistance of the rest . . . then you may deny the fact of slavery, and maintain, *à priori*, that the nation which is spoken of, the Turkish nation, is not deprived of liberty.

The problem of Turkish society contains nothing peculiar; it is no other than the problem of Frankish society conquering Gaul, Saxon society conquering Britain, of all the little Germanic societies which conquered Italy, Spain, and Roman Africa. The circumstances were the same in both, every thing naturally should have been the same, and was so really. The Turks in Greece, like the Franks in Gaul, are on an equality as conquerors of the people whom they possess in common. They are the race to whom the sword has given no masters, and those whom they admit to their race, are restored to liberty, like those who became *Franks* under the Franks. The rest of the conquered, designated without disjunction of races by the common name of *rayas*, are in the same situa-

tion as that anonymous crowd whom the barbarians, conquerors of the south of Europe, called at random serfs, labourers, hinds, planters, plebeians, or citizens. The *rayas* all pay an annual poll-tax called *kharadje*; their servitude is not uniform, any more than that of the conquered of the middle ages. One portion are domestic slaves; another labours for the masters; another, more favoured, has preserved magistracies of its nation and religion; it is ruled by them, and pays in common the taxes of the conquest.

Over these men rule the men of the Turkish race, who give themselves the name of *Osmanlis*, or sons of Osman; these are not governed; they are the superior caste; and there are no castes among them; they can all equally pretend to the magistracies of their society. There is but one exception in favour of one family, from which are invariably chosen the supreme chiefs of the administration, because this family is thought to be descended from the first legislator. But this privilege does not allow the liberty of the *Osmanlis* to be destroyed by the person whom chance or the public choice has placed at the head of affairs. Several chiefs have attempted to violate the law in which the rights of the nation are registered, and have been victims of their ambitious enterprise; and custom, once more resuming its empire when liberty had revenged itself, quietly replaced on the supreme seat rendered vacant by the popular will, another descendant of the Ottoman race, admonished of his future duties by the destiny of his predecessor.

The cities of the *Osmanlis* have an administration peculiar to themselves, composed of the principal citizens, presided over by a magistrate named *ayan*, chosen by the people. This municipal council watches over the common interests of each town; it defends its liberty against the delegates of the central power in the provinces, against the *pachas* who, commissioned to collect the taxes of the conquered, and to torment them until they pay, might think of turning their power against free men. Besides these local administrations, there are corporations which deliberate under chiefs of their own choosing, and the members of which mutually insure each other against injustice and oppression. The villages which do not depend on the territories of great cities, have their elective magistrates named *kiayas*, and their common council. Thus power cannot immediately strike the citizens; it must pass through other delegates before it reaches them. The contributions are divided amongst them; the police is made in common.

The judges belong to a body independent of authority; this body recruits itself, imposing various trials on the candidates. Promotions to judiciary employments are made by rank of age; and the sultan himself cannot choose at random for the great offices, the only ones of which he disposes; he must follow the general order. Justice in Turkey is not regarded as one of the attributes of the supreme head of the government; it does not emanate from this head, but from the book of the law, and the corpo-

ration of men whom the public consider sufficiently able and honest to interpret it worthily. In the interpretation of the law, the judges, independent and respected, are more inclined to follow public opinion than the impulsion of authority, to which they owe nothing, and from which they have nothing to fear.

There are cases in which the agents of the Turkish government punish without legal proceedings, the criminal taken in the very fact; but these sudden executions rarely fall on any but the *rayas*. The Mussulmans are sent before the judges, and the soldiers are summoned before a tribunal of their own body, where they appear before their peers. This practice does not appear to result from the social right of authority, but from the privileges of the conquest, and the system of exception, to which were subjected the conquered, who were both despised and feared.

Arrested in its executive capacity by the corporations and free administration of the cities, and in no way disposing of the judiciary power, the government of the *Osmanlis* still finds fixed limits to its legislative authority. The same body of judges which decides contestations according to the supreme book of the law, has the power of preventing the execution of the new laws, which it declares to be contrary to the ancient law. The chief of the judges, the first *muphti*, can oppose his *veto* to an order of the sultan, by an edict called a *fetva*; and in every province, a subaltern *muphti* may, in the same way, oppose his *veto*, by edicts of the same kind, to the administrative decisions of the *pachas*.

We come to the great peculiarity of Turkish administration, and to the foundation of all the fables which travellers have told respecting this administration. Frequently at the gates of the palace, are suspended the heads of commanders of armies, of governors of provinces, of ministers, great officers, and high functionaries; Europeans, struck with the barbarity of this spectacle and the rank of the victims, have concluded that if the sultan could thus mow down the heads of the greatest dignitaries with impunity, he must still more be master of the life or death of private persons. Our travellers naively judged what came before their eyes according to the customs of Europe, which surround with peculiar sanctity, and exceptional care, the life, honour and property of the delegates of power. In France they can only be pursued in justice but with the consent of those for whom they act: in France, they are precious in the eyes of the law: in Turkey, it is quite the reverse; the security of the law does not exist for them; they are looked upon as the slaves of him who has appointed them; it is for this reason that their head and property belong to him, and that he disposes of them according to his own pleasure. But he does not dispose of the head and property of those who, keeping apart from his favours, have not subjected themselves to his authority; those are sacred to him, as citizens are to their legal magistrates. No one being forced to take a place under the executive power, and no one being ignorant beforehand of the condition of

servitude which those sort of places impose, the man who perishes in virtue of the arbitrator under whom he has placed himself, can only blame himself; he has chosen to play a dangerous game after having calculated its chances. This severe condition does not reach the chief of the judges, who, although named by the sultan, is simply able to be dismissed; and as to the magistrates named by the towns, the sultan has never thought of pretending that they in any way depended on him. In this lies the foundation of the double responsibility of public functionaries towards their chief and the public. There is doubtless barbarity in such a law of security; but we must always recognize that it is the security for the people, and not a sign of the servitude of the people. Whatever the public grievances or personal dislikes of the sultan may be, whatever the number of traitors, the *Coran* forbids more than fourteen to be put to death in one day. This humane precaution has also been so ill understood, that travellers have built upon it a pretended right which the grand signor possessed of putting fourteen persons to death daily. *Ourfis* is the name given to the power with which the law endows him of deciding without legal proceedings of the culpability of his agents or slaves, but which is only permitted him against them. The arbitrary punishment of a common *Osmanli* would cause an insurrection in Constantinople.

Frequent rebellions have proved that the nation of the Osmanlis feels pretty keenly its independence with regard to him whom we wrongly call its master. It is the janisaries, *yenitcheris*, who for a century have played the principal part in these insurrections. This militia, at first purely pretorian, composed of prisoners of war, and young men furnished as a sort of tax by the conquered nations, has gradually become filled by free men; it has thus become national; and it now contains all that is most active in the Turkish population; it is the mirror of the opinions, the organ of the popular passions; it is a security for the nation against the projects of the government, a secu-

rity which may be an obstacle to useful innovations, if they have the misfortune not to be understood. This is what happened in the revolution of 1807, which caused the death of the sultan Selim. M. de Juchereau has been an eye-witness of that revolution and of the one which succeeded it. It is in these great movements, in which, as he says himself, "the different bodies of the state and the different classes of the people have exposed their rights, their pretensions, and their power," that he was able to form an exact idea of this empire, so ill judged by those who have visited it in times of quiet.

The picture that we have sketched of the social state of Turkey is a mere abstract of the first volume of M. de Juchereau's work; the second presents, on the scene of political storms, the bodies and classes of men whose characters are described in the first; this volume serves to corroborate the other. Moreover, the writer, who seems to have the military art much more at heart than politics, cannot be suspected of having seen things under a light too favourable to the system of liberty. It is without reflecting on it himself that he has told us that the administration of the Turkish *pachas* is more liberal than that of the French *préfets*; that the scandal of our mayors of cities, councils of departments, councils of districts, named by the *préfets* or the ministers, has not even its excuse in the example of the Tartar people, the conquerors of the Greeks; in fact, that an *Osmanli*, member of a free city, member of a free corporation which protects him, having nothing to contend with authority, if he does not himself wish to take a part in it, is nearer human dignity than a Frenchman, beset at all hours of the day by authority and its agents in every kind of livery: soldiers, collectors, custom-house officers, policemen, clerks, spies; men who live on the annoyance they cause him, men whom he cannot summon before justice for the evil they have done him, men against whom it is only allowed to petition those who command them.

ESSAY XVI.

ON LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL FREEDOM, A PROPOS OF A COLLECTION OF MIRABEAU'S SPEECHES AND OPINIONS, PUBLISHED BY M. BARTHE.

THE collection of Mirabeau's speeches and opinions, is but the first part of a larger collection, which is to include successively the speeches of Barnave and Vergniaud, assembled and arranged by the care of the same editor. This collection will place under the eyes of the

readers almost all the social questions which have occupied France since the awakening of liberty. Mirabeau leads us from the assembly of the estates in Provence, where his reputation as an orator first began, to the constituent assembly, where this reputation became confirmed:

he and Barnave make us spectators by their sometimes similar, sometimes opposite opinions, of the most important debates of this latter assembly; after them, Vergniaud, intervening in the uncertain and turbulent discussions of the legislative assembly, will show the revolution becoming corrupt in its source, and the philosophy of France darting impetuously beyond the circle of reason and justice which it had at first traced out for itself. We will not attempt to analyze the immense labours of Mirabeau; we will not reproduce the remarks which have already been made on the character of his eloquence; we will only give an account of the singular impression we experienced on reading a portion of his speeches, those pronounced in the estates of Provence. He attacks in them with warmth the name of the Provençal nation, the liberties of the soil of Provence, the rights of the communes of Provence; these formulas, to which our language has been so long unaccustomed, seem at first to be only oratorical fictions; and such must be the involuntary sentiment of us Frenchmen, who for thirty years have known no rights but the rights declared at Paris, no liberties but the liberties sanctioned at Paris, no laws but the laws made in Paris. Yet these were not then words void of meaning; French patriotism increased really in a local patriotism which had its memories, its interests, and its glory. Nations really existed in the heart of the French nation: there were the Breton, the Norman, and the *Béarnais* nation, the nations of Bourgogne, Aquitaine, Languedoc, Franche-Comte, and Alsace. These nations distinguished without dividing their individual existence from the great common existence; they declared themselves united, not subjugated; they showed the authentic stipulations by which their union had been made; a number of cities had their charters of peculiar franchises; and when the word *constitution* was pronounced, it was not used as an expression of renunciation to what was individual, that is to say, free, in that ancient French existence, but as the desire of a better, more solid, more simple security of that liberty which was too unequally, too capriciously bestowed on the various fractions of the land.

Such was the prayer which accompanied the deputies to the first national assembly; such was their mandate, at least in intention. They went further; they dismembered territories, they struck at local existences, to attain with greater certainty the unjust powers which those maintained by the side of legitimate liberties. France did not murmur; it was the time of enthusiasm; and moreover, franchises, rights, and the power of representation were uniformly given to the new circumscriptions. This new independence, rendered common to the whole territory, rejoiced the hearts of patriots; they did not perceive that it was too much dispersed, and that none of its different homes would find power in themselves to defend it. Soon, at the moment when illusion was about to vanish with the first effervescence, a new want, the necessity of resisting external force, took possession of the general mind; at the sight of the

pressing danger, liberty was forgotten for the interests of defence; and *French fury*, always alive, treated as enemies of its country the calmer minds who refused to believe that there were more than one necessity and danger. The partisans of free confederation, a true social state, of which ancient France possessed the germ, and which was to be accomplished in modern France, were dragged to the scaffold; opinion allowed desires which had been its own to be punished by an atrocious death. Later it returned to its first opinion; it became federalist in its turn; but the central power, strengthened by its long assent, laughed at this return, and refused its demands; it still refuses them at the present day.

Let us then remember with all the strength of our memory, that absolute centralization, a system of conquests and not of society, a system which the authority against which the revolution took place had been unable to reach, was not the object of this revolution. Undertaken for liberty, obliged to abjure liberty to resist war, the revolution would one day, under penalty of contradicting itself, return to liberty, and give an account to individuals of their rights which had been suspended for the common defence. Thirty years have been unable to proscribe these rights; they must be claimed as a voluntarily alienated deposit, which cannot be withheld without fraud.

The various portions of ancient France enjoyed social existence by right of the various titles of united nation, free city, enfranchised communes, or municipal city; everywhere were seen traces of judgment by peers, election of magistrates, voluntary contributions, deliberating assemblies, and decisions made in common; but the portions of actual France are inanimate, and the whole has but an abstract, and in some measure, nominal life, like that of a body of which all the limbs are paralyzed. Why should not those formerly living fractions be now represented in the eyes of power, under the various standards of their ancient individuality, to demand as the legitimate return of that lost individuality, not separation, but existence? France, it may be said, has movement and action by its national representation; national representation is all the life of societies. We agree in the axiom; the reply would be a just one, if France were represented. France is not represented. The meaning of our words contains nothing which attacks the legality of the actual chamber of deputies; we acknowledge that its powers are legitimate, yet we repeat, that France is not represented. A central chamber, sitting at Paris, is not the representative of France; it is in truth an essential part of it; it is the head of the representation; it is not representation entirely. To be represented, France should be so in all its ranks, in all its interests, and under all its aspects; to be represented, France should be covered with representative assemblies; we ought to find there the representation of the communes, of the cities, and of the small as well as of the large portions of the territory; and above all, this for the completion of the edifice, the only representation which ex-

ists at the present day, that of the entire country, of the great and sovereign interests of the nation, more general, but not more sacred than the interests of the provinces, departments, cities, and communes.

The local representations of France would constitute the individualities of France. But this demand, in order to appear before authority in all its dignity and power, must come, not from the centre of the country, but from every various point; it must be expressed in a language appropriate to the interests, the character, the anterior existence of each part of the population; in a language of sincerity and even of pride, which shall not permit the men of the central authority to erect themselves as supreme judges of right and necessity. It is the duty of the free newspapers of the provinces to remind their fellow-citizens that they have those appeals to make. It is for them to make them previously, not by invoking in a vague manner the enlightenment of the century or the authority of anterior legislatures, but by attesting what was from time immemorial rooted in the soil of France, the franchises of cities and provinces; by dragging out of the dust of libraries the ancient titles of our local liberties; by presenting these titles before the eyes of patriots who are no longer aware of them, and whom a long habit of individual nullity lulls in the expectation of the laws of Paris. Let us not fear to bring to light the ancient histories of our native land: liberty was not born in it yesterday. Let us not fear to blush in looking at our fathers; their times were difficult, but their minds were not cowardly. Let us not authorize the maintainers of oppression to boast that fifteen

centuries of France belong unreservedly to them. Men of liberty, we also have ancestors.

We recommend to the public the new collection of Mirabeau's, Barnave's, and Vergniaud's speeches. The greatest care has been bestowed on this edition, the only complete one of the works of the three orators. The editor, M. Barthe, is a young lawyer, whose talent has already displayed itself. His notice of the life of Mirabeau is written with elegance, and full of patriotic sentiments, the expression of which, always noble, is mingled without effort in the narrative of facts. The analysis of the various works by which Mirabeau prepared his immense fame, is made there with a variety of style appropriate to their different characters. The political career of the orator is traced in a true and grand manner. M. Barthe has a great comprehension of liberty; he praises Mirabeau for having never been any thing but the organ of the rights of all, and for having protested against the first violences which opened the gulf of misfortunes in which the revolution was swallowed up. Mirabeau has loudly maintained that emigration was an individual right, one of the rights of liberty, a right of justice, and that consequently no power whatever had a right to forbid emigration. "He was right," says M. Barthe; "justice is placed above all constituent assemblies as well as above kings." M. Barthe likewise praises Mirabeau's fine language upon municipalities: "They are," said that great orator, "the basis of the social state, the safety of every day, the security of every fire side, the only possible way of interesting the entire people in the government, and of securing all rights."

ESSAY XVII.

ON THE ANCIENT AND MODERN SPIRIT OF FRENCH LAWYERS, A PROPOS OF THE UNIVERSAL JOURNAL OF LEGISLATION AND JURISPRUDENCE, EDITED BY MESSRS. BARTHE, BERENGER, BERVILLE, DUPIN, JUNIOR, GIROD (DE L'AIN), COUSIN, MERILHOU, ODILON BARROT, JOSEPH REY, DE SCHOONEN, ETC. ETC.

A NEW spirit seems to have arisen in the class of young lawyers: it is the true spirit of the laws, the spirit of pure liberty. For a long while in France, the men who practised the science of the law, were ignorant of the real nature and sanction of human rights; for a long while the representatives of immutable justice regulated the decisions which they made in its name, on the capricious wills of the powerful, or on the servile maxims of paid judges. This shameful discordance is about to disappear. The doctrines which honour our political tribunal are already naturalized at the bar; thence

it will spread to the bench of judges; and soon the social title of lawyers will not be as formerly in contradiction with the reality of their character; they will truly be *hommes de droit*. To this the young men who are now entering on the career of the law aspire; they intend to renew it by treading in it. Confided to their active brain, to their firm and upright minds, this spirit will not stop short; it will force those who follow routine with sincerity to give it up; it will correct those who have some little reason and conscience; as to the others, the course of years will soon have done them justice.

The old generation of French lawyers will thus disappear, body and soul, to make place for a generation as new in its existence as in its principles. Let it not complain that it is now approaching the close of its destiny; its career has been a long one, and one not destitute of grandeur. Born at the moment when the sons of the conquerors of Gaul began to reckon the conquered as men, it arose as a mediator between two nations, whose differences until then had no other arbitrator but the sword. The victorious race had men of its choice and confidence as magistrates: it had its equals as judges: the other race was governed and judged by masters. This subjugated race, for which there was no society, no government, no duties, comprised, in the thirteenth century, the men called people of the champagne country, in contradistinction to the conquerors entrenched on the heights, and the men of the cities who had neither sufficient courage nor sufficient riches to free themselves from the conquest. It was then, that by a simple instinct of humanity, or a great plan of ambition, the supreme chief of the ancient conquerors called around him judges chosen in the nation of the conquered, and thus gave the *judgment by equals* to that portion of the people which had been his inheritance. From this moment, by the fact of such an institution, by that one circumstance of the master's allowing the establishment above him of men permitted to issue decrees against himself in favour of those whose bodies were his patrimony, from this moment arose moral relations between himself and his subjects; from this moment legality commenced, and with it obligation. Previously the weaker party obeyed, but was bound to nothing. The conquerors had duties towards their chief whom they called *king*; the conquered had none; this chief had only in their eyes the somewhat brutal character of a master imposed by violence; this character wore off, and the man whom the subjects of the conquest could formerly qualify only with the title of enemy, then became a chief and a *king* to them.

Such a revolution struck very much the minds of the men whom it raised out of the nothingness of servitude: their imagination imputed to it some marvellous causes; they attributed the royal power and title of the new judges to the Divinity; it became a popular maxim that the judges were instituted by God, and their mission sacred.* They were not unfaithful to it; the first axiom which they promulgated from their new position was this: "No man has full and entire power over the serf who cultivates his land;"† an axiom which contradicted the conquest by limiting its prerogatives.

This principle laid down, one step further led to this one: "that all prerogative sprung from conquest is void before reason and law." The lawyers did not make this progress; instead of placing at once absolute legality in reason, to which alone it belongs, they placed it among the acts of the most rational power which then

existed, in the will of him who had permitted his authority over the subjugated to have limits. From this confusion sprung those singular axioms which so long dishonoured tribunals, pulpits, and books: *the law wills what the king wills; the command of the king is absolute, and absolutely obligatory*;* principles, the immense bearings of which served, it is true, in the early periods, to attract under the most humane power the sons of the vanquished of the conquest, body serfs of the heirs of the conquerors, but which, like a two-edged sword, soon wounded on both sides.

In the name of these doctrines, supported on all sides by all the false resemblances which could be assembled in the codes of all periods, in the histories of all nations, in the dogmas of all religions, the sons of the ancient conquerors, originally equal, though socially inferior to the king, were summoned to avow themselves the king's subjects; the sons of the conquered, the subjects of each manor of the conquerors, were at the same time summoned to avow themselves subjects of the king alone. The exactions of the conquest received the name of the king's rights; the jurisdictions of the conquest were called the king's territory; and the whole country became by a logical fiction united to the domain of a single man. Then arose in some sort a new conquest, which humbled all the inhabitants without distinction of race under the social chief of the primitive conquerors; a less absolute but more capable of endurance than the first one, because it united physical to logical force, and could argue its right at the same time as its fortune. A deplorable and yet consistent thing, the cities which had paid with their blood and their gold the right of exemption from the ancient domination, were claimed by the new; for the reason that being a logical one, that is to say, general both in time and place, it admitted of neither prescription nor reserves. The lawyers of the third estate, advocates, judges, and councillors, were compelled, under pain of denying their own maxims, to pursue and condemn juridically the liberty of the cities and communes, the homes of their fathers, and the ramparts of their nation against every tyranny. It was one of the noblest characters, the greatest talents of that order, it was the Chancellor de l'Hôpital who signed the proclamation issued at Moulins, in 1570, by which civil justice, elective administration, all the liberties of a hundred cities of France, were confiscated for the benefit of the king. This great man doubtless suffered much when he was thus forced to yield to the tyranny of a false principle; for it was under that yoke, more than under that of corruption, that those men of law crouched, who in the interval of the fourth to the seventeenth century, annihilated by decrees all that our country contained of individual independence, whether noxious or inoffensive. The judges commissioned to follow up the execution of the fatal proclamation of Moulins, suffered the cities to plead for the defence of their liberty. Those able to prove by charters,

* Loiseau, *Traité des Offices*.

† Beaumanoir.

* See Pasquier, Loiseau, Loyseau, etc. *passim*.

that this liberty belonged to them by a manifestly onerous title, were excepted from the sentence which deprived the others of it; a remarkable fact, which proves that the idea of justice in the minds of the lawyers of France, reduced itself to the conception of purely commercial justice. In this circle, they judged rightly; beyond it, their intelligence had no sure ground, and they were honestly iniquitous.

Imprisoned in this miserably circumscribed territory, acknowledging no individual rights without a special contract, no social rights beyond the right of absolute sovereignty exercised by a single man, finding in such narrow limits no real distinction between the just and the unjust in politics, they created for themselves factitious distinctions, and fixed arbitrarily what was law; what morally obliged, and what did not oblige the citizens. Their greatest presumption was the imagining that a royal will, expressed in certain terms, registered with certain forms, was in virtue of these forms the real law, the true type of social reason, and that it consequently had a right to be obeyed and to compel obedience. It was in the wavering and slight distinction between a registered and unregistered will, that they placed the limit of what was just or iniquitous, true or false, legal or arbitrary. Like soldiers who present themselves intrepidly to danger for the most equivocal of causes, they performed prodigies of courage, to sustain against insatiable power that theory which permitted it every thing, on the condition of a vain formula, and ceremonies almost as vain. Talon, Molé, d'Aguesseau, displayed an incredible strength of mind in defending the orders of ancient kings against those of new ones. Their successors did not resist in the same way; perhaps less from cowardice than from a want of confidence in the worn-out dogma of the sanctity of proclamations, erected by registration into *fundamental laws* of the kingdom.

The French nation on its side, had lost all faith in these formula; it had, slowly it is true, but profoundly, conceived other principles on the subject of social science, besides the royal lordliness and unlimited sovereignty of the prince, the universal guardian of persons and universal curator of property. In proclaiming the rights of individuals as superior to those of societies, and the rights of societies as superior to those of social power, the revolution soon came to efface the doctrines, traditions, and credit of the ancient lawyers.

If from its cradle the revolution could have been fortunate, we should have seen in a new class of lawyers, a sort of incarnation of the spirit of the maxims of liberty, which, from the

human reason that had given birth to them, were passing into written constitutions. The judiciary order would thenceforth have risen to its supreme destination, to the perpetual defence of the individuality of the citizen against the unjust aggressions of private or public force. But this august establishment was never formed; those who would have been worthy to found it perished in the civil tempest; when calm returned, minds were weary and empty; and the sole supports which presented themselves to prop our judiciary institutions were old members of the Parliament, and old councillors at the Châtelet. They were set to work, and proceeded in the direction of their education and habits. The ancient doctrines having no strong hold on purely private transactions, the civil code was maintained on the basis which the constituent assembly had laid down; the penal code appeared to be edited by some one of those who were called the *bouchers de la Tournelle*; the codes of procedure were calculated to find culprits; the judgment of political crimes was given to commissions.

But in the year 1814, the French Revolution suddenly awoke. Freed from the slough of the empire, liberal France reappeared, bright and young, like those cities that we find intact, at the end of centuries, when we have broken through the coating of lava which covered them. The mind of that reviving France passed into the French bar and the schools of law, so long colourless and lifeless. This new life has abundantly produced, within five years, generous ambitions, noble efforts, and national reputations. The dogma of the sanctity of human liberty has resounded before the tribunals, and in the professors' chairs; although it has been contradicted there by more than one decree, it has taken possession of a territory which it will never give up.

The *Universal Journal of Legislation and Jurisprudence* appears to us an inspiration of the profoundly true and generous spirit which must one day be the party spirit of the entire body of lawyers in France. Edited by patriotic magistrates and young lawyers of already distinguished talent, this work may be considered as the centre and rallying point of the various doctrines, whether of general law, or of special jurisprudence, which will compose the great doctrine of the new judiciary school. On this account, it will be useful to students, and will not be without fruit for the public, which requires a fixed support in the false position in which we find ourselves at the present day, placed as we are between the liberty which we require, and laws made under a state of servitude.

ESSAY XVIII.

ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE EIGHTEENTH AND THAT OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, A PROPOS OF M. GARAT'S WORK, ENTITLED "HISTORICAL MEMOIRS ON THE LIFE OF M. Suard."

THE hatred of the nobles of the present day against the philosophy of the last century is an inveterate, an implacable hatred; a hatred which history will inscribe amongst celebrated aversions. From the vehemence of this aversion, it might be supposed an ancient one; it might be taken for one of those hereditary feuds which were transmitted, increasing as they descended, from one generation to another; this is not the case however: the fathers of almost all our nobles, and what is more, a great number of the nobles themselves, were the servile disciples and shameless extollers of the philosophers: it is their masters whom they deny in railing against the philosophers. And would to Heaven that the thinkers of the eighteenth century had not been the objects of their rash affections; would to Heaven that gilded arm-chairs had not been the first benches of that school: it would have been far greater, had it been popular; the seeds of reason which its founders sowed, instead of languishing half smothered in the dust of the *salons*, would have largely fructified in the midst of the rich soil of plebeian good sense and national conviction.

In 1789, the nation, agitated by the old leaven of insurrection which had been brewing beneath the soil of France since the overthrow of the free towns, had rallied the whole country by the necessity of a common effort; the nation arose and called on philosophy (as it was said one existed) to give it a social state at once more just and more worthy. Philosophy, which had passed from the writings whence it sprung into the frivolous circles, and had stopped there, in the hands of commentators in trains and embroidered waistcoats, was unable to give a sufficiently profound or complete answer. The nation, once universally shaken, was unable to quiet down again; the revolution was compelled to take place as it could. Supported on the wavering basis of some vague axioms and incomplete theories, it stumbled at the first blow; from the moment it was felt to totter, all presence of mind was lost, and men became cruel from fear. France was made bloody, not, as it is erroneously pretended, because the philosophers of the eighteenth century had made themselves heard by the people, but because their philosophy had not become popular; the philosophers and the people had been unable to have a mutual explanation; a class of men, reasoners from idleness, and patriots from vanity, had placed themselves between them. These men, born in a sphere inaccessible to public

evil as to public good, took upon themselves the employment of dissertating on what they could not understand; they established in their *salons* a sort of monopoly of moral and political ideas, without real want of science, without real love for it; impelled by the desire of escaping ennui, the only social calamity able to reach them.

When troubles and dangers came, all this uselessly busy troop took flight, as the drones take flight when the business of the hive commences. After corrupting the century, bringing down writers to the position of boudoir orators, destroying the taste for solitude which constitutes the dignity of thinkers and gives gravity and energy to ideas, after carrying away from amongst the people the men who owed it their labours, they abandoned this people to the trifling and presumptuous half science which their vain conversations had made for it. They did more, they rose against the people and their own science; they were traitors to their principles, and impudently calumniated what they had proclaimed to be just and true. For forty years they had strained every nerve to evoke from the solitude of the provinces disciples for the philosophers, and wits for their *salons*; four whole years they had recruited for philosophy in France; they recruited in Europe against philosophy and France. Poor France! she saw herself attacked for having produced what were called the *detestable* philosophers of the execrable eighteenth century; and it was the patrons, the disciples of the philosophers, the courtiers and princes to whom the century had deigned to give a name, who made or commanded the attack. Their hostility drew the popular attention and confidence towards the eighteenth century. The opinions of that century then descended into the body of common ideas; the nation embraced them, not with servility as the aristocracy had done, but amending them by its calm examination, and investing them with a grandeur which the labour of great assemblies of men always gives to the ideas of individuals. There commenced for France a truly national philosophical opinion, peculiar to the nation, the result of its writers, commented on by itself, and not by *cordons bleus*, or women in great hoops; a perfectly French science, capable of extending its empire into all places where Frenchmen may be. The condemnation of the science of 1760, was that it did not possess this power; its first flight carried it out of France into the foreign cities of

idlers and great nobles : it reigned at St. Petersburg and Berlin before Lyons and Rouen had heard of it.

We have not seen the time when philosophy was friends with the great and idle ones of the world ; we have not seen it reposing on silken seats in the drawing-rooms of the aristocracy ; we have seen it calumniated, pursued, hardly tolerated on the humble benches of a dusty school, the last refuge from which aristocratic hatred threatened soon to drive it. We should therefore be bad judges of the truth of the pictures presented in M. Garat's work upon M. Suard and the eighteenth century. The whole of that century, except ten years, is to us like another world. We run through the society into which the ingenious author has introduced us ; we find there, thanks to him, original and piquant portraits, but not a single face of our acquaintance, not a single feature that we have ever seen : these men are almost our contemporaries ; and yet there are centuries between us. The witty race of their time is now the stupid race ; conversation exists no longer in France, meditation has taken its place ; the spirit of reason is in the public, the gilded saloons make no more pretence to it ; philosophy is no longer gracefully lisped there, it is cursed ; and this is better, for it proves that it is solemn and powerful.

Yet if we must leave to those who have seen the things described by M. Garat the care of pronouncing on the ground work of his book, we can at least with knowledge give our opinion on the style of the book, and the merit of the writer : this merit is remarkably great. Lightly sketched portraits, narratives full of grace, a style artfully varied and always sustained without ceasing to be easy ; a number of witty fancies, keen *aperçus*, grand thoughts and always noble sentiments ; such is a detail of the means of pleasing possessed by this book, and the cause of its success. M. Garat gives evidence in every page of a profoundly felt admiration for talent and probity. He represents in the most favourable light those he has known and loved, without ever placing himself on the scene by their side ; he praises them overflowing, without thinking he has himself a right to some share of praise. Some persons may reproach him with rather too excessive a com-

plaisance for mediocrities which the *salons* have praised highly because they were their work ; but this fault is very excusable in a writer who commits it out of pure generosity of heart and the fear of underrating the merit of others ; and besides, in retracing the events of our youth, it is difficult not to embellish them by a little involuntary fiction ; it is a time for which the most generally faithful memory is never perfectly exact. Superior to the circles of scribbling wits, of thinkers without dignity and good faith, who compose the exterior of the eighteenth century, M. Garat has painted with grander strokes the real genius which the century produced, and who, born far from the frivolous world, became lessened perhaps by entering it. They attract attention ; they will attract it for a long while still ; but we should prefer seeing them without their miserable retinue, like fine oaks which appear larger when they stand alone, than when a thousand parasitical shrubs envelope and deform their trunks.

The eighteenth century still bears the name of the century of French philosophy ; we believe that it will be deprived of this noble title by the present century. Young men who have not made your course of moral studies in the *salons* of Madame Geoffrin and at the dinner-table of M. de Vaines ; young men who form your convictions under nobody's patronage, it is for you that the glory is reserved of founding a new school, popular like your habits, sincere and firm like your minds. The philosophy of this school will see no deserters, because it will be the work of consciences ; it will form itself gradually by the concurrence of so many young and active minds, who emigrate for the sake of science from every part of the country, meet one moment at Paris, and there become imbued with general maxims, without losing the native originality which they owe to the places of their birth. This labouring fraternity, yearly dissolved and yearly renewed, will carry into the cities of France a groundwork of grand and in no ways exclusive doctrine, which the cities will not accept without control. Thus the great opinion of the country will ripen at a hundred different firesides ; thus the national thought, existing in every place, will never again be destroyed by one blow, like a tree which has but one root.

ESSAY XIX.

ON THE ANTIPATHY OF RACE WHICH DIVIDES THE FRENCH NATION, A PROPOS OF M. WARDEN'S WORK, ENTITLED A "STATISTICAL, HISTORICAL, AND POLITICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF NORTH AMERICA."

THE time is come for us to turn our eyes on nations happier than we are, on those whose portion is liberty, that we may find in that prospect consolations for the present and hopes for the future. The actual destiny of the United States of America corresponds to all the desires we formed for our own; these desires are consequently not chimeras; we are not agitated by a vain ambition after the impossible, as our enemies pretend; we do not depart from the human sphere in aspiring to the fulness of social independence; for human nature is essentially free, and liberty is its law. But then, whence proceeds the enormous distance which still separates us from this object, from this benefit to which we aspire, and which we are capable of attaining? It does not proceed from ourselves, but from an external fact, a grave and sad fact, which we endeavour to conceal from ourselves, but which incessantly recurs to us, because by denying it we do not destroy it.

We believe we are a nation, and we are two nations on one soil; two nations, inimical in their reminiscences, irreconcilable in their projects; the one formerly conquered the other; and its designs, its eternal desires, are the renewal of that ancient conquest enervated by time, by the courage of the conquered, and by human reason. Reason, which makes the master blush for the abasement in which he keeps his slave, has gradually detached from that people all the generous dispositions and upright minds; these deserters to a better cause have been its noblest support; and such are the chiefs that we, sons of the conquered, still see at our head. But the remainder, as foreign to our affections and our habits as if only yesterday come amongst us, as deaf to our words of liberty and peace as if our language was as unknown to them as the language of our ancestors was to theirs, the remainder follows its road without occupying itself with ours. When we attempt plan upon plan for a common establishment, when we endeavor to forget, and embrace in one vast union every thing that lives on the soil of France, they rise up to oppose it, and collected apart, laugh amongst themselves at our continual disappointments. America has rejected from its bosom the nation which pretended to be its master, and from that day it has been free. Our fathers have more than once meditated the same enterprise; more than once has the ancient land of Gaul trembled under the feet of the conquerors; but either because the faigue

of these struggles surpassed the strength of our ancestors, or because violence was unsuited to their mild and peaceful character, they soon followed other paths. Instead of repulsing the conquest, they denied it, believing, that by forgetting it themselves, they would make others forget it. Servitude, the result of armed invasion, was imputed by them to a still imperfect civilization; whether conquerors and conquered, masters and subjects, they saw in them all but one people, some of whom had earlier attained liberty and happiness in order to clear and point out the road to the others.

They called society, they called friendship the services conquered at the edge of the sword, and exacted without return. "There are three classes," they say, "which variously concur to the good of the common state; the nobles are useful by their warlike courage, the clergy by their moral examples, the plebeians by the labour of their hands; these classes receive from the community a salary proportioned to their labours and their merit; the least favoured must not envy the others, nor the others wound the former by their pride; all help one another, and contribute in common to the general utility."

This is what the lawyers of the third estate proclaimed in the seventeenth century: in order to be complaisant they falsified history; but the nobility repelled their advances, and its writers called facts to witness against these indulgently factitious theories. "It is false," said the comte de Boulainvilliers, "it is false that it was not the force of arms and the hazard of a conquest which primitively founded the distinction expressed in the present day by the terms noble and plebeian.* It is false that we are nobles in any other interest than our own. We are, if not the descendants in a direct line, at least the immediate representatives of the race of the conquerors of Gaul:† its succession belongs to us; the land of Gaul is ours.‡"

When in 1814, having escaped from a great wreck, and been saved from the despotism which our own hands had reared, we thought of reposing all together in a social establishment of long duration, a friendly hand spontaneously drew up the new compact of French union; it inscribed there the title of noble, that title which had succeeded to the title of Frank, as the title of Frank had to that of barbarian. For the love

* *Dissertation on the French Nobility*, Dutch edition, p. 4.

† *Ibid.* p. 39.

‡ *Ibid.* pp. 53. 148.

of peace none of us protested against this singular resurrection. Our writers hastened to distract our attention from the facts which the word nobility recalled; theory again came to envelope them in its mantle. "*Nobilis*," it was said, "is derived from *notabilis*; a man is *notable* or *noble* when his name is attached to great services or great examples; nobility is the civic crown given to an entire family for the merits of one of its members. This sort of reward may be approved or blamed, it cannot be said that it is anti-social and contrary to liberty." We were thus losing ourselves at pleasure in agreeable hypotheses, when a voice from the camp of the nobles came to recall us harshly to a more tangible ground. "Race of freedmen," exclaimed M. le comte de Montlosier, "race of slaves snatched from our hands, tributary people, new people,* license was granted you to be free, not to us to be nobles; † for us every thing is a right, for you every thing is a favour.‡ We are not of your community; we are entire in ourselves.§ Your origin is clear; ours is clear likewise: dispense with sanctioning our titles; we shall know how to defend them ourselves."|| Now at last, when in our regrets we embrace the images of that liberty which appeared to be promised to France, which should, according to our hopes, lay the foundation of an equal destiny for all the inhabitants of our soil, other regrets make themselves heard. It is not the civil rights destroyed by our ministers that the writers of the nobility wish to see revived, but the ancient race of which they glory; "it is that northern race which took possession of Gaul without extirpating the conquered; ¶ the name of which became synonymous with liberty, when it alone was free on the soil it had invaded; ** which by the tenacity of its despotism easily defeated the fickle carelessness of the Gauls; †† which was able to leave to its successors, now deprived of all rights, the possession of the lands of the conquest, and the government of the men of the conquest."‡‡

After such long warnings, it is time for us to give up, and on our side also return to facts. Heaven is our witness that we were not the first to attest, the first to evoke the terrible and gloomy truth, that there are two hostile camps on the soil of France. It must be said, for history makes it a matter of truth; whatever may have been the physical mixture of the two races, their constantly opposing spirit has existed till the present day in two always distinct portions of the mingled population. The genius of the conquest has made a jest of nature and time; he still hovers over this unfortunate land. By his means the distinctions of castes have succeeded those of blood, the distinctions of orders those of castes, the distinctions of titles those of orders. The actual nobility traces itself back in its pretensions to the privileged men of the six-

teenth century; those pretended they were issued from the possessors of the men of the thirteenth century, who traced themselves back to the Franks of Karle the Great, who sprang from the Sicambers of Chlodowig. The natural filiation alone can be contested here, the political descent is obvious. Let us then give it up to those who claim it; and let us claim the contrary descent. We are the sons of the men of the third estate; the third estate proceeded from the commons; the commons were the asylum of the serfs; the serfs were the vanquished of the conquest. Thus, from formula to formula, through the space of fifteen centuries, we are led to the extreme term of a conquest which it is necessary to efface. God grant that this conquest may abjure itself even to its last traces, and that the hour of combat may not need to strike. But without this formal abjuration we can hope for neither liberty nor repose; we can hope for nothing of what renders America so fortunate and so enviable; the fruits which that land bears will never grow on a soil which still preserves traces of invasion.

M. Warden's five volumes, full of details of every kind, and of the most exact and interesting kind, barely suffice to satisfy the curiosity which the United States of America inspire. However extensive the picture which the writer presents of it, it is always found too limited. We desire to learn every thing, to know every thing concerning the astonishing prosperity of those twenty-two free states, several of which, not thirty years ago, were the habitation of wild beasts; concerning the country in which meet together all human races, all customs, all languages, all religions, and where men entertain for their fellow-men none but sentiments of fraternity and affection. M. Warden has placed at the head of his work a new map of the United States, a map of the District of Columbia, which is the seat of the chief congress, and a view of the palace in which the members of the congress assembled. This palace has been called by the ancient name of the Capitol. It is not, like the Capitol of Rome, built on an immovable rock;* but its destiny is far more certain. Liberty presides over it instead of the fickle god of war; and the tide of the vengeance of the people will never need to rise against it.

We cannot see without emotion on the map of that free country the names of cities borrowed from all the countries of Europe, the names of Paris, Rome, Lisbon, and even that of Athens. All European countries have furnished their share to that happy population, as if to prove to the world that liberty belongs to all, and is the peculiar property of none. The exiles of each country have, like the fugitives of Troy, attached the beloved name of the home of their childhood to the home of their old age. America is the common asylum of us all. From whatever part of the old world we steer, we shall not be strangers in the new; we shall there meet with our language, our fellow-countrymen, and our brethren. If, what destiny will doubtless not

* *On the French Monarchy*, tom. ii pp. 136 149. 155.

† *Ibid* p. 156.

‡ *Ibid*. p. 164.

§ *Ibid* p. 176

|| *Ibid*. p. 212.

¶ Article by M le Comte A de Jouffroy, in *l'Observateur de la Marine*, 9th book, p. 229.

** *Ibid*.

†† *Ibid*.

‡‡ *Ibid*. p. 301.

* *Capitoli immobile saxum* . . .

Virgil, *Æneid* ix.

permit to occur, the barbarism of ancient times prevailed against modern Europe; if those who gave the communes the name of execrable,* and who still threaten war against us in the names of their ancestors, the enemies of ours, were to triumph over reason and us, we should have a redress which our ancestors had not;

the sea is free, and there is a free world beyond it. We should breathe there with ease, we should brace up our minds there, and we should rally there our strength.

*Nos manet Oceanus circumvagus; arva, beata
Petamus arva . . . **

ESSAY XX.

THE TRUE HISTORY OF JACQUES BONHOMME, FROM AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTS.

JACQUES was still very young, when strangers from the south invaded the land of his ancestors; it was a fine domain bathed by two great lakes, and capable of producing corn, wine, and oil in abundance. Jacques had a lively but unsteady mind; growing up on his usurped soil, he forgot his ancestors, and the usurpers pleased him. He learned their language, espoused their quarrels, and bound himself to their fortune. This fortune of invasion and conquests was for some time successful; but one day fortune became adverse, and the tide of war brought invasion on the land of the usurpers. Jacques's domain, on which floated their standards, was one of the first threatened. Bodies of men who had emigrated from the north besieged it on all sides. Jacques was too unaccustomed to independence to dream of freeing his habitation; the sole alternatives his mind suggested to him, were either to deliver himself up to new masters, or to adhere to the old ones. Wavering between these two resolutions, he confided his doubts to a grave personage of his family, the priest of a religion which Jacques had recently embraced, and which he practised with great fervour.

"My father," said he, "what shall I do? My present state wearies me. Our conquerors, who call us their *allies*,† treat us really like slaves. They exhaust us to fill their treasury, which in their language they call the basket;‡ this basket is a bottomless abyss. I am weary of submitting to their yoke; but the yoke of their enemies frightens me; those north men are, it is said, very rapacious, and their battle-axes are very sharp. For mercy's sake, tell me whose side I shall take." "My son," replied the holy man, "you must be on the side of God; God in the present day is on the side of the idolatrous north against the heretical south. The men of the north will be your masters; I can predict this; for I myself, with my own

hands, have just opened your gates to them."† Jacques was stunned by these words; he had not recovered from his bewilderment when a great noise of arms and horses, together with strange acclamations, told him that all was over. He saw men of great height, and speaking from the throat, hurry into his dwelling, divide the furniture into lots, and measure the land in order to divide it. Jacques was sad, but feeling that there was no remedy, he endeavoured to become reconciled to his fate. He looked patiently at the thieves; and when their chief passed, he saluted him by the cry of *Vivat rex!* which the chief did not understand. The strangers distributed the booty, settled on their portions of land,‡ reviewed their forces, exercised themselves in arms assembled in councils, and decreed laws of police and war for themselves, without thinking more of Jacques than if he had never existed. He stood at a distance, awaiting an official notice of his destiny, and practising with a great deal of trouble to pronounce the barbaric names of men in high stations among his new masters. Several of these euphoniously disfigured names may be restored in the following manner: *Merowig, Chlodowig, Hilderik, Hildebert, Sighebert, Karl*, etc.

Jacques at last received his sentence; it was a formal act drawn up by that friend and compatriot who had made himself the introducer of the conquerors,§ and who, as the price of such a service, had received from their bounty the finest piece of cultivated land, and the Greek title of *Episcopus*, which the conquerors transformed into that of *Biscop*,|| and granted without

* Horat. Epod. vxi.

† See Salvien, *De Gubernatione Dei*, Gregory of Tours, and the correspondence of the Gallic bishops with king Chlodowig. (Script. Rerum Francic. tom. iv.)

‡ These portions drawn by lots were called in Latin, *sortes*, and in the Latinized Frankish language, *alodes*, *aloda*, *alodia*; thence came the French word *alleu*.

§ The members of the Gallo-Roman clergy became the secretaries, notaries, editors and keepers of the records to the barbaric kings.

|| We find in the will of the bishop *Remigius*, or *Saint*

* *Communia novum ac pessimum nomen. . . . Sermonem habuit de execrabilibus communis.* Gubertus de Novigeto.

† *Fœderati. Fœdus inæquale.*

‡ *Fiscus.*

understanding it. Jacques, who until then had been called Romanus, the Roman,* from the name of his first masters, saw himself qualified, in this new diploma, with the title of *litus seu villanus noster*,† and ordered, under pain of the rod and cord, to cultivate the land himself for the benefit of the strangers. The word *litus* was new to his ears; he asked an explanation, and he was told that this word, derived from the Germanic verb *let* or *lât*, permit or leave, really signified, that they had the kindness to let him live. This favour appeared to him rather a slight one, and he took a fancy to solicit others from the assembly of the possessors of his domain, which was held on fixed days in the open air, in a vast field. The chiefs stood in the midst, and the multitude surrounded them; decisions were made in common, and each man from the highest to the lowest gave his opinion, *à maximo usque ad minimum*.‡ Jacques went to that august council; but at his approach, a murmur of contempt was raised, and the guards forbade him to advance, threatening him with the wood of their lances. One of the strangers, more polite than the others, and who knew how to speak good Latin, told him the cause of this treatment; “the assembly of the masters of this land,” said he, “*dominorum territorii*, is interdicted to men of your class, to those whom we call *liti vel litones, et istius modi viles inopesque personæ*.”§

Jacques went sadly to work; he had to feed, clothe, warm, and lodge his masters; he worked for many years, during which time his condition barely changed, but during which on the other hand, he saw the vocabulary by which his miserable condition was designated increase prodigiously. In several inventories that were drawn up at the same time, he saw himself ignominiously confounded with the trees and flocks of the domain, under the common name of clothing of the land, *terre vestitus*;|| he was called live money, *pecunia viva*,¶ body serf, *addictus glebe*, *bondman* in the idiom of the conquerors. In times of clemency and mercy, only six days labour out of seven were demanded of him. Jacques was sober; he lived on little, and endeavoured to save; but more than once his slender savings were taken from him in virtue of that incontestable axiom; *quæ servi sunt, ea sunt domini*, what the serf possesses is the master's property.

Whilst Jacques worked and suffered, his masters quarreled amongst themselves, either from vanity or interest. More than once they deposed their chiefs; more than once their chiefs oppressed them; more than once opposite factions waged a civil war. Jacques always bore the weight of these disputes; no party spared him; he always had to bear the anger of the conquered, and the pride of the conquerors. If

happened that the chief of the community of conquerors pretended alone to have real claims on the land, the labour, the body and the soul of poor Jacques. Jacques, credulous and trusting to an excess because his woes were innumerable, allowed himself to be persuaded to give his consent to the pretensions, and accept the title of *subjugated by the chief, subjectus regis*, in the modern jargon, *subject of the king*. In virtue of this title, Jacques only paid the king fixed taxes, *tallias rationabiles*, which was far from meaning reasonable taxes. But although nominally become the property of the chief, he was not therefore free from the exactions of the subalterns. Jacques paid first on one side, then on the other; fatigue was wearing him out. He entreated repose; the laughing reply was: “*Bonhomme cries out, but bonhomme must pay.*” Jacques bore with misfortune; he was unable to tolerate outrage. He forgot his weakness; he forgot his nakedness, and hurried out against his oppressors armed to their teeth or entrenched in fortresses. Their chiefs and subalterns, friends and enemies, all united to crush him. He was peirced with the strokes of lances, hacked with the cuts of swords, bruised under the feet of horses: no more breath was left in him but what he required not to die on the spot, for he was wanted.

Jacques, who, since this war, bore the surname of *Jacques bonhomme*, recovered of his wounds, and paid as heretofore. He paid the subsidies, the assistances, the gabel, the rights of sale, of tolls and customs, the poll tax, the twentieths, &c., &c. At this exorbitant price, the king protected him a little against the rapacity of the other nobles; this more fixed and peaceful condition pleased him; he attached himself to the new yoke which procured it for him; he even persuaded himself that this yoke was natural and necessary to him, that he required saugue in order not to burst with health, and that his purse resembled trees, which grow when they are pruned. Care was taken not to burst out laughing at these sallies of his imagination; they were encouraged on the contrary, and it was when he gave full vent to them, that the names of loyal and well-advised man, *recte legalis et sapiens*, were given him.

If it is for my good that I pay, said Jacques to himself one day, it follows therefore that the first duty of those I pay, is to act for my good, and that they are, properly speaking, only the stewards of my affairs. If they are the stewards of my affairs, it follows that I have a right to regulate their accounts and give them my advice. This succession of inductions appeared to him very luminous; he never doubted but that it did the greatest credit to his sagacity; he made it the subject of a large book, which he printed in beautiful type. This book was seized, mutilated, and burnt, instead of the praises which the author expected, the galleys were proposed to him. His presses were seized; a lazaretto was instituted, wherein his thoughts were to perform quarantine before passing into print. Jacques printed no more, but he did not think less. The struggle of his thought against

Remi, that King Chlodowig made him a present of a fine estate in the environs of Reims, to which the king gave the Frankish name of *Biscespes Heim*, out of politeness.

* Lex Salica, et lex Ripuariorum, *passim*.

† Capitularia, *passim*.

‡ Script. Rerum Francic. tom. v. *passim*.

§ Capitularia, *passim*.

|| See Ducange's Glossary.

¶ Ibid.

authority was long secret and silent; his mind long meditated this great idea, that by a natural right he was free and master at home, before he made any tentative to realize it. At last one day, when a great want of money compelled the powers whom Jacques supplied, to call him to council to obtain from him a subsidy which it did not dare to exact, Jacques arose, assumed a proud tone, and clearly stated his absolute and imprescriptible right of property and liberty.

Authority capitulated, then retracted; war ensued, and Jacques was the conqueror, because several friends of his former masters deserted to embrace his cause. He was cruel in his victory, because long misery had soured him. He knew not how to conduct himself when free, because he still had the habits of slavery. Those whom he took for stewards enslaved him anew whilst proclaiming his absolute sovereignty. "Alas!" said Jacques, "I have suffered two conquests, I have been called serf, villain, subject, but I never was insulted by being told that it was in virtue of my rights that I was a slave and despoiled." One of his officers, a great warrior, heard him murmur and complain. "I see what you want," said he, "and I will take upon myself to give it to you. I will mix up the traditions of the two conquests that you so justly regret; I will restore to you the Frankish warriors, in the persons of my soldiers; they shall be, like them, *barons* and nobles.* I will reproduce the great Cæsar, your first master; I will call myself *imperator*; you shall have a place in my legions; I promise you promotion in them." Jacques opened his lips to reply, when suddenly

the trumpets sounded, the drums beat, the eagles were unfurled. Jacques had formerly fought under the eagles; his early youth had been passed in following them mechanically; as soon as he saw them again, he thought no longer, he marched. . . .

It is time that the jest should end. We beg pardon for having introduced it into so grave a subject; we beg pardon for having made use of an insulting name formerly applied to our fathers, in order to retrace more rapidly the sad succession of our misfortunes and our faults. It seems as if on the day on which, for the first time, servitude, the daughter of armed invasion, put its foot on the country which now bears the name of France, it was written above that servitude should never leave it; that, banished under one form, it was to reappear under another, and changing its aspect without changing its nature, stand upright at its former post, in spite of time and mankind. After the domination of the conquering Romans, came the domination of the conquering Franks, then absolute monarchy, then the absolute authority of republican laws, then the absolute power of the French empire, then five years of exceptional laws under the constitutional charter. Twenty centuries have elapsed since the footsteps of conquest were imprinted on our soil; its traces have not disappeared; generations have trampled on without destroying them; the blood of men has washed without effacing them. Was it then for such a destiny that nature formed that beautiful country which so much verdure adorns, such harvests enrich, and which is under the influence of so mild a climate?

ESSAY XXI.

ON SOME ERRORS OF OUR MODERN HISTORIANS, A PROPOS OF A HISTORY OF FRANCE IN USE IN OUR COLLEGES.

THE criticism of the historical works destined to be placed in the hands of students is not one of the least useful; for if the writings of this kind have less originality than the others, they exercise more influence, and the errors they contain are more dangerous, because they are addressed to readers unable to defend themselves from them. I am about to endeavour to correct some of those which are to be met with in a work published under the title of *Tableaux Séculaires de l'histoire de France*, by a professor

of the university; not that this work is worse than many others, but in order to bring forward the enormous vices of editing which are invariably propagated from year to year, in all the histories of France destined for public instruction. The author of the *Tableaux Séculaires* announces under the date of 413, that a chief of the Burgundians, named Gundicare, takes the title of king. What he here gives us as a fact is not one; it is not true that in the year 413, the chief of the Burgundians exchanged his title of chief for another title; that he ceased to be a chief in order to become something different; nothing like this is related by the historians of the period. Only, if we open the chronicles, we shall find under that date, or near it, "*Rex Burgundionum*

* *Barons*, in Latin *baro*, in old French *bers*, is a derivation from the Germanic words *bahr* or *bohrn*, which simply meant a *man* in the language of the conquerors of Gaul.

Gundicharius," or "*Rex Burgundionum factus Gundicharius*." These expressions in the language as well as in the thoughts of the historians, signified nothing else but that Gondeher, chief of the Burgundians, Gondeher, became chief of the Burgundians.* Because it is under the date of 413 that the name of Gondeher joined to the word *rex* is met with for the first time in the Latin histories, it does not at all follow that in the year 413 Gondeher adopted or received from his nation the Latin title of *rex*, a title which historians give him, because they are unable to write that with which he was qualified in his language. It is exactly as if they said, that in the year 413 Gondeher called himself *Gundicharius*, because his Germanic name appears for the first time under this date with Latin orthography and termination.

Such a supposition appears a wild one, and yet it is not without an example. Grave historians have related as a positive fact, that the chief of the Franks, Chlodowig or Clovis, took the name of Louis after his baptism, and this because they found in some Latin history written after this baptism, the name of Chlodowig Latinized into Lutovicus or Ludovichus, instead of being rendered Chlodovechus, that is to say, deprived of the Frankish aspirate which the Gaulois were tired of writing and pronouncing. It is another illusion of the same kind which makes historians assign an epoch at which the Franks took kings and ceased to have dukes. We find in the Latin writers sometimes the words *Francorum duces*, and sometimes those of *Francorum reges*; this difference of expression, which is frequently met with *à propos* of the same personages, is a mere variety of style. Our modern writers have seen in it political revolutions.—Those who prided themselves on exactness noted that the word *reges*, being employed after that of *duces*, that *duces* again being used, and followed ever afterwards by *reges*, it was perfectly evident that the Franks had been at first governed by dukes, then by kings, then again by dukes, and finally by kings. The author of the *Tableaux Séculaires* tells us, that after Clodion, Mérovée, a relation of that prince, was raised on the buckler. It is time to give the personages of our history their real names, and no longer to reproduce those doubly disfigured by the Latin language and that of the old French chronicles. No man of the nation of the Franks was ever called Clodion or Mérovée. The Chlodio, which we make Clodion, is nothing but the Latin form of the Germanic word Hlod, the familiar diminutive of Hlod, which signifies *striking, celebrated, illustrious*. In the same way *Merovechus* is Latinized from *Merowig*, which means *eminent warrior*. In the second place, the title of prince, introduced at this period of our history, upsets facts and ideas. This phrase of modern language is entirely inapplicable to the manners and customs of that period; unless the word prince is taken in its purely ancient signification, and that in using it, no

other meaning is attributed to it except that of the Latin word *princeps*, which means *chief* or *commander*.

Our author mentions, under the date of 511, Clotaire king of Soissons, Thierry king of Metz, Clodomir king of Orleans, and Childebert king of Paris. I will not again insist on the inexactitude of the proper names;* I will only remark that the expressions of original authors, *rex Parisiis*, *rex Suessionibus*, are detestably translated by the words king of Paris, king of Soissons, &c. The Latin of these authors means literally king or chief at Soissons, king or chief at Paris, &c.; which signifies, that such and such a man, one of the principal chiefs of the Franks, the commander of a tribe or a large portion of the army, had his head quarters either at Paris or at Soissons.

The combination of the title of *rex* or king with the name of a country, adopted in our language, has contributed to change the primitive signification of that title. When they said *rex Francorum*, king of the Franks, this was perfectly clear: a king of the Franks is a chief of the Franks. But when we say king of France, a very different idea, that of a more modern and far more complex political situation presents itself to the mind: yet hardly any one is conscious of the confusion. We establish kings of France at a period when all present France was the enemy of the Frankish kings, far from constituting their kingdom. Children are asked who the first king of France was. No one perceives that this is a very ill-expressed question. What is meant by first king of France? is it the first who literally bore the title of king of France? Then it must be one of the kings of the third race; for those of the two first not speaking French, did not take a French title, and their qualification, whether in Latin or in the Germanic language, answered to that of king of the Franks. Is it the person whom Roman authors first called *Francorum rex*? we must find out in these authors the precise moment at which one of them wrote these words in the place of *Francorum dux*. Or is it the

* In making all possible concessions to custom, these names should be written Chloter, Theoderik, Chlodomir, and Hildebert. These names signify celebrated and excellent, extremely brave, celebrated and eminent, brilliant warrior. Generally, all Frankish names, and even those of the other Germanic nations of the period of the great invasion, are formed by the connection of two qualifying adjectives. The number of these monosyllabic adjectives is sufficiently limited for it to be easy to draw up a list of them; they are joined at random, and so as to form sometimes the first, sometimes the second part of the name. The only difference between the names of men or women is, that the latter are less varied, and generally finish by certain words which in men's names are always placed at the beginning, like *Hild* and *Gond*. Thus *Hildebert* is the name of a man, *Berte-hild* that of a woman. The same difference exists between *Gonde-bald* and *Bald-gonde*. The *e* placed at the end of the first word, and which marks a stop between the two parts of the name, is often replaced by other vowels, like *o* and *u* in the dialect of the Franks, *i* in that of the Alemanni and Longobards, and *a* in that of the Goths. But these vowels bearing no accent, were pronounced indistinctly, and thus resembled the mute *e*.

* Gondeher signifies an eminent warrior, and the name of the nation may be translated by that of confederate warriors.

first of all the chiefs of the Frankish nation? It would be equally impossible and useless to discover his name; it is much more important to know precisely what a chief of the Franks was.

The author of the *Tableaux Séculaires* proposes himself another no less ambiguous question.—When was the nobility established? To give a date of some sort, he replies, that the nobility was established in the ninth century. But what is meant by the establishment of the nobility? is it the establishment of exclusive rights of a certain class of men upon the soil and the other inhabitants of the country? or is it the establishment of the Latin qualification of *nobilis*? If it is the privileges which are meant, their origin is clear; they are derived from the conquest; they are the conquest itself. As to the title of *nobilis*, it is difficult to say when the conquering race adopted it for the first time, if it was an invention of its own pride, or of the flattery of the conquered. Whichever it was, the epithets of praise were not unpleasant to it: it often boasted of itself, and spoke of itself as *an illustrious race founded by God himself, strong in arms, firm in its alliances, of singular beauty and whiteness, of a noble and healthy body, audacious, active, and terrible*.* Since the victory of the Franks, the words *nobilitas* and *nobilis* were almost always joined to their national name.—We find *Franciæ gentis nobilitas, de nobili Francorum genere, homo francus nomine et re nobilis*. In the first periods of the conquest, when the names of nations were still used to distinguish the races, when the word *Romans* was used to distinguish the conquered, the name of Frank, alone and without epithet, signified a man superior to others. Later, when the national name of the conquered gave place to names derived from their special condition, like those of serfs and villains, the national name of the conquerors likewise vanished, and was replaced by the epithet of praise which had at first accompanied it. At first the words *nobilis francus* were used, then *francus* or *nobilis* were used indifferently, and lastly, only the word *nobilis* was used. This has happened; but at what precise epoch? This is what it is impossible to discover, any more than the gradual variations of the language, the birth or decline of words.

* Gens Francorum inclita, auctore Deo condita, fortis in armis, firma pacis fœdere, candore et formâ egregiâ, corpore nobilis et incolumis, audax, velox, aspera (Pro log. ad Leg. Salic., Scriptores Rerum Francic. tom. iv.)

The long habit of joining the name of Frank to the epithets of honour which accompanied it, and which contained the idea of power, of liberty, of riches, and even that of the moral qualities which constitute nobility of soul, was the cause that this name itself became an equivalent adjective to those with which it was usually combined. In the twelfth century, the word *frank* was used in opposition to *chétif*, that is to say, of poor and low condition.* We know in what moral sense this word is now employed, and it is to our ancient political condition that it owes the energy which has caused it to be adopted by several foreign nations. The Germans, for example, use it to express the condition of free men in all its fullness. They say, *frank und frey, frank and free*. This signification, more modern for them amongst whom the difference of conditions did not answer primitively to a difference of race, has led several critics into error on the real signification of the name of the Franks in the ancient Teutonic language. They have thought it was equivalent to that of free men, and they were mistaken.† This name of a warlike confederacy, formed for attack rather than resistance to foreign oppression, had a meaning similar to the impression which those who adopted it wished to produce around them. It properly signified violent or rough, and indicated the will to carry war to the extremity without fear and without mercy.

I beg your pardon for the dryness of these remarks. If it is permitted to be minute, it is in what affects the truth of local colouring, which must be the characteristic of history. Ours is cold and monotonous, because every thing in it is cold and stiff; truth alone can give it piquancy and interest. The prospect of that object is required to diminish the dullness of the dry paths which must be traversed before it can be attained.

* Thibaut fut plein d'engein et plein fut de feintie.

A homme ne à femme ne porta amié,
De franc ne de chéuf n'ot merci ne pitié
(Vers sur Thibaut le Tricheur, comte de Champagne)

† See the words *Frang* and *Frech* in Wachter's Glossary. It seems that in the dialect of some of the nations which formed the Frankish confederation, the name of the association was pronounced without an *n*, and that *Frac* or *Frek* was used instead of *Frank* or *Frenk*. It is perhaps for this reason that the seals of several of the early kings bear the words *Fracarum rex*.

ESSAY XXII.

FIRST LETTER ON THE HISTORY OF FRANCE, ADDRESSED TO THE EDITOR OF THE "COURTIER FRANCAIS."

MONSIEUR,

THE title of French which your journal bears, imposes a kind of obligation on you to embrace every thing which concerns France; to follow its destiny in the past, as you follow it in the future, and sometimes to present in your pages, by the side of the energetic expression of the wants and desires of the present epoch, a lively and faithful picture of the times which have preceded and produced our own, and which have produced ourselves.

In difficult circumstances, a nation is always led to look back; it becomes more curious to learn what were the conduct and characters of the men who preceded it on the world's scene, and have transmitted its name to it. It seems as if, like the Antæus of fable, it hoped to renew its vigour by touching the bosom whence it sprung. And, in truth, it is rare for the great memories of the past not to inspire at once more calmness and more strength to the generation which retraces them. It is not that there is nothing mysterious and inexplicable in this; it is because in recalling to our memory what former generations have done for us, we conceive the idea of an engagement which, so to speak, binds us to it: the interest of preserving our liberty, our welfare, our national honour, appears to us as a duty; the care of these things becomes more dear to us, when we feel before them as if in presence of a deposit which had been placed in our hands on the rigid condition of improving and increasing it.

Such are the sentiments which would produce a serious study of the history of France in the minds of the Frenchmen of the present day. It must be said for the honour of our name, the spirit of independence is impressed on this history as strongly as on that of any other people, ancient or modern. Our ancestors understood it; they willed it as we do; and if they did not bequeath it to us full and entire, it was the fault of circumstances and not theirs; for they surmounted more obstacles than we shall ever meet. If we have now some power to obtain respect for our just rights, it is to their courage that we owe it; and the accession of French liberty, pure and great as our desires anticipate, will one day be but the accomplishment of their ancient enterprise.

These assertions will appear strange, I know, to many persons. They will be astonished to hear me say, that strong and independent generations trod the soil of our country before we did, when the word liberty is so rarely met with in those of our histories which every body reads, and which pass for the most exact. This is,

Monsieur, the misfortune of France; in the times of great patriotic efforts, literature was not born; and when literary talent came, patriotism slumbered, and historians sought inspirations for their narratives elsewhere. The history of France, such as the modern writers have made it, is not the real history of the country, the national, the popular history: this history is still buried in the dust of cotemporary chronicles, whence our elegant academicians have been careful not to fetch it. The best part of our annals, the most serious, the most instructive, still remain to be written; the history of the citizens, of the subjects, and of the people, is still missing. This history would present to us at the same time examples of conduct, and that feeling of sympathy which we vainly seek in the adventures of the small number of privileged persons who occupy alone the historical scene. Our minds would attach themselves to the destiny of the masses of men who have lived and felt like us, far better than to the fortune of the great and of princes, the only one which is related to us, and the only one in which there are no lessons for our use; the progress of the popular masses towards liberty and well-being would appear to us more imposing than the march of conquerors, and their misfortunes more touching than those of deposed kings. In this truly national history, if it found a pen worthy to write it, France would figure with its cities and various populations, which would present themselves before us as so many collective beings endowed with will and action. We should learn that our cities have something to be proud of besides the residence of some great noble, or the passage of some sovereign; and it is not true that during entire centuries, all their political life consisted in furnishing recruits for the company of *free archers*, and paying taxes twice a year.

But if the labour of collecting and bringing to light the scattered and unknown details of our real history would be useful and glorious, it would be difficult; it would require great strength, long researches, rare sagacity; and I hasten to tell you, Monsieur, that I have not the presumption to undertake it. Led to historical studies by an irresistible attraction, I should be careful not to mistake the ardour of my tastes for a sign of talent. I feel within me the profound conviction that we have not yet a history of France, and I aspire only to make the public share my conviction, persuaded that from that vast assembly of just and active minds, new candidates will soon start up for the high func-

tions of the historian of French liberty. But whoever would pretend to it, must try himself previously; it will not be sufficient for him to be capable of that common admiration for what are called heroes; he would require a stronger mode of thinking and feeling; the love of men as men, abstractedly from their renown or social position; an intrepid judgment, which declares liberty, even when dejected and despised, to be greater and more holy than the powerful who cast it down; a sensibility expansive enough to attach itself to the destiny of an entire people as to the destiny of a single man, to follow it through centuries with as attentive an interest and as keen emotions as we follow the steps of a friend in a perilous course.

This sentiment, which is the soul of history, has been wanting in the writers who, up to the present time, have endeavoured to treat of ours. Not finding within themselves the principle which should concentrate round one sole interest the innumerable portions of the picture which they intended to present, they sought the link externally, in the apparent continuity of certain political existences, in the chimera of the non-interrupted transmission of a power which was always the same, to the descendants of one family. To sustain this scaffolding, and maintain the thread of their narratives, they have been compelled to falsify facts in a thousand ways; they have omitted certain authentic reigns, forged imaginary relationships, and kept in oblivion the acts and formulas of the ancient election of kings; they have pretended to see the legacy of France, body and goods, established as a right in wills which transmitted nothing but a purely private domain and possession; they have travestied the popular assemblies of the conquering nation of Gaul into high courts of aulic justice. When they saw the men of that free country assemble in arms on hills,* or in vast plains,† to vote their laws,‡ they represented them as the servile auditors of some imperial edict, like subjects before a master, who alone speaks, and whom nobody contradicts.

All the events are thus misconstrued by arbitrary interpretations; and owing to this method, after reading our history, it is difficult to remember any thing else in the way of insinuations and manners, than a complete detail of an estate belonging to a royal house. How is it possible to pass without giddiness from these narratives, which embrace so many years, and in which the French nation figures only as a remembrance, to the history of the thirty years which we have just seen elapse? It seems as if we were suddenly transported to a new country, in the midst of a new people; and yet they are the same men. In the same way that we are able to trace ourselves back by name and descent to the Frenchmen who lived before the eighteenth century, we could equally trace ourselves back to them by our ideas, hopes and desires, if their thoughts and actions were faithfully reproduced to us.

No, it is not since yesterday that our France has seen men employing their courage, and all the faculties of their soul, to create for themselves and their children an existence at once free and inoffensive. Those serfs escaped from the soil, who raised up seven hundred years ago the walls and civilization of the ancient Gallic cities, have preceded us at a distance to open a wide path for us. We, who are their descendants, believe that they were worth something, and that the most numerous and most forgotten part of the nation deserves to live over again in history. If the nobility can claim high feats of arms, and military renown in the past, there is also a glory for the plebeians, that of industry and talent. Those were plebeians who reared the war horse of the noble, and joined the steel plates of his armour. Those who enlivened the festivities of the castles by poetry and music, were also plebeians; the very language we speak is that of the plebeians; they created it at a time when court and dungeons re-echoed with the harsh and guttural sounds of a Germanic dialect.

ESSAY XXIII.

ON THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE HISTORY OF FRANCE BY ROYAL RACES.

SUPPOSE a sensible stranger, who had some acquaintance with the original historians of the downfall of the Roman empire, but had never opened a single modern volume of our history.

Suppose that, meeting for the first time with one of these books, he looked through the table of contents, and remarked, as a striking feature, the basis of the whole work, the distinction of several races, what idea do you think he would form of these races, and the intention of the author? Most probably he would imagine that this distinction answers to that of various popu-

* Montana colloquia, jus montanum, Malberg.

† Campus Martius.

‡ Lex fit consensu populi. . . . (Edict. Pist.)

lations, either Gallic or foreign, the mixture of which, gradually brought about, formed the French nation; and when he saw that he was mistaken, that they are simply different families of princes, upon which our entire system of national history turns, he would doubtless be much astonished. For us, used from infancy to such an historical plan, not only it does not offend us, but we cannot imagine it to be possible to find another. We simply require of the writers to introduce as many fine maxims and as elegant a style as possible into it.

It may perhaps be said that this method is a natural consequence of the importance of those who are placed at the head of the government; but antiquity likewise had governors; ancient historians do not forget to mention the names of the consuls of Rome and the archons of Greece. This notwithstanding, the narrative of each epoch is not with them of the birth, education, life, and death of a consul or an archon. A real history of France ought to relate the destiny of the French nation; its hero should be the entire nation; all the ancestors of that nation should figure in it by turns, without exclusion and without preference. The old chronicles, compiled in the convents, naturally had preferences for the men who gave the most to the churches and monasteries; and history, thus written apart from the scene of the world, lost its public character to assume that of simple biography. Notwithstanding the superiority of our enlightenment, we have copied the model transmitted by the monks of the middle ages, and we have even surpassed them. Of all that was passing in Gaul, they saw only the succession of the Frankish kings; we, for more simplicity, have reduced this succession to one family, or two or three at the utmost. The most scrupulous of our historians make three races of kings, but that is the extent; these are the pillars of Hercules which none venture to pass, not even those who confess that Mérovée is not the son of Clodion, and that Raoul, Eudes, and Robert are not descendants of Pepin. Notwithstanding this confession, they persist, according to the established formula, to call *first race* their collection of twenty-one kings, from Pharamond to Childeric III., and *second race* that of fifteen kings, from Pepin to Louis V.

First race, called the Merovingian; second race, called Carolingian: these are two formulas which we read in those of our histories which are reckoned the best, and which we repeat in our habitual conversation, without conceiving the least doubt of their exactness. Yet more than one question can be made on this matter; and to begin with the dynasty which our historians call Merovingian, whence does it derive this surname, and at what period did it receive it? Is it a popular appellation of a mere scientific designation, introduced by the writers in order to mark a division in history? Here are difficulties which a second class pupil might submit to his professor. If the professor was one of those conscientious men who make sure of things before they reply, he would look through the original document, and would at first be much astonished to read in an ancient

chronicler: *Merovingia quæ alio nomine dicitur Francia*. He would see *Merovingus* employed instead of *Francus* in a life of Saint Colomban, written in the seventh century. Finally, he would find in three historians, Frankish by birth, the following passages: *Merovechus, à quo Franci cognominati sunt Merovingi . . . Meroveus, ob cuius facta et triumphos (Franci), intermisso Sicambrorum vocabulo, Merovingi dicti sunt . . . Merovicus, à quo Franci Merovinci appellati sunt, quod quasi communis pater omnibus coelestetur.** Our professor would conclude from these authorities, that *Merovingian*, as we call it, or *Merowing*, as the Franks called it, was not only a family name, but sometimes the name of a people. All the Franks without distinction were called Merowings, from the name of Merowig, an ancient chief, whom all the members of the nation venerated as their common ancestor. There is nothing surprising in this; the clans of Scotland and Ireland and the tribes of Arabia still call themselves by the name of some ancient leader, poetically invoked as the father of the whole tribe.

As to the name of *Carlovingians*, it is an absurd barbarism, introduced into the nomenclature for more conformity with the name of Merovingians. The word used in the chronicles of the period, which has been disfigured in this way, is that of Carolingi, which is itself only the Frankish word *Karl*ing with a Latin termination.

The title of *Karl*ings, or *children of Karl*, suits very well the kings whose succession composes what is called the second race; but this title should at least be restored or Frenchified in a proper manner. It was under the government of the descendants of Karl surnamed Marteau, that the title of *Merowings* or *Merovingi*, according to the Latin orthography and declension,† was applied as the name of a dynasty to the kings, the last of whom was dethroned by Pepin, Karl's son.

Doubtless the attention bestowed on the genealogies of the kings has not been useless to history. This problem was the first which the learned of the seventeenth century undertook to solve; and several of them have given proof of an admirable sagacity. But now that, thanks to their efforts, every thing of this nature is cleared up, other historical questions arise, and that of our national genealogy among the first. As many as we are, French in name and heart, the children of one country, we do not all descend from the same ancestors. From the most distant times several populations of different races inhabited the territory of Gaul; the Romans, when they invaded the country, found in it three nations and three languages.‡ What were these nations, and in what relation of origin and family did they stand to the inhabitants of the other countries of Europe? Was there

* Sigeberti Chron.—Harulfii Chron.—Roriconis Gesta Francorum, apud Script. Rerum Francic. tom. iii.

† *Merwingi* is sometimes found in the ancient documents.

‡ See, in Cæsar's Commentaries, the distinction he establishes between the Belgians, the Celts, and the Aquitanians.

an indigenous race, and in what order did the races, emigrated from other parts, come to jostle themselves against the first? What has been, in the succession of time, the movement of degradation from the primitive differences of manners, character and language? Are any traces of them to be found in the local habits which distinguish our provinces, notwithstanding their uniformity produced by civilization? Do not the dialects and provincial *patois*, by the various accidents of their vocabularies and pronunciation, appear to reveal an ancient di-

versity of idioms? These are questions the bearing of which is immense, and which, if introduced into our history at its various periods, would completely change its aspect. There would be no need intentionally to diminish the importance of the royal races, in order that the imagination of the reader should be more struck with that of the popular races. They would be like great trees which should suddenly spring up in a field sprinkled with bushes, like rivers which should arise in a plain watered by little rivulets

ESSAY XXIV.

ON THE CHARACTER AND POLICY OF THE FRANKS.

To correct in some measure the false versions of our modern historians, on what are called the first epochs of the French monarchy, it would be necessary to separate in idea the Frankish race from the other inhabitants of Gaul, and distinguish the facts peculiar to it from the mass of historical facts. This labour, which would remedy many errors, is too long to be made the subject of a letter; but I can endeavour to give you an idea of it, by hastily tracing a slight anecdotal history of the relations of the Frankish population with the other populations of Gaul, from the sixth to the tenth century.

When the Frankish tribes were only known in the land we inhabit by their incursions into the four Germanic and Belgic provinces, two nations of the Germanic race inhabited as a fixed residence the beautiful southern provinces between the Loire and the two seas. The Burgundians were established on the east; the Goths on the south and west. The entry of these barbaric nations had been violent and accompanied with ravages; but they soon acquired the love of repose: they daily became more like the natives, and tended to become their neighbours and friends.* The Goths especially showed a liking for Roman customs, which were those of all the Gallic cities. Their chiefs gloried in love of the arts, and affected the polished manners of Rome.† Thus the wounds of the invasion became gradually healed, the cities raised up their walls; industry and science revived once more; Roman genius reappeared in that country where the conquerors themselves seemed to abjure their conquest.

It was then that Chlodowig, chief of the

Franks, appeared on the banks of the Loire. Terror preceded his army;* it was known that at their emigration from Germany into Gaul, the Franks had shown themselves cruel and vindictive towards the Gallo-Roman population; fear was so great at their approach, that in many places fearful prodigies were supposed to foretell their invasion and victory.† The ancient inhabitants of the two Aquitanias joined the troops of the Goths for the defence of the invaded territory. Those of the mountainous country, called in Latin *Arvernii*, and which we call Auvergne, engaged in the same cause. But the courage and efforts of these men of various races did not prevail against the axes of the Franks, nor the fanaticism of the northern Gauls incited by their bishops, the enemies of the Goths who were Arians. An avid and ferocious multitude spread itself as far as the Pyrenees, destroying and depopulating the cities.‡ It divided the treasures of the country, one of the richest in the world, and crossed the Loire again, leaving garrisons on the conquered territory.§

In the year 532, Theoderik, one of the sons and successors of Chlodowig, said to those Frankish warriors whom he commanded: "Follow me as far Auvergne, and I will make you enter a country where you will take as much gold and silver as you possibly can desire; where you can carry away in abundance flocks,

* Terror Francorum resonabat. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. Ecclesiast.)

† Sanguis erupit in medio Tolosæ civitatis et tota die fluxit, Francorum adveniente regno. (Idat. Chron., apud Script. Rerum Francic. tom. ii.)

‡ Urbes subruens, municipia depopulans (Roriconis monachi Gesta Francorum.)

§ Prædam innumerabilem . . . ad solum proprium . . . (Script. Rer. Francic. tom. ii. and iii.)

* . . . Non cum subjectis, sed cum fratribus Christianis. (Pauli Orosii Historia.)

† Leges Wisigoth. passim.

slaves, and garments.”* The Franks took up arms, and once more crossing the Loire, they advanced on the territory of the *Bituriges* and *Avernes*. These paid with interest for the resistance they had dared to the first invasion. Every thing amongst them was devastated; the churches and monasteries were razed to their foundations.† The young men and women were dragged, their hands bound, after the luggage to be sold as slaves.‡ The inhabitants of this unfortunate country perished in large numbers or were ruined by the pillage. Nothing was left them of what they had possessed, says an ancient chronicle, except the land, which the barbarians could not carry away.§

Such were the neighbourly relations kept up by the Franks with the Gallic populations which had remained beyond their limits. Their conduct with respect to the natives of the northern provinces was hardly less hostile. When Hilperik, the son of Clothar, wished, in the year 584, to send his daughter in marriage to the king of the West Goths,|| or Visigoths, settled in Spain, he came to Paris and carried away from the houses belonging to the *fisc* a great number of men and women, who were heaped up in chariots to accompany and serve the bride elect. Those who refused to depart, and wept, were put in prison: several strangled themselves in despair. Many people of the best families enlisted by force into this procession, made their will and gave their property to the churches. “The son,” says a cotemporary, “was separated from his father, the mother from her daughter; they departed sobbing, and pronouncing deep curses; so many persons in Paris were in tears that it might be compared to the desolation of Egypt.”¶

In their domestic misfortunes, the kings of the Franks sometimes felt remorse, and trembled at the evil they had done. Fredegonda, the wife of the Hilperik I have just mentioned, seeing her sons die one after the other, exclaimed, “It is the tears of the poor, the groans of the widows, and the sighs of the orphans that kill them. We amass and hoard up without knowing for whom. Our treasures remain without possessors, but are full of rapine and curses. Let us not hesitate to burn all these papers which serve to levy unjust taxes.”** But this momentary

repentance soon yielded to the love of riches, the most violent passion of the Franks.

Their incursions into the south of Gaul recommenced as soon as that country, recovered from its terrors and defeats, no longer admitted their garrisons nor tax collectors. Karle, to whom the fear of his arms gave the surname of *Marteau*,* made an inroad as far as Marseilles; he took possession of Lyons, Arles and Vienne, and carried off an immense booty to the territory of the Franks.† When this same Karle, to insure his frontiers, went to fight the Saracens in Aquitania, he put the whole country to fire and sword; he burnt Bèrgiers, Agde and Nîmes; the arenas of the latter city still bear traces of the fire. At death of Karle, his two sons, Karlmann and Peppin,‡ continued the great enterprise of replacing the inhabitants of the south, to whom the name of Roman was still given, under the yoke of the Franks.§ In 742, their army passed the Loire at Orleans, directed its march to Bourges, devastated the country as far as the castle of Loches, and divided on the spot the spoils of the vanquished, and the men themselves whom they brought away to sell. In the year 761, Peppin, having become King of the Franks, convoked their great annual assembly on the banks of the Loire; they came there with their arms and baggage, crossed the river, and ravaged Aquitania as far as the country of the Arvernes, where they burned the city of Clermont, causing a number of men, women, and children, to perish in the flames.|| The principal city of the Arvernes was taken by storm, and the Franks, according to their custom, seized every thing that could be carried away. The following year they again came into the environs of Bourges to carry away men and horses. In 765, they extended their incursions to Limoges; in 766, they went as far as Agen, destroying vines and trees, burning and plundering houses. After this ravage of entire Aquitania, they departed for their own country, “full of joy,” as the chronicles say, “and praising God who guided them in this fortunate expedition.”¶

suspiria orphanorum interimunt Nunc, si placet, veni et incendamus omnes descriptiones iniquas. (Ibid. p. 253.)

* Quia nulli parcere sciret. (Chron. Viridunense, apud Script. Rerum Francic. tom. iii.)

† In Francorum regnum, cum magnis thesauris remeavit (Fredegarii Chronic. apud Script. Rerum Francic. tom. ii.)

‡ The word *mann*, which signifies man, is here joined to that of *karl*, which signifies robust man, to give it still more force. The signification of the name of Peppin is not easy to discover; this name seems formed of *Pepp* or *Pipp*, a familiar contraction of another name of two syllables, and of the Germanic diminutive, indicated by the addition of the syllables *in*, *ien*, or *chen*. Two names analogous to this one are found in Gregory of Tours: we find *Pappolenus* and *Beppolenus*, which, in the language of the Franks, must have been called *Pappeleen* and *Beppleen*. It is still the same familiar name *Bepp* or *Papp*, followed by the diminutive *leen* or *lein*, as the Germans now pronounce it.

§ Romanos proterunt. (Fredeg. Chronic. apud Script. Rerum Francic. tom. ii.)

|| Vivos concremaverunt. (Fredegarii Chronic.)

¶ In Franciam læti Christo in omnibus præsule, Christo duce, Deo auxiliante. (Ibid. tom. ii.)

* Et ego vos inducam in patriam, ubi aurum et argentum accipiat, quantum vestra potest desiderare cupiditas, de quâ pecora, de quâ mancipia, de quâ vestimenta in abundantiam adsumas. (Greg. Turon. apud Script. Rer. Francic. t. ii.)

† Solo tendis adæquata. (Ibid.)

‡ Scitisque vultibus puellas. (Vita sancti Fidoli, apud Script. Rer. Francic. tom. iii.)

§ Præter terram solam quam barbari secum ferre non poterant. (Script. Rer. Francic. tom. iii. p. 356.)

|| This name signifies Western Goths; it proceeded from the reciprocal situation of the two great branches of the Gothic population in their native land to the north of the Danube. It was the invasion of the Huns which compelled this population to emigrate in large bodies to the Roman territory.

¶ Tantusque planticus in urbe erat Parisiacâ, ut plantici compararetur Egypto. (Greg. Turon. apud Script. Rer. Francic. tom. ii. p. 289.)

** Ecce eos lachrymæ pauperum, lamenta viduarum,

The southern Gaul was to the sons of the Franks what entire Gaul had been to their fathers; a country, the riches and climate of which attracted them incessantly, and saw them return as enemies, as soon as it did not purchase peace of them. Karle, son of Peppin, to whom we give the singular name of *Charlemagne*, in imitation of the romances of the middle ages, carried as far as the Pyrenees the devastation which his father had been unable to extend beyond the confines of Aquitania. He united entire Gaul and several of the neighbouring countries under a military government, which he endeavoured to render regular to insure its duration, but the dismemberment of which commenced almost immediately after his death.

Then all the countries united by force to the empire of the Franks, and over which, in consequence of this union, the name of France had extended itself, made unheard-of efforts to reconquer their ancient names. Of all the Gallic provinces, none but the southern ones succeeded in this great enterprise; and after the wars of insurrection, which, under the sons of Karle the Great, succeeded the wars of conquest, Aquitania and Provence became distinct states. Among the south-eastern provinces re-appeared even the ancient name of Gaul, which had for ever perished north of the Loire. The chiefs of the new kingdom of Arles, which extended from the Jura to the Alps, took the title of Kings of Gaul in opposition to the Kings of France.

ESSAY XXV.

ON THE ENFRANCHISEMENT OF THE COMMUNES.

THE communes of the middle ages are now nothing more than a name; but their name has resounded so loudly in our history, that the problem of that past existence still forms one of the most serious controversies. Whence came the communes of France? What genius, what power created them? To these questions our historians reply, that as the first royal charters bearing the concession of communes belong to the reign of Louis the Sixth, surnamed the Fat, it was Louis the Fat who founded the communes. Neither in the *treasury of the charters* of the tower of the Louvre, nor in that of the *Sainte Chapelle*, was to be found, it is said, any act containing the concession of communes anterior to the reign of Louis the Sixth, who consented to the establishment of a municipal system in the towns of Laon, Amiens, Noyon and Saint Quentin: this circumstance, which I willingly grant, by no means proves that before the reign of Louis the Sixth no city of France had enjoyed and fully enjoyed, a similar system.

Previously to the date of the four or five charters of Louis-le-Gros, the large cities of Provence, Languedoc and Burgundy, possessed laws of their own, and magistrates of their own choosing: from time immemorial Narbonne, Béziers, Lyons, Marseilles and Arles, were municipal cities. If, therefore, Louis the Fat enfranchised, as it is said he did, the cities of the north of France, and founded in them municipal government, he only imitated what already existed in the south: he was not a creator, he was only a copyist. And does even the merit of this imitation belong to him? This is doubtful. The very tenour of the royal charters is contrary to this belief. The charters say: I have

granted, *concessi*; this clause implies, it appears to me, the idea of previous solicitation; it leaves at least in doubt whether the free system which was to convert the city into what was then called a commune, whether the imitation of the government of the southern cities was not a project at first conceived by the inhabitants themselves, and then submitted by them to the approbation of the authority whose opposition they feared; whether, in one word, the community of citizens had not the first and consequently the greatest share in the act which constituted in a fixed and durable manner its independent existence.

The obstinacy of historians never to attribute any spontaneity, any conception to bodies of men, is a very singular thing. If a whole nation emigrates and seeks a new dwelling for itself, it is in the opinion of annalists and poets, some hero who to illustrate his name chooses to found an empire: if new customs are established, it is some legislator who imagines and imposes them; if a city is organized, it is some prince who gives it life: the people and the citizens are materials for the thought of one man. Do you wish to know precisely who created an institution, who conceived a social enterprise? Look who were those who really wanted it; to them must belong the first idea, the will of acting, and at least the largest share in the execution, *is fecit cui prodest*: the axiom is as admissible in history as in justice. Therefore, who derived most benefit in the twelfth century from the system of municipal independence, from equality before the law, from the election of all local authorities, from the fixing of all taxes, which caused a city to become, according to the language of the period, a com-

monalty or commune? Who, if not the city itself? Was it possible that a king, however liberal he may be supposed, could have more interest than itself in the establishment of institutions which would withdraw it in many ways from royal influence? The participation of the kings of France in the great social movement from which the communes sprung, could only be, and really was, a sort of non-resistance, more often forced than voluntary.

Within the old dismantled walls of the ancient Gallo-Roman cities conquered by the Franks, dwelt a population which could not be enslaved and divided with the land, like the population of the country. The conquered had inflicted on it at hazard taxes levied according to the edicts of imperial taxation, or according to new edicts arbitrarily drawn up. It had painfully sustained itself in the midst of the violence and exactions of the barbarians, supporting itself by its industry, by the remains of Roman industry which it practised without rivals, on account of the idle and haughty mode of life of the conquerors. Feudal isolation rendered its condition still harder and more full of dangers; it was a prey to all kinds of pillaging, plundered in a thousand ways, and at last driven to take up arms for its preservation and defence; it repaired the breaches which time and carelessness had made in its walls; and sometimes, to strengthen the enclosure, it pulled down old monuments half in ruins, a palace, a theatre, or a triumphal arch, the remains of the grandeur and glory of the Roman name. Soon the cities which had assumed this defensive attitude declared themselves to be free, under the safeguard of the archers who watched over their towers, and the iron portcullises which fell before their gates. Externally they were fortresses, internally, fraternities; they were, in the language of the period, spots of friendship, independence and peace.† The energy of these authentic names suffices to convey an idea of the equal association of all, consented to by all, which formed the political condition of these men of liberty, thus separated from the world of illegality and violence. Towards the close of the eleventh century, the south of Gaul already contained a great number of its cities which reproduced to a certain extent in their internal government the forms of the ancient Roman municipality; their happy example gaining ground, soon spread a new spirit north of the Loire, and as far as the banks of the Somme and the Scheldt. Associations consecrated by oath were formed in the least strong and least rich cities of the country to which the name of France was then applied in a special manner; an irresistible movement agitated the semi-serf population; peasants escaped from the soil, came to swell it and conspire with the inhabitants for the enfranchisement of the city, which thenceforth assumed the name of commonalty without waiting for a royal or seignorial charter to grant it.

Confiding in the power which the union of all wills towards one same object gave them, the members of the new commonalty signified to the nobles of the place the act of their future liberty. The nobles resisted; war ensued, and was followed by a mutual arrangement; and thus were drawn up most of the charters; a stipulation of money became the basis of the treaty of peace, and the payment of independence.

If the cities had not been in a condition to offer war to whoever should not recognize their right of freely organizing themselves, they would not have obtained, even for money, the avowal and recognition of that right; no sum once paid, no rent reasonably imposed, could compensate for the *tailles hautes et basses*,* the droits of marriage, of death, of mortmain, of justice, and of all the other droits which the nobles and the kings themselves lost by the creation of these new political authorities. If the cities, at the moment when they required the consent of the nobles and kings, had not previously established the bases of their independent constitution, neither kings nor nobles would have formed the conception for them, and taken the lead in enfranchisement, even with the intention of selling it at the highest possible price; it was not a merchandise which it was profitable to sell. It was likewise never a good scheme for the king to plan against the great vassals, to enfranchise spontaneously and erect into commonalties the cities of the royal domain, unless we suppose the kings to have had the singular intention of weakening themselves in order to induce by their example the great vassals to weaken themselves. Kings and vassals only submitted in their own defence to the revolution which enfranchised the communes. The money they derived from them was seized on by them as the wreck of a ship. There was no speculation in that; at a later period the kings of France really speculated, but it was on the destruction of the communes; they all perished one after another by royal proclamations between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries. The establishment of the first commonalties in the north of France was, therefore, a fortunate conspiracy. It was the name they gave themselves.† Their citizens called themselves conspirators.‡ The taste for these political associations spread to the small cities and boroughs. It even reached the champaign country, the country of pure slavery; and sometimes fugitive slaves, after binding themselves to one another by the oath to live and die together, dug deep ditches and built ramparts of earth behind which they slept in peace, lulled by the vain

* *Taille haut et bas*, in the customs of the duchy of Burgundy, is the *taille aux quatre cas* which is levied on the *tailles hautes et basses*; that is to say on the vassals and other free tenants, as well as on the serfs and mortmainables. (Encyclopédie)

The *taille aux quatre cas* is the tax for the marriage of the lord's eldest daughter, for his voyage beyond sea, for his ransom from the enemy, and for his knighthood. (Ed.)

† Communio civium, quæ et conjuratio dicta. (Annal. Trev.)

‡ Conjurati, jurati. (Ducange's Glossary.)

* Here is the formula of the rights of commonalty *Sabinatus collegium, majoratus, sigillum, campana, defreydus et jurisdictio.*

† Libertas, amicitia, pax. (See Ducange's Glossary.)

sound of their masters' anger. Liberty gave them industry; industry rendered them powerful in their turn; and those who had cursed them soon sought their alliance. Sometimes a noble, abandoned by the serfs of his domain, enclosed with strong pallisades some portion of desert and uncultivated land, and proclaimed far and wide that this place should in future be a place of freedom. He promised by an oath, beforehand, liberty of person and property for whoever should inhabit within the enclosure of his new city, and drew up to secure the observance of this oath, a charter expressing the privileges of the future commonalty. He demanded in payment of the land and dwelling-place an annual rent and precisely defined services. Those whom the agreement suited, resorted to this new

asylum, and the city increased gradually under the protection of the castle.

It was thus that some commonalties really had for their founder the signer of their charter; but these were the minority, the least important ones, and those which came last. The most ancient and most considerable established themselves spontaneously by insurrection against the seignorial authority. When the king interfered in this quarrel, the commonalty already existed. There was no longer any thing left to do but to interpose between it and its immediate lord to stop the civil war. By examining the facts more closely, by reading, not the modern historians but the original documents, it will be seen that this work of simple mediation was all the share which Louis the Fat took in the enfranchisement of the communes.

ESSAY XXVI.

A GLANCE AT THE HISTORY OF SPAIN.*

It is independence which is ancient, despotism which is modern, as Madame de Stael has energetically said; and in these few words she has retraced our entire history, and the history of all Europe. There is no reason for separating the destiny of Spain from the common destiny; its present situation, apparently a novelty, is not a novelty to it. More than once its sun has risen upon generations of free men; and what it now displays before the eyes of astounded Europe, is little else than the restoration of an almost ruined edifice, of which the foundation still existed. If the events of this world had an equal and uniform course, Spain would always have been far in advance of France in its civil liberty. Civil war, the consequence and development of conquest, never ceased to agitate the mixed population of Gaul: by a great general disaster, the population of Spain was early united in a common fraternity, confounded in the same interest, the same sentiment, the same condition, and the same customs. In the year 712, the Arabs took possession of the whole country except a small desert on the north-west between the sea and the mountains,† the sole habitation left to those who did not acknowledge the right of the conquerors over the dwelling of their ancestors. Confined in that corner of land which became a country for them all, Goths and Romans,‡ conquerors and conquered, strangers and natives, all united by

the same misfortune, forgot their ancient feuds, aversions, and distinctions: there was but one name, one law, one state, one language: all were equal in this exile.

They descended their steep mountains, and placed the limits of their dwelling in the plains; they built fortresses to insure their progress, and the name of *land of castles** is still preserved by two provinces, which formed in succession the frontiers of the reconquered kingdom. To assist them in these expeditions, they made an alliance with the ancient race of inhabitants of the Pyrenees, a race at all times independent, which had never yielded to the power of the Romans, whose language it never spoke, had never yielded to the ferocious valour of the Franks, whose rear-guard it had crushed at Roncesvalles, and had seen the torrent of the fanatical warriors of the East roar vainly at its feet. This union deprived the Moors towards the commencement of the twelfth century of the great cities of Sargossa and Toledo; other cities soon shared the same fate. The grandest part of the history of Spain is the political history of these cities, successively reconquered by the ancient population of the country.

The equality which reigned in the patriotic armies of the Asturias and of Léon could not perish by victory: they were perfectly free men who occupied the houses and ramparts deserted by the flight of the enemy; they were perfectly free men who became burghesses and citizens. Urban and rural property established no distinction of rank among men. Rank or personal con-

* This Essay was published in 1820.

† The province of the Asturias.

‡ This was the name which the Gothic race gave the Spanish race, as the Franks did to the Gauls.

* Castilla.

sideration did not pass from the possessor to the domain; and no domain was able to communicate to him who obtained it as his share power over lands or men. No one could demand from another any thing besides his legitimate rights; no one could take from the hands of another the weapons they had borne together. Thus the man of the fortress and the man of the city, the lord of the manor and the peasant, equally free in their various possessions, lived as friends and not as enemies. It was not that men were better in those countries than elsewhere; it was because every thing was established there on a groundwork of primitive equality and fraternity; whilst in the neighbouring countries, the main point of revolutions on the contrary was the basis of an absolute inequality impressed on the soil by the footstep of conquest, and degraded itself little by little, yet unable to become totally effaced.

Every city re-peopled by Christians became a commune, that is to say, a sworn association under freely elected magistrates: all this sprung without an effort, without a dispute, from the simple effect of the occupation of the city. The citizens had nothing to pay beyond the civil contribution; they had no obligation beyond that of maintaining their society and defending its territory. They had to rally in times of common danger round the supreme chief of the country; each one came at the summons to place himself under the banners of his commune and leaders of his own choice. Whoever possessed a war-horse and the armour of a horseman, was exempted from this service from the contribution of war; the others paid a moderate duty: thus the population was divided in the language into *horsemen* and *taxables*; this distinction, in fact, was the only one. The influence of foreign customs added to it later rights which were not derived thence.

The chiefs, settled in vast territories for the care of the general defence, likewise founded towns by calling into an enclosure, protected by their fortresses, the Christians escaped from the Moorish country, and those who had no certain abode. Here there were treaties, contracts, and charters, which expressed the rights of the future city, and stipulated the price of land for whoever should make it his dwelling.* The charter bound forever or until a new agreement, the citizens and their sons, as well as the sons of him who had founded the commune; the cities possessed round them vast portions of land which submitted to their municipal jurisdiction; their power of *justice* extended to the castles which received instead of granting it. There were no various ranks or servile labours for the workmen. It seemed as if all those who had reconquered their native land were sacred to one another: mutual respect, mutual pride, protected them; and the traces of this noble character are to be met with in the present day in the pride of the peasant of Castile.

* *Liberi semper et ingenui maneatis, reddendo mihi et successoribus meis, in unouquoque anno, in die Pentecostes, de unaqueque domo, 12 denarios.* (Charter cited by Hallam, *Europe in the Middle Ages*.)

The territories containing several towns, which according to the custom of the period took the name of kingdoms, possessed as their common organization the same organization as the municipal cities, elective chiefs,* and a great general assembly. The dignity of supreme chief in time became hereditary by the influence of feudal customs, which were a model for all Europe.

As to the general assemblies, there is no occasion to ask at what period the representatives of the cities took their seats there. The cities were equal to the castles; the same race of men inhabited them, a race equal in every respect to the other, by its origin, customs and arms. As soon as it became necessary to take counsel, the cities gave their advice.† If, in the course of time, a large number of cities were deprived of their natural right of sending deputies‡ to the general assemblies,§ it was because they had themselves allowed it to fall into disuse, being satisfied with the sole independence of their internal government.¶ The despotic power felt itself authorized by this negligence to inflict on them, in the name of prescription, perpetual incapacity. The flux and reflux of feudal successions brought kings of foreign race into Spain; ¶ they finished without scruple the work of tyranny which the evil genius of nations had already inspired to the chiefs who united the whole country under one authority. The assemblies became but a shadow before the reality of power. Yet until the middle of the seventeenth century, the *cortès* of Castile did not cease to bring forward their complaints in a sometimes energetic manner, or to treat as illegal the arbitrary acts of the kings; but these courageous voices were lost in the silence of all Europe; there was no longer an echo anywhere for the accents of independence.

Such was the destiny of the land reconquered by the sons of the companions of that king, a bandit (from patriotism,) to whom tradition gives the unauthentic name of Pelagius. In the north-eastern provinces which formed the territories of Catalonia and Arragon, a country snatched by the arms of the Franks from the arms of the Saracens, some traces of that foreign deliverance always existed; the hand of the conqueror long remained impressed there; the political formulas of those countries reverence the names of serf and master, tributary and superior. Nevertheless, by the side of the hereditary dependence which they imposed on a portion of men, the laws of Arragon established for the powerful of the country** a complete independence, the independence of the ancient Franks, the companions of the Karles and Chlodowigs. The formula of elec-

* *Defuncto in pace principe, primates totius regni una cum sacerdotibus successorum regni concilio communi constituant.* (Concil. Tolet.)

† *De consejo e con otorgamiento de las cibdades e villas, e de sus procuradores en su nombre.*

‡ *Procuradores.*

§ *Las cortès.*

¶ *A Spanish commune was called *consejo*, council.*

¶ *Ricos* the Fifth and his successors.

** *Ricos hombres* The word *ricos* here preserves its primitive Germanic signification.

tion of the kings, so much cited by historians, has something of the proud and harsh language which was spoken at the invasion of Gaul under the tents of Soissons or of Reims.*

Spain has joined with a daring hand the broken thread of its ancient days of glory and of liberty; may no reverse crush its noble and perilous effort! *Esto perpetua!* this is the wish of a stranger who believes, that wherever free men are, there also are friends to mankind. The happy mother of a people united for so many centuries by the community of good and evil, of a people which has in the background no memories of civil wars, she will doubtless not see her soil dishonoured by those political proscriptions which reproduce the wars of nation against nation long after the hostile names

cease to exist, and every thing seems united by the same language and the same customs. If too sharp discussions, the inevitable results of the weakness of our excited minds, for one moment trouble its repose, at least the sentiment of ancient equality, the conscience that there are no hereditary injuries or wrongs upon the head of any citizen that the Spaniard ever loved, ever respected the Spaniard, and that the misfortunes of despotism were the work of foreign hands; these calm and consoling ideas will no doubt soften the asperity of vain disputes, and the clashing of rival pretensions. Blood will never flow in the midst of these family debates; the Spaniard will at all times be the beloved brother of the Spaniard.*

ESSAY XXVII.

AN EPISODE OF THE HISTORY OF BRITANNY

At every fresh appearance of an historical novel by Walter Scott, I hear it regretted that the customs of ancient France are not represented by some one in as picturesque a light; I even hear our history blamed on this account as being too dull, it is supposed, and for its monotonous uniformity, which does not present sufficiently various situations and original characters. This accusation is an unjust one. The history of France is not deficient in subjects for the talent of poets and novelists; but it wants a man of genius like Walter Scott to understand and describe it. Amongst the novels of this celebrated man, there are few, the scenes of which could not have been placed in France. The rooted distinction of hostile populations on the same territory, the hatred of the Norman and Saxon in England, of the Highlander and Saxon in Scotland, are also to be met with in our history. It was not without long convulsions that the ten nations, of which we are the sons, could be reduced into one; and many centuries passed before the national names, the remembrance of races, even the diversity of language, had disappeared; before the Gaul allowed himself to be called a Frank, and the Frank spoke the Roman idiom of Gaul without contempt.

The civil wars of the middle ages are the signs of the co-existence of several irreconciled races of men: there are nations concealed in the quarrels of the kings and nobles; for neither party was alone when they fought, and their power

did not extend far enough to inspire men with a contempt of their own life for the interest or the passions of others.

These wars were essentially national, but modern historians, not understanding them, always disguise them under a colouring of feudality. When they meet with the Latin word *dux*, which often means national chief, they render it by the word *duc*, which, in the actual language, necessarily implies the idea of voluntary subordination. The free chiefs of the Basque nation become dukes of Gascony, the chief of the Bretons is made Duke of Brittany; a little more, and the great Wiukind,† the author of ten national revolts against the power of the Franks, would have been called Duke of Saxony.

The truth is, that in the ninth and tenth centuries, in the wars of the Bretons and Franks, neither kings nor dukes were in question, but the Breton and Frankish races, implacable neighbours and enemies. I have before me the narrative in verse of an expedition undertaken by Lodewig, or Louis-le-débonnaire,‡ against Morman, chief of the Bretons; it is the work of a cotemporary monk, who dedicates his poem

* Although subsequent events have at various times given the lie to my prediction, there is one fact worthy of remark, which is, that the armed insurrection against the reform of institutions and social progress, has constantly had its rise either in the Basque provinces, foreign to Spain properly so called, by their customs, and even by their language; or in Navarre, the population of which, as its name indicates, is of Basque origin.

† This name signifies "wise child."

‡ Lodewig and Chlodowig are two perfectly identical names; only the second form is more ancient than the

* "We who are as much as you, and are worth more than you, we choose you for our lord, on condition that you will respect our laws; if not, not."

to the king of the Franks. I shall translate it almost literally, and you will see that our ancient annals might produce inspirations similar to those which gave birth to the Lady of the Lake or the Lord of the Isles.

The poet begins by informing the reader that the name of Lodewig or Hluto-wig is a fine name, formed of two words which when placed together, signified a famous warrior like the god Mars:—

*Nemp̃ sonat Hluto præclarum, Wich quoque Mars est **

He then relates how old Karl, Lodewig's father, has obtained the consent of the Franks to his son's succeeding him; how the pope came to Reims to bring the Roman diadem to this son and salute him with the title of Cæsar; how Lodewig, made Cæsar,† gave the pope two golden vases, horses, and rich clothes. After this detailed narrative, the author continues in these words:—

"The aims of Cæsar were fortunate, and the renown of the Franks extended beyond the seas. Yet according to the ancient custom, Cæsar summons to him the chiefs and guardians of our frontiers; amongst them comes Lande-Bert, whose mission was to observe the country inhabited by the Bretons. This nation, hostile to ours, was formerly driven from its home and thrown upon the coast of Gaul by the sea and winds. As it had been baptized, the Gallic nation received it. In their conquests, the Franks neglected them for more terrible enemies. It gradually extended itself, removed its frontiers, and flattered itself with the vain hope of conquering us.‡

"Well! Frank," said Cæsar to Lande-Bert, 'tell me what is the nation near thee doing? Does it honour God and the holy Church? has it a chief and laws? does it leave my frontiers in peace?' Lande-Bert bowed and replied; 'It is a haughty and perfidious race, full of malice and falsehood; it is Christian, but only in name, for it has neither faith nor works; it inhabits forests like the wild beasts, and like them lives by rapine. Its chief is called Morman, if he deserves the name of chief who governs his people so ill. They have often threatened our frontiers, but never with impunity.§

first. In the ninth century, the strong aspirate at the beginning was rarely pronounced. By following the orthography which I have adopted, the passing from one form to the other permits the preservation of the distinction established by our modern historians between the series of Frankish kings to whom they give the name of *Clotus*, and the series of those to whom they give that of *Louis*.

* Ermoldi Nigelli carmen de rebus gestis Ludovici
† *Pn*; apud Script. Rerum Francic. tom. vi. p. 13.

In several Germanic dialects, and especially in that of the *Alemanni*, who were early incorporated with the Frankish nation, the *f* always takes the place of the *d*. This is why the poet writes "Hluto" instead of "Hludo." The final *o*, as I have already mentioned, was pronounced mutely.

‡ The Franks wrote and pronounced *Keisar*. In modern German, *Keisar* signifies *Emperor*.

§ Ermoldi Nigelli carmen, apud Script. Rerum Francic. t. vi. p. 38.

§ In domibus habitant, lustrisque cubilia conduunt,
Et gaudent raptò vivere more ferarum.

"Lande-Bert," rejoined Cæsar, 'the things thou hast just said sound strangely in mine ear; I perceive that these strangers inhabit my territory and do not pay me its tribute. I perceive that they venture to make war with us; war must punish them for it. Yet before marching against them, I must send them a message: as their chief has received the holy sacrament of baptism, it is fitting he should be warned. Wither shall go to him from me?'

"Wither, an abbot wise and prudent in business, was immediately called. 'Wither,* said Cæsar, 'take my commands to the king of the Bretons; tell him no longer to endeavour to fight us, and to implore peace from the Franks.†'

"The Abbot Wither mounts on horseback and travels without stopping; he goes by the shortest roads, for he knew the country. Near the frontier of the Bretons he possessed a fine domain, which he owed to Cæsar's kindness. Morman dwelt in a lonely spot between a thick forest and a river; his house, externally defended by hedges and ditches, was filled with weapons and soldiers. Wither presents himself and demands to see the king. When the Breton recognized the Frankish messenger, fear appeared on his countenance; but he soon composed himself. 'I salute thee, Morman,' said Wither, 'and bring thee greeting from Cæsar the pacific, the pious, the invincible.' 'I salute thee,' replied Morman, 'and I wish Cæsar a long life.' Both sat down at a distance from one another, and Wither exposed his message.‡

"Lodowig Cæsar, the glory of the Frankish nation, the glory of the children of Christ, the first of men in war and the first in peace, declares to thee that thou dost inhabit his land, and owest him tribute for it. This is what he says, and on my side, I will add something for thy interest. If thou wilt live with the Franks in peace, and obey Cæsar, he will give thee the land which thy nation cultivates; reflect for thy sake and that of thy family; the Franks are strong, and God fights for them. Hasten, then, to take a serious resolution.§

"The Breton kept his eyes fixed on the ground, which he struck with his foot; the adroit messenger was prevailing on his mind partly by gentle words, partly by threats, when

Rex Murmanus adest cognomine dictus eorum,

Dicit si liceat rex, quia nulla regit.

Sæpius ad nostros venerunt tramite fines,

Sed tamen inlites non rediére suos

(Ermoldi Nigelli carmen, lib. iii. p. 39.)

* The author writes *Witchar* and *Wicharius*. The opening of the Germanic languages is almost always replaced by an *a* in the Latin orthography. *Witchar* signifies *sage* and *eminent*, or what comes to the same thing, *eminently sage*, for it appears that one of the two composing adjectives, either the first or the last, were taken in an adverbial sense.

† Ermoldi Nigelli carmen, lib. iii. p. 39.

‡ "Salve, Witchar ait, Murman, tibi dico saltem Cæsaris armigeri, pacificique, pn."

Suscipiens prorsus reddit cui talia Murman,
Oscula more dedit. "Tu quoque, Witchar, ave,
Pacifico Rugusto opto salus sit vitæque perpes,
Et regat imperium sæcla per ampla suum."

(Ibid. p. 40.)

§ Ibid. p. 41.

suddenly the Breton's wife, a haughty and insidious woman, entered. She had just left her bed, and according to custom brought the first kiss to her husband. Having embraced him, she spoke to him for a long while in a whisper; then glancing with contempt on the messenger, and addressing herself aloud to Morman, she said: 'King of the Bretons, honour of our nation, who is this stranger? Whence comes he? What does he bring us? Is it war? Is it peace?' 'It is the messenger of the Franks,' answered Morman, smilingly. 'Whether he brings peace or war, these things concern men; woman, go in quiet to thy business.' When the messenger heard these undecided words, contrary to those he had received, he pressed the chief to reply without delay: 'Cæsar awaits me,' said he. 'Give me,' answered Morman, 'the period of the night for reflection.*'

"At the break of day, the Abbot Wither presents himself at the chief's door; it is opened, and Morman appears, stupified with sleep and wine. 'Go,' said the Breton, in a broken voice, 'go, tell thy Cæsar that Morman does not inhabit his lands, and that Morman does not want his laws. I refuse the tribute, and defy the Franks.' 'Listen, Morman,' replied the sage Wither, 'our ancestors have always thought thy race was fickle and inconstant; I think it is with reason, for the prattle of a woman has unsettled thy mind. Listen to what Wither predicts: thou wilt hear the war cry of the Franks; thou wilt see thousands of lances and bucklers advance against thee. Neither thy marshes, thy thick forests, nor the ditches which surround thy dwelling will preserve thee from our blows.' 'Well then! I also,' answered the chief, rising from his seat, 'I also have chariots full of javelins; if you have white bucklers, I have coloured ones.†'

"Wither brings back in haste his answer to the king of the Franks. The king instantly commands arms and ammunition to be prepared; he summons near the town of Vannes the assembly of the Franks and the nations which obey them. The Franks, the Suabians, the Saxons, the Thuringians, the Burgundians, all come thither equipped for war. Cæsar himself goes there, visiting holy places on his road, and everywhere receiving presents which enrich his treasury.‡

"Meanwhile the king of the Bretons prepares for the combat; and Cæsar, pious and merciful, sends him a last message. 'Let him be reminded,' said he, 'of the peace that he formerly

swore, the hand that he gave to the Franks, and the obedience he showed Karle my father.' The envoy departs; he swiftly returns, for Morman, incited by his wife, has insulted him. Then Cæsar publishes before the Franks the Breton's last replies. The trumpet gives the signal, and the soldiers pass the frontier. They carry off the flocks, hunt the men through their forests and marshes, burn the houses, and spare nothing but the churches, according to Cæsar's commands. No troop confronts them or engages the combat on a plain. The Bretons are seen, dispersed and in disorder, showing themselves in the distance among the rocks and shrubs: they wage a perfidious war in the passage of defiles, or conceal themselves behind the fences and walls of their habitations.*

"Meanwhile, in the depths of those valleys covered with tall heaths, the Breton chief arms and makes his friends arm. 'Children, companions,' said he to his party, 'defend my house; I confide it to your courage; and I, with a small number of brave men, am going to lay a snare for the enemy; I shall bring you the spoil.' He takes his javelin to arm his two hands, springs upon his horse, and about to leave the door, demands, according to the custom of the country, a large goblet, which he empties.† He embraces joyfully his wife, his children and all his servants. 'Wife,' said he, 'listen to what I tell thee: thou wilt see these javelins made red by the blood of the Franks; the arm of him thou lovest has never wielded them in vain.' Morman disappeared in the forest, burning to meet king Lodewig. 'If I saw him,' he said, 'if I met that Cæsar, he should obtain what he demands of me; I would pay him the tribute in iron.‡'

"Morman and his troop soon meet with a party of Franks who conduct the baggage; he falls upon them, attacks them in front, in flank, in the rear, disappears, and returns to the charge according to the tactics of his nation. At the head of the troop was a man named Kosel,§ of low birth, and as yet undistinguished by any great action. Morman drives his horse against him; the Frank awaits him without fear, trusting to the goodness of his armour. 'Frank,' said the Breton chief, 'shall I make thee a present? There is one I have kept for

* Per dumosa procul, silicem per densa repositi,
Apparent rari, prelia voce gerunt:
Bella per angustos agitant improba calles;
Edibus inclusi prelia nulla dabant.

(Ibid. p. 45.)

† Scandit equum velox, stimulis præfigit acutis,
Frena tenens; gyros dat quadrupes varios
Et salit antè fores potius prægrandia vasa,
Ferre jubet solito; suscipit atque bibit

(Ibid.)

‡ Si fortuna foret, possem quò cernere regem,
Namque sibi ferrum missile forte darom,
Proque tributali hæc ferrea dona dedissem.

(Ibid. p. 46.)

§ The author writes *Coslus* in Latin, in order to preserve the tonic accent on the first syllable. This name, of which nothing indicates the signification, is of the class of those which appear to have been contracted by familiar use. The termination in *el* is one of the signs of the diminutive.

* Witchar ut audivit verbis contraria verba,
Protinus ore tulit hæc quoque verba suo:
"Morman, ait, regi quæ vis mandata remitte;
Jam nunc tempus adest jussa reterre mihi."
Ille quidem tristes volvens sub pectore curas,
"Tempora sint placiti hæc mihi noctis, ait"

(Ibid. p. 41.)

† Olli respondit furio pectore Murman;
Se solito ad tolens Brito superba canit:
"Mæsitibus milena nacent mihi plaustria paratis,
Cum quibus occurram concitus acer eis
Scuta mihi fucata, tamen sunt candida vobis,
Multa manent: belli non timor ullus adest."

(Ermoldi Nigelli carmen, lib. iii. p. 42.)

‡ Ibid. p. 44.

thee; here it is, and remember me.' Saying these words he hurled the javelin against the Frank, who ward off the blow with his buckler, and addressing himself to Morman, said, 'Breton, I have received thy present, receive in return that of the Frank.*' He spurs his horse, and instead of throwing a light dart, strikes the temple of the Breton chief with a blow of that heavy lance with which the Franks are armed. The lance pierces the chief's iron helmet, and with a single blow fells him to the earth. The Frank then springs from his horse and cuts off the head of the conquered; but a companion of Morman's strikes him in the back, and Kosel perishes at the moment of his victory.†

"The report soon spreads that the king of the Bretons is dead, and his head in Cæsar's camp. The Franks flock in crowds to see it: it is brought stained with blood, and they call Wither

to recognize it. Wither throws water on the head, and having washed it, he combs the hair, and declares it to be that of the Breton chief. The Bretons submitted to Cæsar; they promised to attend to his commands; and Cæsar left them in peace."*

The facts of this narrative belong to the year 818, and in 824, the Bretons having chosen a new chief recommenced war against the Franks. In 851, they made a great invasion on the territory of their enemies, conquered all the country near the mouth of the Loire, and advanced as far as Poitiers. The emperor Karle, surnamed the Bald, marched against them with all his forces; but his army having been put to flight, he was compelled to abandon to the Bretons all that they chose to preserve of their conquests. The towns of Rennes and Nantes have since then formed part of Brittany.†

* Protinus hunc Murman verbis compellat acerbis.

"France, tibi primo hæc mea dona dabo
Hæc servata tibi jamdudum munera constant,
Quæ tamen accipiens, post memor esto mei."

"Britto superbe tuæ suscepi munera dextræ,
Nunc decet accipias qualia Francus habet."

(Ermoldi Nigelli carmen, lib. iii. p. 46.)

† Ibid. p. 47.

* Mox caput affertur collo tendis ense revulsum,
Sanguine sedatum absque decore suo.

Witchar adesse jubent, prorsus orantque referri,
Vera aut falsa canant, eligat ipse rogant.
Is caput extemplò latice perfundit et ornat
Pectine: cognovit mox quoque jussa sibi.

(Ermoldi Nigelli carmen, lib. iii. p. 47.)

† V. Script. Rer. Francic. t. vii. pp. 68. 260. 290.

PREFACE TO THE NARRATIVES.

IT is an assertion almost proverbial, that no period of our history is so arid and confused as the Merovingian period. This epoch is the one most willingly abridged, most slurred over, most unscrupulously passed by. There is more indolence than reflection in this contempt. If the history of the Merovingians is difficult to disentangle, it is by no means uninteresting. On the contrary, it abounds in singular events, in original characters, in dramatic incidents so varied, that the only difficulty is that of placing such numerous details in order. The latter half of the sixth century especially, presents to both writers and readers the greatest wealth and interest; either because this epoch, being the first of that mixture of the aborigines and conquerors of Gaul, was on that account more poetical, or else because it owes interest to the *naïf* talent of its historian Georgius Florentinus Gregorius, known by the name of Gregory of Tours.

The manners of the destroyers of the Roman empire, their savage and singular aspect, have been frequently described in our day, and they have been twice described by a great master.* These pictures are sufficient to imbue forever, with its local and poetical colouring, the historical period extending from the great invasion of the Gauls in 406, to the establishment of the Frankish domination; but the succeeding period has not been the subject of any artistic study. Its original character consists in an antagonism of races no longer complete and striking, but softened by a number of reciprocal imitations, caused by the mutual habitation of the same territory. These moral modifications, which present themselves on all sides, under different aspects, and in different degrees, multiply general types and individual physiognomies in the history of the period. There are Franks who remained pure Germans in Gaul, Gallo-Romans irritated and disgusted by the barbarian rule, Franks more or less influenced by the manners and customs of civilized life, and Romans become more or less barbarian in mind and manners. The contrast may be followed in all its shades through the sixth century, and into the middle of the seventh; later, the Germanic and Gallo-Roman stamp seem effaced and lost in a semi-barbarism clothed in theocratic forms.

By a fortuitous, but singularly fortunate coincidence, this complex and varied period is the very one of which the original documents offer the most characteristic details. It met with an historian marvellously suited to its nature in an intelligent and saddened witness of that confusion of men and things, of those crimes and catastrophes, in the midst of which the irresistible destruction of ancient civilization was accomplished. We must come down to the time of Froissart to find a narrator equal to Gregory of Tours in the art of bringing the personages on the scene, and animating them by dialogue. Every thing which

* M. de Chateaubriand; Les Martyrs, livres vi. et vii.; Etudes, ou Discours Historiques, étude sixième, Mœurs des Barbares.

the conquest of Gaul had placed together, or in opposition, on the same territory, races, classes, divers conditions, are imaged in his sometimes humorous, sometimes tragical, but always truthful and animated narratives. They are like an ill-arranged gallery of pictures and sculpture; they are like ancient national songs, curtailed, thrown together without connection, but capable of classification and of forming a poem, if this word, so indiscriminately used in the present day, can be applied to history.

The idea of undertaking a work of art as well as of historical science on the century of Gregory of Tours, was the result of these reflections; I conceived it in 1833. My plan decided on, two methods presented themselves: a continued narrative of a series of political events, or detached narratives, each containing the life or adventures of some persons of the period. I did not hesitate between these two methods; I chose the second; firstly, on account of the nature of the subject, which presented materials for a varied and complete picture of social transactions, and of the destination of humanity in political, civil, and domestic life; secondly, on account of the peculiar nature of my principal source of information, *The Ecclesiastical History of the Franks*, by Gregory of Tours.

In order that this curious book should have its full weight as a document, it must become the ground-work of our narrative history, not for what he says of the principal events, for those are to be found elsewhere, but for the episodes, the local events, the sketches of manners, which can be met with nowhere else. If these details are combined with a series of great political events, and inserted in their respective places in a complete narrative, they will make little figure, but rather encumber its progress at every step; moreover, it would be necessary to give colossal dimensions to history written in this way. This is what Adrian of Valois did in his three folio volumes of the *Gestes des Franks*, from the first appearance of the Franks to the fall of the Merovingian dynasty; but a book like that is purely one of science, useful to students, but repulsive to the mass of readers. It would be impossible to imitate or translate into French the work of Adrian of Valois; and were it attempted, the object, in my opinion, would not be attained. Although allowing himself a wide field in his voluminous chronicle, the learned man of the seventeenth century often prunes and abridges; he omits facts and details, softens all roughnesses, renders vaguely what Gregory of Tours distinctly expresses, suppresses or perverts the dialogue, and looks only to the meaning, the form to him being of no consequence. Now, the form is the principal thing; its smallest lineaments must be observed, must be rendered by study clearer and more spirited, and in it must be contained all that historical science furnishes us respecting the laws, manners, and social state of the sixth century.

The following is the plan which I laid down for myself as the subject demanded: to choose the culminating point of the first period after the mixture of the two races; there, in a given space, to collect and unite in groups the most characteristic events, to form a suite of pictures succeeding one another progressively, varying their size while giving breadth and gravity to the different masses of the narrative; widening and strengthening the tissue of the original narrative, by the help of inductions suggested by legends, poems of the period, the diplomatic documents, inscriptions and figures. Between 1833 and 1837, I published the *Revue des deux Mondes*, under a provisory title,* six of these episodes or fragments of a history impracticable in its entire state. They here appear with their definite title: *Récits des temps Mérovingiens*, and

* *Nouvelles Lettres sur l'Histoire de France.*

form the first section of the entire work, the second of which will likewise have two volumes.

If unity of composition is wanting in these detached histories, there will at any rate be unity of impression left on the mind of the reader. These narratives, occupying little more than the space of half a century, will be in some measure connected by the reappearance of the same persons, and they will often serve to develop one another. There will be as many of these masses of separate narrative as I shall find facts comprehensive enough to serve as centres, as rallying points to many secondary facts to give them a general meaning, and by them produce a complete dramatic action. Sometimes it will be the narration of some individual, to which will be joined a picture of the social events which influenced it; sometimes a series of public events, to which, as it proceeds, will be added personal adventures and domestic catastrophes.

The mode of life of the Frankish kings, the interior of the royal abode, the stormy lives of the nobles and bishops; usurpation, the civil and private wars; the intriguing turbulence of the Gallo-Romans, and the undisciplined brutality of the barbarians; the absence of all administrative order, and of all moral ties between the inhabitants of the Gallic provinces, in the heart of the same kingdom; the renewal of old rivalries and hereditary hatreds of one canton towards another, one city towards another; everywhere a sort of return to a state of nature; and the insurrection of individual will against law and order under whatever form presented, whether political, civil or religious, the spirit of revolt and violence penetrating even into the female monasteries;—such are the various pictures I have endeavoured to sketch from cotemporary remains, and the assemblage of which presents a view of the sixth century in Gaul.

I have made a minute study of the characters and fates of historical personages, and have endeavoured to give reality and life to those whom history has most neglected. Amongst these persons, four figures, types of their epoch, will be found pre-eminent: Fredegonda, Hilperik, Eonius Mummolus, and Gregory of Tours himself; Fredegonda, the ideal of elementary barbarism, without consciousness of right and wrong; Hilperik, the man of barbaric race, who acquires the tastes of civilization, and becomes polished outwardly without any deeper reformation; Mummolus, the civilized man who becomes a barbarian, and corrupts himself in order to belong to his age; Gregory of Tours, the man of a former epoch, but one better than the present, which oppresses him, the faithful echo of the regrets which expiring civilization calls up in some elevated minds.*

The narratives of the Merovingian times will, I think, close the circle of my works of historical narrative; it would be rash to extend my views and hopes beyond. Whilst I endeavoured in this work to paint Frankish barbarism, mitigated in the sixth century by the contact of a civilization it destroyed, a reminiscence of my early youth crossed my mind. In 1810, I was finishing my studies at the college of Blois, when a copy of "*Les Martyrs*," brought from without, circulated through the college. It was a great event for those amongst us who already felt a love of the beautiful and of glory. We quarrelled for the book; it was arranged that each one should have it by turns, and mine fell on a holyday at the hour of going out walking. That day I pretended to have hurt my foot, and remained alone at home. I read, or rather devoured the pages, seated before my desk in a vaulted room, which was our school-

* Decedente, atque imo potius pereunte ab urbibus Gallicanis liberalium cultura litterarum . . . cum gentium feritas deserviret, regum furor acueretur . . . ingemiscebant sæpius plerique dicentes : Væ diebus nostris, quia pernit studium litterarum a nobis. (Greg. Turon., *Hist. Franc. Eccles.*, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 137.)

room, and the aspect of which appeared to me grand and imposing. I at first felt a vague delight, my imagination was dazzled; but when I came to the recital of Eudore, that living history of the declining empire, a more active and reflecting interest attached me to the picture of the eternal city, of the court of a Roman emperor, the march of a Roman army in the marshes of Batavia, and its encounter with an army of Franks.

I had read in the history of France, used by the scholars of the military college, and our classical book, "*The Franks, or French, already masters of Tournay, and the banks of the Escaut, had extended their conquests as far as Somme. . . . Clovis, son of King Childéric, ascended the throne 481, and by his victories strengthened the foundations of the French monarchy.*"* All my archæology of the middle ages consisted in these sentences, and some others of the same kind, which I had learned by heart. *French, throne, monarchy*, were to me the beginning and end, the groundwork and the form of our national history. Nothing had given me any notion of M. de Chateaubriand's terrible Franks *clothed in the skins of bears, seals, and wild boars, and of the camp guarded by leathern boats, and chariots drawn by huge oxen, of the army placed in the form of a triangle, in which could be distinguished nothing but a forest of javelins, of wild beasts' skins, and half-naked bodies.*† As the dramatic contrast between the savage warrior and the civilized soldier gradually developed itself, I was more and more deeply struck; the impression made on me by the war-song of the Franks was something electrical. I left the place where I was seated, and marching from one end of the room to the other, repeated aloud, and making my steps ring on the pavement:—

"Pharamond! Pharamond! we have fought with the sword.

"We have hurled the battle-axe with two blades; sweat ran from the brow of the warriors, and trickled down their arms. The eagles and birds with yellow feet uttered screams of joy; the crows swam in the blood of the dead; all ocean was but a wound. The virgins have long wept.

"Pharamond! Pharamond! we have fought with the sword.

"Our fathers fell in battle, all the vultures moaned at it: our fathers satiated them with carnage. Let us choose wives whose milk shall be blood, and shall fill with valour the hearts of our sons. Pharamond, the song of the bard is ended, the hours of life are passing away; we will smile when we must die.

"Thus sang forty thousand barbarians. The riders raised and lowered their white shields in cadence; and at each burden, they struck their iron-clad chests with the iron of their javelins."‡

This moment of enthusiasm was perhaps decisive of my future vocation. I had then no consciousness of what had passed within me; my attention did not dwell on it; I even forgot it for many years; but when after inevitable stumblings in the choice of a profession, I gave myself up wholly to history, I remembered that incident of my life and its minutest circumstances with singular preciseness. Even now, if the page which struck me so forcibly is read aloud to me, I feel the same emotion I did thirty years ago. Such is my debt to the writer of genius who began and still reigns over the new literary epoch. All those who in various ways follow the paths of this epoch, have likewise found him at the source of their studies and their first inspirations; there is not one who ought not to say to him, as Dante did to Virgil:—

Tu duca, tu signore, e tu maestro.

* Abrégé de l'Histoire de France à l'usage des Elèves de l'Ecole royal militaire, faisant partie du cours d'études rédigé et imprimé par ordre du roi, 1789, t. i. p. 5 et 6.

† Les Martyrs, livre vi.

‡ Les Martyrs, livre vi.

NARRATIVES

OF

THE MEROVINGIAN TIMES.

FIRST NARRATIVE.

A. D. 561—568.

THE FOUR SONS OF CHLOTHER THE FIRST—THEIR CHARACTERS—THEIR MARRIAGES—HISTORY OF
GALESWINTHA.

A few leagues from Soissons, on the banks of a small river, stands the village of Braine. In the sixth century this was one of those immense farms where the Frankish kings held their court. The royal habitation had none of the military aspect which distinguished the castles of the middle ages; it was a large building surrounded with porticos of Roman architecture, sometimes built of carefully polished wood, and ornamented with statues not altogether wanting in elegance.* Round the principal body of the building were disposed the lodgings of the officers of the palace, whether barbarians, or of Roman origin, as well as those of the chiefs of the tribes, who, in accordance with Germanic custom, had with their warriors, entered into *truste* with the king, that is to say, had made an especial engagement of vassalage and fidelity.†

Other houses of meaner appearance were occupied by a large number of families, both the men and women of which exercised all manner of trades, from that of goldsmith and armourer, to that of weaver and tanner, from embroidery in silk and gold, to the coarsest preparations of flax and wool. Most of these families were Gallic; born on that portion of territory which the king had adjudged to himself by right of conquest, or brought with violence from some neighbouring town to colonize the royal domain: but judging from their names, there were Germans also among them, as well as other barba-

rians, whose fathers had entered Gaul as workmen, or as servants following the train of the victorious tribes. Whatever their origin or their species of industry, however, these families were placed in the same rank, and called by the same name, *lites* in the German language, and *fiscalins* in the Latin, that is to say, attached to the *fisc*.* Buildings for agricultural purposes, such as studs, stables, sheepfolds, and barns, with the hovels of the husbandmen, and huts of the serfs, completed the royal village, which exactly resembled, though on a larger scale, the villages of ancient Germany. In the very site of these residences there was something which recalled the scenery beyond the Rhine; most of them stood on the outskirts, and some in the centre of those vast forests since mutilated by civilization, but of which we still admire the remains. Braine was the favourite residence of Chlothar (the last of the sons of Chlodowig,) even after the death of his three brothers had made him entire master of Gaul. It was there in a secret apartment that he kept his triple-locked chests containing all his riches in gold coins, vases, and precious jewels. It was there also he executed the principal acts of regal power. It was there he assembled the bishops of the Gallic towns; received ambassadors from foreign kings, and presided over the great assemblies of the Franks, which were followed by those feasts traditional among the Teutonic races, at which wild boars and deer were served up whole on spits, and staved barrels occupied the four corners of the hall.†

* *Æthera mole sua tabulata palatia pulsant ...
Singula silva favens edificavit opus
Altior innititur, quadrataque porticus ambit,
Et sculpturata lustris in arte faber.*

Venantius Fortunatus Carmin., lib. ix. cap. xv. t. i. p. 326, ed. Luch.

† V. pactum legis Salicæ, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. iv. p. 159; et ibid., Marculf. Formul., p. 475.

* Fiscalini, Liti, Lidi, Lazı Vide Recueil des Historiens de la France et des Gaules, t. iv. passim.

† Cum ergo ille ad prandium invitatus venisset, conspicit, gentili ritu, vasa plena cervisæ domi adstare. Quod ille sciscitans quid sibi vasa in medio posita vel-

As long as he was not called to a distance by war against the Saxons, the Bretons, or the Septimanian Goths, Chlothar employed his time in travelling from one domain to another. He went from Braine to Attigny, from Attigny to Compiègne, from Compiègne to Verberie, consuming all the provisions he found in his royal farms; hunting, fishing, and swimming with his Frank *leudes*, and selecting numerous mistresses from among the daughters of the *fiscalins*. From the rank of a concubine, these women frequently passed with a singular facility to that of wife and queen. Chlothar, whose marriages it is difficult to enumerate and classify, married in this way a girl of very humble birth, called Ingonda, without at all giving up his irregular habits, which as a woman and a slave she bore with extreme submission. He loved her passionately, and lived with her in perfect harmony. One day she said to him:—

"The king, my lord, has made of his servant what it has pleased him, and has called me to his bed; he will complete his graciousness by acceding to the request of his servant. I have a sister named Aregonda, who is attached to your service; I pray you to be pleased to procure her a rich and brave husband, that I may suffer no humiliation on her account."

This demand piqued the curiosity of the king, and roused his libertine propensities; he set off the same day for the domain on which Aregonda lived, and where she exercised some of the trades which then devolved on women, such as weaving and dyeing stuffs. Chlothar finding her quite as beautiful as her sister, took her to himself, installed her in the royal apartment, and gave her the name of his wife. At the end of some days he returned to Ingonda, and said to her with that coarse *bonhomme* which was a peculiarity of his character, and of the Germanic character in general:—

"The favour which thou, sweet one, didst desire of me, I thought of according thee; I looked out for a rich and brave man for thy sister, and could find none better than myself. Learn, then, that I have made her my wife, which I think will not displease thee."

"Let my lord," answered Ingonda, without apparent emotion, and without any diminution of her accustomed patience and conjugal submission, "let my lord do as it seems good to him, provided his servant lose none of his affection."*

(A. D. 561.) In the year 561, after an expedition against one of his sons, whose rebellion he punished by burning him with his wife and children, Chlothar returned to his residence at Braine with a perfectly calm conscience. There

he prepared for the great autumnal hunt, which was a species of solemnity among the Franks. Followed by a number of men, horses and dogs, the king entered the forest of Cuise, of which that of Compiègne in its present state is but a small fragment. In the midst of this violent exercise, which was unsuited to his age, he was seized with a fever, and ordering himself to be transported to his nearest domain, he expired in the fiftieth year of his reign.* His four sons, Haribert, Gonthramn, Hilperik, and Sighebert, followed his funeral procession as far as Soissons, singing psalms and bearing waxen torches in their hands. Scarcely was the funeral over, when Hilperik, the third of the four brothers, set off in great haste for Braine, and forced the guards of this domain to deliver into his hands the keys of the royal treasure. As soon as he was master of the riches his father had accumulated, he distributed a portion of them to the chiefs of the tribes, and to the warriors, who were quartered either in Braine or in the neighbourhood. They all swore fidelity† to him by placing their hands between his; saluted him by acclamation with the title of *koning*, and promised to follow wherever he should lead them‡. Placing himself at their head, he marched straight to Paris, the ancient dwelling-place of Chlodowig the First, and afterwards the capital of the kingdom belonging to Hildebert, his eldest son.

Perhaps Hilperik attached some idea of importance to the possession of a town formerly inhabited by the conqueror of Gaul, or perhaps he only wished to appropriate the imperial palace, the buildings and gardens of which covered, to a vast extent, the left bank of the Seine.§ There is nothing improbable in this supposition, for the ambitious views of the Frankish kings rarely extended beyond the prospect of personal and immediate gain; and, on the other hand, although preserving a strong touch of Germanic barbarism, ungovernable passions, and a merciless soul, Hilperik had imbibed some of the tastes of Roman civilization. He was fond of building, delighted in the games of the circus, and, above all, had the pretension of being a grammarian, a theologian, and a poet. His Latin verses, in which the rules of metre and prosody were rarely observed, found admirers amongst the noble Gauls, who trembled as they applauded, and exclaimed that the illustrious son of the Sicambers surpassed the sons of Romulus in beauty of language, and that the dwellers on the banks of the Wahal

lent... (Vita S Vedasti, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. iii. p. 373.)

* Tractavi mercedem illam implere, quam me tua dulcedo expetit. Et requirens virum divitem atque sapientem, quem tuæ sorori deberem adungere, nihil melius quam meipsum inveni. Itaque novens quia eam conjugem accepti, quod tibi displicere non credo At illa, quod bonum, inquit, videtur in oculis domini mei faciat tantum ancilla tua cum gratia regis vivat. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. ii. p. 205.)

* Exin regressus, quinquagesimo primo regni sui anno, dum in Cotia silva venationem exerceret, a febre corripitur, et exinde Compendium villam rediit (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. ii. p. 214.)

† Chilpericus vero, post patris funera, thesauros, qui in villa Brinnaco erant congregati, accepit, et ad Francos utiliores petiit, ipsosque muneribus mollitos sibi subdidit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. ii. p. 214.)

‡ Koning signifies king, in the dialect of the Franks. Vide "Lectures sur l'Histoire de France," Letter ix.

§ Et mox Parisius ingreditur, sedemque Childeberti regis occupat. (Greg. Turon. loc. sup. cit.)

would instruct the dwellers on the banks of the Tiber.*

Hilperik entered Paris without opposition, and quartered his warriors in the towers which defended the bridges of the city, then entirely surrounded by the Seine. But at the news of this bold stroke, the other three brothers united against him who wanted to select his own share of the paternal inheritance, and at the head of superior forces advanced towards Paris.† Hilperik did not venture on resistance, and, renouncing his enterprise, submitted himself to the chances of a division made by mutual consent. This division of the whole of Gaul, with a considerable portion of Germany, was made by drawing lots, exactly as had taken place half a century earlier between the sons of Chlodowig. There were four lots, answering, with a few differences, to the four kingdoms known under the names of the kingdoms of Paris, Orleans, Neustria, and Austrasia. Haribert obtained as his share that portion which had belonged to his uncle Hildebert; that is to say, the kingdom which took its name from Paris, which, extending lengthways from north to south, included Senlis, Melun, Chartres, Tours, Poitiers, Saantes, Bordeaux, and the towns near the Pyrenees. Gonthramn's share was that of his uncle Chlodimir, the kingdom of Orleans, and all the Burgundian territory, extending from the Saone and the Vosges, to the Alps and the Mediterranean. Hilperik's share was his father's, the kingdom of Soissons, which the Franks called *Neosterrike*, or western kingdom, and which was bounded on the north by the river Escaut, and on the south by the stream of the Loire. And, finally, the eastern kingdom, or *Osterrike*, fell to Sighebert's share, and contained Auvergne, the north-east of Gaul, and Germany as far as the Saxon and Slavonian frontiers.‡ It seems as if the towns had been counted one by one, and that their numbers alone served as the basis for fixing each of the lots; for, independently of this extraordinary division of territory, there are a number of *enclaves*,§ for which it is

impossible to account. Rouen and Nantes are in Hilperik's kingdom; Avranches in that of Haribert; the latter possesses Marseilles; Gonthramn has Aix and Avignon; and Soissons, the capital of Neustria, is blockaded by four towns, Senlis and Meaux, Laon and Reims, which belong to the two kingdoms of Paris and Austrasia.

(A. D. 561—564.) After chance had assigned to the four brothers their separate shares of towns and lands, each one swore by the relics of the saints to content himself with his own share, and attempt no further encroachment either by violence or stratagem. This oath was soon violated. Hilperik, availing himself of the absence of his brother Sighebert, who was then making war in Germany, suddenly attacked Reims, and took possession of it, as well as of several other towns equally within his reach. But he did not long enjoy this conquest: Sighebert returned victorious from his campaign beyond the Rhine, retook his towns one by one, and pursuing his brother to the walls of Soissons, defeated him in a pitched battle, and forced an entry into the capital of Neustria.

(A. D. 564—566.) According to the character of barbarians, whose anger is violent but of short duration, they were again reconciled, and renewed the oath never to attack one another. These two were turbulent, quarrelsome, and revengeful; but Haribert and Gonthramn, older and less vehement, had some inclination for peace and repose. Instead of the rough and warlike appearance of his ancestors, King Haribert affected the calm and rather heavy demeanour of the magistrates who administered justice according to the Roman laws in the towns of Gaul. It was his ambition to be thought learned in jurisprudence; and no flattery was more agreeable to him than praises of his skill as a judge in intricate cases, and the facility with which, although German by origin and language, he expressed himself and discoursed in Latin.* King Gonthramn presented the singular contrast of manners habitually gentle and almost saintly, with fits of sudden fury, worthy of the forests of Germany. Once, having lost a hunting horn, he put several freed men to the torture; another time he ordered a noble Frank to be put to death on the mere suspicion of having killed a buffalo on the royal domain. In hours of calmness, his feelings were in favour of order and regularity, which he specially manifested by religious zeal, and submission to the bishops, who were then the source of all law and order.

King Hilperik, on the contrary, was a sort of half-civilized free-thinker, and followed his own fancies, even when the dogmas of the Catholic faith were in question. The authority of the clergy was intolerable to him, and one of his

* *Admirande mihi nimium rex, cujus optime
Froelia robur agit, carmina lima polit.*

Venantii Fortunati Carmin., lib. ix. p. 580

Cum sis progenitus clara de gente Sycamber,
Floret in eloquio lingua Latina tuo.

Ibid. p. 560.

Confectique duos libros, quasi sedulium meditatus, quorum versiculi debiles nullis pedibus subsistere possunt (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. ii. p. 291.)

† Sed non diu hoc ei licuit possidere, nam conjuncti fratres ejus eum exinde repulere. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. ii. p. 214.)

‡ Et sic inter se hi quatuor . . . divisionem legitimam faciunt, dedique sors Chariberto regnum Childeberti, sedemque habere Parisius; Guntchramno vero regnum Chlodomeris, ac tenere sedem Aurelianensem; Chilperico vero regnum Chlotacharii patris ejus cathedramque Sueviones habere. Sigiberto quoque regnum Theuderici sedemque habere Remorum. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 214.)

§ That is, towns which were in the territories of one king, though belonging to another.

* Si veniant aliquæ variato murmure causæ,

Pondera mox legum regis ab ore fluunt.

Quamvis confusas referant certamina voces,

Nodosæ litus solvere fila potes.

Qualis est in propria dote sermone loquela,

Qui nos Romanos vincis in eloquio

Venantii Fortunati Carmin., lib. iv. p. 560.

great pleasures was the annulling of wills made in favour of churches and monasteries. The characters and conduct of the bishops were the principal subjects of his jokes and dinner-table conversation; he called one a hare-brained fool, another an insolent wretch; one a gossip, and another luxurious. The great wealth which the church possessed, and which was always increasing; the influence the bishops had in the towns where, since the dominion of the barbarians, they exercised most of the privileges of the ancient municipal magistracy;—all these riches, and all this power, which he envied without perceiving the means of becoming possessed of them, strongly excited his jealousy. The complaints he uttered in his vexation were not wanting in sense; and he was often heard to say: "See how our *fisc* is impoverished! See how all our wealth goes to the churches! Truly, no one reigns but those bishops.*"

Moreover, the sons of Chlothar the First, with the exception of Sighebert, the youngest, were all incontinent to the highest degree; rarely satisfied with one wife; leaving without scruple the woman they had just married, and taking her again, according to the caprice of the moment. The pious Gontramn changed his wives almost as often as his two brothers; and, like them, he had concubines, one of whom, named Veneranda, was the daughter of a Gaul attached to the *fisc*. King Haribert took at the same time for mistresses two sisters of great beauty from amongst the attendants of his wife Ingobergha. One was named Markowefa, and wore the dress of a nun, the other Merofleda; they were the daughters of a wool-comber, of barbaric origin, and *lile* of the royal domain.†

Ingobergha, jealous of her husband's love for these two women, did all she could to persuade him out of it, but in vain. Not daring, however, to ill-treat her rivals, or to turn them away, she invented a scheme which she thought would disgust the king with this unworthy *laison*. She sent for the father of these girls, and gave him some wool to comb in the court yard of the palace. Whilst this man was at his work, doing his best to show his zeal, the queen, who was standing at a window, called to her husband:—"Come here," said she, "come and see something new." The king came, looked round, and seeing nothing but the wool-comber, became angry at this jest.‡ A violent discussion ensued

between the husband and wife, and produced an effect quite contrary to what Ingobergha expected; the king repudiated her, and married Merofleda.

Haribert, soon finding that one legitimate wife was not sufficient for him, solemnly gave the titles of wife and queen to a girl named Theodehilda, the daughter of a shepherd. Some years after, Merofleda died, and the king immediately married her sister Markowefa. According to the laws of the church, he was thus guilty of double sacrilege, as a bigamist, and as the husband of a woman who had taken the veil. When summoned by St. Germain, Bishop of Paris, to annul his second marriage, he obstinately refused, and was excommunicated. But the time was not yet come when the savage pride of the heirs of the conquest should bow to the discipline of the church. Haribert received the sentence without emotion, and kept both his wives.*

Of all the sons of Chlothar, Hilperik is the one to whom cotemporary narratives assign the greatest number of queens, that is to say, of women married according to the laws of the Franks, with the ring and the *denarius*. Audowera, one of these queens, had in her service a young girl named Fredegonda, of Frankish origin, and of such remarkable beauty that the king fell in love with her the first instant he saw her. However flattering this love might be, it was rather dangerous for a servant, whose situation placed her at the mercy of the jealousy and revenge of her mistress. But Fredegonda had no fears; as cunning as she was ambitious, she undertook to bring about legal causes of separation between the king and queen Audowera, without at all compromising herself. If we are to believe a tradition which was prevalent less than a century afterwards, she succeeded in her design, thanks to the connivance of a bishop and the queen's simplicity. Hilperik had lately joined his brother Sighebert to march beyond the Rhine against the nations of the Saxon confederacy; he had left Audowera far advanced in her pregnancy. Before his return, the queen was delivered of a daughter, and not knowing if she ought to have it baptized during her husband's absence, she consulted Fredegonda, who, being a perfect mistress of dissimulation, inspired no distrust. "Madam," answered the attendant, "when the king my lord returns triumphant, could he behold his daughter with any pleasure if she were

* *Ecce pauper remansit fiscus noster, ecce divitiæ nostræ ad ecclesias sunt translatae: nulli penitus, nisi soli episcopi regnant: pernit honor noster, et translatus est ad episcopos civitatum* (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. ii. p. 291.)

† *Habebat tunc temporis Ingoberga in servitium suum duas puellas pauperis cujusdam filias, quarum prima vocabatur Marcowefa, religiosam vestem habens; alia vero, Merofleda, in quarum amore rex valde detinebatur; erant enim, ut diximus, artificis lanarii filiae.* (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 215.)

‡ *Quo operante, vocavit regem. Ille autem sperans aliquid novi videre, adspicit hunc eminens lanas regias componentem: quod videns, commotus in ira, reliquit Ingobergam* (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 215.)

* Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 215, et seq.

[The thoughtful reader will not fail to compare this indifference on the part of Haribert to the ecclesiastical anathema with that manifested by Napoleon, who, on receiving the sentence of excommunication from Pius VII., ordered his general to seize the Pope, and bring him a prisoner to Fontainebleau, which was done; and he will further contrast the inefficiency of the papal vengeance in these cases, with the terrible might of such a power in the hands of a Gregory the VIIth. In the instance of Haribert, we see the unripeness of the ecclesiastical power; in that of Henry the IVth, Emperor of Austria, its maturity; and in that of Napoleon, its decay.—Ed.]

not baptized?"* The queen received this advice gratefully, and Fredegonda began to prepare, by dint of intrigues, the snare into which she wanted her to fall.

When the day of the christening arrived, the baptismery was hung at the appointed hour with tapestry and garlands; the bishop was present in his pontifical robes, but the godmother, a noble Frankish lady, did not appear, and she was waited for in vain. The queen, astonished and disappointed, was uncertain what course to pursue, when Fredegonda, who was near her, said, "Why should you trouble yourself about a godmother? No lady is worthy to stand in that relation to your daughter; if you will follow my advice, you will be her godmother yourself."⁴ The bishop, who probably had been previously gained over, finished the ceremony, and the queen retired, without foreseeing what would be the consequences of this act.

When King Hilperik returned, all the young girls of the royal domain went out to meet him, carrying flowers, and singing poetry in his praise. When Fredegonda met him, she said: "Blessed be God that the king, our lord, has triumphed over his enemies, and that a daughter is born unto him! But with whom will my lord sleep this night? for the queen, my mistress, is now your gossip, and godmother to her daughter Hildeswinda!" "Well then," answered the king jovially, "If I cannot sleep with her, I will sleep with thee!"⁵

Hilperik found his wife Audowera under the portico of the palace, holding her child in her arms, which she presented to him with a mixed feeling of pride and delight; but the king, affecting a tone of regret, said: "Woman, in thy simplicity thou hast been guilty of a crime; in future thou canst not be my wife."⁶ A rigid observer of the ecclesiastical laws, the king banished the bishop who had baptized his daughter, and persuaded Audowera to separate from him at once, and to take the veil, as if she were a widow. As a consolation, he gave her several estates belonging to the *fisc*, and situated near the Mans. Hilperik then married Fredegonda, and at the news of this marriage, the repudiated queen set off for her retreat, where, fifteen years afterwards, she was put to death by the order of her former servant.¶ Whilst Chlothar's three

eldest sons thus lived in debauchery, and married women of low birth, Sighebert, the youngest, far from following their example, was ashamed of and disgusted by it. He resolved to have but one wife, and that one of royal blood.* Athanagild, King of the Goths, settled in Spain, had two marriageable daughters, the youngest of whom, Brunehilda, was much admired for her beauty; it was on her that Sighebert's choice fell. A numerous embassy, with rich presents, left Metz for Toledo, to demand her hand of the king of the Goths. The chief of the embassy was Gog, or more correctly, Godeghisel, mayor of the palace of Austrasia, a man well experienced in all sorts of negotiations; he succeeded perfectly in this one, and brought Sighebert's betrothed with him from Spain. Wherever Brunehilda passed in her long journey to the north, she was remarked, say her cotemporaries, for the grace of her manners, her good sense, and agreeable conversation.† Sighebert loved her, and preserved a passionate attachment for her all his life.

(566.) It was in the year 566 that the nuptial ceremony was celebrated with great pomp in the royal town of Metz. All the lords of the kingdom of Austrasia were invited by the king to take part in the games of that day. At Metz were seen arriving, with their suites of men and horses, the counts of towns, and the governors of the northern provinces of Gaul, the patriarchal chiefs of the ancient Frankish tribes who had remained beyond the Rhine: and the dukes of the Alemanni, of the Baiwars and of the Thorings or Thuringians.‡ In this singular assembly the most various degrees of civilization and barbarism were contrasted side by side with each other. There were the Gallic nobles polished and insinuating; the Frankish nobles, blunt and haughty; together with complete savages, clothed in furs, and as rude in manners as in appearance. The nuptial banquet was splendid and animated; the tables were covered with chased gold and silver dishes, the spoils of conquest; wine and beer flowed uninterruptedly into cups studded with precious stones, and into the buffalo horns which the Germans used as drinking-cups.§ The spacious halls of the palace rang with the healths and challenges of the drinkers, the shouts and peals of laughter, and all the noise of Germanic gaiety. To the pleasures of the nuptial feast succeeded a far

* Domina mea, ecce dominus rex victor revertitur, quomodo potest filiam suam gratanter recipere non baptisatam? (Gesta Reg. Francor., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 561.)

† Numquid similem tui invenire poterimus, quæ eam suscipiat? moda tum ipsa suscipe eam. (Gesta Reg. Francor., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. ii. p. 561.)

‡ Cum qua dominus meus rex dormiet hac nocte? quia domina mea regina commatuer tua est de filia tua. Chil-desande. Et ille ait. Si cum illa dormire nequeo, dormiam tecum. (Gesta Reg. Francor., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 561.)

§ Nefandem rem fecisti per simplicitatem tuam: jam enim conjux mea esse non poteris amplius. (Gest. Reg. Francor., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 561.)

¶ Rogavitque eam sacro velamine induere cum ipsa filia sua, dedique ei prædia multa et villas; episcopum vero, qui eam baptisavit, exilio condemnavit; Fredegundem vero copulavit sibi ad reginam (ibid.)

* Porro Sigibertus rex, cum videret quod fratres ejus indignas sibi uxores acciperent, et per vililitatem suam etiam ancillas in matrimonium sociarent. . . (Geg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 216.)

† Erat enim puella elegans opere, venusta adspectu, honesta moribus atque decora, prudens consilio, et blanda conloquio. (Geg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 216.)

‡ Ille vero, congregatis senioribus secum, præparatis epulis cum immensa lætitia atque jocunditate eam accipit uxorem. (Geg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. ii. p. 216.)

§ Rex enim cum inter prandendum quoddam vas lapideum vitrei coloris auro gemmisque mirabiliter ornatum juberet offerri plenum mero. (Vita S. Fridolini, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iii. p. 388.)

more refined species of amusement, and of a nature to please but a small number of the guests.

There was then at the court of the King of Austrasia an Italian, called Venantius Honorius Clementianus Fortunatus, who, travelling in Gaul, was everywhere received with marks of distinction. He was agreeable, but superficial, and had much of that Roman elegance which was almost extinct on this side of the Alps. Recommended to King Sighebert by those bishops and Austrasian counts who admired refinement, and regretted the general want of it, Fortunatus was treated with generous hospitality at the semi-barbarous court of Metz. The stewards of the royal *fisc* had orders to furnish him with lodgings, provisions and horses.* In order to testify his gratitude, he made himself court poet: he addressed Latin verses to the king and the nobles, which, if not always perfectly understood, were always well received, and well paid for. As the marriage feast could not be complete without an epithalamium, Venantius Fortunatus composed one in the classical style and recited it to the strange audience which thronged around him, with as much seriousness as if he had been giving a public lecture at Rome in the Forum of Trajan.†

In this composition, which has no other merit than that of being one of the last pale reflections of Roman talent, the two inevitable persons of every epithalamium, Venus and Love appear with their usual accompaniments of bows, torches and roses. Love shoots an arrow right into the heart of King Sighebert, and flies to tell his mother of this great triumph. "My mother," said he, "I have ended the combat." Then the goddess and her son fly through the air to the city of Metz, enter the palace, and adorn the nuptial chamber with flowers. There a dispute arises between them on the merits of the newly-married couple: Love is for Sighebert, whom he calls another Achilles; but Venus prefers Brunehilda, whose portrait she describes thus:—

"O virgin, whom I admire, and whom thy husband will adore, Brunehilda, more brilliant, more radiant than the ethereal lamp, the light of precious stones is dimmed by the splendour of thy countenance; thou art another Venus, and thy dowry is the empire of beauty! Among the Nereids who swim in the seas of Iberia, in the springs of the ocean, there is none who can call herself thy equal; none of the Napææ are more beautiful, and the river-nymphs bow down their heads before thee. The whiteness of milk and the brightest red are the colours of thy complexion; lilies and roses, purple woven with gold, present nothing comparable to it. Sapphires, diamonds, crystals, emeralds, and jas-

per are vanquished; Spain has produced a new pearl."‡

These mythological commonplaces and fine-sounding but unmeaning words pleased King Sighebert and those Frankish nobles who, like himself, understood a little Latin poetry. To say the truth, there was no party among the principal barbarian chiefs opposed to civilization; they willingly imbibed all they were capable of possessing; but this varnish of politeness encountered such savage customs, such violent manners, and such ungovernable passions, that it was impossible for it to do much good. Besides, after these high personages who sought the company and copied the manners of the ancient nobles of the country from vanity or aristocratic instinct, came a crowd of Frankish warriors, who would have suspected of cowardice every man who knew how to read, unless they had witnessed proofs of the contrary. On the least pretext for war, they recommenced pillaging Gaul as at the time of the first invasion; they carried off and melted the sacred vases of the churches, and hunted for gold even in the tombs. In times of peace, their principal occupations were contriving plans for depriving their Gallic neighbours of their estates, and going out sword in hand, on the high roads to attack those on whom they wished to revenge themselves. The most pacific among them spent their days in furbishing their arms, in hunting, or intoxicating themselves. Every thing could be obtained from them for drink; even the promise of using their influence with the king in favour of such or such a candidate for a vacant bishopric.

Continually tormented by these guests, and always fearing for the safety of their property and persons, the members of the rich native families lost that peace of mind, without which all learning and arts must perish; or else, carried away by the force of example and by a certain instinct of brutal independence which no civilization can efface from the heart of man, they embraced the life of the barbarians, despised every thing but physical force, and became quarrelsome and turbulent. They went out at night, like the Frankish warriors, to attack their enemies in their houses or on the roads, and they never appeared in public without the Germanic dagger, called *skramasax*, or safety-knife. It was thus by the simple course of events, that in about a century and a half all intellectual cultivation and elegance of manners disappeared from Gaul, without this deplorable change being the work of any mischievous will, or any systematic hostility towards Roman civilization.‡

* O virgo miranda mihi, placitura jugali,
Clarior æthereæ, Brunehildis, lampade fulgens,
Lumina gemmarum superasti lumine vultus...
Sapphirus, alba adamas, crystallæ, smaragdus, iaspis,
Cedant cuncta, novam genuit Hispania gemmam!
(Venantii Fortunati Carmin., lib. iv. p. 558.)

† V. Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 227, de Andarchio et Ursu, lib. ix. p. 342, de Sichario et Chramnisindo. —Ibid. lib. iv. p. 210, de Cautino episcopo, et Catone presbytero.

* Te mihi constituit rex Sigibertus opem,
Tutor ut graderer tecum comitando viator,
Atque pararetur hinc equus, inde cubus
(Venantii Fortunati carmen ad Sigouldum, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 525.)
† Vix modo tam nitido pomposa poemata cultu
Audit Trajana Roma verenda foro.
(Venantii Fortunati Carmina, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 487.)

According to the chronicles of the time, Sighebert's marriage and the splendour which attended it, and more especially the importance he derived from the rank of his new wife, made a lively impression on the mind of King Hilperik. In the midst of his concubines and the wives he had married, after the custom of the ancient Germanic chiefs, and with very little ceremony, it seemed to him that he had a less noble and less regal life than his younger brother. Like him, he resolved to take a wife of high birth; and to imitate him in all points, he sent an embassy to the king of the Goths, to demand the hand of Galeswintha, his eldest daughter.* But this demand met with obstacles which had not presented themselves to Sighebert's envoys. The report of the King of Neustria's debauches had reached Spain; the Goths, more civilized than the Franks, and more submissive to the discipline of the Gospel, exclaimed loudly that King Hilperik led the life of a heathen. On her side, Athanagild's eldest daughter, naturally timid, and of a gentle and melancholy disposition, trembled at the idea of going to so great a distance, and belonged to such a man. Her mother, Gotswintha, loved her dearly, and partook of her repugnance, her fears, and forebodings of unhappiness; the king was undecided, and delayed his definitive answer from day to day. At last, when pressed by the ambassadors for a reply, he refused to come to any conclusion with them, unless their king engaged himself by an oath to dismiss all his women, and live with his new wife according to the law of God. Couriers were dispatched into Gaul, and returned, bringing from King Hilperik a formal promise to abandon all his wives and concubines, provided he obtained a wife worthy of him, and the daughter of a king.†

A double alliance with the kings of the Franks, his neighbours and natural enemies, offered such political advantages to King Athanagild, that on this assurance, he hesitated no longer, but proceeded to consider the articles of the marriage treaty. From that moment all the discussions turned, on one side, upon the portion the bride should bring; and, on the other, upon the dowry she should receive from her husband after the wedding-night, as a *morning-gift*. According to a custom observed among all the tribes of Germanic origin, it was necessary at the bride's waking, her husband should make her some present, as the price of her virginity. This present varied in its nature and value: sometimes it was a sum of money, or some costly article; sometimes teams of oxen or horses, cattle, houses, or lands; but whatever it was, there was but one name for it,—it was called "morning gift," *morgen-gabe* or

morgane ghiba, according to the various dialects of the Germanic idiom. The negotiations relative to the marriage of King Hilperik with the sister of Brunehilda, retarded by the interchange of messengers, were prolonged until the year 567; they were then in treaty, when an event occurred in Gaul, which facilitated their termination.

Haribert, the eldest of the four Frankish kings, had left the neighbourhood of Paris, his usual residence, to go to one of his domains near Bordeaux, to enjoy the climate and productions of southern Gaul. He there died suddenly, and his death caused a new division of the territory of the Frankish empire. No sooner were his eyes closed, than one of his wives, Theodehilda, a shepherd's daughter, seized upon the royal treasure; and in order to retain the title of queen, she sent to propose to Gonthramn that he should make her his wife. The king received this message very graciously, and replied with an air of perfect sincerity: "Tell her to hasten to me with her treasures, for I will marry her, and make her great in the eyes of nations: I mean her to receive more honours with me than with my deceased brother."* Enchanted with this answer, Theodehilda loaded several carriages with her husband's riches, and departed for Châlons-sur-Saône, King Gonthramn's residence. But on her arrival, the king paid no attention to her, but began examining the baggage, counting the chariots, and weighing the coffers; then turning to those who surrounded him, he said: "Is it not better this treasure should belong to me rather than to this woman, who did not merit the honour my brother did her by taking her to his bed?"† All were of this opinion. Haribert's treasures were placed in safety, and the king sent her, who had so unwillingly made him this valuable present, to the monastery of Arles, under a large escort.

Neither of Gonthramn's two brothers disputed with him the possession of the money and precious things he had acquired by this stratagem; they had to debate with him and between themselves interest of far greater importance. The plan in agitation was to reduce the division of the Gallic territory into three parts instead of four, and by mutual agreement, to make a division of the provinces and towns which had formed Haribert's kingdom. This new distribution was more strange and confused than the first. Paris was divided into three equal parts, and each brother had one. To avoid the danger of a sudden invasion, neither of them was to enter the town without the consent of the other two, under pain of losing not only his share of Paris, but his entire share of Haribert's kingdom. This clause was ratified by a solemn oath sworn on the relics of three venerable saints, Hilary, Martin, and Polyeuctus, whose curses

* For the orthography of this name, I adopt the form proper to the Gothic dialect; that which answers to it in the dialect of the Franks is *Galeswinde* or *Gäleswinde*.

† Quod videns Chilpericus rex, cum jam plures haberet uxores, sororem ejus Galeswintham expetit, promittens per legatos se alias relicturum, tantum condignam sibi regisque prolem mereretur accipere. Pater vero ejus has promissiones accipiens (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 217.)

* Accedere ad me ei non pigeat cum thesauris suis, ego enim accipiam eam faciamque magnam in populis. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 216.)

† Rectus est enim ut hi thesauri penes me habeantur, quam post hanc, quæ indigne germani mei thorum adivit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 216.)

in this world and the next were invoked on the head of him who should break his word.*

Senlis and Marseilles were divided as Paris had been, but into two parts only; the former between Hilperik and Sighebert, the latter between Sighebert and Gonthramn. Three lots were made of the other towns, probably according to a calculation of the taxes gathered in them, and without regard to their respective positions. The geographic confusion became still greater; the *enclaves* were multiplied, and the kingdoms became involved in one another. Gonthramn obtained Melun, Saintes, Agen, and Perigueux. Meaux, Vendôme, Avranches, Tours, Poitiers, Albi, Conserans, and the towns of the Lower Pyrenees, fell to Sighebert's share. In Hilperik's share were, amongst many other towns of which historians make no mention, Limoges, Cahors, and Bordeaux, the now destroyed towns of Bigorre and Béarn, and the cantons of the Upper Pyrenees. The eastern Pyrenees were, at this period, beyond the territory belonging to the Franks; they were in the possession of the Goths of Spain, who, by this means, kept up a communication with their Gallic territories, which extended from the Aude to the Rhône. Thus the King of Neustria, who until then had not been master of a single town south of the Loire, became the near neighbour of his future father-in-law, the king of the Goths. The situation furnished an additional reason for the marriage treaty, and brought it to a speedy conclusion. Amongst the towns which Hilperik had recently acquired, several were on the frontiers of Athanagild's kingdom; others were scattered about in Aquitania, a province formerly taken from the Goths by Chlodowig the Great. To stipulate that these towns, which his ancestors had lost, should be given as a dowry to his daughter, was an adroit stroke of policy, and the king of the Goths did not overlook it. Either from a want of perception of any thing beyond the interest of the moment, or from a desire of concluding his marriage with Galeswintha at any price, Hilperik promised without hesitation to give the towns of Limoges, Cahors, and Bordeaux, with the towns of the Pyrenees and all the surrounding territory, as dowry and *morning gift*.† The confused notions which existed among the Germanic nations respecting the difference between territorial possession and the right of government, might some day free these towns from the Frankish rule, but the king of Neustria did not foresee this. Entirely absorbed by one idea, he only thought of stipulating that, in return for what he gave up, a considerable sum of money and other valuables should be paid into his own

hands; this point once settled, all obstacles were overcome, and the marriage was decided on.

Throughout this long negotiation, Galeswintha's feelings had always been those of repugnance to the man for whom she was destined, and of vague fear for the future. The promises made by the Frankish ambassadors in the name of king Hilperik, had not reassured her. As soon as she learnt that her fate was irrecoverably fixed, she was seized with terror, and running to her mother, she threw her arms round her like a child seeking protection, and wept silently in her arms for more than an hour.* The Frankish ambassadors presented themselves to pay homage to the betrothed bride of their king, and receive her orders for their departure; but, barbarians as they were, they were touched by the sight of these two women sobbing on each other's bosoms and clinging so closely as to appear linked together, and they dared not mention the journey. Two days passed thus, and on the third they presented themselves once more before the queen, telling her this time, that they were in haste to depart, and spoke of the king's impatience and the length of the journey.† The queen wept, and begged for one more day for her daughter. But the next day, when she was told that every thing was ready, "one day longer," said she, "and I will ask no more. Know you that where you are carrying my daughter, there will be no mother for her?"‡ But all possible delays were ended; Athanagild interposed his regal and paternal authority, and notwithstanding the tears of the queen, Galeswintha was placed in the hands of those who were entrusted with the mission of bringing her to her future husband.

A long line of horsemen, of chariots, and of baggage-wagons, traversed the streets of Toledo in the direction of the north gate. The king, on horseback, followed in his daughter's train as far as a bridge over the Tagus, at some distance from the town; but the queen could not make up her mind to return so soon, and determined to travel further. Leaving her own chariot she sat by the side of Galeswintha, and she went on stage by stage, day by day, until she had journeyed upwards of a hundred miles. Every day she said, "I will go so far," and when they had reached that place, she went on

* Ut quisquis sine fratris voluntate Parisius urbem ingrederetur, amitteret partem suam, essetque Polioctus martyr, cum Hilario atque Martino confessoribus, iudex ac retributor ejus. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 295.)

† De civitatibus vero, hoc est Burdegala, Lemovica, Cadurco, Benarno et Begarro, quas Galesindam . . . tam in dote quam in *Morgane giba*, hoc est matutinali dono, in Franciam venientem certum est adquisisse. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. ix., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 344.)

* Hoc ubi virgo metu auditque exterrita sensit,
Currit ad amplexus, Gotsuintha, tuos.
Brachi constringens necit sine fune catenam,
Et matrem amplexu per sua membra ligat.
(Venantii Fortunati Carmin., lib. vi. p. 561.)

† Instant legati germanica regna requiri,
Narrantes longæ tempora tarda viæ.
Sed matris moti gemitu sua viscera solvunt . . .
Prætereunt duplices, tertia, quarta dies
(Venantii Fortunati Carmin., lib. vi. p. 561.)

‡ Quid raptus ? differte dies, cum disco dolores,
Solamenque mali sit mora sola mei.
Quando iterum videam, quando hæc mihi lumina
ludant ?
Quando iterum natæ per pia colla cadam ? . . .
Cur nova rura petas, illic ubi non ero mater ?
(Venantii Fortunati Carmin., lib. vi. p. 562.)

further.* When they approached the mountains, the roads became difficult to pass; she did not perceive it, and still wished to go on. But as her retinue augmented their numbers, and increased the confusion and dangers of the journey, the Gothic nobles resolved not to permit their queen to proceed another mile. It was necessary to be resigned to the inevitable separation; and new but calmer scenes of tenderness took place between the mother and daughter. The queen expressed in gentle words her grief and maternal fears. "Be happy," said she; "but I tremble for thee; take care, my child, take care.†" . . . At these words, which harmonized too well with her own sad forebodings, Galeswintha wept, and replied: "It is God's will, I must submit;" and the sad separation was accomplished.

This numerous retinue being now divided, horsemen and chariots formed different parties, some continuing to march forward, others returning to Toledo. Before mounting the car which was to convey her back, the queen of the Goths stood by the road side, and fixing her eyes on her daughter's chariot, she remained standing immovable, gazing until distance and the windings of the road hid it from her sight.‡ Galeswintha, sad but resigned, pursued her journey towards the north. Her escort, which was composed of nobles and warriors of both nations, Goths and Franks, crossed the Pyrenees and passed through the towns of Narbonne and Carcassonne, without quitting the kingdom of the Goths, which extended to that distance; then passing through Tours and Poitiers, took the direction of Rouen, where the marriage was to be celebrated.§ At the gates of every large town the whole train stopped, and everything was prepared for a solemn entry; the horsemen threw off their travelling cloaks, uncovered the harness of their horses, and armed themselves with the bucklers which usually hung at their saddle-bows. The betrothed bride of the king of Neustria quitted her heavy travelling chariot for a car of state, built in the shape of a tower, and covered with plates of silver. The cotemporary poet, from whom we borrow these details, saw her enter thus at Poitiers, where she rested some days. He says that the splendour of her equipage was much admired, but he makes no mention of her beauty.||

Faithful to his promise, Hilperik had repudiated his wives, and dismissed his mistresses. Fredegonda herself, the most beautiful of them all, the favourite amongst those to whom he had given the title of queen, did not escape from this general proscription; she submitted with an apparent resignation and good will, which would have deceived a sharper man than king Hilperik. It seemed as if she sincerely felt that this divorce was necessary, that the marriage of a king with a woman of her rank could never be valid, and that it was her duty to give up her claim in favour of a queen really worthy of the title. She only asked as a last favour not to be dismissed from the palace, and to be allowed to take her place as formerly among the women employed in the royal service. Under this mask of humility, there was a depth of cunning and female ambition of which the king of Neustria was quite unsuspecting. Since the day when he first conceived the idea of marrying a woman of royal blood, he thought he no longer loved Fredegonda, and became indifferent to her beauty; for the mind of the son of Chlothar, like the barbarian mind in general, was little capable of receiving impressions of various natures at the same time. It was thus that, from want of foresight and judgment, not from tenderness of heart, he allowed his former favourite to remain near him in the house which his new wife was to inhabit.

Galeswintha's wedding was celebrated with as much preparation and magnificence as that of her sister Brunehilda; and this time the bride had extraordinary honours paid her: all the Franks of Neustria, nobles and simple warriors, swore fidelity to her, as to a king.* Standing in a semicircle, they drew their swords all together and brandished them in the air, repeating an old pagan formula, which devoted whoever violated his oath to the edge of the sword. Then the king himself solemnly renewed his promise of constancy and conjugal fidelity; placing his hand on a shrine containing some relics, he swore never to divorce the daughter of the king of the Goths, and never to take another wife as long as she lived.†

Galeswintha was remarked, during the festivities of her marriage, for the graciousness she showed to all the guests; she received

Hanc ego nempe novus conspexi prætereuntem
Molliter argenti turre rotante vehi.

(Venantii Fortunati Carmin., lib. vi. p. 562.)

It is more than probable that Fortunatus heard from the persons who accompanied Galeswintha the circumstances of her departure, and even the touching expressions which, in the midst of declamatory speeches, are to be found in his piece of poetry. This is the reason that I have considered this composition as an historical document.

* Jungitur ergo thoro regali culmine virgo,
Et magno meruit plebis amore coli.
Uique fidelis ei sit gens armata, per arma
Jurat, jure suo se quoque lege ligat.

(Venantii Fortunati Carmin., lib. vi. p. 562.)

† Legatis sane Anthanahildi regis quærentibus, ut tacitis sanctorum pignoris fides firmaretur, quod Galsonta in vita sua solio regni non pelleretur, Chilpericus non abnuitt... (Aimoini Monachi Floriac de Gest Franc., lib. iii. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Franc., t. iii. p. 68.)

* Dat causas spatii genitrix, ut longius iret;
Sed fuit optanti tempus necque breve.
Pervenit quo mater, ait, esse inde reverti,
Sed quod velle prius, postea nolle fuit.

(Venantii Fortunati Carmin., lib. vi. p. 562.)

† Quod superest gemebundus amor hoc mandat eunū
Sis, precor, o felix, sed cave valde Vale

(Venantii Fortunati Carmin., lib. vi. p. 562.)

‡ E contra genitrix post natam lumina tendens,
Uno stante loco, pergit et ipse sinul
Tota tremens, agiles raperet ne mula quadrigas..
Illuc mente sequens, qua via flectit iter,
Donec longe oculis spatioso evanuit amplo

(Venantii Fortunati Carmin., lib. vi. p. 562.)

§ (Hadriani Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. ix. p. 24.)

|| Post, aliquas urbes, Pictavis attingit acres,
Regali pompa, prætereundo viam.

them as if she already knew them; to some she made presents, to others she addressed kind and gentle words; all assured her of their devotion, and wished her a long and happy life.* These vows, which were never to be realized for her, accompanied her into the nuptial chamber; and the next morning, when she got up, she received the *morning-gift* with all the ceremonies prescribed by the Germanic customs. In presence of some chosen witness, king Hilperik took his wife's hand in his own right hand, and with the left threw a piece of straw over her, and pronounced with a loud voice the names of five towns, which were in future to be the queen's property. The act of this perpetual and irrevocable donation was drawn up in the Latin language; it has not been preserved to us, but we can easily imagine the tenour of it, from the usual formulas and style used in all memorials of the Merovingian epoch:

"Since God has commanded that a man shall leave father and mother to cleave to his wife, that they shall be as one flesh, and that no one shall put asunder those whom the Lord has joined together, I, Hilperik, king of the Franks, an illustrious man, do give to-day from tenderness of affection, under the names of dowry and *morgane-ghiba*, the towns of Boideaux, Cahors, Limoges, Bèarn, and Bigorre, with their territories and population, unto thee, Galeswintha, my well-beloved wife, whom I have wedded according to the Salic law, by the *sou* and the *denier*.* It is my will that, from this day forth, thou shouldst hold and possess them to perpetuity; and I give, transfer, and confer them by this present act, as I have already done by the piece of straw and the *handelang*."†

The first months of the new queen's marriage were at least quiet, if not happy; patient and gentle, she bore with resignation all the savage *brusquerie* of her husband's character. Besides, for some time, Hilperik felt a sincere affection for her; he first loved her from vanity, and rejoiced that he had in her as noble a wife as his brother; then, when surfeited with this gratification of his self love, he loved her from avarice, on account of the large sums of money and the number of valuables she had brought

him.* But after having for some time pleased himself with counting up these riches, he ceased to feel any delight in them, and from that time there was no attraction to bind him to Galeswintha. Her moral beauty, her humility, her charity to the poor, had no charms for him; he had sense and feeling for external beauty only. Thus the time arrived when, in spite of his resolutions, Hilperik felt only coldness and *ennui* by his wife's side. (A.D. 568.)

Fredegonda had waited for this moment, and she profited by it with her usual address. She met the king as if by accident, and the comparison of her person with Galeswintha's was sufficient to revive in the heart of this sensual man a passion which a few puffs of vanity had not sufficed to extinguish. Fredegonda once more became a concubine, and made great parade of her new triumph; she even assumed a haughty and contemptuous behaviour towards the neglected wife.‡ Doubly hurt as a woman and a queen, Galeswintha first wept in silence; at last she ventured to complain, and told the king that she was no longer honoured in his house, but received injuries and affronts she could not bear. She begged as a favour to be divorced, and offered to leave all she had brought with her, provided she was permitted to return to her own country.‡

The voluntary sacrifice of a great treasure, the disinterestedness of pride, were things incomprehensible to king Hilperik; and unable to appreciate, he had no faith in them. Thus, notwithstanding their sincerity, the words of the sad Galeswintha inspired him with no other feelings than those of sombre defiance, and the fear of losing, by an open rupture, treasures which he rejoiced to possess. Subduing his feelings, and concealing his thoughts with all the cunning of a savage, he suddenly changed his manners, assumed a gentle and caressing tone, and deceived Athanagild's daughter with protestations of love and repentance. She spoke no more of a separation, and flattered herself that his return to her was sincere; when one night, by the king's order, a faithful servant was introduced into her room, and strangled her whilst she slept. On finding her dead in bed, Hilperik affected surprise and grief, pretended to shed tears, and a few days after restored to Fredegonda the rights of a wife and a queen.§

* *Hos quoque muneribus permulcens, vocibus illos, Et, licet ignotos, sic facit esse suos.*

(Venanti Fortunati Carmin., lib. vi. p. 562.)

† Dum Dominus ab initio præcepit ut relinquit homo patrem et matrem, et adheret suæ uxori, ut sint duo in carne una, et quod Dominus coniunxit, homo non separet, ego enim in Dei nomine, ille, illi dulcissimæ conjugii meæ, dum et ego te per solidum et denarium secundum legem Salicam visum tui sponsare, ideo in ipsa amoris dulcedine, dabo ergo tibi... (Formul. Bignon. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iv. p. 539.) Ego Chilpericus rex Francorum, vir iustus... (Ibid. passim.) De civitatibus vero, hoc est Burdegala, Lemovica, Cadurco, Benarno et Begorra. tam in dote quam in morgane-ghiba... cum terminis et cuncto populo suo. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. ii. ibid. t. ii. p. 344, 345.)

‡ Per hanc chartulam libelli dotis vice per festucam atque per *andelangum* (Formul. Lindenbrog., ibid. t. iv. p. 655.)—*Handelang* or *handelag*, from the word *hand*, expressed, in the Germanic language, the action of delivering, giving, transmitting with the hand.

* A quo etiam magno amore diligebatur. Detulerat enim secum magnos thesauros. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 217.)

† Sed per anorem Fredegundis, quam prius habuerat, ortum est inter eos grande scandalum. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. cap. xxvii., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 217.)

‡ Cumque se regi quereretur assidue injurias perferre, diceretque nullam se dignitatem cum eodem habere, petuit ut, relictis thesauris quos secum detulerat, liberam redire permitteret ad patriam. (Ibid.)

§ Quod ille per ingenia dissimulans, verbis eam lenibus demulsit. Ad extremum eam suggillari iussit a puero, mortuamque reperi in strato... Rex autem, cum eam mortuam deditisset, post paucos dies Fredegundem recepit in matrimonium. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 217.)

Thus perished this young woman, to whom a sort of secret revelation seemed to have given warning of the fate which was reserved for her; a gentle and melancholy being, who appeared amidst Merovingian barbarism like an apparition of another age. Notwithstanding the weakness of the moral sense in the midst of innumerable crimes and miseries, there were minds deeply touched by such unmerited misfortunes; and in accordance with the spirit of the age, their sympathies were touched with superstition. It was said that a crystal lamp, suspended near Galeswintha's tomb on the day of her burial, had suddenly given way without any one's touching it, and had fallen on the marble pavement without breaking or going out; to complete the miracle, it was asserted that the spectators had seen the marble yield like a soft material, and the lamp sink half way into it.* Such stories may make us smile, we who read them in old books written for men of another age; but in the sixth century, when these legends passed from mouth to mouth, as the living and poetical expression of the popular feelings and faith, those who listened to them became thoughtful, and wept.

SECOND NARRATIVE.

A. D. 568—575.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE MURDER OF GALESWINTHA—CIVIL WAR—DEATH OF SIGHEBERT.

Amongst the Franks, and the tribes of the Germanic race in general, whenever a murder had been committed, the nearest relation of the deceased invited all his relations and allies to a meeting, summoning them on their honour to appear in arms, war being held to exist from that moment between the murderer and all who were in the remotest degree connected with his victim; as husband of Galeswintha's sister, Sighebert found himself called upon to fulfil the dictates of revenge. He sent messengers to king Gonthramn, who, without hesitating a moment between his two brothers who had thus become enemies, sided with the injured party, either because the national manners impelled him to do so, or because the odious and cowardly crime of king Hilperik placed him, as it were, under the ban of his own family. War was instantly declared, and hostilities commenced, but with very different degrees of ardour on the part of the two brothers thus armed against the third. Excited by the call for vengeance of his wife Brunehilda, who had absolute dominion over him, and whose violent disposition had thus suddenly betrayed itself, Sighebert wanted to push matters to extremes; he felt no remorse even at fratricide; but Gonthramn, either from Christian feeling, or the natural weakness of his character, (A.D. 569,) soon abandoned the part of co-assailant for that of mediator. By the help of prayers and threats, he prevailed upon Sighebert not to be the avenger of his own cause, but peaceably to demand justice of the assembled people according to law.*

According to the laws of the Franks, or, more properly speaking, according to their national customs, every man who felt himself aggrieved had a free choice between private war and public judgment; but judgment once passed, war ceased to be legitimate. The assembly of justice was called *mal*, that is to say, a council; and in order to exercise in it the function of arbitrator, it was necessary to belong to the class of landed proprietors, or, according to the Ger-

Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. i. p. 217) Non tulerunt fratres, tanto scelere maculatum consortium esse suum, sed conjurati simul regno pellere moliti sunt. Quod consilium non tam astu Chilperici quam ipsa levitate qua ceptum fuerat, dissipatum est (Aimoini Monachi Floriac. de Gest. Franc. lib. iii. cap. v. ibid. t. iii. p. 68) The passage in Gregory of Tours is obscure from the words *regno dejiciunt*; if taken literally, we must suppose that there is some deficiency in the accounts, as we can find no later narrative to show that Hilperik regained his kingdom. Aimoin, an historian of the tenth century, has corrected the words of Gregory of Tours, perhaps with the help of some documents now lost. I have followed his text, according to the example of Adrian of Valois, who ends it by the following induction: "Tamen bellum Chilperico a fratribus, præsertim a Sigiberto, qui, instigante Brunehilde uxore, sororem ejus Galeswintham vicisci cupiebat, denunciatum puto, et priusquam ad arma veniretur, Guntchramni Francorumque decreto pacem inter ambos compositam discordiamque dijudicatam esse." (Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic. lib. ix. p. 26.)

* *Lychnus enim ille, qui fune suspensus coram sepulchro ejus ardebat, nullo tangente, fune disrupto, in pavementum corruit et fugiente ante eum duritia pavimenti, tanquam in aliquod molle elementum descendit, atque medius est suffusus nec omnino contritus, quod non sine grandi miraculo videntibus fuit.* (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. ii. p. 463.)—Fortunati Carmin., lib. vi. p. 463.

* Post quod factum reputantes ejus fratres, quod sua emissiones antedicta regina fuerit interfecta, eum de regno dejiciunt. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud

manic expression, to the class of *arimans*, men of honour.* In large or small numbers, varying with the nature and importance of the causes they had to debate upon, the judges appeared in arms at the assembly, and sat on benches arranged in a circle. Before the Franks passed the Rhine and conquered Gaul, they held their courts of justice in the open air, on hills consecrated by ancient religious rites. After the conquest, and their conversion to Christianity, they abandoned this custom, and the *mal* was held by the kings or counts in halls of wood or stone; but notwithstanding this change, the place of meeting kept the name it had formerly received in pagan Germany, and it was still called in the Germanic language, *mal-berg*, the mountain of the council.†

When a proclamation in the three Frankish kingdoms had announced that in the delay of forty nights (such was the legal expression,) a solemn council would be held by king Gontramm for the re-establishment of peace between kings Hilperik and Sighebert, the principal chiefs and the great proprietors, attended by their vassals, came to the appointed place. There was a solemn judgment passed, which the history of the time mentions without giving any details,‡ and the probable circumstances of which it is possible to find with the help of different law-texts, acts, and legal formulas. The induction applied to these texts gives the following facts, which are, it is true, merely simple conjectures, but which may, to a certain extent, fill up the vacuum left here by historical evidence.

The assembly having met, king Gontramm took his place on a raised seat, and the rest of the judges sat on low benches, each wearing his sword by his side, with a servant behind him bearing his buckler and javelin. King Sighebert as the accuser first came forward, and in the name of his wife, queen Brunehilda, accused Hilperik of having willingly had a share in the murder of Galeswintha, the sister of Brunehilda. A delay of fourteen nights was allowed for the accused to appear in his turn and justify himself by oath.§

The law of the Franks demanded that this oath of justification should be confirmed by

those of a certain number of freemen; six in small cases, and as many as seventy-two in cases of great importance, whether from the gravity of the charge, or the high rank of the parties.* It was necessary that the accused should present himself in the enclosure formed by the benches of the judges, accompanied by all the men who were to swear with him. Thirty-six stood on his right, and thirty-six on his left; then, on the summons of the principal judge, he drew his sword, and swore on his arms that he was innocent; then the compurgators, drawing their swords at the same time, swore the same oath.† No passage, either in the chronicles or contemporary records, gives us any reason to think that king Hilperik sought legally to exculpate himself from the crime which was imputed to him; most probably he presented himself alone before the assembly of the Franks, and sat down in silence. Sighebert rose, and addressing himself to the judges, he said three different times, "Tell us the Salic law." Then he repeated a fourth time, pointing to Hilperik, "I summon you to tell him and me what the Salic law ordains."‡

Such was the appointed formula for demanding judgment against an adversary convicted on his own confession; but in the present case, the answer to this summons could only take place after long discussions, for it was a case in which the common law of the Franks was only applicable from analogy. In order to prevent, or at least to shorten the private wars, this law determined, that in a case of murder, the culprit should pay the heirs of the deceased a sum of money proportioned to the rank of the latter. From fifteen to thirty-five golden *sols* were given for the life of a domestic slave, forty-five for that of a *lite* of barbaric origin, or of a Gallo-Roman tributary, a hundred for a Roman proprietor, and double for a Frank, or any other barbarian living under the Salic law.§ The fine

* Et ille postea qui rogatus fuerat, si se ex hoc idoneum esse cognoscat, se debet cum duodecim per sacramenta absolvere; si vero major causa fuerit, se adhuc majori numero. (Leg. Salic. tit. lxxvi., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. iv. p. 159.) The oath of the co-jurors was called in the Germanic language, *Weder-ed*, (*Vedredum*;) that is, *reiterated oath*. Si quis Ripuarius sacramento fidem fecerit, super xiv. noctes sibi septimus seu duodecim vel septuagesimus secundus cum legitimo termino noctium studeat conjurare (Leg. Ripuar., tit. lxvi., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. iv. p. 248.)

† Si autem contentio orta fuerit quod sacramentum in die placito non conjurasset, tunc cum tertia parte juratorum suorum adfirmare studeat, aliquibus a dextris seu a sinistris stantibus. Sin autem nec sic satisfecerit, tunc secundum presentiam judicis vel secundum terminationem sextam juratorum suorum cum dextera armata mat prius quam posterius sacramentum in presentia judicis confirmare studeat. (Ibid.)

‡ Si qui Ralhimburgi legem voverint dicere in Malbergo residentes . debet eis qui causam requirit dicere: Dicite nobis legem salicam. Si illi tunc noluerint dicere, tunc iterum qui causam requirit, dicit: Vostangano ut nishi et isto legem dicatis. Bis autem et tertio hoc debet facere (Leg. Salic. tit. lx., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. iv. p. 155.)

§ Leg. Salic. tit. xlv. et xlv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. iv. pp. 147, 148. According to the new valu-

* This class of men is still designated in the laws and public acts by the name of *Rachimburgi*, *Racimburdi*, (*Rekin-burghi*), good securities.

† *Malbergum*, *Mallobergum*, *Malleborgium*, locus iudicii, conventus iudicialis, ipsum iudicium, populus ad iudicium congregatus. (Ducange, Glossar.) V. Leg. Salic. et Leg. Ripuar., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. iv. p. 120, et seq.

‡ This judgment is recalled and verified to us by the famous treaty of Andelau, of which it forms one of the grounds: *per iudicium gloriosissimi domni Gunthramni regis, vel Francorum*. (Exemplar pactuonis apud Andelau factæ an. 587. Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. ix. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. iv. p. 159.)

§ Si antrusio antrusionem de quacunque causa admallare voluerit, ubicunque eum convenire poterit, super septum noctes cum testibus eum rogare debet, ut ante iudicem ad Mallobergo debeat convenire. Sic postea iterato ad noctes xiv. eum rogare debet ut ad illum Mallobergo debeat venire ad dandum responsum (Leg. Salic. tit. lxxvi., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. iv. p. 159.)

was trebled in all these gradations if the murdered man, whether slave or serf of the soil, whether Roman or barbarian, by birth belonged to the king as a servant, vassal, or public functionary. Thus, for a colonist of the *fisc*, ninety golden *sols* were paid, three hundred for a Roman admitted to the royal table, and six hundred for a barbarian decorated with a title of honour, or singly *an-trusti*, that is to say, *confidant* of the king.*

This fine, which, once paid, was to secure the culprit from subsequent pursuit and all acts of revenge, was called in the Germanic language, *wer-geld*, or "safety-tax," and in Latin, *compositio*, because it ended the war between the offender and the injured party. There was no *wer-geld* for the murder of royal personages, and in this tariff of human life they were placed beyond and above all legal valuation. On the other hand, the barbarian customs in some sort gave a prince the privilege of homicide; and this was the reason why, unless the interpretation of the terms of the Salic law was extended, it was impossible to say what was to be done in the action brought against king Hilperik, and to decide what rate of composition-money should be paid to Galeswintha's relations. Unable to decide strictly according to law, the assembly proceeded to arbitration, and gave sentence almost in the following terms:—

"This is the judgment of the most glorious king Gontramm, and of the Franks sitting in the *Mal-berg*. The cities of Bordeaux, Limoges, Cahors, Bearn, and Bigorre, which Galeswintha, sister of the most excellent lady, Brunehilda, received, as every one knows, as a dowry and morning gift, at her arrival in the country of the Franks, will become from this day forth the property of queen Brunehilda and her heirs, in order that, by this agreement, peace and charity may be restored between the most glorious lords Hilperik and Sighebert."†

ation given by Mr. Guérard, in his *Mémoires sur le Système Monétaire des Francs sous les deux Premières Races* (French Numismatic Review, the numbers for November and December, 1837), the golden sol (solidus), of which the real value was 7s. 8½d., was equal to 4l. 2s. 11d. of our present money.

* The word *Trustee* exists in the English language. Si vero eum qui in truste dominica est occiderit. sol. DC. culp. jud. (Leg. Salic. tit. xlv.) Si Romanus homo convivia regis occisus fuerit sol CCC compariatur. (Ibid.) Si quis gravionem occiderit, sal. DC culp. jud. (Ibid tit. lvi.) Si quis sagibaronem aut gravionem occiderit qui puer regius fuerat, sol. CCC, culp jud (Leg. Salic, tit lvi., apud Script. Rer. Gallic et Francic, t. iv. p. 154.)

† De civitatibus vero, hoc est Burdegala, Lemovica, Cadurco, Benarno et Begorra quæ Galesuindam germanam domnæ Brunichildis tam in dote quam in morgane-giba, hoc est matutinali dono, in Franciam venientem certem est adquisisse... Quas etiam per iudicium gloriosissimi domni Guntchramni regis, vel Francorum, superstitibus Chilperico et Sigiberto regibus, domna Brunichildis noscitur adquisisse: ita convenit... (Exemplar Pactiois apud Andelaum factæ; Greg. Turon Hist Franc., lib. ix., apud Script Rer Gallic et Francic. t. ii. p 314.) Adrian of Valois has drawn from this passage the same conclusion as myself; according to him, compensation was imposed by judgment "Guntchramni Francorumque decreto pacem inter ambos compositam

The two kings advanced towards each other, holding in their hands small branches of trees, which they exchanged, as a sign of the promise which they made each other, the one never to attempt to take again what he had just lost through the decree of the assembled people, the other never to claim a larger composition under any pretext whatsoever.

"My brother," the king of Austrasia then said, "I assure thee for the future peace and security concerning the death of Galeswintha, sister to Brunehilda. Henceforward thou hast neither complaints nor persecution to fear from me; and if, which it please God to prevent, it should happen that thou be disturbed or cited anew before the *Mal* for the above-mentioned homicide, or for the composition I have received from thee, either by me, my heirs, or any other person in their name, the composition shall be restored to thee doubled."* The assembly broke up, and the two kings, lately mortal enemies, departed apparently reconciled.

The idea of accepting this judgment as an expiation was not a likely one to enter king Hilperik's mind: on the contrary, he resolved some day or other to seize upon those towns again, or to help himself to an equivalent out of Sighebert's dominions. This project, meditated on and concealed for nearly five years, was suddenly put into execution in the year 573. Without any exact idea of the situation and relative importance of the towns whose loss he regretted, Hilperik knew that Bearn and Bigorre were the least considerable, and the furthest removed from the centre of his kingdom. Whilst considering the best means of recovering by force what he had only given up from weakness, he found that his plan of conquest would be more feasible and more profitable if he were to substitute the larger and more wealthy cities of Tours and Poitiers, which were more conveniently situated for him, for the two smaller ones at the foot of the Pyrenees. Accordingly, he assembled his troops in the town of Angers, which belonged to him, and gave the command of them to Chlodowig, the youngest of his three sons by Audowera, his first wife.

Without any declaration of war, Chlodowig marched upon Tours. Notwithstanding the strength of this ancient city, he entered it without resistance; for King Sighebert, as well as the other two kings, only kept a permanent garrison in the towns where they resided; and the citizens, almost all of Gallic origin, cared little whether they belonged to one Frankish

discordiamque dijudicatam esse; quinque urbibus nimirum Burdigala, Lemovicis, Cadurcis, Benarno et Bigorra quæ ab Chilperico, doli domique matutini nomine, Galesuinthæ collatæ fuerant, Brunichildi ejus sorori Sigiberti Austrasiorum regis conjugi adjudicatis." (Adrian Valesii. Rer Francic, lib ix. t ii p. 27.)

* Et nullo unquam tempore de jam dicta morte, nec de ipsa leude, nec ego ipse, nec ullus de heredibus meis, nec quislibet ullas calumnias, nec repetitiones agere, nec repetere non debeamus. Et si fortasse ego ipse, aut aliquis de heredibus meis, vel quicumque te ob hoc inquietare voluerit, et a me defensatum non fuerit, inferamus tibi duplum quod nobis dedisti. (Marculfi Formul., lib. ii., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic t. iv. pp 495. 512.)

King or another. Master of Tours, the son of Hilperik directed his march to Poitiers, whose gates were opened to him with equal readiness, and he there established his head-quarters in a central point between Tours and the cities of Limoges, Cahors, and Bordeaux, which were still closed against him.*

At the news of this unexpected aggression, King Sighebert sent messengers to his brother Gonthramn, to demand assistance and advice. The part which Gonthramn had played six years before, in re-establishing peace between the two kings, seemed to invest him with a sort of supremacy over them, with the right of punishing whoever broke his word, and resisted the judgment of the people. With this intention, and with that instinctive sense of justice which was one of the principal features of his character, he took upon himself the charge of repressing the hostile attempts of King Hilperik, and obliged him once more to submit to the conditions of the treaty of partition, and the decision of the Franks. Without any remonstrance or previous summons to the violator of the peace, Gonthramn sent out against Chlodowig a body of troops conducted by Eonius Mummolus, the best of his generals, a man of Gallic origin, equal to the bravest among the Franks in intrepidity, and surpassing them all in military talent.†

Mummolus, whose name was then famous, and will often recur in the course of these narratives, had lately defeated in many battles, and finally driven beyond the Alps, the nation of the Langobardi, which was then in possession of the north of Italy, and which had made a descent upon Gaul, menacing with conquest the provinces in the neighbourhood of the Rhone.‡ With that rapidity of movement which had procured him so many victories, he left Châlons-sur-Saône, the capital of Gonthramn's kingdom, and marched to Tours, passing through Nevers and Bourges. At his approach, young Chlodowig, who had returned to Tours with the intention of there sustaining a siege, retreated, and took up a favourable position on the road to Poitiers, at a short distance from that town, and there awaited reinforcements. The citizens of Tours peaceably received the Gallo-Roman general, who took possession of the place in the name of King Sighebert. In order to render them for the future less indifferent in political matters, Mummolus obliged them in a mass to take the oath of fidelity.§

If, as is most probable, his proclamation, ad-

ressed to the bishop and count of Tours, resembled in style all acts of the same kind, all the men of the city and its precincts, *whether Romans, Franks, or of any nation whatsoever*, were ordered to assemble in the episcopal church, and there to swear by every thing holy, to keep with sincerity and like true *Leudes* the faith due to their lord, the most glorious King Sighebert.*

In the meantime, the reinforcement which Chlodowig expected, arrived at his camp near Poitiers. It consisted of a troop of men raised in the neighbourhood, and led by Sigher and Basilius, one of Frankish, the other of Roman origin; both influential on account of their riches, and zealous partisans of King Hilperik. This numerous but undisciplined army, mostly composed of colonists and peasants, formed the vanguard of the Neustrian army, and was the first to encounter the soldiers of Mummolus. Notwithstanding much valour and even fury in the combat, Sigher and Basilius were unable to stop the greatest, or rather the only tactician of the time in his march to Poitiers. Attacked at once in front and rear, they were, after an enormous loss, thrown back upon the Franks of Chlodowig's army, which gave way and disbanded almost immediately. The two chiefs of the volunteers were killed in the confusion, and the son of Hilperik, no longer able to defend Poitiers, fled towards Saintes. Having by this victory become master of the town, Mummolus considered his mission ended; and having obliged the citizens to take the same oath of fidelity to King Sighebert as those at Tours had taken, he returned to the Gonthramn's kingdom, not deigning to pursue a small number of Neustrians who fled with the son of their king.†

Chlodowig made no attempt to rally his forces and return to Poitiers; but, either from fear of finding the northern road shut against him, or from a spirit of bravado natural to a young man, instead of directing his course towards Angers, he continued to follow a contrary road, and marched to Bordeaux, one of the five towns he had been ordered to seize.‡ He arrived at the gates of this large city, with a handful of men in bad condition, and at the first summons made by him in his father's name, they were opened to him. A curious fact, which shows in a striking manner the impotence of administration under the Merovingian sovereigns. There was not a sufficient military force in this great city to defend Queen Brunehilda's right of possession and King Sighebert's right of sovereignty

* Cùm Chilpericus Turonis ac Pictavis pervasisset, quæ Sigiberto regi per pactum in partem venerat. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 227.)

† Coniunctus rex ipse cum Guntchramno fratre suo, Mummolus eligit, qui has urbes ad eorum dominium revocare deberet. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 227.)

‡ See Gregory of Tours, lib. iv. chap. xlii. and xlv.
§ Qui Turonis veniens, fugato exinde Chlodovecho, Chilperici filio, exactis à populo ad partem regis Sigiberti sacramenta, Pictavos accessit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 227.)

* Ut omnes pagenses vestros, tam Francos, Romanos vel reliquas nationes degentes, bannire, et locis congruis per civitates, vicos et castella congregare faciat; quatenus; præsentem misso nostro, fidelitatem nobis leode et samio per loca sanctorum, debeant promittere et conjurare. (Marculfi Formul., lib. i., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iv. p. 483.)

† Sed Basilius et Sicharius, Pictavi cives, collecta multitudine, resistere voverunt: quos de diversis partibus circumdatos oppressit, obruit, interemit, et sic Pictavos accedens sacramenta exegit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 227.)

‡ Chlodovechus vero, Chilperici filius, de Turonica ejectus, Burdegalam abiit. (Ibid. p. 228.)

against a band of harassed fugitives, ignorant of the country. The son of Hilperik was thus enabled to establish himself as its master, and he and his followers occupied palaces which belonged to the *fisc*, formerly imperial property, and which had devolved on the Germanic kings, together with the rest of the inheritance of the Cæsars.

A full month had elapsed since young Chlodowig had established himself at Bordeaux with all the airs of a conqueror, and affecting the authority of a viceroy, when Sigulf, one of the guardians of the March of the Pyrenees, suddenly set out in pursuit of him.* This frontier, which it was necessary to defend against the Goths and Basques, then belonged entirely to the king of Austrasia, in whose name the ban of war was proclaimed on both sides of the Adour. Some indications afforded by events of later occurrence, give us reason to think, that in order not to weaken his fortified places, the duke, or, as he was called in the Germanic language, the *Mark-graf*,† ordered a general rising of the inhabitants of the country, a population of hunters, shepherds, and wood-cutters, nearly as savage as their neighbours, the Basques, with whom they often united to pillage the convoys of merchandize, plunder the small towns, and resist the Frankish governors. Those mountaineers who obeyed the call of the Austrasian chief, came to the place of meeting, some on foot, some on horseback, in their usual equipment, that is to say, in hunting costume, a spear in the hand, and a trumpet or horn slung in a shoulder belt. Under the command of the *Mark-graf* Sigulf, they entered Bordeaux, hastening their march with a view to surprise, and directing their steps to that part of the town where the Neustrians were quartered.

These, thus suddenly attacked by an enemy far superior in numbers, had only time to mount their horses and oblige their prince to do the same; they surrounded him, and fled with him in a northerly direction. Sigulf's forces set off furiously in pursuit of them, animated either by the hope of taking alive and so getting the ransom of a king's son, or by a feeling of national hatred against the men of the Frankish race. In order to excite each other to the pursuit, or to increase the terror of the fugitives, or simply from an impulse of southern gaiety, they blew their trumpets and hunting-horns as they rode. During the whole day, bent over the reins of his horse which he was spurring forwards, Chlodowig heard behind him the sound of the horn and the cries of the huntsmen, who followed on

his track as if he were a deer in the forest.* But in the evening, as the darkness became thicker, the heat of the pursuit gradually abated, and the Neustrians were soon able to continue their journey at a moderate pace. It was thus that young Chlodowig reached the banks of the Loire and the walls of Angers, which he had so short a time before left at the head of a numerous army.†

This miserable termination to an enterprise so confidently undertaken, produced a feeling of gloomy and ferocious anger in the mind of King Hilperik. Not only the love of gain, but also a feeling of wounded vanity now incited him to risk all to recover what he had lost, and answer the challenge which seemed thus to have been conveyed to him. Determined on avenging his wounded honour in a striking manner, he assembled on the banks of the Loire an army much more numerous than the first, and entrusted the command of it to Theodebert, his eldest son.‡ The prudent Gontram thought this time that any fresh attempt at mediation on his part would probably be of no use in restoring peace, and would certainly cost him very dear. Renouncing the part of mediator direct, he adopted a middle course, which in case of non-success enabled him to keep himself apart, and take no share in the quarrel. He left the care of reconciling the two kings to an ecclesiastical synod; accordingly, in obedience to his orders, all the bishops of the kingdom, neutral by position, formed a council in a neutral town, Paris, where, according to the arrangement agreed on, neither of the sons of Chlother could put his foot without the consent of the two others.§ The council addressed to the king of Neustria the most pressing exhortations to keep the peace he had sworn to maintain, and no longer to invade his brother's rights. But all their discourses and messages were useless. Hilperik would listen to nothing, but continued his military preparations, and the members of the synod returned to King Gontram, bringing with them, as the sole fruit of their mission, the announcement that war was inevitable.||

* Quem fugientem cum tubis et buccinis, quasi labentem cervum fugans, insequabatur. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 228.)

† Qui vix ad patrem regrediendi liberum habuit adiut. Tamen per Andegavis regressus ad eum rediit. (Ibid.)

‡ Chilpericus autem rex, in ira commotus, per Theodebertum filium suum seniores civitates ejus (Sigiberti) pervadit, id est Turonis et Pictavis, et reliquis citra Sigirim sitas. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 228.)

§ Gunthramnus rex omnes episcopos regni sui congregat, ut inter utrosque quid veritas haberet, edicerent. (Ibid.)

|| Sed ut bellum civile in majore pernicite crederetur, eos audire peccatis facientibus distulerunt. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 228.)—War continued in spite of a solemn judgment, and the law of compensation was infringed. We must distinguish, as Adrian of Valois has done, between this officious mediation and the judgment given in the year 569. See above, p. 124, and *Adrian. Valens Rer. Francic.*, lib. ix. p. 26 and 51.

* Denique cum apud Burdegalensem civitatem, nullo prorsus inquietante, resideret Sigulfus quidam a parte Sigiberti se super eum object. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 228.)—Chlodoveus, filius Chilperici, Burdegalam pervadit, id est Turonis et Pictavis, et reliquis citra Sigirim sitas. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 228.)—Super quem Sigulfus dux partium Sigiberti irruens. (Aimoini Monac. Floriac. de Gest. Franc., ibid. t. iii. p. 71.)

† *Mark*, limit, frontier; *graf*, chief of a district, governor, judge.

Meanwhile, Theodebert passed the Loire, and by a movement which seemed like military combination, instead of marching at first upon Tours, as his younger brother had done, he directed his march to Poitiers, where the Austrasian chiefs who commanded in Aquitania had concentrated their forces. Gondobald, the principal amongst them, had the imprudence to hazard a pitched battle against the Neustrians, who were in greater numbers, and more interested in this war than the troops which he led. He was completely defeated, and lost every thing in a single engagement.* The conquerors entered Poitiers, and Theodebert, master of this place, in the centre of Austrasian Aquitania, had it in his power to besiege any one of the towns he was ordered to attack. He took a nothern course, and entered on that part of the territory of Tours which lies on the left bank of the Loire. Either by his father's orders, or out of mere wantonness, he made war upon the country in a most savage manner, carrying devastation and massacre into every place he passed through. The citizens of Tours saw with horror, from the tops of their walls, the clouds of smoke which arose on all sides, announcing the conflagration of the adjacent country. Although bound to king Sighebert by an oath sworn on the sacred relics, they dropped at once their religious scruples, and surrendered at discretion, imploring the clemency of the victor.†

After the submission of Poitiers and Tours, the Neustrian army laid siege to Limoges, which opened its gates, and then marched from thence to Cahors. In this long route, its passage was marked by the devastation of the country, the pillage of houses, and the profanation of holy places. The churches were stripped and burnt, the priests put to death, the nuns violated, and the convents reduced to ruins.‡ At the news of these outrages, a general panic spread itself from one end to the other of the ancient province of Aquitania, from the Loire to the Pyrenees. This extensive and beautiful country, which the Franks had entered sixty years before, not as enemies of the native population, but as adversaries of the Goths, its first masters, and as soldiers of the orthodox faith against an heretical power; this favoured country, which conquest had twice passed over without leaving any traces, where the Roman manners were preserved almost unaltered, and where the Germanic princes beyond the Loire were only known for their reputation as perfect Catholics,—was suddenly deprived of the repose it

had enjoyed for half a century. The sight of such cruelties and acts of sacrilege struck all minds with wonder and dismay.

The campaign of Theodebert in Aquitania was compared to the persecution of Diocletian;* the crimes and depredations of Hlperik's army were, with singular *naveté*, contrasted with the acts of piety of Chlodowig the Great, who had founded and enriched so many churches. Invectives and maledictions imitated from the Bible fell from the lips of the Aquitanian bishops and senators, whose Christian faith was their only patriotism; or they recounted to each other, with a smile of hope, the miracles which it was rumoured had occurred in different parts to punish the excesses of the barbarians.† This was the name given to the Franks; but this word had in itself no derogatory meaning; it was used in Gaul to designate the conquering race, as the natives were called Romans.

Very often the simplest accident formed the groundwork of those popular tales which excited imaginations coloured with a shade of superstition. A few miles from Tours, on the right bank of the Loire, stood a monastery famous for the relics of Saint Martin; whilst the Franks were plundering on the left bank, twenty of them took a boat to cross the river and pillage this rich monastery. Having neither oars nor poles tipped with iron with which to guide it, they made use of their lances, keeping the iron end upwards, and pushing the other end to the bottom of the river. Seeing them approach, the monks, who could not mistake their intentions, advanced towards them, crying out: "Beware, oh barbarians! beware of landing here, for this monastery belongs to the blessed Martin."‡ But the Franks landed nevertheless; they beat the monks, broke all the furniture of the monastery, carried off every thing valuable, making them up in bales with which they loaded their small craft.§ The boat, badly steered and overloaded, met with one of the shoals which are so numerous in the bed of the Loire, and ran aground. The shock produced by this sudden stoppage, threw several of those who were employing all their force to move their heavy bark, off their balance, so that they fell forward, and the iron of their lances ran into their breasts; the rest, struck with alarm and remorse, began loudly to cry for help. Some of the monks, whom they had ill-treated, coming to see what was the matter, got into a boat, and beheld with

* Fuitque illo in tempore peior in ecclesiis gemitus, quam tempore persecutionis Diocletiani (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 228.)

† Et adhuc obstupescimus et admiramur cur tante super eos plage irruerint: sed recurramus ad illud quod parentes eorum egerunt, et isti perpetravit. Illi de fanis ad ecclesias sunt conversi; isti quotidie de ecclesiis prædes detrahunt. Illi monasteria et ecclesias ditaverunt, isti eas diruunt ac subvertunt (Ibid.)

‡ Nolite, o barbari, nolite hic transire: beati enim Martini istud est monasterium (Ibid.)

§ Illic transgrediuntur, et, inimico stimulantia, monachos cædunt, monasterium evertunt, resque diripiunt. de quibus facientes sarcinas, navi imponunt. (Ibid. p. 229.)

* Qui Pictavis veniens contra Gundobaldum ducem pugnavit. Terga autem vertente exercitu partis Gundobaldi, magnam sui stragem de populo illo fecit (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 238.)

† Sed et de Turonica regione maximam partem incendit, et nisi ad tempus manus dedissent, totam continuo debellasset (Ibid.)

‡ Commoto autem exercitu, Lemovicinum, Cadurcinum, vel reliquis illorum provincias pervadit, vastat, evertit; ecclesias incendit, ministeria detrahit, clericos interficit, monasteria virorum dejicit, puellarum deludat, et cuncta devastat. (Ibid.)

much astonishment what had happened. Entreated by the plunderers themselves to take back all the booty seized in their house, they regained the bank singing the service for the dead for the souls of those who had perished so unexpectedly.*

Whilst these things were passing in Aquitania, king Sighebert was assembling all the forces of his kingdom to march against Theodebert, or to compel Hilperik to recall him, and so keep the limits which were assigned to him by the treaty of division. He called to arms not only the Franks from the borders of the Meuse, the Moselle, and the Rhine, but all the Germanic tribes on the other side of that river who recognized the authority or patronage of the sons of Merowig. Such were the Sweves, or Swabians, and the Alemanni, the last remains of two formerly very powerful confederacies, the Thuringians, and the Baiwars, who preserved their nationality under hereditary dukes; and lastly, some of the smaller nations of Lower Germany, who were detached either by force or by their own free will, from the formidable league of the Saxons, that enemy and rival of the Frankish empire.† These trans-rhenane nations, as they were then called, were entirely heathen, or if those nearest to the Gallic frontier had received some rudiments of Christianity, they curiously mixed up with it the ceremonies of their ancient worship, sacrificing animals and even men in their solemn festivals ‡ To these savage habits they added a thirst for plunder and a love of conquest, which drove them westward, and stimulated them to pass the great river like the Franks in search of booty and lands in Gaul.

The Franks knew this, and observed with distrust the least movements of their former brethren, who were always ready to follow in their footsteps, and endeavour to overcome them. It was to remove this danger that Chlodowig the Great fought the battle of Tolbiac against the United Swabians and Alemanni. Other victories gained by Chlodowig's successors followed the defeat of this, the vanguard of the tribes beyond the Rhine. Theodorik subdued the Thuringian nation together with several Saxon tribes; and Sighebert himself signalized his activity and courage against the latter. As king of eastern France, and guardian of the common frontier, he had maintained in the minds of the Germanic nations a feeling of fear and respect for the Frankish sovereigns; but by enlisting them in his army, and leading

them under his banners into the very centre of Gaul, he was likely to renew in them their old jealousy and love of conquest, and thus raise a storm which might be dangerous to both Gauls and Franks.

At the news of this great arming in Austrasia, therefore, a feeling of anxiety spread, not only among Hilperik's subjects, but even amongst those of Gonthramn, who himself shared their fears. Notwithstanding his unwillingness to quarrel without long and extreme provocation, he could not help considering the rising in a mass of the trans-rhenane nations as an act of hostility against all the Christians in Gaul, and he returned a favourable answer to the request for aid which Hilperik addressed to him: "The two kings had an interview," says a cotemporary author, "and formed an alliance, swearing to each other that neither of them should let his brother perish."*

Foreseeing that Sighebert's plan would be to march to the south-west and gain some point of the road between Paris and Tours, Hilperik transported his army to the eastern side of the course of the Seine to defend its passage. Gonthramn, on his side, strengthened the northern frontier with troops, as it was not protected by any natural defence, and came himself to Troyes as a point whence he could observe all that passed.

(A. D. 574.) It was in the year 574, that after a march of several days, the troops of the king of Austrasia arrived near Arcis-sur-Aube. Sighebert halted at this spot, and awaited the reports of his spies before he proceeded any further. To enter Hilperik's kingdom without changing his line of march, it was necessary to cross the Seine a little above where it was joined by the Aube, at a spot then called *Les douze Ponts*, and now Pont-sur-Seine; but all the bridges were broken down, and the boats carried away, while the king of Neustria was encamped at no great distance, prepared to give battle, if any one attempted to ford it.† Rather less than ten leagues southward, the Seine with its two banks formed a part of the states, or, as they were then called, the lot of Gonthramn. Sighebert did not hesitate to demand permission to pass through his territories. The message which he sent him was short and significative: "If you do not permit me to pass this river, which runs across your lot, I shall pass over you with my whole army."‡ The presence of

* Et unusquisque ferrum. quod contra se tenebat, pectori dignitur. Quibus interfectis, monachi ipsos et res suas ex alvo detrahentes, illos sepelientes, res suas domui restitunt. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. iv, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. ii p. 229.)

† Dum hæc agerentur, Sigibertus rex gentes illas quæ ultra Rhenum habentur commovet, et bellum civile ordinens, contra fratrem suum Chilpericum ire destinat (Ibid.)

‡ Nam ita Christiani sunt isti barbari, ut multos præcæ superstitionis ritus observent, humanas hostias alaque impia sacrificia divinationibus adhibentes (Procopius de Bello Gothico, lib. ii. cap. xxv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 37.)

* Quod audiens Chilpericus, ad fratrem suum Guntchramnum legatos mittit Qui conjuncti pariter fœdus ineunt, ut nullus fratrem suum perire sineret. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii p. 229.)

† Sed cum Sigibertus gentes illas adducens venisset, et Chilpericus de alia parte cum suo exercitu resideret, nec haberet rex Sigibertus, super fratrem suum iturus, ubi Sequanam fluvium transmearet — (Ibid.) Sigibertus cum exercitu Arciam recedens Chilpericus Duodecim Pontes . . . (Fredegarus Hist. Franc. Epitom. ibid., p. 402.)

‡ Fratri suo Guntchramno mandatum mittit, dicens: Nisi me permiseris per tuam sortem hunc fluvium transire, cum omni exercitu meo super te pergam. (Greg. Turon. loc. super. cit.)

this formidable army acted powerfully on king Gonthramn's imagination, and the same motives of fear which had determined him to coalesce with Hilperik, now induced him to break off that alliance, and violate his oath. All the accounts which he received from his spies and the people of the country, respecting the number and appearance of the Austrasian troops, presented to him in alarming colours the danger to which a refusal must expose him. In fact, if the armies of the Merovingian kings were usually without discipline, that one surpassed in ferocious turbulence all that had been seen since the period of the great invasions. The principal battalions consisted of the least civilized and least Christian part of the Frankish population, that which inhabited the country near the Rhine; and the greater part of the troops was a horde of barbarians in the fullest force of the term. They were the same wild savages who had overrun Gaul in the times of Attila and Chlodowig, and were only to be met with in popular tales of the times; warriors with long mustachios, and hair combed up to the top of their heads, who hurled their battle-axes into their enemies' faces, or harpooned them at a distance with their hooked javelins.* An army like this could not exist without pillage, even in a friendly country; but Gonthramn preferred exposing himself to depredation for a short time, rather than encounter the chances of invasion and conquest. He allowed them a passage, probably over the bridge of Troyes; and in that very town he had an interview with his brother Sighebert, to whom he swore inviolable peace and eternal friendship.†

At the news of this treachery, Hilperik hastened to leave the position he had taken up on the left bank of the Seine, and to reach the centre of his dominions by a hasty retreat. He marched, without halting, to the neighbourhood of Chartres, and encamped on the banks of the Loir, near the village of Avallocium, now called Alluye.‡ During this long march he was constantly followed, and closely pressed by the enemy's troops. Several times, Sighebert, thinking he was going to stop, called upon him, according to the Germanic custom, to name a day for the combat; but instead of answering, the king of Neustria quickened his pace and continued to march. Scarcely was he settled in his new quarters when a herald of the Austrasian army brought him the following message: "If you are not a *man of nothing*, prepare the field of battle, and accept the combat."§ Such

a challenge never remained unanswered by a man of Frankish race; but Hilperik had lost all his former pride. Therefore, after many vain efforts to escape his enemy, he was driven to extremity, and not possessing even the courage of a wild boar at bay, he had recourse to entreaties, and begged for peace upon any terms.

Sighebert, notwithstanding his violent disposition, was not ungenerous; he consented to forgive every thing, provided only the towns of Tours, Poitiers, Limoges, and Cahors, were given back to him without delay, and the army of Theodebert re-crossed the Loire.* Thus defeated by his own confession, and deprived for the second time of his hopes of conquest, Hilperik, like an animal caught in a snare, suddenly became more moderate; he even had one of those fits of good-nature, which, in the Germanic character, seemed to alternate with the most brutal ferocity, and the most cunning selfishness. He was uneasy as to the fate of the inhabitants of the four towns, which had submitted to him. "Forgive them," said he to his brother, "and do not lay the blame on them; for if they have been wanting in fidelity towards you, it was because I compelled them to it by fire and sword." Sighebert was humane enough to accept this apology.†

The two kings seemed sufficiently pleased with each other, but the Austrasian army was full of discontent. The men recruited in the countries beyond the Rhine, murmured at being disappointed, by an unexpected peace, of the booty which they had hoped to amass in Gaul. They were indignant at having been led so far from their homes without fighting or gaining any thing; and accused king Sighebert of having withdrawn from the field as soon as it became necessary to fight. All the camp was in commotion, and a violent outbreak was expected. The king, without betraying the smallest emotion, mounted on horseback, and galloping towards the groups of the most violent of the mutineers: "What is the matter," said he, "and what is it you ask?" "A battle!" was the cry on all sides. "Give us an opportunity of fighting and getting riches, otherwise we will not return to our own country."‡ This menace

petiit. (Greg. Turon., Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 229.) Man of nothing, *Nihtig, Nihiting, Niding*, according to the Germanic dialects; this formula was employed in challenges and proclamations of war

* Ille vero timens ne, confuso utroque exercitu, etiam regnum eorum conrueret, pacem petiit, civitatesque ejus, quas Theodobertus male pervaserat, reddidit (Greg. Turon. loc. sup. cit.)

† Deprecans ut nullo casu culparentur eorum habitatores; quos ille injuste igni ferroque opprimens adquisierat (Greg. Turon., Hist. Franc., lib. iv., and Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 229.)

‡ Tunc ex gentibus illis contra eum quidam murmura-verunt, cur se certamine subtraxisset. Sed ille, ut erat intrepidus, ascenso equo, ad eos dirigit. (Greg. Turon., Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 229.) Adversus Sigibertum rumorem levant, dicentes. Sicut promissisti, da nobis ubi rebus ditemur, aut preliemur; alioquin ad patriam non revertimur. (Fredegar. Hist. Franc. Epitom., ibid., p. 307.)

* See *Lettres sur l'Histoire de France*, lettre vi.

† Quod ille timens, sedus cum eodem init, eumque transire permittit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 229.)—Trecas junxerunt, et in ecclesia sancti Lupi sacramenta ut pacem servarent, dederunt (Fredegar. Hist. Franc. Epitom., ibid., p. 407.)—This author confuses facts in a most strange manner, but I have availed myself of the geographical indications he gives, and which are not to be met with elsewhere.

‡ Denique sentiens Chilpericus quod Guntchramnus, relicto eo, ad Sigibertum transisset, castra movit et usque Avallocium Carnotensem vicum abiit. (Greg. Turon. loc. sup. cit.)

§ Quem Sigibertus insecutus, campum sibi preparari

might have caused a new conquest in the midst of Gaul, and even the dismemberment of the Frankish government; but Sighebert was not in the least disconcerted by it; and by means of soothing words, and promises made with the appearance of firmness, he succeeded in calming the irritation of these savages without much trouble.

The camp was raised, and the army set out for the banks of the Rhine. They took the road to Paris, but did not pass through that town, for Sighebert, faithful to his engagements, respected its neutrality. The Austrasian troops ravaged all the places they passed on the road, and the environs of Paris suffered long from their passage. Most of the hamlets and villages were burnt, the houses pillaged, and a number of men made prisoners, nor was it possible for the king to prevent these excesses. "He spoke and entreated," says the ancient narrator, "that these things might not be, but he was unable to prevail against the determination of the people from the other side of the Rhine."^{*}

These heathens only entered the churches to rob them. In the rich basilica of Saint Denis, one of the captains of the army took a piece of silk worked in gold, and ornamented with precious stones, which covered the tomb of the martyr; another had the audacity to get on the tomb itself in order to reach and knock down with his lance a golden dove, the symbol of the Holy Ghost, which hung from the ceiling of the chapel.† These thefts and profanations exasperated Sighebert as a king and as a Christian; but, feeling that he had no authority over the minds of his soldiers, he acted towards them as his ancestor Chlodowig did towards the man who broke the vase of Reims. Whilst the army was on its march, he took no notice of what passed, but dissembled his anger; but when these unruly men, having returned to their tribes and homes, were dispersed, he had all those who had distinguished themselves by these acts of mutiny and plunder seized upon one by one, and put to death.‡ It appears that similar devastations took place at the passage of the Austrasian army on the northern frontier of Gonthramn's kingdom, and that this insult, which he felt keenly, caused disagreement between him and Sighebert. On the other hand, the pacific disposition of the king of Neustria did not last long; as soon as he found himself free from danger, he resumed his former plan, and again began to covet the towns of Aquitania, which he had possessed for a short time. The quarrel which had just broken out between his two brothers appeared to him a favourable opportunity for recommencing his projects of

conquest; he hastened to avail himself of it; and in less than a year after peace had been concluded, he wrote thus to Gonthramn: "Let my brother come to me, let us see each other, and be joined by the same common interest; let us fall upon our common enemy Sighebert."* This proposition was very well received; the two kings had an interview, made each other presents in token of friendship, and concluded an offensive alliance against their brother of Austrasia. Hilperik, full of confidence sent fresh troops towards the Loire under the command of his son Theodebert, who crossed the river for the second time in the year 575; he himself entered the territory of Reims, the western frontier of the kingdom of Austrasia, with a large army. His campaign was marked by havoc like that of Theodebert in Aquitania; he burned villages, destroyed harvests, and seized on every thing which could be taken away.†

The news of these depredations, and of the coalition formed against him, reached Sighebert at the same time. He had forgiven Hilperik, and resisted the prayers of his wife, who desired neither peace nor truce with the murderer of Galeswintha. His indignation was that of a violent but simple-hearted man, who discovers that his confidence has been abused. He burst into invectives and imprecations. But this boiling rage, a sort of fever which might be again calmed by the submission of the enemy, was too uncertain to satisfy Brunehilda. She employed all the influence she possessed over her husband, to insinuate into his mind some more settled plan of revenge, and to direct his resentment to one end, the death of his brother. To put the assassin to death was the cry of Galeswintha's sister, and this time Sighebert listened to her. It was in the hope of a single combat, in which one should fall, that he again proclaimed war against Hilperik amongst the oriental Franks and the tribes beyond the Rhine.‡

To incite these intractable people to fight desperately, the king of Austrasia promised them every thing; money, plunder, and even lands and cities in Gaul. He marched directly westward to the assistance of the province of Reims, which prevented all anxiety as to the way in which he should cross the Seine. At his approach, Hilperik avoided the combat as he had done in the preceding campaign, and retreated, following the course of the Marne towards the Lower Seine, till he could take up a favourable position. Sighebert pursued him as far as the walls of Paris; but he stopped there, tempted by the idea of occupying that

* Vicos quoque, qui circa Parisius erant, maxime tunc flamma consumpsit; et tam domus quam res reliquæ ab hoste direptæ sunt, ut etiam et captivi ducerentur. Obstatabatur enim rex ne hæc fierent, sed furorẽ gentium, quæ de ulteriore Ghent amnis parte venerant, superare non poterat. (Greg. Turon., Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallicæ et Francicæ, t. ii. p. 229.)

† Adriani Valesii Rer. Francicæ, lib. ix. p. 55.

‡ Sed omnia patienter ferebat, donec redire posset ad patriam Multos ex eis postea lapidibus obrui præcipiens. (Ibid.)

* Post annum iterum Chilpericus ad Guntchramnum fratrem suum legatos mittit, dicens: Veniat frater mecum, et videamus nos, et pacificati persequamur Sigibertum inimicum nostrum. (Ibid.)

† Quod cum fuisset factum, seque vidissent, ac muneribus honorassent, commoto Chilpericus exercitu, usque Rhenis accessit, cuncta incendens atque debellans. (Greg. Turon., Hist. Franc. lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallicæ et Francicæ, t. ii. p. 229.)

‡ Quod audirens Sigibertus, iterum convocatis gentibus illis, quod supra memoriam fecimus,.....contra fratrem suum ire disponit. (Ibid.)

town, which was then considered very strong, making it his head-quarters, and a place of refuge in case of necessity. However prudent this idea, the king of Austrasia, by following it, committed an act of temerity from which he would doubtless have shrunk, if his passion for revenge had not overcome in him all fears and scruples.

According to the treaty of division, concluded eight years before, Paris, though in three divisions, was nevertheless a neutral town, interdicted to each of Clothar's three sons by the most sacred oaths, and by all the terrors of religion. Until then, not one of them had dared to infringe this oath, or to brave the curses pronounced against him who should violate it. Sighebert had the courage to do so, preferring rather to peril his soul than neglect a single means of success. Paris was in fact necessary to him as a support, or to use a modern phrase, as the basis of his ulterior operations, either when acting in the west against Hilperik or in the south against Theodebert. He therefore summoned the town to surrender, and in spite of the treaty entered it without resistance, its sole guardians being Saint Polyeuctus, Saint Hilary, and Saint Martin.*

After establishing his quarters at Paris, king Sighebert's first occupation was to send troops against Hilperik's son, who, after traversing Aquitania by the same route as the preceding year, had just arrived at Limoges. Between the cities of Tours and Chartres, there was an extent of land containing the countries of Châteaudun and Vendôme, which belonged to the kingdom of Austrasia. Sighebert resolved to levy an army there, in order to spare the forces he had brought with him. His messengers went from town to town, publishing an edict which enjoined every free man to appear at the place of meeting, equipped as well as he could with arms of some sort, from the coat of mail and lance, to the cudgel shod with iron, or even the knife. But no one, either in towns or villages, answered this summons; and notwithstanding the fine of sixty golden sols ordered to be paid by those who resisted the royal mandate, the inhabitants of Châteaudun, of Vendôme, and of the environs of Tours, neither armed nor left their houses.† These people knew that their country formed a part of Sighebert's lot, and that the taxes levied on them found their way into the Austrasian treasury, but this was all; and as the king on whom they depended did not make them feel his administrative authority by any exercise of it, as this was the first order

they had ever received from him, they paid no regard to it.

If this passive resistance had lasted, the king of Austrasia would have been compelled to divide his forces. In order to put a stop to it, instantly and without violence, he sent there two of his cleverest negotiators, Godeghisel, mayor of the palace, and Gonthramn surnamed Bose, or the cunning, a man of readiness and intrigue, and gifted, notwithstanding his Germanic origin, with a suppleness of mind rarely found but in the Gallo-Roman race. The two Austrasian chiefs succeeded in their mission, and soon passed the Loire at the head of a native army, badly equipped, but sufficiently numerous not to fear a battle with Theodebert's Franks.*

These, already much alarmed by the news of the Austrasian invasion, were still more so when they learnt that troops were advancing against them, and that all retreat was cut off. But whatever might have been the discouragement of his soldiers, Theodebert, like a true Germanic chief, resolved to march upon the enemy.‡ He left Limoges, and took up his position on the banks of the Charente, eight or ten miles distant from Angoulême; during the march, so many of his men deserted, that when about to give battle, he found himself almost left alone; he fought, nevertheless, with great bravery, and was killed in the fray. The Gallic peasants who composed the army of Godeghisel and Gonthramn-Bose, had not, like the Franks, a kind of idolatrous feeling for the descendants of Merowig; without respect for the long hair which distinguished the son of king Hilperik, they stripped him with the other dead bodies, and left him naked on the field of battle. But an Austrasian chief named Arnulf was shocked by this profanation, and though Theodebert's enemy, he carried away the body of the young prince with respect; and having washed it, according to custom, and dressed it in rich garments, he caused it to be buried at his own expense in the town of Angoulême.‡

Meanwhile, king Gonthramn, once more giving way to fear, or his love of repose, had become reconciled with Sighebert. Hilperik learnt this new treachery at the same time as the death of his son, and the loss of his Aquitanian army. Reduced by this double calamity to a complete state of despair, and thinking only of saving his life, he left the banks of the Seine, travelled quickly through his kingdom, and took refuge within the walls of Tournai with his wife, his children, and his most faithful warriors.§ The

* Parisius venit. (Greg. Turon Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 229.) Ecce pactiones quæ inter nos factæ sunt, ut quisquis sine fratris voluntate Parisius urbem ingrederetur, amitteret partem suam, essetque Polyeuctus maritus, cum Hilario atque Martino confessoribus, iudex ac retributor ejus. Post hæc ingressus est in eam germanus meus Sigibertus, qui iudicio Dei interiit, amittit partem suam. . . juxta Dei judicium et maledictiones pactionum (Ibid., lib. vii. p. 295.)

† Mittens nuntios Dunensibus et Toronicis, ut contra Theodobertum ire deberent. Quod illi dissimulantes Leg. Ripuar., tit. lxx. Ibid. t. iv. p. 243. Leg. Wisigoth., lib. ix. Ibid. p. 425.

* Rex Godegiselmus et Guntchramnus duces in capite dirigit. Qui commoventes exercitum adversum cum pergunt. (Greg. Turon Hist. Franc., lib. iv., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 229.)

† At ille, derelictus a suis, cum paucis remansit: sed tamen ad bellum exire non dubitat. (Ibid.)

‡ Theodobertus devictus in campo prosternitur, et ab hostibus exanimis corpus, quod dici dolor est spoliatur. Tunc ab Arnulfo quodam collectus, ablatusque, ac dignis vestibus est indutus, et ad Ecolismensem civitatem sepultus (Ibid.)

§ Chilpericus vero cognoscens, quod iterum se Guntchramnus cum Sigiberto pacificasset, se infra Tornacen-

strength of this town, the first capital of the empire of the Franks, had determined him to choose it as an asylum. In expectation of a siege, he busied himself in assembling there both men and ammunition, whilst Sighebert, free in his movements throughout the whole extent of Neustria, seized upon the cities of that kingdom.

Having made himself master of those to the north and east of Paris, he marched westward, resolved to deliver up to his warriors from beyond the Rhine all he had just conquered, both lands and cities, in requital of their services. This project caused great anxiety to the Franks, even to those of the kingdom of Austrasia.* The Austrasians were little desirous of possessing as neighbours in Gaul, men whom they looked upon as their natural enemies; and on their side, the Neustrians saw themselves threatened with confiscation of property, political slavery, and all the evils usually produced by a change of masters. The former remonstrated with, and murmured against the king; the latter made an agreement with him. After deliberating on what was proper to be done in so perilous a conjuncture, the lords and *arimans* of Neustria addressed a message to Sighebert in the following terms: "The Franks, who formerly looked up to king Hildebert, and who have since become liege men to king Hilperik, now turn to thee, and propose, if thou wilt come to them, to elect thee as their king."†

Such was the somewhat singular language of Germanic policy, and it is in this way that the Franks exercised the right of leaving the prince who governed them, to acknowledge the authority of another descendant of Merowig. The regal power possessed by each of the sons of Chlothar consisted far less in the extent and riches of the provinces forming his kingdom, than in the number of fighting men who had placed themselves under his banner, and who, according to the Germanic expression, *obeyed his mouth*.‡ There was nothing fixed nor certain in this division of the Frankish population between the sovereigns whose subjects they were: it did not even correspond with the territorial division of each, as one prince might have

vassals in the kingdom of another. Amongst these vassals or *leudes*, the most devoted, the most useful, according to their expressions, were those who, living near the king, and forming a permanent guard round his person, had as salary the right of dining at his table, or on the produce of his estates. The faith of those who, living at a distance, and in their own homes, enjoyed, by royal permission, the *feud* or payment in land, was less to be depended on.* It was this latter class of men who, to save their property, deserted the cause of Hilperik, and offered the sovereignty to Sighebert; the former, more faithful, but less numerous, had followed the fugitive king to Tournai. Sighebert joyfully received the message and offer of the Neustrians, he engaged upon oath that no town should be given up to his soldiers, and promised to come to the assembly where he was to be inaugurated, according to the custom of his ancestors. He then went to Rouen to make a kind of military reconnoitring, and returned to Paris, after having assured himself that no strong town in the west was disposed to hold out against him. In order to guard against a return of brotherly affection on the part of her husband, and to superintend herself the fulfilment of her revenge, Brunehilda left the town of Metz to join Sighebert. She felt so assured of her triumph, that she chose to make this journey accompanied by her two daughters, Ingonda and Chlotheswinda, and her son Hildebert, a child of four years old. Her baggage-wagons contained great riches, and her most valuable ornaments in gold and precious stones.† It seems as if, with a woman's vanity, she wished to dazzle all eyes, and to show herself magnificent in her dress, as well as terrible to her enemies. This princess, still young, and of remarkable beauty, answered more to the idea the Gallic population had of a queen, according to the traditions of the Roman empire, than any other of the wives of the Merovingian monarchs. The daughter of a king, and born in a country where royalty, although of barbaric origin, was imperial in its appearance, she commanded respect as well by the dignity of her manners as the nobility of her birth. The day of her entry into Paris the inhabitants crowded to meet her, the clergy of the churches and the persons of senatorial family hastened to pay homage to her; but the man whose municipal and ecclesiastical dignities placed him at the head of the city, the bishop Germanus, now honoured as a saint, did not appear.

He was a man highly civilized, and deeply imbued with the Christian faith; one of those sensitive minds in whom the sight of the Roman world, governed by barbarians, caused ineffable disgust, and who wore himself out in a vain

sos muros cum uxore et filis suis communiuit (Ibid p. 230.)

* Sigibertus vero obtentis civitatibus illis, quæ citra Parisius sunt positæ, usque Rothomagensi urbem accessit, volens easdem urbes hostibus cedere; quod ne faceret, a suis prohibitus est (Ibid.)

† Tunc Franci, qui quondam ad Chilbertum adspexerant seniore ad Sigibertum legationem mittunt, ut ad eos veniens, derelictis Chilperico, super se ipsum regem stabilirent (Greg Turon Hist Franc, lib iv apud Script. Rer. Gallic et Francic, t. ii p. 230.) Convertimini ad me ut sub mea sitis defensione (Ibid lib ii, p. 184.)

‡ *Mund*, from which the words *mundeburdus*, *mundiburdium*, *mundeburde*, etc. are derived. Sub sermone tutionis nostræ visi fuimus recepisse, ut sub mundeburde vel defensione in Iustis viri illius majoris domus nostri. (Marculfi Formul lib. i. apud Script. Rer. Gallic et Francic, t. iv p. 447.) From certain roots in the Teutonic languages, it appears that the mouth was among the ancient Germans the symbol of authority, and the ear that of servitude

* Omnes causæ ejus aut amicorum suorum, tam illo- rum qui cum illo pergunt, quam qui ad propria eorum resident (Marculfi Formul lib. i. apud Script. Rer. Gallic et Francic t. iv. p. 447.)

† Regressus inde, Parisius est ingressus ibique ad eum Brunichildis cum filis venit (Greg Turon Hist Franc. lib iv apud Script. Rer. Gallic et Francic t. ii. p. 230.) Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic lib. ix. p. 57.

struggle against the violence and unruly passions of kings. From the commencement of the civil war, St. Germain had endeavoured to interpose as mediator between Hlperik and Sighebert; and at the arrival of the latter, he had in vain renewed his solicitations and remonstrances. Fatigue and discouragement affected his health; he fell ill, and in the midst of his corporeal sufferings, the present and future state of Gaul appeared to him in the darkest colours. "Why," said he, "have not we a moment of repose? Why can we not say, like the apostles, in the interval of two persecutions, Here at last are days which at least are bearable!"* Unable from illness to make Brunehilda listen to his exhortations in favour of peace, he addressed them to her by letter. This letter, which was conveyed to her by a clerk of Frankish origin, named Gondulf, and which has been preserved to us, begins with respectful excuses and protestations of attachment; and then proceeds in the following manner:—

"Shall I repeat the rumours which are spread abroad? They surprise me, and I should wish to keep them hidden from your piety. It is said that it is owing to your advice and instigation that the ever-glorious king Sighebert is so obstinately bent on the ruin of his country. If I mention these things, it is not that I put any faith in them; it is to entreat you to give no occasion for such imputations. Although it is very long since this country was happy, we do not despair that Divine Mercy will yet stop the arm of revenge, provided only those who rule are not themselves governed by thoughts of murder, by cupidity, the source of all evil; and by anger, which deprives men of their reason.†

"God knows, and that is enough for me, I have wished to die, that their lives might be prolonged. I have wished to die before them, that my eyes might not see their ruin, and that of this country. But they are never weary of quarreling and being at war, each one throwing the blame on the other, having no regard for the judgment of God, and unwilling to leave any thing to the decision of the Almighty. Since neither of them will condescend to listen to me, it is to you that I address my entreaties; for if, owing to their discord, the kingdom falls to ruin, it will be no great triumph for you and for your children. Let this country have to bless itself for having received you; show that you come to save, not to destroy it; by calming the king's anger, by persuading him to wait with patience for the judgment of God, you will put an end to the idle talk of the people.‡

* *Et tempore quando minor erat numerus populi Christiani, et cum Dei auxilio licebat residere quietum, tum apostoli dicebant. Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile, ecce nunc dies saluus. Nunc e contrario tan funestos et luctuosos ante oculos habentes dies, fientes dimus: Ecce dies tribulationis et perditionis nostræ (Germani Paris. episc. epist. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. iv. p. 80)*

† *Vulgi verba iterantes, quæ nos maxime terrent, vestra pietati in notitiam deponimus, quæ ita disseminata eloquentium ore detrahunt, quasi vestro voto, consilio et instigatione dominus gloriosissimus Sigibertus rex tam ardue hanc velit perdere regionem. (Ibid.)*

‡ *Ad hoc vos hæc regio suscepisse gratuletur, ut per*

"It is with grief that I write these things to you, for I know how kings and nations perish by offending God. Whoever trusts in the strength of his own arm, will be confounded, and will not obtain the victory; whoever reposes with confidence in the numbers of his followers, far from being removed from danger, perils his very life. Whoever is proud of his riches in gold and in silver, will meet with disgrace and desolation before his avarice is satisfied. This is what we read in the Scriptures. . . ."

"To vanquish a brother, to humble a family of relations, and to dissipate property acquired by our ancestors, is a victory without honour. Whilst fighting against each other, they fight against themselves; each one works to destroy his own happiness, and the enemy who looks on, approaches rejoicing to see them accomplishing their own destruction. . . We read that Queen Esther was the instrument chosen by God for the good of the whole nation: show your prudence and the sincerity of your faith by dissuading our lord, king Sighebert, from an enterprise condemned by the Divine law, and let the people enjoy the benefits of peace, until the Eternal Judge shall pronounce his sentence. Against the man who could lay aside all fraternal affection, who could despise the counsels of a wife, and refuse to acknowledge the truth, all the prophets raise their voices, all the apostles curse him, and God Himself, the All-Powerful, will judge him."‡

There was something imposing in the tone of sadness which pervades every phrase of this letter, in the somewhat haughty gravity of the style, and even in the disdainful way of speaking of kings without naming them, but all was in vain. Brunehilda possessed in the highest degree that vindictive and implacable temperament of which the old Germanic poetry has personified the type in a woman who bears the same name.† She cared neither for the menaces of religion, nor for the ancient warnings of human experience as to the instability of fortune. Far from reflecting on the truly critical situation in which she would be placed, if her husband were to suffer any reverse, she showed herself more impatient than ever to see him depart for Tournai, to strike a last blow, and complete his victory by the murder of his brother.

Sighebert first sent a part of his troops to surround Tournai, and commence its siege; he himself made his preparations for going to some spot where he might be inaugurated king of the

vassalutem, non interitum percipere videatur. In hoc populi restinguunt verba, si mitigatis furorẽ, si Dei facitus expectare iudicium. (Ibid. t. iv. p. 81)

* *Propterea hæc dolens scribo, quavideo qualiter præcipitatur et reges et populi, ut Dei incurrant offensam. (Ibid.)*

† *Inhonesta victoria est fratrem vincere, domesticas domos humiliare, et possessionem a parentibus constructam evertere. Contra semetipsos pugnant suamque felicitatem exterminant; de sua perditione gaudere accelerant inimicus. (Ibid.)*

‡ *The Brynhilda of the Scandinavian Edda, and the Brunhilt of the Niebelungen: this resemblance of names is purely accidental.*

western Franks.* Neither Paris nor any other town was suited to this ceremony, which was to take place in the open air in the midst of a camp. One of the fiscal domains of the kingdom of Neustria, that of Vitry-on-the-Scarpe, was chosen as the place of assembly, either because it was but at a short distance from Tournai, or because its northerly position made it a more convenient place of meeting for the Frankish population, which was more numerous towards the north. At the moment of departure, just as the king was setting out, escorted by his chosen body of horsemen, all regularly armed with painted bucklers, and lances with streamers, a pale man in sacerdotal vestments appeared before him; it was the bishop Germanus, who had risen from his bed of suffering to make one last and solemn appeal: "King Sighebert," said he, "if you go, laying aside the intention of putting your brother to death, you will return alive and victorious; but if you harbour any other thought, you will die; for the Lord hath said by the mouth of Solomon: 'Whoso diggeth a pit for his brother, shall fall into it himself.'"[†] The king was not in the least troubled by this unexpected address; his mind was made up, and he deemed himself sure of victory. Without answering a word, he passed on and soon lost sight of the gates of the town, in which his wife and children were to remain until his return. The passage of Sighebert through the kingdom which was about to belong to him by election, was like an anticipated triumph. The Gallic inhabitants, and the clergy of the towns, came out in procession to meet him, the Franks mounted on horseback to join the cavalcade. Everywhere acclamations resounded in the German and Latin languages.[‡]

From the banks of the Seine to those of the Somme, the Gallo-Romans predominated; but from the latter river northwards, traces of the Germanic race became more and more frequent. The further you advanced, the more numerous the Frankish population became as compared with the natives; they no longer formed small and scattered bands of idle warriors, as in the central provinces of Gaul; they were now to be seen in entire tribes and agricultural communities, living on the outskirts of the marshes and forests of Belgium. Vitry, near Donai, formed the boundary of these two regions; the northern Franks, labourers and farmers, and the southern ones, military vassals, were easily able to meet there to witness the coronation of their new king. Among the great proprietors and chiefs of the kingdom of

Neustria, one only, named Ansowald, was not at the meeting; his absence was remarked, and gained him much subsequent renown on account of his fidelity to the unfortunate.*

The ceremony took place in a plain surrounded by the tents and sheds of those who, unable to lodge in the houses, belonging to the domain of Vitry, were obliged to pass the night in the open air. The Franks, in arms, formed a large circle, in the midst of which king Sighebert placed himself, surrounded by his officers and nobles of high rank. Four robust soldiers advanced, holding a buckler, on which the king sat down, and which they then raised to the height of their shoulders. On this sort of walking throne, Sighebert made three times the round of the circle, escorted by the nobles, and saluted by the multitude, who to render their acclamations more noisy, applauded by striking the flats of their swords on their bucklers braced with iron.[†] After the third round, according to the Germanic rites, the inauguration was completed, and from that moment Sighebert had the right to call himself king of the Franks, both of the *Oster* and *Neoster-Rike*. The rest of that day, and several following ones, were passed in rejoicings, in mock fights, and sumptuous feasts, in which the king exhausted the provisions of the farm of Vitry, in doing the honours of his new kingdom to every comer.

A few miles from thence, Tournai, blockaded by the Austrasian troops, was the theatre of very different scenes. As far as the coarseness of his mind rendered him capable of moral suffering, Hilperik felt all the grief of a betrayed and deposed king; Fredegonda, in her fits of terror and despair, was like a wild animal. On her arrival within the walls of Tournai, she was *enceinte*, and near her confinement; she shortly after became the mother of a son in the midst of the tumult of a siege, with the fear of death haunting her day and night. Her first impulse was to abandon the child, which she looked upon as a fresh cause of danger, and let it perish for want of care and food; but this was only a passing thought, and maternal instinct soon recovered the ascendancy. This newborn infant, baptized by, and the godchild of the bishop of Tournai, received, contrary to the custom of the Franks, a name foreign to the Germanic language; that of Samson, which his parents, in their distress, chose as an omen of deliverance.[‡]

* Omnes Neustrasie ad eum venientes se sum ditioni subjecerunt. Ansowaldus tantum cum Chilperico remansit. (Fredegarii Hist. Franc. Epitom. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 407.)

† Veniente autem illo ad villam, cui nomen est Victoriacum, collectus est ad eum omnis exercitus, impositumque super clypeo sibi regem statuunt. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 230.)—Plaudentes tam palmis quam vocibus, eum clypeo evectum super se regem constituent. (Ibid., lib. ii. p. 184.)

‡ Quem mater ob metum mortis a se abiecit, et perdere voluit. Sed cui non potuisset, objurgata a rege, eum baptizari precepit. Qui baptizatus, et ab ipso episcopo susceptus... (Ibid. lib. v. t. ii. p. 249.)—Adrian Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. ix. t. ii. p. 60.

* Ille vero hæc audiens, misit qui fratrem suum in supra memorata civitate obsideret, ipse illic properare deliberans. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 230.)

† Si abieris, et fratrem tuum interficere nolueris, vivus et victor redibis; sin autem aliud cogitaveris, morieris. Sic enim Dominus per Salomonem dixit: Foveam quam fratri tuo parabis, in eam conruens. Quod ille, peccatis facientibus, audire neglexit. (Ibid.)

‡ Hinc cui barbaries, illinc romanica plaudit: Diversis linguis laus sonat una viri. (Fortunati Carmen de Chariberto rege, apud Bibl. Patrum, t. x. p. 560.)

The king, judging his position to be almost desperate, awaited the event with indifference; but the queen, more active minded, tormented herself in a thousand ways, made projects of escape, and observed every thing around her, to discover the slightest ray of hope. Amongst the men who had come to Tournai to follow the fortunes of their prince, she remarked two, whose countenances or conversation indicated a profound feeling of sympathy and devotion; they were two young men born in the country of Terouenne, Franks by origin, and disposed by their characters to that fanatical loyalty which was a point of honour with vassals in the middle ages. Fredegonda displayed all her address and the advantages which her rank gave her to secure the good will of these men; she sent for them, talked to them of her misfortunes and despair, plying them with strong liquors; and when she thought she had wrought them sufficiently to her purpose, she spoke of their going to Vitry to murder king Sighebert. The young soldiers promised to do what the queen commanded, and she then, with her own hands, gave them each a long knife in a sheath, what the Franks called a *skramasax*, of which, with an excess of precaution, she had poisoned the blades. "Go," said she, "and if you return alive, I will load you and your posterity with honours; if you fall, I will distribute alms for you in all holy places."*

The two young men left Tournai, and giving themselves out as deserters, they passed the out-posts of the Austrasians, and took the road which led to the royal domain of Vitry. When they arrived there, the halls re-echoed with the mirth of feasts and banquets. They said they belonged to the kingdom of Neustria; that they came to do homage to king Sighebert, and to speak to him. In these days of his new dignity, Sighebert was obliged to be affable, and to give audience to whoever should ask of him justice and protection. The Neustrians solicited a moment's conversation apart, which was easily granted them; the knife which each carried at his waist did not excite the smallest suspicion, it being a part of the Germanic costume. Whilst the king was graciously listening to them, one standing at his right hand, the other at his left, they both at the same moment drew their *skramasax*, and stabbed him in the ribs. Sighebert uttered a shriek, and fell down dead. At this cry, Hareghisel, the king's chamberlain, and a Goth named Sighilo, rushed in with their swords drawn; the former was killed, and the latter wounded by the assassins, who defended themselves with all the fury of despair. But other armed men hastened in, the chamber became full,

and the two Neustrians, attacked on all sides, soon fell in this unequal struggle.*

At the news of these events, the Austrasians who were besieging Tournai hastened to collect their baggage, and regain the road to their own country. Each was anxious to go and see what was going on at home; for the sudden death of the king would naturally cause in Austrasia a vast deal of disorder, violence, and rapine. This numerous and terrible army thus disappeared in the direction of the Rhine, leaving Hilperik without an enemy to oppose him, and free to go wherever he liked. Having escaped an almost certain death, he left the walls of Tournai to return and take possession of his kingdom. The domain of Vitry, the scene of so many events, was the first place he went to. But he only found there a few Austrasian servants watching the corpse of Sighebert, instead of the brilliant assembly of Neustrians, who had returned to their own homes. Hilperik saw his brother's body without either hatred or remorse, and he determined that the funeral should be worthy of a king. By his order, Sighebert was clad in garments and arms of great price, according to the Germanic custom, and buried with pomp in the village of Lambres on the Scarpe.†

Such was the end of this long drama, which begins with a murder and ends with one; a real tragedy in which nothing is wanting, neither passions, characters, nor that dark fatality which was the soul of ancient tragedy, and which gives the grandeur of poetry to the accidents of real life. There is no history more forcibly stamped with the seal of an irresistible destiny, than that of the kings of the Merovingian dynasty. These sons of half savage conquerors, born with the ideas of their fathers, in the midst of the enjoyments of luxury and the temptations of power, had neither rule nor measure in their passions and desires. It was in vain for men more enlightened than themselves in the affairs of this world, and the conduct of life, to raise their voices and counsel moderation and prudence; they listened to nothing; they ruined themselves through want of understanding, and it was said: The hand of God is there. Such was the Christian formula; but to those who saw them blindly following the current of their brutal instincts and disorderly passions, like a boat carried away from the shore by the stream, it was easy, without being prophets, to guess and predict the end which awaited almost every one of them.

* Tunc duo pueri cum cultris validis, quos vulgo *skramasaxos* vocant, infectis veneno, maleficati a Fredegunde regina (Greg Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii p. 230.) Tunc Fredegundis memor artium suarum inebriavit duos pueros tarwunnenses, dixitque eis: Ite ad cuneum Sigiberti eumque interficite. Si evaderitis vivi, ego mirifice honorabo vos et sobolem vestram, si autem corrueritis, ego pro vobis elemosynas (Gesta Reg. Franc., ibid p. 562.) *Skramasax* means a knife.

* Cum alliam causam se gerere simularent, utraque ei latera feriunt. At ille vociferans, atque corruens, non post multo spatium emisit spiritum. ibique et Charegisilus cubicularius ejus conruit. ibi et Sigila, qui quondam ex Gothia venerat, multum laceratus est. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii p. 230.) Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. ix. t. ii p. 61.

† Chilpericus autem in ancipiti casu defixus, in dubium habebat an evaderet, an periret, donec ad eum missi veniunt de fratris obitu nuntiantes. Tunc egressus a Turnaco cum uxore et filius, eum vestitum apud Lambres vicum sepelivit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iv. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii p. 230.)

(A. D. 580.) One day that Hilperik's family, re-established in its grandeur, resided at the palace of Braine, two Gallic bishops, Salvius of Alby and Gregory of Tours, after having had an audience, were walking together round the palace. In the midst of the conversation, Salvius, as if struck with an idea, suddenly stopped and said to Gregory, "Dost thou not see something above the roof of that building?" "I

see," said the bishop of Tours, "the new balcony which the king has had built there." "And seest thou nothing else?" "Nothing," replied Gregory; "if thou seest any thing else, tell me what it is." Bishop Salvius sighed deeply, and said, "I see the sword of God's anger suspended over this house."* Four years afterwards, the king of Neustria perished by a violent death.

THIRD NARRATIVE.

575—578.

THE HISTORY OF MEROWIG, THE SECOND SON OF KING HILPERIK.

(A. D. 575.)—EVER since the departure of Sighebert, Brunehilda had remained alone at Paris, nourishing ambitious hopes which the events of each day seemed to confirm, and already in imagination both queen of Neustria and mistress of the fate of her enemies, when the news of Sighebert's death reached her; an event by which she was suddenly cast down from the highest pitch of prosperity, and reduced to a state of extreme and imminent danger. Hilperik, victorious through the murder of his brother, advanced toward Paris in order to seize on the family and treasures of Sighebert. Not only did all the Neustrians, without exception, return to their allegiance, but the defection extended to the principal Austrasians, who meeting him on the way, swore fidelity to him, either in hopes of obtaining some of the fiscal lands in return, or to assure themselves of protection in the troubles with which their country was threatened. One noble, named Godin or Godewin, received extensive territories in the neighbourhood of Soissons, as the reward of his defection; and the keeper of the royal ring or great seal of Austrasia, the referendary Sig or Sigoald, and many others, followed the same example.*

Bowed down by her misfortune and this melancholy news, Brunehilda knew not what to decide upon, and there was no one in whom she could trust. The old imperial palace which she inhabited on the banks of the Seine had already become a prison for her and her three children; for, although she was not openly

watched, she did not dare to leave it and take the road to Austrasia, for fear of being seized or betrayed in her flight, and thus aggravating the dangers of a situation already sufficiently perilous.† Convinced of the impossibility of flight with her family and baggage, she conceived the idea of saving at least her son, who, although a child, stood too much in the way of Hilperik's ambition for his life to be spared. The escape of young Hildebert was planned with the most profound secrecy by the only devoted friend his mother still possessed: this was the duke Gondobald, the same who, two years before, had so ill defended Poitou against the invasion of the Neustrians. The child was placed in a large basket which usually held the household provisions, let down from the window, and carried out of the town by night. Gondobald, or, according to other accounts, a servant, who was less likely to excite suspicion, travelled alone with the son of king Sighebert, and conducted him to Metz, to the great astonishment and delight of the Austrasians. His unexpected arrival altered the state of things entirely; the defection ceased, and the oriental Franks proceeded at once to restore their national dynasty. A great assembly of the nobles and warriors of Austrasia took place at Metz; Hildebert the Second, not quite five years old, was

* Godinus autem, qui a sorte Sigiberti se ad Chilpericum transtulerat, et multis ab eo muneribus locupletatus est. Villis vero quas ei rex a fisco in territorio Suesionico indulserat. (Ibid. lib. v. t. ii. p. 233.) Sigo quoque referendarius, qui annulum regis Sigiberti tenuerat, et ab Chilperico rege provocatus erat. Multi autem et alii de his qui se de regno Sigiberti ad Chilpericum tradiderant. (Ibid. p. 234.) Sig is a familiar diminutive.

* Tunc remoti paululum, dum hinc inde sermocinamur, ait mihi: Videasne super hoc tectum quæ ego suspicio? Cui ego: Video enim supertegulum, quod nuper rex poni jussit. Et ille: Aliud. Inquit, non adspicis? Cui ego: Nihil aliud enim video. Suspiciabar enim quod aliquid joculariter loqueretur, et adjeci: Si tu aliquid magis cernis, enarra. At ille, alta trahens suspiria, ait: Video ego evaginatum iræ divinæ gladium super domum hanc dependentem. (Ibid. lib. v. t. ii. p. 264.)

† Igitur, interempto Sigiberto rege, Brunehildis regina cum filio Parisius residebat. Quod factum cum ad eam perlatum fuisset, et conturbata dolore et luctu, quid ageret ignoraret. (Ibid.)

there proclaimed king, and a council was chosen from amongst the bishops and principal men to govern in his name.*

At this news, which deprived him of all hopes of uniting his kingdom to his brother's without war, Hilperik, furious at the failure of his favourite scheme, hastened to Paris to seize at least the person and treasures of Brunehilda.† The widow of king Sighebert soon found herself in presence of her mortal enemy, with no other protection than her beauty, her tears, and feminine coquetry. She was scarcely eight-and-twenty; and whatever might be the evil intentions the husband of Fredegonda entertained towards her, probably the grace of her manners, so lauded by her contemporaries, would have made some impression on him, even had he not been attracted by other charms, those of the treasures which she was known to possess. But Merowig, the eldest of the sons of the king of Neustria, who accompanied their father, was deeply touched at the sight of this fascinating and unfortunate woman, and his looks of pity and admiration did not escape Brunehilda.

Either because the young man's sympathy was a consolation to the imprisoned queen, or because, with the quick glance of a woman fertile in resources, she saw in it a means of safety, she employed all her address to encourage this infant passion, which soon grew into the most blind and violent love. (A.D. 576.) By giving himself up to it, Merowig became the enemy of his own family, causing thereby an irreparable breach between himself, his father, and all connected with him. Perhaps he was not himself conscious of the criminality and danger of such a position; or perhaps, foreseeing the consequences, he yet determined to brave every thing, and follow, without fear or remorse, wherever his will and inclination might lead him. However this might be, and whatever the degree of attention shown by Merowig to his uncle's widow, Hilperik saw nothing of it; he was too much occupied in looking over and taking an inventory of the bags of gold and silver, the coffers of jewels, and the bales of rich stuffs.‡ It happened that their number exceeded his hopes, and this fortunate discovery had an immediate influence on his temper, rendering him more mild and merciful towards his prisoner. Instead of cruelly wreaking his vengeance upon her for the ill she had wished him, he contented himself with exiling her by way of punishment, and with a sort of courtesy even restored to her a small

portion of the treasure of which he had despoiled her. Brunehilda, more humanely treated than her own conscience told her she deserved, departed under escort for Rouen, which was assigned to her as a place of banishment. The only really painful trial she had to go through after so many alarms, was her separation from her two daughters, Ingonda and Chlodowinda, whom king Hilperik, no one knew why, sent to Meaux and detained as prisoners there.*

This departure left young Merowig tormented by pangs all the more acute for his not daring to confide them to any one; he followed his father to the palace of Braine, a place always dull, and which now appeared to him insupportable.

Fredegonda entertained towards her husband's children a stepmother's hatred, which might have become proverbial, even had she been the only example of it. All their father's tenderness or kindness to them excited jealousy and anger in her. She longed for all their deaths, and that of Theodebert in the preceding year had caused her much delight.† Merowig as the future head of the family, was at present the principal object of her aversion, and of the numberless persecutions with which she contrived to harass those whom she hated. The young prince wished to leave Braine and go to Rouen, to her whose looks and, perhaps, words, had told him that he was beloved; but he had neither pretext nor means to enable him successfully to attempt this journey. His father, unconscious of what he was doing, soon furnished him with an opportunity.

Hilperik, who was persevering in his plans more from dullness of apprehension than from energy of character, after having settled the affairs of Neustria in the best way he could, began to meditate another attempt on those towns which had been already the subject of a two years' war between his brother and himself. These towns, which the Austrasian generals had regained a little before Sighebert's death, had just acknowledged the authority of his son, with the exception of Tours, the inhabitants of which, become more cautious, took the oath of fidelity to King Hilperik, because they were nearer the centre of Neustria. The attempt so often repeated upon Poitiers, Limoges, Cahors and Bordeaux, was once more to be renewed. Hilperik chose for the command of this expedition the one of the two sons who remained to him after the death of Theodebert, who had not been defeated; this was Merowig. His father entrusted him with a small army and ordered him to march into Poitou at its head.‡ This was not the direction the young man would have preferred to follow if he had been free to march where he pleased; for his heart was full of a passion very different from that of glory and battles. Whilst marching slowly by the Loire with his

* Gondobaldus dux adprehensum Childebitum filium ejus parvulum furtim abstulit. ereptumque ab imminenti morte, collectisque gentibus super quas pater ejus regnum tenuerat, regem instituit, vix lustro ætatis suo jam peracto. (Ibid. p. 233.) Sed factione Gondoldi ducis, Childebitus in pera positus, per fenestram a puero acceptus est, et ipse puer singulus eum Mettis exhibuit. (Fredegarii Hist. Francor. Epitom. ibid., p. 407.)

† Chilpericus rex Parisius venit, adprehensamque Brunichildem... thesaurosque ejus quos Parisius detulerat, abstulit. (Greg. Turon. loc. supr. cit.)

‡ Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 245.

* Brunichildem apud Rotomagensis civitatem in exilium truxit. Filias vero ejus Meidis urbe teneri præcepit. (Ibid. p. 233.)

† Eo quod Guntchramnus (dux) Fredegundis reginæ occultis amicitius potiretur pro interfectione Theodoberti. (Ibid. p. 246.)

‡ Chilpericus vero filium suum Merovechum cum exercitu Pictavis dirigit. (Ibid. p. 233.)

horse and foot soldiers, he thought of Brunehilda and regretted that he was not pursuing a road by which he should be nearer to her. This idea, which haunted him incessantly, soon made him lose sight of the object of his expedition, and of the mission with which he was entrusted. On arriving at Tours, instead of a simple halt, he made a stay in that city of several weeks, giving as an excuse his wish to celebrate the festival of Easter in the basilica of Saint Martin.* During this interval of repose, he employed his leisure, not in preparing the plan of his campaign, but in arranging projects of escape, and how to collect for himself a treasure which, consisting of objects of great value but small bulk, could be the most easily transported. Whilst his soldiers overran the environs of the city, pillaging and ravaging everywhere, he took every thing he could lay hands upon from Leudast, Count of Tours, a devoted partisan of his father, who had received him in his house with the utmost hospitality.† After plundering this house of every thing valuable it contained, and finding himself master of a sum sufficient for his purpose, he left Tours under pretence of visiting his mother, who had been a nun in the Mans ever since Hilperik had repudiated her to marry Fredegonda. But instead of fulfilling this filial duty, and then returning to his army, he passed on, and took the road to Rouen through Chartres and Evreux.‡

Whether Brunehilda expected this proof of affection, or whether the arrival of Hilperik's son was a matter of surprise to her, she was so much rejoiced at it, and their mutual attachment made such rapid progress, that in a few days the widow of Sighebert had entirely forgotten her husband and consented to marry Merowig.§ This marriage, on account of the affinity of the parties, was one of those unions prohibited by the laws of the church; and although religious scruples had little hold on the consciences of the two lovers, they ran the risk of being disappointed in their wishes, from the difficulty of finding a priest who would exercise his functions in open violation of canonical rules. The bishop of the metropolitan church of Rouen at that time was Prætextatus, of Gallic origin, and who, by a curious accident was Merowig's godfather, and who, in consequence of this spiritual paternity, had felt the affection of a father for him ever since the day of his baptism.¶ This kind-hearted but weak-minded man was unable to resist the pressing entreaties, and, perhaps, the unruly passions of

the young prince, whom he called his son; and notwithstanding the duties of his order, he consented to celebrate and bless the marriage of the nephew with the uncle's widow.

During this relapse of Gaul into barbarism, the impatience and neglect of all authority were the vices of the age; and in all minds, even the most enlightened, individual caprice or the enthusiasm of the moment, took the place of law and order. The natives only followed too well in that respect the example of the Germanic conquerors, so that the supineness of these, no less than the ferocity of the others, contributed to the same end. Blindly yielding to a feeling of sympathy, Prætextatus secretly celebrated the marriage between Merowig and Brunehilda, and holding the hands of the lovers according to the custom of the epoch, he pronounced the sacramental formula of the nuptial benediction, an act of weakness, which was one day to cost him his life, and of which the consequences were not less fatal to the rash young man for whom he had performed it.*

Hilperik was at Paris, full of hope for the success of the Aquitanian expedition, when he received the unexpected account of his son's flight and marriage. His anger was mixed up with suspicions of treachery and fear of some conspiracy against his person and power. In order to defeat it, if there was still time to do so and to withdraw Merowig from the influence and bad counsel of Brunehilda, he immediately set out for Rouen, resolved to separate them and break off their connection.† In the meantime, the newly married lovers, entirely absorbed in the first delights of their marriage, had thought of nothing but love, and notwithstanding her active mind and fertility in expedients, the arrival of the King of Neustria found Brunehilda quite unprepared. To avoid falling into his hands in the first heat of his anger, and to gain time if possible, she and her husband took refuge in the little church of Saint Martin, built on the ramparts of the town. It was one of those wooden basilicas then common all over Gaul, and which from their height, their pillars formed by several trunks of trees fastened together and the arches necessarily pointed on account of the difficulty of rounding them with such materials, furnished in all probability the original type of the pointed style, which some centuries afterwards prevailed in architecture.‡ Although such an asylum was very inconvenient, on account of the insufficiency of the accommodations, which, adjoining the walls of the little church, and participating in its privileges, served as a place of retreat for fugitives, Merowig and Brunehilda determined not to leave the spot, so long as they had any reason to suppose

* At ille, relicta ordinatione patris, Turonis venit ibique et dies sanctos Paschæ tenuit. (Ibid.)

† Multum enim regionem illam exercitus ejus vastavit. (Ibid.) Advéniente autem Turonis Merovecho, omnes res ejus (Merovechus) usquequaque diripuit. (Ibid. p. 261.)—See fifth Narrative.

‡ Ipse vero simulans ad matrem suam ire velle, Rothomagum petiit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. ii. p. 233.)

§ Et ibi Brunehildæ reginæ conjungitur, eamque sibi in matrimonio sociavit. (Ibid.)

¶ Proprium mihi esse videbatur, quod filio meo Merovecho erat, quem de lavacro regenerationis excepi. (Ibid. p. 245.)

* See the fourth Narrative.

† Hæc audiens Chilpericus, quod scilicet contra fas legemque canonicam uxorem patris accepisset, valde amarus, dicto citius ad supra memoratum oppidum dirigit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. t. ii. p. 233.)

‡ At illi cum hæc cognovissent, quod eosdem separare decerneret, ad basilicam sancti Martini, quæ super muros civitatis ligneis tabulis fabricata est, confugium faciunt. (Ibid.)

themselves in danger. It was in vain that the King of Neustria used all sorts of stratagems to induce them to leave it; they did not suffer themselves to be deceived, and as Hilperik did not dare to use violence, for fear of drawing down the terrible vengeance of Saint Martin upon his head, he was obliged to make a capitulation with his son and daughter-in-law. Before giving themselves up, however, they exacted an oath from the king that he would not employ his authority to separate them. Hilperik made this promise, but in a manner so adroitly perfidious that it left him at liberty to act as he pleased; he swore that he would not separate them, if such was the word of God.* However ambiguous the terms of this oath, the fugitives were satisfied with them, and partly through weariness partly through persuasion, they left the sacred precincts to which the church of Saint Martin of Rouen communicated its right of sanctuary. Hilperik, a little re-assured by his son's submissive behaviour, prudently dissembled his anger and concealed his suspicions; he even embraced the bride and bridegroom and sat down to dinner, assuming a tone of paternal kindness towards them. After two or three days passed in the most intense dissimulation, he suddenly carried off Merowig and proceeded with him on the road to Soissons, leaving Brunehilda at Rouen more strictly guarded than before.†

A few miles from Soissons, the King of Neustria and his young travelling companion were stopped by the disagreeable intelligence that the city was besieged by an Austrasian army, and that Fredegonda, who was there at the time waiting the return of her husband, had scarcely time to fly with her step-son Chlodowig and her own child still in its cradle. Other and more positive accounts left no doubt as to the parties concerned in this unexpected attack. These were the Austrasian deserters, who with Godewin and Sigould at their head, had abandoned Hilperik for young Hildebert the Second, and before returning to their own country, thought proper to commemorate this act of repentance by an insolent attack upon the capital of Neustria. Their small army was composed principally of the inhabitants of the Rhenish province, a turbulent race, who as soon as they heard of a war with the Neustrians, crossed the frontiers to plunder the territory of the enemy.‡ King Hilperik had no difficulty in assembling a larger army in Paris and Soissons. He marched at once to the relief of the besieged city; but

instead of at once attacking the Austrasians, he contented himself with displaying his troops, and sending them a message, hoping they might be induced to retire without a battle. Godewin and his companions answered that they came there to fight. But they fought with bad success, and Hilperik, for the first time a conqueror, entered the capital of his kingdom in triumph.*

His joy, however, was of short duration. Other and graver considerations soon rendered him anxious and uneasy. It occurred to him that the attempt of the Austrasians against Soissons, might be the result of a plot formed by Brunehilda's intrigues, that Merowig knew of it, and was even concerned in it, and that his apparent sincerity and submissive deportment were only a mask put on to deceive him.† Fredegonda took advantage of this opportunity to blacken the young man's imprudent conduct by false insinuations. She attributed to him ambitious designs of which he was utterly incapable; that his object was nothing less than to depose his father and reign over the whole of Gaul, with the woman to whom he had united himself by an incestuous marriage. In consequence of these artful representations, the suspicions and want of confidence of the king increased to such a degree as almost to become a panic terror. Imagining his life to be endangered by the presence of his son, he deprived him of his arms and ordered him to be closely watched until some definitive arrangement should be made respecting him.‡

Some days afterwards, an embassy, sent by the nobles who governed Austrasia in the name of young Hildebert, and commissioned to disavow the attempt of Godewin as an act of private warfare, arrived in the presence of Hilperik. The king affected such a love of peace, and so much friendship for his nephew, that the envoys were emboldened to add to their apologies a demand, the success of which was very doubtful, that of the liberation of Brunehilda and her two daughters. In any other circumstances, Hilperik would not, at the first request, have given up an enemy who had fallen into his hands; but, struck with the idea that Merowig's wife would overthrow his kingdom, he seized the occasion of doing an act of prudence with a good grace, and without hesitation granted what was asked of him.§

* Quod ut Chilpericus rex compertit, cum exercitu illuc direxit, mittens nuntios ne sibi injuriam facerent.... Illi autem, hæc negligentes, præparantur ad bellum, commissioque prælo invaluit pars Chilperici.....Fugatisque reliquis, Suessionas ingreditur. (Ibid.)

† Quæ postquam acta sunt, rex, propter conjugationem Brunichildis, suspectum habere capit Merovechum filium suum, dicens hoc prælium ejus nequitia surrexisse. (Ibid.)

‡ Spoliatumque ab armis, datis custodiibus, libere custodiri præcepit, tractans quid de eo in posterum ordinaret. (Ibid. p. 233) Adriani Valenti Rer. Francic., lib. x. p. 73

§ Tunc quoque Chilpericus legationem suscepit Chilberti junioris, nepotis sui, petentis matrem suam sibi reddi Brunichildem. Cujus ille non aspernatus preces, eam cum munere pacis poscenti remisit filio. (Aimoin, de Gest. Franc., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iii. p. 73.)

* Rex vero adventens, cum in multis ingeniis eos exinde auferre mitteretur et ille dolose eum putantes facere, non crederent, juravit eis, dicens: Si, inquit, voluntas Dei fuerit, ipse hos separare non conaretur. (Ibid.)

† Hæc illi sacramenta audientes, de basilica egressi sunt, ex-usculationisque et dignenter acceptis, epulavit cum eis. Post dies vero paucos, assumpto secum rex Merovecho, Suessionas rediit. (Ibid.)

‡ Collecti aliqui de Campania, Suessionas urbem aggrediuntur, fugataque ex ea Fredegonda regina, atque Chlodovecho filio Chilperici, volebant sibi subdere civitatem... Godinus autem caput belli istius fuit. (Ibid.)—Siggo quoque referandarius. ad Chilbertum regem Sigiberti filium, relicto Chilperico, transiit (Ibid. p. 234.)

At this unhopèd-for repeal of the orders which kept her in exile, Brunehilda quitted Rouen and Neustria as hastily as if the earth trembled under her feet. Fearful of the least delay, she hurried the preparations for her departure, and resolved even to set off without her baggage, which was still of great value, notwithstanding the vast losses she had sustained. Several thousands of gold pieces, and many bales containing jewels and valuable tissues, were by her orders confided to the care of the bishop Prætextatus, who, by accepting this rich deposit, compromised himself a second time, and still more deeply than he had done before, for the sake of his godson Merowig.* Having left Rouen, the mother of Hildebert the Second went to meet her two daughters at Meaux; then avoiding Soissons, she took the road to Austrasia, where she arrived without obstacle. Her presence, so strongly desired in that country, soon became the cause of great troubles, by exciting the jealousy of the powerful and ambitious chiefs, who wished the care of the young king to remain in their hands alone.

Brunehilda's departure neither put a stop to king Hilperik's mistrust, nor to the rigorous measures against his eldest son. Merowig, deprived of his arms and military baldric, which among the Germans was deemed a sort of civic degradation, was still kept in confinement and carefully guarded. As soon as the king had recovered from the agitation into which these events, following each other so rapidly, had thrown him, he returned once more to his beloved project of conquering the five cities of Aquitania, of which Tours was the only one in his possession. Having no longer a choice between his two sons, he gave Chlodowig the command of this new expedition, notwithstanding his former misfortune. The young prince was ordered to march upon Poitiers, and assemble as many men as he was able in Touraine and Anjou.† Having levied a small army, he took Poitiers without resistance, and was there joined by a larger force from the south, under the command of a powerful chief of Gallic origin, named Desiderius.

He was a man of high birth, the proprietor of large estates in the neighbourhood of Alby, turbulent and recklessly ambitious, as all men were at that time, but superior to his rivals of barbaric origin, from his extended views and turn for military affairs. As governor of a district near the frontiers of the Goths, he had made himself formidable to that nation, the enemy of the Gallo-Franks, and had acquired great renown and influence amongst the southern Gauls by many brilliant actions.‡ The large number

of well equipped men, who, under his orders, joined the Neustrian army, was due to this influence; and from the moment that the two forces were united, Desiderius took the command of the whole. Looking as a warrior and a politician on the plan of taking four towns, separated by considerable distances, one by one, as utterly contemptible, he substituted for Hilperik's projects a plan for subjugating the whole of the country which lies between the Loire, the ocean, the Pyrenees, and the Cevennes. This project of territorial invasion made no sort of distinction between the cities dependant on Austrasia and those which belonged to Gonthramn; accordingly Desiderius did not spare the latter, but began by taking possession of Saintes, which opened to him the road to Bordeaux.*

At the news of this unexpected aggression, king Gonthramn for the second time roused himself from his habitual inaction, and hastily dispatched with a sufficient body of forces Eonius Mummolus, a patrician of Provence, who had throughout Gaul the reputation of being invincible. Mummolus advanced through the plain of Auvergne by forced marches, entered the territory of Limoges, and forced Desiderius to abandon the western part of the country for the purpose of marching against him.† The two armies, commanded by men of Gallic race, were soon in presence of each other; and a pitched battle was fought, one of those battles which had not been seen in Gaul since Roman tactics had been supplanted by a warfare of skirmishes and surprises, the only one which the Barbarians could comprehend. The victory was long undecided, but it remained, as usual, in the hands of Mummolus, who compelled his adversary to retreat after a fearful carnage. The chronicles speak of five thousand men killed on one side, and twenty-four thousand on the other. This it is difficult to believe; but the exaggeration shows the impression it made on those who lived at the time.

Seeing the Neustrian army thus completely destroyed, Mummolus retreated in his turn, either because such were his instructions, or because he thought he had done enough.‡ Although victorious, he conceived a great respect for the talents of his opponent; and later, this opinion served to unite them in an enterprise of no less importance than the founding a new kingdom in the Gallic territory. In a short time Desiderius was at the head of a new army, and aided by sympathy arising from their common origin and his own personal credit with the Gallo-Romans, he renewed his military opera-

dux, Gothis satis infestus (Chron. Joannis Beclariensis apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 21.)

* Usque Santonas transit, eamque pervasit (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 239.)

† Mummolus vero, patricius Guntchramni regis, cum magno exercitu usque Lemovicinum transit, et contra, Desiderium, ducem Chilperici regis, bellum gessit. (Ibid.)

‡ In quo prælio cecidere de exercitu ejus quinque milia; de Desideri vero viginti quatuor milia. Ipse quoque Desiderius fugiens vix evasit. Mummolus vero patricius per Arvernum rediit. (Ibid.)

* Duo volucla speciebus et diversis ornamentis referta quæ adprecabantur amplius quam tria milia solidorum. Sed et sacculum cum numismatis auri pondere tenentem quasi milia duo quia res ejus, id est quinque sarcinas, commendatas habere (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 245.)

† Chilpericus rex Chlodovechum filium suum Turonis transmisit. Qui, congregato exercitu, in terminum Turonicum et Andegavum (Ibid. p. 239.)

‡ Ibid. lib. viii. t. ii. p. 332. Desiderius Francorum

tions with uninterrupted success. Five years afterwards, all the cities, from Dax to Poitiers, and from Alby to Limoges, belonged to the king of Neustria; and the Roman conqueror was installed in Toulouse, the ancient capital of the Visigoths, where with the title of duke he became a sort of viceroy.* Merowig had already passed several months in a state of semi-captivity, when his doom was pronounced by domestic authority, in which the voice of his step-mother Fredegonda prevailed. This decree, against which there was no appeal, condemned him to lose his hair, that is, to be cut off from the family of the Merowigs. According to an ancient custom, most probably once a part of some religious institution, long hair, preserved untouched by scissors from the moment of birth, was the peculiar attribute of this family, and the symbol of its hereditary right to the royal dignity. The descendants of the first Merowig were thus distinguished from all the other Franks; under the most miserable dress, they were always to be known by their hair, which, sometimes in plaits, sometimes floating at liberty, covered their shoulders and descended to the middle of their loins.† To deprive them of the smallest portion of this ornament, was to profane their persons, deprive them of the privilege of receiving the communion, and suspend their rights to sovereignty; a suspension which custom tolerantly limited to the time necessary for the hair to grow to a certain length.

A Merovingian prince might suffer this temporary forfeiture in two ways; either his hair was cut according to the manner of the Franks, to cover the neck, or else it was cropped quite short, in the Roman fashion; and this sort of degradation, more humiliating than the other, was usually accompanied by ecclesiastical tonsure. Such was the severe sentence passed upon his son by king Hilperik; the young man lost at the same time the right of reigning and that of bearing arms. He was forced to become a priest against his own inclination, contrary to the canons of the church, and compelled to deliver up the sword and military baldric which had been solemnly given him, according to the Germanic custom, to lay aside every part of the national costume, and put on the Roman dress, which was the costume of the clergy.‡ Merowig was ordered to mount on horseback in this dress, so little suited to his tastes, and to proceed to the monastery of Saint Calais near the Mans, where he was to conform, in the most rigid seclusion, to the rules of ecclesiastical discipline. Escorted by armed horsemen, he depart-

ed without hope of flight or deliverance, but perhaps consoled by this popular saying, made for members of his family who were the victims of a similar fate, "The wood is still green, the leaves will shoot forth again."*

There was at that time in the basilica of Saint Martin of Tours, the most respected of sanctuaries, a fugitive whom king Hilperik was endeavouring to decoy from thence in order to seize his person. This was the Austrasian Gonthramn-Bose, whom public rumour accused of having killed young Theodebert with his own hand, or at least of having allowed him to be massacred by his soldiers, when as a generous enemy, he might have spared his life.† The terrible news of Sighebert's murder reached him in the centre of Aquitania, and fearing, not without reason, to fall into the hands of the king of Neustria, he had placed himself for safety under the protection of Saint Martin. Duke Gonthramn was assured of perfect safety, not only from this supernatural protection, but also from the more visible, though not less efficacious intervention of the Bishop of Tours, Georgius Florentius Gregorius, who was ever the firm guardian and protector of the rights of his church, but more especially of the right of sanctuary. However perilous it might be in the midst of these social disorders to defend the cause of the weak and of fugitives against the brute force and bad faith of powerful men, Gregory displayed, in this constantly renewed struggle, an unwearied constancy, and a prudent but intrepid dignity.

Since the day in which Gonthramn-Bose had fixed himself with his two daughters in one of the houses which formed the court of the basilica of Saint Martin, the bishop of Tours and his clergy had not had a single moment of repose. They had to resist king Hilperik, who, thirsting for vengeance against the fugitive, and yet not daring to drag him by violence from his asylum, endeavoured to compel the priests themselves to drive him from the sacred precincts, in order to spare himself the crime and dangerous consequences of sacrilege. First, the king sent a friendly invitation, then menacing insinuations, and finally, as words and messages had no effect, such hostile demonstrations as were likely to terrify not only the clergy of Tours, but the entire population.

A Neustrian duke named Rokkolen, encamped at the gates of the city with a body of men raised in the territory of the Mans. He took up his quarters in a house belonging to the metropolitan church of Tours, and sent from thence the following message to the bishop: "If you do not oblige Duke Gonthramn to leave the basilica, I will burn the city and its suburbs." The bishop

* Ibid., p. 281, 282, 296, 303, etc

† Solemne enim est Francorum regibus nunquam tonderi: sed a pueris intonsi manent: cæsaries tota decenter eis in humeros propendit: anterior coma e fronte discriminata in utrumque latus deflexa. Idque velut insigne quoddam eximiaeque honoris prærogativa regio generi apud eos tribuitur. Subditi enim orbiculatum tondentur. (Agathæ Histor. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 49)

‡ Post hæc Merovechus, cum in custodia a patre retineretur, tonsuratus est, mutataque veste qua clericis uti mos est, presbyter ordinatur. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 239.)

* Et ad monasterium Cenomannicum, quod vocatur Annsula, dirigitur, ut ibi sacerdotali erudiretur regula. (Ibid.) In viridi ligno hæc frondes succissæ sunt, nec omnino arescunt, sed velociter emergunt ut crescere queant. (Ibid., lib. ii. p. 185.)—V. Adriani Valesii Notit. Galliar. p. 22.

† Ut scilicet Guntchramnum, qui tunc de morte Theodeberti impetebatur, a basilica sancta deberemus extrahere. (Greg. Turon., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 234.)—See the second Narrative.

calmly replied that the thing was impossible. But he received a second message still more menacing than the first: "If you do not this very day expel the king's enemy, I will destroy every thing green for one league round the city, so that the plough may pass over it."*

Bishop Gregory was not more moved by this than by the first threat; and Rökkolen, who to all appearance had too few followers to attempt any thing serious against the population of a large town, contented himself, after all his boasting with pillaging and demolishing the house in which he had taken up his abode. It was constructed of pieces of wood joined and fixed with iron fastenings, which the Mans soldiery carried off in their leathern knapsacks with the rest of the booty.† Gregory of Tours congratulated himself at seeing this rude trial terminate thus, when new embarrassments occurred, produced by a complication of events impossible to foresee.

Gonthram-Bose was a singular character. Of Germanic origin, he surpassed the most talented men of the Gallo-Roman race in practical ability, the fertility of his inventive genius, and the instinct of *rouerie*, if that word may be employed here. It was not the usual Germanic falseness, a brutal lie accompanied by a horse laugh;‡ it was something more refined, and at the same time more corrupt; an universal and restless spirit of intrigue, which carried him unceasingly from one end of Gaul to the other. No one knew better than this Austrasian how to persuade others to venture into danger, and yet keep out of it himself. It was said of him that he had never sworn an oath to a friend without breaking it immediately; and it was to that probably that he owed his Germanic surname.§ In the sanctuary of Saint Martin of Tours, instead of leading the habitual life of a fugitive of distinction, that is to say, passing the day in eating and drinking, without any sort of occupation, Duke Gonthram was always on the watch for news, and took care to be informed of whatever occurred, that he might turn it to some account. He soon learnt the details of Merowig's misfortunes, his forced ordination and exile in the monastery of Saint Calais. The

idea struck him of forming out of these materials a plan of escape for himself, by inviting the son of Hilperik to join him, share his saucuary, and then to concert with him the means of passing together into Austrasia. Gonthram-Bose hoped by those means to augment his own chances of escape, from the far more numerous ones which might be opened to the young prince on account of his rank and the devotion of his friends. He confided his plans and his hopes to a sub-deacon of Frankish origin named Rikulf, who, out of friendship to him, undertook to go to Saint Calais, and obtain, if possible, an interview with Merowig.*

While the sub-deacon was journeying towards the town of Le Mans, Gaïlen, a young Frankish warrior attached to Merowig by the ties of vassalage and brotherhood in arms, watched in the environs of Saint Calais for the arrival of the escort which was to place the newly-made recluse in the hands of his superiors and gaolers. As soon as the escort appeared, a body of men lying in ambush rushed upon them, and by the superiority of their number, compelled them to fly and abandon the prisoner confided to their care.† Once more restored to liberty, Merowig joyfully quitted the clerical dress to resume the military costume of his nation; the shoes fastened round the leg by long strips of leather, tight, short-sleeved tunic hardly reaching to the knees, and the jacket lined with furs, over which was passed the baldric from which the sword hung.‡ It was in this dress the messenger of Gonthram-Bose met him, uncertain what direction it would be safe for him to follow. Rikulf's proposal was accepted without much reflection, and the son of Hilperik, this time escorted by his friends, took the road to Tours. A travelling cloak, of which the hood covered his head, served to protect him from the astonishment and laughter which the sight of the head of a priest on the shoulders of a soldier would have excited. As soon as he arrived under the walls of Tours, he got off his horse, and his head still enveloped in the hood of his cloak, he marched towards the basilica of Saint Martin, the doors of which were at that moment all open.§

* Quod si non faceremus, et civitatem et omnia suburbana ejus juberet incendio concremari. Quo audito mittimus ad eum legationem, dicentes: hæc ab antiquo facta non fuisse, quæ hic fieri deprecabatur. .. Sed (Roccolenus) mandata aspera remittit dicens: "Nisi hodie projecteris Guntchramnum ducem de basilica, ita cuncta virentia quæ sunt circa urbem adteram, ut dignus fiat aratro locus ille." (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 234, 235.)

† Cum in domo ecclesiæ ultra Ligerim resideret, domum ipsam quæ clavibus addita erat, disfixit. Ipsos quoque clavos Cenomannici, qui tunc cum eodem advenerant, impletis foliis portant, annonas evertunt et cuncta devastant. (Ibid.)

‡ Ipsis prodentibus Francis, quibus familiare est ridendo fidem frangere. (Flav. Vopisc., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. i. p. 541.)

§ Bose, in modern German *Böse*, signifies malicious, wicked.—Verumtamen nulli amicorum sacramentum dedit, quod non protinus omnisasset. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 241.)

* Hæc audiens Guntchramus Bose, qui tunc in basilica Sancti Martini, ut diximus, residebat, misit Rikulfum subdiaconum, ut ei consilium occulte præberet expetendi basilicam Sancti Martini. (Ibid. p. 239.)

† Ab alia parte Gaïlenus puer ejus advenit. Cumque parvum solatum qui eum deestant haberent, ab ipso Gaïleno in itinere excussus est. (Ibid.)

‡ Quorum pedes primi perone setoso talos ad usque vinciebantur; genua, crura, suræque sine tegmine. Præter hoc vestis alta, stricta, versicolor, vir appropinquans poplitibus exertis: manicæ sola brachiorum principia velantes. .. Penduli ex humero gladii balteus super currentibus strinxerant clausa bullatis latera rhenonibus. (Sidon. Apollinar. Epist. apud Script. Rer. Gallic., et Francic., t. i. p. 793.)—V. Monachi Sangallensis de Gestis Caroli Magni, lib. i. ibid. t. v. p. 121, et Vitam Caroli Magni per Eginhardum scriptam, ibid. p. 93.

§ Operatio capite, indutuque veste seculari, beati Martini templum expetit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 239.)—These words *operatio capite* are explained by the following passage of the same author, as bearing the meaning which I have attributed to them:—*Et tecto-*

It was a solemn festival, and the Bishop of Tours, who officiated pontifically, had just administered to the faithful the communion of the two kinds. The bread which remained over after the consecration of the Eucharist, covered the altar, arranged on cloths by the side of the large two-handled chalice which held the wine. It was the custom for these loaves, which were not consecrated, but only blessed by the priest, to be cut in pieces and distributed among the congregation at the end of the mass; this was called giving the *eulogies*. The entire assembly, with the exception of excommunicated persons, participated in this distribution made by the deacons, as that of the Eucharist was by the priest or officiating bishop.* After going all over the basilica, giving each one his share of holy bread, the deacons of Saint Martin saw near the door a man unknown to them, and whose face being half hidden, seemed to indicate on his part the desire of not being recognized; they therefore passed him over, and offered him none.

The temper of young Merowig, naturally hot, was over-excited by care and the fatigue of the journey. On finding himself deprived of a distinction which all the rest of the congregation had obtained, he fell into a violent fit of rage. Making his way through the crowd which filled the nave of the church, he penetrated into the choir where Gregory and another bishop, Ragenemod, a Frank by origin, who had just succeeded Saint Germain in the see of Paris, sat. When he came opposite the place where Gregory sat, clothed in his pontifical robes, Merowig said in a rough and imperious tone: "Bishop, why are not the *eulogies* given to me as well as to the rest of the faithful? Tell me if I am excommunicated?"† At these words, he threw back the hood of his cloak, and discovered to the bystanders the face, crimson with rage, of a tanned soldier.

The Bishop of Tours had no difficulty in recognizing the eldest of the sons of King Hilperik, for he had often seen him, and already knew all his story. The young fugitive appeared before him charged with a double infraction of the ecclesiastical laws, marriage within the prohibited degrees, and the renunciation of the sacred character of a priest, so seri-

ous a fault, that rigid casuists termed it apostasy. The extreme state of delinquency in which the secular costume and the arms he wore placed him, prevented Merowig from being admitted to the communion of the consecrated bread and wine, or even to that of the holy bread, which was, so to speak, the type of the first, without having been tried by the canonical laws. Bishop Gregory, with his usual calmness and dignity of manner, informed him of this. But his serious and gentle speech served only to exasperate the young man's anger, and, losing all regard and respect for the sanctity of the spot, he exclaimed: "Thou hast not the power to cut me off from the communion of the faithful, and if by thy own private authority, thou refusest me the communion, I will conduct myself like an excommunicated person, and kill some one on the spot."‡ These words, pronounced in a very savage manner, terrified the audience, and created a feeling of profound regret in the mind of the bishop. Fearing to excite the frenzy of the young barbarian too far, and thus create further evils, he yielded from necessity; and after deliberating some time with his colleague from Paris, to save appearances at least, he distributed to Merowig some of the *eulogies* which he desired.†

As soon as the son of Hilperik, with Gailen his brother in arms, his young companions and numerous followers, had established themselves in the court of the basilica of Saint Martin, the Bishop of Tours hastened to fulfil certain formalities required by the Roman law; the principal one consisted in his giving notice to the competent magistrate and the civil authorities of the arrival of every new fugitive.‡ In the present case, King Hilperik was the sole judge and party interested; it was to him therefore that the declaration was to be made, whatever might be the necessity of soothing his resentment by a show of deference and respect. Accordingly a deacon of the metropolitan church of Tours was sent to Soissons, a royal city of Neustria, commissioned to give an exact account of all that had taken place. A relation of the bishop's named Nicetius, who was going to Paris for his own affairs, was his companion in this embassy.§

Arrived at Soissons, and admitted to the royal presence, they began to disclose the motives of their journey, when Fredegonda suddenly interrupted them, exclaiming: "These men are spies, who are only come to see what the king

capite ne agnoscaris sylvam pete .. et ille accepto consilio, dum oblecto capite fugere niteretur, extracto quidam gladio caput ejus cum cucullo decidit. (Lib vii p. 310.)—The use of cloaks with hoods to them had passed from Gaul to Rome. See the Satires of Juvenal, passim, the *Père Montfaucon, Antiquité expliquée*.

* Nobis autem missas celebrantibus in sanctum basilicam, aperta reperies ostia, ingressus est. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 239.)—Præfatio D. Theod. Ruinart. ad Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., ibid. p. 95.

† Petiit, ut ei eulogias dare deberemus. Erat autem tunc nobiscum Ragenemodus Parisiacæ sedis episcopus, qui sancto Germano successerat. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 239.)—In rendering thus literally this speech, I have employed a form of expression very common in the History of Gregory of Tours: *Quid tibi visum est, o episcope*, etc. See the fourth Narrative.

* Quod cum refutarem, ipse clamare cepit et dicere, quod non recte eum a communione sine fratrum conventu suspenderemus... Minabatur enim aliquos de populo nostro interficere, si communionem nostram non meruisset (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii p. 239.)

† Illo autem hæc dicente, cum consensu fratris qui præsens erat contestata causa canonica, eulogias a nobis accepit. Veritas autem sum, ne dum unum a communione suspendebam, in multos existorem homicida. (Ibid.)

‡ Law of the Emperor Leon respecting sanctuaries (456). See *Histoire Ecclesiastique de Fleury*, t. vi. p. 562.

§ Nicetius vir nepus meus, propriam habens causam, ad Chilpericum regem abili cum diacono nostro, qui regi fugam Merovechi narraret. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii p. 239.)

is doing, in order to give the information they obtain to Merowig." These words were sufficient to rouse Hilperik's suspicions, and orders were given to arrest Nicetius and the deacon, who were the bearers of the message. They were stripped of all the money they had about them, and conducted to the confines of the kingdom, whence neither returned until after an exile of seven months.* While the messenger and the relation of Gregory of Tours were treated in this arbitrary manner, he himself received from King Hilperik a dispatch couched in these terms: "Drive the apostate from your basilica, otherwise I will lay waste all the surrounding country." The bishop simply replied that such a thing had never occurred, not even in the times of the Gothic kings, who were heretics, and that it could not possibly happen now that the true Christian faith was established. Forced by this answer to proceed from threats to deeds, Hilperik made up his mind to act, but with apathy; and at the instigation of Fredegonda, who had no horror of the crime of sacrilege, it was resolved that an army should be raised, and the king place himself at its head, to punish the city of Tours and violate the sanctuary of Saint Martin.†

On learning the news of these preparations, Merowig was seized with a sort of religious terror: "God forbid," he exclaimed, "that the holy basilica of Saint Martin should suffer any violence, or his country be devastated on my account!" He wanted instantly to depart with Gontram-Bose; and endeavour to reach Austrasia, where he flattered himself that he should find a safe asylum, repose, riches, and all the delights of power with Brunehilda; but nothing was ready for this long journey; they had neither men enough around them, nor sufficient influence with those at a distance. Gontram's advice was, to wait, and not throw themselves from fear of one danger into a still greater one.‡ Incapable of attempting any thing without the help of his new friend, the young prince sought a refuge from his anxieties in acts of fervent devotion which were quite new to him. He resolved to pass a night in prayer in the sanctuary of the basilica, and taking with him his most valuable movables, he laid them as offerings on the tomb of Saint Martin; then, kneeling down near the sepulchre, he besought the saint to come to his assistance, and by his gracious interference to enable him soon to re-

gain his liberty, and at some future day to become king.*

With Merowig, these wishes naturally followed each other, and the last it appears formed the principal topic of his conversations with Gontram-Bose, and of the projects they devised together. Gontram, full of confidence in the resources of his own mind, rarely invoked the aid of the saints; but on the other hand, he had recourse to fortune-tellers, in order to test the justness of his conclusions by their science. Leaving Merowig to pray alone, he sent one of his followers to a woman in whose predictions he had great confidence, and who had already foretold amongst other things, the year, day, and hour on which King Haribert was to die.† When interrogated in the name of duke Gontram on the future which was reserved for himself and the son of Hilperik, the sorceress, who probably knew them both very well, gave this answer, addressed to Gontram himself: "It will happen that King Hilperik will die in the course of the year, and that Merowig will obtain the throne, to the exclusion of his brothers: thou, Gontram, will be duke of all the kingdom for five years; but in the sixth, by the favour of the people, thou wilt receive the episcopal dignity in a town situated on the left bank of the Loire, and thou wilt in time depart this life old and full of days.‡

Gontram-Bose, who passed his life in making dupes, was himself the dupe of sorcerers and conjurors. He was delighted with this extravagant prophecy, which was doubtless in accordance with his dreams of ambition and most secret thoughts. Thinking that the town so vaguely indicated could be no other than that of Tours, and seeing himself already in imagination the successor of Gregory on the pontifical throne, he took care to impart his future good fortune to him with a malicious satisfaction, for the title of bishop was much coveted by the barbarian chiefs. Gregory had just arrived at the basilica of Saint Martin to perform the night service, when the Austrasian duke made him this strange communication with the air of a man firmly convinced of the infallibility of the sorceress. The bishop answered: "You should ask such things of God," and was unable to restrain his laughter.§ But

* Quibus visis, Fredegundis regina ait: "Exploratores sunt, et ad sciscitandum quid agat rex advenierunt, ut sciant quid Merovecho renuntient." Et statim expositos in exilium retrudi precepit, de quo mense septimo expleto relaxati sunt. (Ibid.)

† Igitur Chilpericus nuntios ad nos direxit, dicens: "Ejicite apostatam illum de basilica, sin autem, totam regionem illam igni succindam." Cümque nos rescripsissemus impossibile esse quod temporibus hæreticorum non fuerat Christianorum nunc temporibus fieri, ipse exercitum commovet. (Ibid.)

‡ Cüm videret Merovechus patrem suum in hac deliberatione intentum, adsumto secum Guntchramno duce ad Brunichildem pergere cogitat, dicens: Abiit ut propter meam personam basilica domini Martini violentiam perferat, aut regio ejus per me captivitas subdatur. (Ibid. p. 240.)

* Et ingressus basilicam, dum vigilias ageret, res quas secum habebat, ad sepulchrum beati Martini exhibuit, orans ut sibi sanctus succurreret, atque ei concederet gratiam suam, ut regnum accipere posset. (Ibid. p. 241.)

† Tunc direxit Guntchramnus puerum ad mulierem quamdam, sibi jam cognitam a tempore Chariberti regis, habentem spiritum Pythonis, ut ei quæ erant eventura narraret. (Ibid. p. 240.)

‡ Quæ hæc ei per pueros mandata remisit: "Futurum est enim ut rex Chilpericus hoc anno deficiat, et Merovechus rex, exclusis fratribus, omne capiat regnum. Tu vero ducatum totius regni ejus annis quinque tenebis. Sexto vero anno in una civitatum, quæ super Ligeris alveum sita est in *dextra* ejus parte, favente populo, episcopatus gratiam adipisceris" (Ibid.) By the words *dextra parte* we must here understand the right side of the river, going up towards its source V. Adriani Valesii Notitiam Galliarum.

§ Statim ille vanitate elatus, tanquam si jam in cathedra Turonicæ ecclesiæ resideret, ad me hæc detulit

this foolish and insatiable vanity reminded him but too painfully of the men and miseries of his time. He was preoccupied with these sad reflections during the chaunting of the Psalms; and when after the service of the vigils he was desirous of taking a short repose, and retired to bed for that purpose in a room near the church, the crimes of which that church seemed destined to be the theatre in the unnatural war between a father and son, and the misfortunes which he foresaw but was not able to prevent, haunted him until he fell asleep. During his slumber, the same ideas, but in colours still more terrible, presented themselves to his mind. He saw an angel traversing the air, hovering over the basilica, and crying in the most lugubrious accents: "Alas! alas! God has smitten Hilperik and all his sons! Not one of them will survive him, or possess his kingdom."* This dream appeared to Gregory as a revelation of the future far more worthy of credit than the answers and predictions of fortune-tellers.

Fickle and inconsistent in character, Merowig soon had recourse to distractions more in accordance with his turbulent habits, than vigils and prayers by the tombs of saints. The law which sanctioned the inviolability of these religious asylums, also gave the fugitives full power to provide themselves with all sorts of provisions, so that it should be impossible for their pursuers to drive them out by means of famine. The priests of the basilica of Saint Martin took upon themselves the care of supplying the articles necessary to the subsistence of such of their guests as were poor, and consequently had no servants. The rich people were served either by their own servants, who were at liberty to go backwards and forwards, or by men and women from without, whose presence frequently caused a great deal of confusion and excess. The courts of the buildings, and the peristyle of the basilica, were at all hours filled by people engaged in business, or a crowd of idlers and loungers. At the time of the different repasts, the noise and confusion sometimes drowned the chaunting of the service, disturbing the priests in their stalls and the monks in their cells. Sometimes the guests, half intoxicated, quarreled until they came to blows, and bloody frays took place at the door, and even in the interior of the church.†

If similar disorders did not follow the banquet by which Merowig and his companions tried to divert themselves, boisterous merriment was not wanting; shouts of laughter and coarse jests resounded in the hall, and above all were heard joined with the names of Hilperik and Fredegonda. Merowig did not spare either of them. He related the crimes of his father, and the debauches of his stepmother, spoke of Fredegonda as an infamous adulteress, and of Hilperik as an imbecile husband, and the persecutor of his own children. "Although there was nothing in this but what was perfectly true," says the cotemporary historian, "I think it was not agreeable to God that such things should be divulged by a son."* This historian, Gregory of Tours himself, being one day invited to Merowig's table, heard the young man's scandalous speeches with his own ears. At the end of the repast, Merowig, who remained alone with his pious guest, felt himself in a devotional mood, and begged the bishop to read him something for the benefit of his soul. Gregory took the book of Solomon, and opening it at hazard, read the following verse: "The eye of him that mocketh at his father, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out." This singular coincidence was looked upon by the bishop as a second revelation of the future, as menacing as the first.‡

Meanwhile Fredegonda, more inveterate in her hatred and more active than her husband, resolved to be beforehand with the expedition which was in preparation, and to have Merowig murdered by an ambush. Leudaste, Count of Tours, who was anxious to be in the queen's good graces, and who besides had to revenge the pillage committed in his house the preceding year, offered himself with eagerness to be the instrument of the murder. Reckoning on the want of circumspection of the man he wished to kill by surprise, he tried various stratagems to entice him beyond the limits of the sanctuary: he did not succeed. Either out of savage spite, or to excite the anger of the young prince so as to make him lose all feeling of prudence, he caused his followers to be attacked in the streets of the town.‡ Most of them were massacred, and Merowig, enraged at this news, would have run blindly into the snare, if the prudent Gonthramn had not withheld him. When he was railing violently, saying that he

verba Cujusego, iridens stultitiam, dixi: "A Deo hæc poscenda sunt ..." Illo quoque cum confusione discedente, valde inridebam hominem, qui talia credi putabat. (Greg. Turon., Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 240.)

* Vigiliis in basilica sancti antistitis celebratis, dum lectulo decubans obdormissem, vidi angelum per aera volantem. cùmque super sanctam basilicam præteriret, voce magna ait: "Heu! heu! percussit Deus Chilpericum, et omnes filios ejus, nec superabit de his qui processerunt ex lumbis ejus qui regat regnum illius in æternum." (Ibid.)

† Nam sæpe cædes infra ipsum atrium, quod ad pedes Beati extat, exegit (Eberulfus,) exercens assidue ebrietas ad vanitates Introeuntes puellæ, cum reliquis pueris ejus, suspiciebant picturas parietum, rimabanturque ornamenta beati sepulchri: quod valde facinororum religiosus erat. ... hæc ille cùm post cœnam vino madi-

dus advertisset. ... Furibundus ingreditur. (Ibid. lib. vii. t. ii. p. 300.)

* Merovechus vero de patre atque noverca multa crimina loquebatur; quæ cùm ex parte vera essent, credo acceptum non fuisse Deo, ut hæc per filium vulgarentur. (Ibid. lib. v. t. ii. p. 240.)

‡ Quadam enim die, ad convivium ejus adscitus, dum pariter sederemus, suppliciter petii aliqua ad instructionem animæ legi. Ego vero, reserato Salomonis libro, versiculum qui primus occurrit arripui, qui hæc continebat: "Oculum qui adversus adspexerit patrem, effodiant corvi de convallibus." Illo quoque non intelligente, consideravi hunc versiculum a Domino præparatum. (Ibid.)

‡ Leudastes tunc comes, cùm multas ei in amore Fredegundis insidias tenderet, ad extremum pueros ejus, qui in pago egressi fuerant circumventos dolis gladio trucidavit, ipsamque interimeret cupiens si reperire loco opportuno potuisset. (Ibid.)

should have no rest until he had avenged himself on the lover of Fredegonda, Gonthramn counselled him to direct his retaliation where there was no risk, and where the advantage would be considerable; to punish for this insult, not Leudaste, who was on his guard, but some other, no matter whom, of the friends of King Hilperik.*

Marileif, first physician to the king, a very rich man, and of an unwarlike disposition, was then at Tours, on his road from Soissons to Poitiers, his native city. He had with him but few followers and much baggage; and nothing was more easy than for the young warriors, Merowig's companions, to carry him off from his inn. They entered it unawares, and cruelly ill treated the peaceful doctor, who, luckily for himself, contrived to escape, and took refuge in the cathedral almost naked, leaving his gold, silver, and the rest of his movables in the hands of the assailants.† All this was looked upon as lawful booty by the son of Hilperik, who, satisfied with the trick he had played his father, and thinking himself sufficiently revenged, was anxious to display his clemency. At the request of the bishop he announced to poor Marileif, who did not venture to quit his asylum, that he was at liberty to continue his journey.‡ But at the moment that Merowig was congratulating himself on having so prudent a man as Gonthramn-Bose as companion of his fortunes and his intimate friend, the latter did not hesitate in selling his services to the mortal enemy of the young man who so inconsiderately placed entire confidence in him.

Far from sharing the hatred which King Hilperik felt for Gonthramn on account of the murder of Theodebert, Fredegonda was grateful to him for having rid her of one of her stepsons, as she would fain have been of the other two. The interest she displayed in favour of the Austrasian duke, had become still stronger ever since she had a glimpse of the possibility of using him as an instrument in Merowig's destruction. Gonthramn-Bose never willingly undertook a dangerous commission; but the ill success of the attempt of Count Leudaste, a man more violent than adroit, determined the queen to look for one who might, by his craft, render certain the murder which she meditated, although he did not execute it himself. She therefore sent a confidential person to Gonthramn with this message: "If thou canst contrive to decoy Merowig out of the basilica, so that he may be killed, I will make thee a magnificent present."§ Gonthramn-Bose joyfully

accepted the proposal. Persuaded that the artful Fredegonda had already taken her measures, and that suborned assassins kept watch in the environs of Tours, he went to Merowig and said to him in a most cheerful tone, "Why do we lead here the lives of cowards and idlers, skulking like fools round this basilica? Let us send for our horses, and take dogs and hawks with us, and let us go out hunting, to take exercise, breathe the fresh air, and enjoy the fine view."*

The desire for space and fresh air which prisoners feel so keenly, spoke to Merowig's heart, and the extreme facility of his character made him approve of every thing his friend proposed without examination. He accepted this attractive invitation with the readiness natural to his age. The horses were instantly brought into the court of the basilica, and the two fugitives set out completely equipped for hunting, their birds on their wrists, escorted by their servants, and followed by their dogs in couples. They fixed upon a domain belonging to the church of Tours, and situated in the village of Jocundiacum, now Jouay, at a short distance from the city, as the spot they were to go to. They spent the day in this manner, hunting and racing together, without Gonthramn's giving the slightest sign of premeditation, or appearing to think of any thing but amusing themselves as much as possible. What he expected did not occur; either Fredegonda's emissaries had not yet arrived at Tours, or else her instructions had not been properly followed up, but no armed troop appeared to fall upon Merowig, either in the various excursions of the day, or on the way home. Merowig, therefore, returned quietly to the sanctuary which afforded him security, rejoiced at getting his liberty for a few hours, and not at all aware that he had been in danger of perishing by the most signal treachery.†

The army which was to attack Tours was ready, but when it was necessary to depart, Hilperik suddenly became undecided and timid; he wished to know how great at that moment was Saint Martin's susceptibility against the infringers of his privileges, and if the holy confessor was in an indulgent or choleric mood. As there was no one in the world who could give him the slightest information on this point, the king conceived the strange idea of writing to the saint himself, requesting a clear and positive answer. He therefore composed a letter, which expressed in law terms his paternal grievances against the murderer of his son Theodebert, and appealed to the justice of the saint against this great culprit. The conclusion

* Sed ille consilio usus Guntchramni, et se ulcisci desiderans..... (Ibid.)

† Redeunte Marileifo archiatro de præsentiæ regis (eum) comprehendi præcepti, cæsumque gravissime, ablato auro argenteoque ejus, et reliquis rebus quas secum exhibebat, nudum reliquit. Et interfecisset utique, si non, inter manus cædentium elapsus, ecclesiam expetisset. (Ibid.)

‡ Quem nos postea indutum vestimentis, obtenta vita, Pictavum remisimus. (Ibid.)

§ Misit ad Guntchramnum Bosoneum Fredegundis regina, quæque ei jam pro morte Theodoberti patrocina-batur, occultè dicens: Si Merovechum ejicere poteris de

basilica ut interficiatur, magnum de me munis accipies. (Ibid.)

* At ille presto putans esse interfectores, ait ad Merovechum: "Ut quid hic quasi segnes et timidi residemus, et ut hebetes circa basilicam banc occulimur? Veniant enim equi nostri, et acceptis accipitribus, cum canibus exerceamur venatione, spectaculisque patulis jocundemur." Hoc enim agebat callide, ut eum a sancta basilica separaret. (Ibid.)

† Egressi itaque, ut diximus, de basilica ad Jocundiacensem domum civitati proximam progressi sunt: sed a nemine Merovechus nocitus est. (Ibid. p. 241.)

of this request was the following peremptory demand: "Is it permitted me, or is it not, to take Gonthramn from the sanctuary?"* It is still more singular, that beneath this there was a stratagem by which King Hilperik thought to deceive his celestial correspondent, intending, if he received permission for Gonthramn, to make use of the same for Merowig, whose name he did not mention for fear of frightening the saint† This singular epistle was brought to Tours by a student of Frankish race, named Baudeghisel, who placed it on Saint Martin's tomb with a sheet of blank paper, on which the saint might write his answer. At the end of three days the messenger returned, and finding on the tombstone the paper just as he had left it, without the smallest word of writing, he supposed that Saint Martin refused to explain himself, and returned to King Hilperik.‡

What the king feared above all things was, that Merowig should join Brunehilda in Austrasia, and, aided by her counsels and money, should succeed in creating a party in his favour among the Neustrian Franks. In the mind of Hilperik this fear surpassed even his hatred for Gonthramn-Bose, whom he felt inclined to forgive, provided he in no way favoured the escape of his companion in confinement. This produced another plan in which Hilperik again displayed the same heavy and timorous policy. This plan consisted in obtaining from Gonthramn, without whom Merowig was unable to undertake a journey for want of resources and firmness, an oath not to leave the basilica without giving the king notice of it. King Hilperik hoped by this means to be warned in time to intercept all communications between Tours and the Austrasian frontier. He sent emissaries to confer secretly with Gonthramn; and in this struggle between two parties to overreach each other, the latter was not behindhand. Trusting little to the conciliatory speeches sent him by Hilperik, but thinking that it might be a last chance of safety if all others failed, he took the oath required of him, and swore in the sanctuary itself of the basilica, with one hand on the

silken cloth which covered the high altar.* This done, he continued secretly, but with no less activity than before, to prepare for a sudden flight.

(A. D. 577.) Since the lucky blow which had thrown the Doctor Marleif's money into the hands of the fugitives, these preparations had progressed rapidly. Mercenary soldiers, a class of men which conquest had created, offered themselves in numbers to serve as escort to the end of the journey; their number soon amounted to more than five hundred. With such a force, escape was easy, and the arrival in Austrasia highly probable. Gonthramn-Bose, judging that there was no longer any reason for delay, and taking care, notwithstanding his oath, that the king should not have the least notice of it, told Merowig that it was time to think of departing. Merowig, weak and irresolute when not roused by passion, just when he was on the point of making this great attempt, gave way, and again sunk into his former state of indecision. "But," said Gonthramn to him, "have we not the predictions of the sorceress in our favour?" The young prince was not reassured by this; but to divert himself from his sad forebodings, he determined to seek for information as to the future from some better source.†

There was at that time a method of religious divination, which, although prohibited by the councils, was, notwithstanding, practised in Gaul by the wisest and most enlightened men of the time. Merowig determined to have recourse to it. He went to the chapel in which was the tomb of Saint Martin, and placed on the sepulchre three of the inspired books, the book of Kings, the Psalms, and the Gospels. During one whole night he prayed to God and the holy confessor to reveal to him what was to happen, and whether he might hope to obtain his father's kingdom or not.‡ He then fasted three whole days, and on the fourth he returned to the tomb, and opened the three volumes one after another. The book of Kings was the one whose reply he was most anxious to obtain: it opened at a page at the top of which stood the following verse: "Because they forsook the Lord their God, and have served other gods; therefore hath the Lord brought upon them all this evil." In opening the book of Psalms, he found this passage: "Thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation!" Lastly, in the Gospels he read these words: "Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified."§ It was impossible

* Et quia impetebatur tunc Guntchramnus de interitu ut diximus, Theodoberti, misi Chilpericus rex nuntios et epistolam scriptam ad sepulchrum sancti Martini, quæ habebat insertum, ut ei beatus Martinus rescriberet, utrum liceret extrahi Guntchramnum de basilica ejus an non. (Ibid.)

† [This attempt of savage cunning to outwit its fears, and juggle with the higher powers, is very characteristic of the mixture of superstition, obtuseness, and low cunning of that epoch. Nine centuries later we meet with a still more singular case of this juggling with infernal power. Gilles de Retz, whose fourteen years' horrible worship of the devil (to whom he offered up no less than 140 infants as sacrifices) blackens the annals of France, at the very time that he was committing this infamy felt himself sure of heaven, having, as he thought, *deceived* or *corrupted* his Supreme Judge "by masses and processions." Michelet, *Histoire de France*, livre xi.—EDITOR.]

‡ Sed Baudeghislaus diaconus, qui hanc epistolam exhibuit, chartam puram cum eadem quam detulerat, ad sanctum tumulum misit. Cùmque per triduum expectasset, et nihil rescripti recipere, rediit ad Chilpericum. (Greg. Turon. *Hist. Franc.*, lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 241.)

* Ille vero misit alios, qui a Guntchramno sacramenta exigenter, ut sine ejus scientia basilicam non relinqueret. Qui, ambler jurans, pallam altaris fidejussorem dedit nunquam se exinde sine jussione regia egressurum. (Ibid.)

† Merovechus vero non credens Pythonissæ.. (Ibid.)

‡ Tres libros super Sancti sepulchrum posuit, id est, Psalterii, Regum, Evangeliorum: et vigilans tota nocte, petit ut sibi beatus confessor quid eveniret ostenderet, et utrum possit regnum accipere, an non ut Domino indicante cognosceret. (Ibid.)

§ Post hæc continuato triduo in jejuniis, vigiliis, atque

to imagine any thing more appalling for one who imagined he received an answer from God himself, than each of these words; it might have shaken a stronger mind than that of the son of Hilperik. He remained as if overpowered by the weight of this triple menace of treason, ruin, and violent death, and wept bitterly for a long while by the tomb of Saint Martin.* Gonthramn-Bose, who had equal faith in his oracle, and, moreover, found in it no cause of fear for himself, persisted in his resolution. By means of that influence which strong minds exercise in an almost magnetic manner upon weak and impressionable characters, he restored the courage of his companion so well, that the departure took place without delay, and Merowig mounted on horseback with a look of tranquillity and confidence. Gonthramn in this decisive moment had also a trial to go through; he was going to separate himself from his two daughters, who had taken refuge with him in the basilica of Saint Martin, and whom he feared to take with him, on account of the hazards of so long a journey. Notwithstanding his profound selfishness, and imperturbable duplicity, he was not completely devoid of good feeling, and amidst so many vices, he had at least one redeeming virtue, paternal love.† The society of his daughters was in the highest degree dear to him. If he was separated from them, he never hesitated to expose himself to danger that he might rejoin them, and if there was any danger to defend them from, he became fierce and courageous even to rashness. Compelled to leave them in an asylum which King Hilperik, if he became desperate, might cease to respect, he determined to fetch them away himself; and it was with this idea, the only good one which could find a place in his bosom, that he quitted the sanctuary, and galloped on by the side of Merowig.‡

Nearly six hundred horsemen recruited, to all appearance, among the adventurers and vagabonds of the country, both Franks and Gauls by origin, accompanied the two fugitives. Keeping along the left bank of the Loire, from south to north, they passed over King Gonthramn's territories in good order. When they arrived near Orleans, they turned eastward to avoid passing through Hilperik's dominions and reached the environs of the city of Auxerre without encountering any obstacle; but here their good fortune ceased. Erp or Erpoald, count of that city, refused to allow them to pass through it, either because he had received some dispatch from King Hilperik, requesting his friendly assistance

or else did so of his own accord, to maintain peace between the two kingdoms. It appears that this refusal gave rise to a combat, in which the troops of the two fugitives were totally defeated. Merowig, whose anger had probably driven him to commit some imprudence, fell into the hands of Count Erpoald; but Gonthramn, always ready in a retreat, escaped with the remains of his little army.*

Fearing to venture further northwards, he determined to retrace his steps and reach one of the towns of Aquitania, belonging to the kingdom of Austrasia. It was very dangerous for him to approach Tours; it was to be feared that the news of his flight had decided Hilperik to order his troops to march, and that the town was full of soldiers. But all his prudence gave way to his paternal feelings; instead of passing at a distance with his small and badly armed band of fugitives, he marched straight to the basilica of Saint Martin. It was well guarded; nevertheless he forced his way in, and reappeared almost immediately with his daughters, whom he wished to place in safety out of Hilperik's kingdom. After this bold manœuvre, Gonthramn took the road to Poitiers, a town which had become Austrasian ever since the victory of Mummolus. He arrived there without accident, placed his two travelling companions in the basilica of Saint Hilary, and left them to go and see what was passing in Austrasia.† This time, for fear of a second misfortune, he made a long circuit, and directed his course northwards by Limousin, Auvergne, and the road leading from Lyons to Metz.

Before Count Erpoald was able to give information of this to King Gonthramn and receive his orders relative to the prisoner, Merowig succeeded in escaping from the place where he was confined. He took refuge in the principal church of Auxerre, one dedicated to Saint German, the apostle of the Bretons, and established himself there in safety as at Tours, under the shelter of the right of sanctuary.‡ The news of his flight reached King Gonthramn almost as soon as that of his arrest. This was more than sufficient to displease in the highest degree this timid and pacific king, whose principal care was to keep himself aloof from the quarrels which might spring up around him. He feared that Merowig's remaining in his kingdom would create a deal of trouble, and wished either that the son of Hilperik should have been allowed to pass quietly, or else have been detained and strictly guarded. Accusing Erpoald at the same time of excess of zeal and want of skill, he summoned him instantly before him; and when the count was about to answer and justify his conduct, the king interrupted him, saying:

orationibus, ad beatum tumulum iterum accedens, revolvit librum, qui erat, Regum, versus autem primus paginas quam reseravit, hic erat ... (Ibid.)—See I Kings ix. 9 Ps lxxii. 18. Matt. xxvi. 2.

* In his responsionibus ille confusus flens diutissime ad sepulchrum beati antistitis. (Greg. Turon Hist. Franc., lib. v apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 241.)

† Guntchramnus vero alias sane bonus Nam ad perjurium nimum præparatus erat... (Ibid.)

‡ Adjuvato secum Guntchramno duce, cum quingentis aut eo amplius viris discessit. Egressus autem basilicam sanctam ... (Ibid.)

* Cum iter ageret per Autusiodorensē territorium, ab Erpone duce Guntchramni regis comprehensus est. (Ibid.)

† Guntchramnus Boso Turonis cum paucis armatis veniens, filias suas, quas in basilica sancta reliquerat, vi abstulit, et eas usque Pictavis civitatem, quæ erat Childerici regis, perduxit. (Ibid. p. 249.)

‡ Cumque ab eo Erpone detineretur, casu nescio quo dilapsus, basilicam Sancti Germani ingressus est. (Ibid. p. 241.)

"Thou didst arrest him whom my brother calls his enemy; but, if thy intentions were serious, thou shouldst have brought him to me without loss of time; otherwise thou shouldst not have interfered with a man whom thou didst not intend to keep prisoner."*

The ambiguity of these expressions proved on the part of King Gonthramn as much repugnance to take part with the son as fear of quarrelling with the father. The weight of his displeasure fell on Count Erpoald, who was not only deprived of his office, but condemned moreover to pay a fine of seven hundred golden pieces.† It seems that in spite of Hilperik's messages and entreaties, Gonthramn took no measure for disturbing the fugitive in his new asylum, and that, so far from it, he contrived, without compromising himself, and yet saving appearances, that Merowig should quickly find means to escape and continue his journey. Indeed, after a residence of two months in the basilica of Auxerre, the young prince departed accompanied by his faithful friend Gallen, and this time the roads were open to him. He at last arrived in the territory of Austrasia, where he hoped to find repose, friends, the delights of marriage and all the honours attached to the title of husband of a queen, but where new obstacles and misfortunes awaited him, which were only to end with his life.‡ The kingdom of Austrasia, governed in the name of a child by a council of nobles and bishops, was at that time the theatre of continual troubles and violent dissensions. The absence of all legal restraint and the headstrong wilfulness of individual wills, were felt there still more strongly than in any other part of Gaul. There was in this respect no distinction of race or state; barbarians or Romans, prelates or military chiefs, all men who felt themselves strong from power or wealth, rivalled each other in turbulence and ambition. Divided into opposite factions, they agreed only in one thing, a violent dislike to Brunehilda, whom they wanted to deprive of all influence in the government of her son. The principal chiefs of this formidable aristocracy were Egidius, Bishop of Reims, notoriously sold to the King of Neustria, and Duke Rauching, the richest of the Austrasians, the very type, if such an expression can be used, of those who did ill from a sheer love of it, as the other barbarians did from passion or interest.§ Traits of almost incredible cruelty, such as popular traditions impute to the nobles of the feudal times, and the remembrance of which is still attached to

the ruins of their keeps and castles, were related of him. When he supped, lighted by a slave who held in his hand a waxen torch, one of his favourite amusements was to oblige the poor slave to extinguish the torch against his naked legs, then to light it again and put it out and relight it several times in the same way. The deeper the burn was, the more was Duke Rauching amused and laughed at the contortions of the miserable wretch who was forced to submit to this species of torture.* He caused two of his serfs, a young man and woman, whose crime was their having married without his consent, and whom, at the entreaties of a priest, he had sworn not to separate, to be buried alive in the same grave. "I have kept my word," said he with a ferocious sneer; "they are now united for ever."†

This terrible man, whose insolence towards Queen Brunehilda exceeded all bounds, and whose conduct was a perpetual rebellion, had for his constant attendants Bertefred and Ursio, the one of Germanic origin, the other, son of a Gallo-Roman, but both thoroughly imbued with the cruelty and violence of Germanic manners. In their savage opposition, they attacked, not only the queen, but whoever sided with her and endeavoured to maintain order and public tranquillity. They had a peculiar hatred to the Roman Lupus, Duke of Champagne, or the Rhenish provinces, a severe and vigilant governor, and fully imbued with the traditions of the imperial government.‡ The domains of Lupus were almost daily ravaged, his houses pillaged, and his life threatened by Duke Rauching's faction. Once Ursio and Bertefred, with a troop of soldiers, fell upon him and his followers at the very gates of the palace where the young king and his mother lived. Attracted by the tumult, Brunehilda hastened to the spot, and courageously throwing herself among the armed men, she exclaimed, addressing herself to the chiefs of the assailants: "Why do you thus attack an innocent man? Do not commit this outrage; do not provoke a war which would be the ruin of the country!" "Woman," replied Ursio with brutal haughtiness, "retire; let it suffice thee to have governed in thy husband's lifetime; it is thy son who reigns now, and it is to our protection, not thine, that the kingdom looks for safety. Retire, then, or we will trample

* "Retinisti, ut ait frater meus, inimicum suum quod si hoc facere cogitabas, ad me eum debuisti prius adducere. sin autem aliud, ne tangere debueras quem tenere dissimulabas." (Ibid.)

† Gunthramnus rex in ira commotus Erponem septingentis aureis damnat, et ab honore removet. (Ibid.)

‡ Merovechus prope duos menses ad antedictam basilicam residens, fugam inivit, et ad Brunichildem reginam usque pervenit. (Ibid.)

§ Rauchingus vir omni vanitate repletus, superbia tumidus, elatione protervus; qui se ita cum subjectis agebat, ut non cognosceret in se aliquid humanitatis habere, sed ultra modum humane malitiæ atque stultitiæ in suos desæviens nefanda mala gerebat. (Ibid. p. 233.)

* Num si ante eum, ut adsolet, convivio urentem puer cereum tenuisset, nudari ejus tibias faciebat, atque tandem in his cereum comprimi, donec lumine privaretur: iterum cum inluminatus fuisset, similiter faciebat usque dum totæ tibie famuli tenentis exurerentur; fiebatque ut, hoc fente, iste magna lætitia exultaret. (Ibid. p. 234.)

† Sepelivitque eos viventes dicens: "Quia non frustravi juramentum meum, ut non separarentur hi in sempiternum..." In talibus enim operibus valde nequissimus erat, nullam aliam habens potius utilitatem, nisi in cachinnis ac dolis. (Ibid.)

‡ Illis consiliis Romana potentia fulsit;

Te duce sed nobis hic modo Roma redit.

Justitia florente, favent, te iudice, leges,

Causarumque æquo pondere libra manet ...

(Fortunati carmen de Lupo dunde, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 514.)

thee under our horses' feet."* This situation of things in Austrasia, ill accorded with the hopes in which Merowig had indulged; but the illusion did not last long. He had scarcely entered Metz, the capital of the kingdom, when he received from the council of regency the order to depart immediately, even if he was permitted to enter the town. The ambitious chiefs, who treated Brunehilda as a stranger without rights or power, were not likely to submit to the presence of the husband of this queen, whom they feared, although pretending to despise her. The more she prayed and entreated that Merowig should be received hospitably, and allowed to live with her in peace, the more harsh and inexorable those who governed in the name of the young king became. They alleged as their reason, the danger of a rupture with the King of Neustria; they did not fail to avail themselves of it, and their compliance with their queen's wishes was confined to simply dismissing the son of Hilperik, without using violence, or giving him up to his father.†

Deprived of his last hope of refuge, Merowig retired by the same road he had come; but before passing the frontier of Gontramm's kingdom, he left the high road and wandered from village to village through the Rhenish country. He went at random, walking by night and concealing himself all day, especially avoiding people of high rank, who might have recognised him; in constant fear of being betrayed, and exposed to all sorts of evils, and with no prospect in view but that of reaching the sanctuary of Saint Martin of Tours in disguise. As soon as all traces of him were lost, it was supposed that he had taken that resolution, and the news of it soon reached Neustria.‡

At this report, King Hilperik dispatched his army to occupy the city of Tours, and guard the abbey of Saint Martin. The army, arrived in Touraine, pillaged, devastated, and destroyed the country, without even sparing the property of the church. All sorts of rapine were committed in the buildings of the abbey, which was converted into barracks, where soldiers were quartered to keep guard at all the entrances to the basilica. The gates were kept closed day and night, excepting one, through which a small number of priests were allowed to enter to chaunt the offices, and the people were excluded from the church, and deprived of Divine service.§ At the same time that these precautions

were taken to cut off the retreat of the fugitive, King Hilperik, probably with the consent of the nobles of Austrasia, passed the frontier in arms, and searched every part of the territory where it was possible that Merowig had concealed himself. Although surrounded like a wild beast pursued by the hunters, the young man succeeded in escaping from his father's search, thanks to the compassion of the lower classes of Franks, or those of Roman origin, in whom alone he could trust. After having fruitlessly scoured the country, and taken a military ride along the forest of Ardennes, Hilperik re-entered his kingdom without the troops whom he led on this reconnoitering expedition having committed any act of hostility against the inhabitants.*

Whilst Merowig saw himself reduced to lead the life of an outlaw and a vagrant, his old companion in adversity, Gontramm-Bose, arrived in Austrasia from Poitiers. He was the only man of any importance in the country of whom the son of Hilperik could ask assistance; and he without doubt very soon learnt the retreat, and all the secrets of the unhappy fugitive. So completely desperate a state of things offered to Gontramm two prospects, between which he was not accustomed to hesitate, an onerous fidelity, or the profits of an act of treachery; he decided in favour of the latter. Such was at least the general opinion; for, according to his usual way, he avoided compromising himself, by working in secret, and playing a double game, so as to enable him boldly to deny it, if the plot did not succeed. Queen Fredegonda, who never failed to act for herself whenever it happened (and it was not a rare occurrence) that her husband's dexterity was at fault, seeing the little success of the chase after Merowig, resolved to have recourse to less noisy, but more certain measures. She communicated her plan to Ægidius, Bishop of Reims, who was united to her by friendship, and an assistant in her political intrigues; and through him Gontramm-Bose once more listened to the instructions and brilliant promises of the queen. From the union of these two men with the implacable enemy of the son of Hilperik, arose a skilfully combined plot to hurry him to his ruin, by means of his greatest foible, the wild ambition natural to a young man, and his desire to reign.†

Some men from the country of Théroutanne, the country most devoted to Fredegonda, entered Austrasia secretly to obtain an interview with the son of Hilperik. Having found him in the retreat in which he kept himself concealed, they

* Hæc illa loquente, respondit Ursio: "Recede a nobis, o mulier, sufficiat tibi sub viro tenuisse regnum. Nunc autem filius tuus regnat; regnumque ejus non tua, sed nostra tuitione salvatur. Tu vero recede a nobis, ne te ungulæ equorum nostrorum cum terra confodiant." (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 267.)

† Sed ab Austrasiis non est collectus. (Ibid. lib. v. t. ii. p. 241.) Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. x. p. 83.)

‡ Merovechus vero dum in Remensi campania latitaret, nec palam se Austrasiis crederet. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 246.) Post hæc sonuit, quod Merovechus iterum basilicam sancti Martini conaretur expetere. (Ibid.)

§ Exercitus autem Chilperici regis usque Turonis accedens, regionem illam in prædas mittit, succendit atque devastat: nec rebus sancti Martini pepercit. (Ibid. p.

241.) Chilpericus vero custodiri basilicam jubet, et omnes claudi aditus. Custodes autem unum ostium, per quod pauci clerici ad officium ingrederentur, relinquunt, reliqua ostia clausa tenebant, quod non sine tædio populus fuit. (Ibid. p. 246.)

* Pater vero ejus exercitum contra Campanenses commovit, putans eum ibidem occultari: sed nihil nocuit, nec eum potuit reperire. (Ibid. t. ii. p. 241.)

† Loquebantur etiam tunc homines, in hac circumventionem Egidium episcopum et Gunthramnum Bosonem fuisse maximum caput, eo quod Gunthramnus Fredegundis reginæ oculis amicitis potiretur pro interfectione Theodoberti. Egidius vero quod etiam longo tempore esset carus (Ibid. lib. v. t. ii. p. 246.)

gave him the following message, in the name of their fellow-countrymen:—"Since thy hair has grown once more, we will submit to thee, and are ready to abandon thy father, if thou wilt come amongst us."*

Merowig eagerly seized this offer; he even fancied himself secure of dethroning his father, on the good faith of persons he did not know, the delegates of an obscure canton of Neustria. He set out at once for Therouanne, accompanied by a few men blindly devoted to his fortunes; Gailen, his inseparable friend in fortune and adversity; Gaukil, count of the palace of Austrasia under King Sighebert, and now fallen into disgrace; and finally Grind, and several others whom the chronicler does not name, but whom he honours with the title of men of courage.†

They ventured into the Neustrian territory, without considering that the further they advanced, the more difficult retreat became. On the confines of the savage district which extended north of Arras to the coasts of the ocean, they found what had been promised them, troops of men who welcomed them, and received King Merowig with acclamations. Invited to rest in one of the farms which the Frankish population inhabited, they entered without mistrust; but the doors were instantly closed upon them, guards defended every issue, and armed bodies of men surrounded the house like a besieged city. At the same time, couriers mounted on horseback, and hastened to Soissons to announce to King Hilperik that his enemies had fallen into the snare, and that he might come and dispose of them.‡

At the noise of the barricaded doors, and the military preparations which rendered his departure impossible, Merowig, struck with the sense of his danger, remained pensive and dejected. The sad and thoughtful imagination of the man of the north, which formed the most striking trait in his character, gradually got the better of his reason; he was beset with ideas of violent death, and horrible images of tortures and punishments. A profound terror of the fate for which he was reserved seized on him with such intensity, that, despairing of every thing, he saw no resource but suicide.§ But, wanting the courage to strike the blow himself, he required for that purpose another arm than his own, and addressing his brother in arms: "Gailen," said he, "we have never had but one soul

and one mind until now: do not let me fall into the hands of my enemies, I conjure thee; take a sword and kill me." Gailen, with the obedience of a vassal, drew the knife which he wore at his girdle, and struck the young prince a mortal blow. King Hilperik, who arrived in great haste to seize his son, found only his corpse.* Gailen was taken with the other companions of Merowig; he had clung to life, either from some remaining hope, or some inexplicable weakness.

There were persons who doubted the truth of these facts, and believed that Fredegonda, going straight to the point, had had her step-son murdered, and that the suicide was an invention to get over the paternal scruples of the king. However, the horrible treatment which Merowig's companions met with, seemed to justify his forebodings for himself and his anticipated terrors. Gailen perished, mutilated in the most barbarous manner; his feet, hands, nose, and ears, were cut off: Grind had his limbs broken on the wheel, which was raised in the air, and where he expired: Gaukil, the eldest of the three, was the least unfortunate; he was simply beheaded.†

Thus Merowig paid the penalty of his disgraceful intimacy with the murderer of his brother, and Gonthramn-Bose became a second time the instrument of that fatality which seemed to attend upon the sons of Hilperik. He did not feel his conscience more loaded than before; and, like the bird of prey who, at the end of his chase, returns to the nest, he became anxious about his two daughters whom he had left at Poitiers. This town had just fallen again into the hands of the King of Neustria; the project of conquest which the victory of Mummolus (A. D. 578) had put an end to for the time, was recommenced after an interval of a year, and Desiderius, at the head of a numerous army, again menaced all Aquitania. Those who had been most remarkable for their fidelity to King Hildebert, or to whom King Hilperik had any particular dislike, were arrested in their houses, and sent under escort to the palace of Braine. The Roman Ennodius, Count of Poitiers, guilty of having attempted to defend that city, and the Frank Dak, son of Dagarik, who had shown himself in the field as a partisan leader, were seen passing in the same plight on the road from Tours to Soissons.‡ In such circumstances,

* *Merovechus vero a Tarrabennensibus circumventus est, dicentibus, quod, relicto patre ejus Chilperico, ei se subjugarent, si ad eos accederet.*—(Ibid.) Danihelem quondam clericum, cæsarie capitis crescente, regem Franci constituit (Erchanberti fragmentum, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 690)

† Qui velociter, adsumtis secum viris fortissimis, ad eos venit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 246)

‡ Hi præparatos detegentes dolos, in villiam eum quamdam concludunt, et circumseptum cum armatis, nuntios patri dirigunt. Quod ille audiens, illic præparare destinat. (Ibid.)

§ Sed hic cum in hospitio quodam retineretur, timens ne ad vindictam inimicorum multas lueret penas (Ibid. lib. v. t. ii. p. 246.)

* *Vocato ad se Gaileno familiari suo, ait: Una nobis usque nunc et anima et consilium fuit: rogo ne patiaris me manibus inimicorum tradi: sed accepto gladio intras in me. Quod ille nec dubitans, eum cultro confodit. Advenientes autem rege, mortuus est repertus.* (Ibid.)

† *Extiterunt tunc qui adsererent verbo Merovechi, quæ superius diximus, a regina fuisse conficta; Merovechum vero ejus fuisse jussu clam interemptum. Gailenum vero adprehensum, abscisis manibus et pedibus, auribus et narum summatibus, et alius multis cruciatibus adfectum infeliciter necaverunt. Grudionem quoque, intextum rotæ, in sublime sustulerunt Gucilionem, qui quondam comes palatii Sigiberti regis fuerat, abscisso capite interfecerunt.* (Ibid. lib. v. t. ii. p. 246)

‡ *Chilpericus quoque rex Pictavum pervasit, atque nepotis sui homines ab ejus sub hominibus effugavit. Ennodium ex comitatu ad regis præsentiam perduxerunt.* Cum Dacco, Dagarici quondam filius, relicto

the return to Poitiers was a perilous enterprise for Gonthramn-Bose; but this time he did not reflect, and determined, at any price, to deliver his daughters from the danger of being carried off from their asylum. Accompanied by a few friends, for he always found some in spite of his multiplied treacheries, he took the road to the south as the safest he could select, arrived at Poitiers without molestation, and was no less successful in withdrawing his two daughters from the basilica of Saint Hilary. This was not all; it was necessary to hasten away and reach promptly some spot where they might be safe from pursuit. Gonthramn and his friends remounted their horses without loss of time, and left Poitiers by the gate which opened on the road to Tours.*

They marched by the side of the covered wagon which contained the two young girls, armed with daggers and short lances, the ordinary equipment of the most peaceful travellers. They had not advanced more than a few hundred yards on the road, when they perceived some horsemen coming towards them. The two forces halted to reconnoitre each other, and that of Gonthramn-Bose placed itself on the defensive, for the men in front of it were soon discovered to be enemies.† These had for their leader a certain Drakolen, a very active partisan of the King of Neustria, and who was returning from the palace of Braine, whither he had been conveying the son of Dagarik and other captives, their hands tied behind their backs. Gonthramn felt that it was necessary to give battle; but before coming to an engagement, he tried to parley. He sent one of his friends to Drakolen, giving him the following instructions: "Go, and tell him this in my name: Thou knowest that formerly there was an alliance between us; I therefore pray thee to leave me a free passage: take what thou wilt of my property; I abandon every thing to thee, even should I remain naked; only let me and my daughters go where we intend."‡

rege Chilperico, huc illucque vagaretur, a Dracolenoduce, qui dicebatur industrius, fraudulenter adprehensus est, quem vincum ad Chilpericum regem Brennacum deduxit . . . (Ibid. lib. v. l. ii. p. 246)

* His diebus Guntchramnus Boso filias suas a Pictavo auferre conabatur. (Ibid. p. 249)

† Dracolenus se super eum obiecit: sed illi, sicut erant parati resistentes, se defensare nitebantur. (Ibid.)

‡ Guntchramnus vero misit unum de amicis suis ad

On hearing these words, Drakolen, who thought himself the stronger of the two, gave a shout of derision, and pointing to a bundle of cords which hung at his saddle-bow, he said to the messenger, "Here is the cord with which I bound the other culprits I have led to the king; it will do for him also."* Instantly spurring his horse, he rushed upon Gonthramn-Bose, and attempted to give him a blow with his lance; but the blow was ill-directed, and the iron of the lance, detaching itself from the wood, fell to the ground. Gonthramn resolutely seized that moment, and striking Drakolen on the face, made him stagger in his saddle; some one else knocked him down and dispatched him with a stroke of a lance through the ribs. The Neustrians, seeing their leader dead, turned their horses' heads, and Gonthramn-Bose continued his journey, but not before he had carefully stripped the body of his enemy.†

After this adventure, Duke Gonthramn travelled quietly into Austrasia. Arrived at Metz, he recommenced the life of a great Frankish noble, a life of savage and disorderly independence, which neither partook of the dignity of the Roman patrician, nor the chivalric manners of the feudal lord. History makes little mention of him during an interval of three years; we then suddenly meet with him at Constantinople, where he seems to have been drawn by his restless and truant disposition. It was in this journey that, through his mediation, the great intrigue of the century was planned, an intrigue which shook the whole of Gaul, in which the feeling of rivalry of the Austrasian Franks towards their western brethren, united with the national hatred of the southern Gauls, for the destruction of the two kingdoms of which Soissons and Châlons-sur-Saône were the capital towns.

eum, dicens: Vade et dic ei: Scis enim quod fœdus inter nos initum habemus, rogo ut te de meis removeas insidius. Quantum vis de rebus tollere non prohibeo; tantum mihi etsi nudo liceat cum filiabus meis accidere quo voluero. (Ibid.)

* Ecce, inquit, funiculum, in quo alii culpabiles ad regem, me ducente, directi sunt: in quo et hic hodli ligandus illic deducetur vincus. (Ibid. lib. v. l. ii. p. 250)

† Elevatoque conto, Dracolenum artat in faucibus. Suspensumque de equo sursum, unus de amicis suis eum lancea latere verberatum finivit. Fugatisque sociis, ipsoque spoliato, Guntchramnus cum filiabus liber abscessit. (Ibid.)

FOURTH NARRATIVE.

577—586.

THE HISTORY OF PRÆTEXTATUS, BISHOP OF ROUEN.

(A. D. 577.) WHILE the son of Hilperik, unable to find shelter in the kingdoms of his father or of his wife, wandered amidst the heaths and forests of Champagne, there was but one man throughout Neustria who had sufficient courage to proclaim himself his friend. This was Prætextatus, Bishop of Rouen, who, since the day that he held the young prince, at the baptismal font, had conceived for him one of those devoted, absolute, and unreflecting attachments, of which a mother or a nurse alone seems capable. The blind sympathy which had led him, in spite of the laws of the church, to favour the passion of Merowig for his uncle's widow, only increased with the misfortunes which attended this inconsiderate passion. It was probably to the zeal of Prætextatus that the husband of Brunehilda was indebted for the money, by means of which he succeeded in escaping from the basilica of Saint Martin of Tours, and reaching the frontiers of Austrasia. At the news of the ill success of this escape, the bishop was not discouraged; on the contrary, he, as his spiritual father, increased his efforts to procure friends and a home for the fugitive persecuted by his natural father. He took very little trouble to disguise sentiments and actions, which appeared duties to him. No man of the least importance among the Franks, who inhabited his diocese, paid him a visit without hearing a long account of the misfortunes of Merowig, and the affection and support of the visitor being earnestly solicited for his godson; for his dear son, as he called him. These words formed a sort of burden, which, in the simplicity of his heart, he repeated constantly, and mixed up with all his conversation. If he happened to receive a present from some rich or powerful man, he hastened to return him double its value, obtaining from him the promise to come to Merowig's assistance, and remain faithful to him in his reverses.*

As the Bishop of Rouen was careless of what he said, and confided without precaution in all sorts of people, it was not long before King Hilperik was informed of every thing, either through public rumour, or officious friends, and received false, or at least, exaggerated denunciations. Prætextatus was accused of distributing presents among the people to excite them to rebellion, and of organizing a conspiracy against the person and dignity of the king. At this

news, Hilperik fell into one of those fits of rage and terror, during which he abandoned himself to the counsels and assistance of Fredegonda, being himself uncertain what course to pursue. Since the day that he had succeeded in separating Merowig and Brunehilda, he had almost forgiven Prætextatus for having solemnized their marriage; but Fredegonda, less forgetful, and less confined in her passions to the interest of the moment, had contracted a profound hatred towards the bishop, one of those hatreds which, with her, ended only with the life of whoever had the misfortune to excite it. Seizing this occasion, therefore, she persuaded the king to denounce Prætextatus before a council of bishops, as guilty of high treason according to the Roman law, and to insist at least on his being punished for infringing the canons of the church, even if he was not found guilty of any other crime.*

Prætextatus was arrested in his house, and conducted to the royal residence to undergo an examination on the facts which were imputed to him, and on his relations with Queen Brunehilda since the day that she left Rouen to return to Austrasia. They learnt from the answers of the bishop that he had not entirely restored to that queen the treasures she had entrusted him with at her departure; and that two bales full of stuffs and jewels, which were estimated at three thousand golden sols, and moreover a bag of golden pieces to the number of two thousand, still remained.† More rejoiced at this discovery than by any other information, Hilperik hastened to seize this deposit, and to confiscate it to his own profit; he then banished Prætextatus, under safe escort, far from his diocese until the meeting of the synod, which was to assemble and judge him.‡

Letters of convocation addressed to all the bishops of Hilperik's kingdom, commanded them to come to Paris at the end of the spring

* Audiens Chilpericus quod Prætextatus, Rothomagensis episcopus, contra utilitatem suam populi munera daret, eum ad se accessit præcepit. (Ibid. lib. v. t. ii. p. 243.)

† Quo discusso, reperit cum eodem res Brunichildis reginæ commendata (Ibid. lib. v. t. ii. p. 243.) Duo volucula speciebus et diversis ornamentis referta præciabantur amplius quam tria milia solidorum. Sed et sacculum cum numismatis auri pondere tenentem quasi milia duo (Ibid. p. 245.) According to the valuation made by Mr. Guérard, three thousand golden sols are intrinsically worth 1115*l.* and relatively worth 11,947*l.* 2*s.* 8*d.*

‡ Ipsisque (rebus) ablatis, eum in exilio usque ad sacerdotalem audientiam retineri præcepit. (Ibid. p. 243.)

* Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Ber. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. pp. 244, 245. Adriani Valesii. Ber. Francic., lib. x. p. 83, et seq.

of the year 577. Since the death of King Sighebert, the King of Neustria looked upon this city as his property, and disregarded the oath which forbade his entering it. Either because he really feared some enterprise on the part of the secret partisans of Brunehilda and Merowig, or to make more impression on the minds of the judges of Prætextatus, he made the journey from Soissons to Paris accompanied by a retinue so numerous that it might have passed for an army. These troops encamped at the gates of the king's abode, which was, apparently, the ancient imperial palace which rose on the banks of the Seine, to the south of the city of Paris. Its eastern front was by the side of the Roman road, which, leaving the little bridge of the city, took a southern direction. Opposite the principal entrance, another Roman road, in an eastern, but afterwards in a south-eastern direction, led through vineyards to the greatest elevation of the southern range of hills. There stood a church dedicated to the invocation of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, and which was probably chosen as the hall for the synodal meeting, on account of its proximity to the royal habitation, and the encampment of the soldiery.*

This church, which had been built half a century, contained the tombs of King Chlodowig, Queen Chlothilda, and St. Genovefe or Genevieve. Chlodowig had ordered its construction at Chlothilda's entreaties at the moment of his departure to the war against the Wisigoths; when he arrived at the destined spot, he threw his axe straight before him, that the strength and reach of his arm might some day be judged of by the length of the edifice.† It was one of those basilicas of the fifth and sixth centuries, more remarkable for the richness of their decoration than the grandeur of their architectural proportions, ornamented in the interior with marble columns, mosaics, painted and gilt ceilings, and the exterior with a copper roof and a portico.‡ The portico of the church of St. Peter consisted of three galleries, one running along the front of the building, and the others forming on each side flying buttresses in the shape of horse-shoes. These galleries were decorated throughout their length with pictures in fresco, divided into four large compartments, representing the four phalanxes of the saints of the old and the new law, the patriarchs, the prophets, the martyrs and confessors.§

* See *l'Histoire de Paris*, by Dulaure, tom. 1. aux *Articles Palais des Thermes, rue Saint Jacques, rue Galande, et rue de la Montagne Sainte Geneviève*.

† Tunc rex projecit a se in directum bipennem suum, quod est Francisca; et dixit: *Futur ecclesia beatorum apostolorum, dum auxiliante Deo revertitur*. (Gest. Reg. Franc., apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 554.)

[The curious practice of measuring certain boundaries by throwing the axe, the hammer, or the javelin, is copiously illustrated in Michelet's "*Origines du Droit Français*," pp 70–77. *Eo*.]

‡ V D Theod Ruinart præfat ad Greg. Turon. pp 95, 96. Greg. Turon Hist. Franc., lib ii. cap. xiv. et xvi. Fortunati Carmina. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 479. Ibid. t. iii. p. 437.

§ Cui est porticus applicata triplex, necnon et patriarcharum et prophetarum, et martyrum atque confesso-

rum. Such are the details furnished us by the original documents respecting the spot where this council assembled, the fifth of those held at Paris. On the day fixed by the letters of convocation, forty-five bishops met in the basilica of St. Peter. The king also came to the church; he entered it, attended by a few of his *leudes* armed only with their swords; and the crowd of Franks equipped for war remained under the portico, of which every avenue was filled. The choir of the basilica formed most probably the enclosure reserved for the judges, the plaintiff, and the defendant; as convicting evidence, the two bales and the bag of golden pieces seized in the house of Prætextatus were placed there. The king on his arrival pointed them out to the bishops, announcing that these were to play a conspicuous part in the cause which was to be discussed.* The members of the synod, who came either from the towns which were King Hilperik's original possessions, or from those he had conquered since the death of his brother, were partly by origin Gauls and partly Franks. Among the former, who were by far the more numerous, were Gregory, Bishop of Tours, Felix of Nantes, Domnolus of the Mans, Honoratus of Amiens, Ætherius of Lisieux, and Pappolus of Chartres. Among the latter were Ragenemod, Bishop of Paris, Leudowald of Bayeux, Romahaire of Coutance, Marowig of Poitiers, Malulf of Senlis, and Berthramn of Bordeaux; the latter was, it appears, honoured by his colleagues with the dignity and functions of president.†

He was a man of high birth, nearly related to the kings through his mother Ingeltruda, and who owed to this relationship great riches and influence. He imitated the polish and elegance of Roman manners; he liked to appear in public in a car drawn by four horses, and escorted by the young priests of his church, like a patron surrounded by his clients.‡ To this taste for luxury and senatorial pomp, Bishop Berthramn added a taste for poetry, and composed Latin epigrams, which he boldly offered to the admiration of connoisseurs, although they were full

rum, veram vetusti temporis fidem, quæ sunt tradita libris et historiæ paginis, pictura refert (Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iii. p. 370.) V Dulaure, *Hist. de Paris*, t. i. p. 277.

* Ostenderat autem nobis ante diem tertiam rex duo volucra... (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 245.)

† Conjuncto autem consilio, exhibitus est. Erant autem episcopi qui advenierat apud Parisius. in basilica sancti Petri apostoli. (Ibid. p. 243.) Ibid. lib. vii. cap. xvi. et passim. It has been objected to this double classification, that in the sixth century Roman or Germanic names are not always an infallible sign of the origin of those who bear them. for that some Germanic names are to be found in Gallo-Roman families. I am aware of this; but these are rare exceptions which prove the rule. If, until we have distinct proofs to the contrary, we may not class as Franks all those of the Merovingian times who bear Germanic names, and as Gauls those who bear Roman ones, history is no longer possible

‡ Huc ego dum famulans comitatu junger eodem, Et mea membra cito dum veterantur equo.....

(Fortunati Carmen ad Berthramnum Burdigal. Episc. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 437.)

of stolen lines and faults of rhythm.* More insinuating and adroit than men of the Germanic race usually were, he had preserved the love of open and shameless profligacy which characterized them. Following the example of the kings his relations, he took servants as concubines, and not content with them, he chose mistresses from among married women.† It was reported that he carried on an adulterous intercourse with Queen Fredegonda, and either from this, or some other cause, he had espoused the resentment of this queen against the Bishop of Rouen in the most violent manner. Generally speaking, the prelates of Frankish origin inclined to favour the king's cause by sacrificing their colleague. The Roman bishops had more sympathy with the accused, more feeling of justice and respect for the dignity of their order; but they were alarmed by the military preparations by which Hilperik was surrounded, and especially by the presence of Fredegonda, who, mistrusting as usual her husband's powers, had come to work herself at the accomplishment of her revenge. When the accused had been brought in, and the audience begun, the king rose, and instead of addressing himself to the judges, he hastily apostrophized his adversary, saying: "Bishop, how didst thou venture to marry my enemy Merowig, who should have been my son, to his aunt, I mean to say, to the wife of his uncle? Wert thou ignorant of what the canonical decrees ordain in this respect? Not only art thou convicted of having sinned thus, but moreover thou hast plotted with him of whom I speak, and hast distributed presents to get me assassinated. Thou hast made the son an enemy to his father; thou hast seduced the people with money, that none should bear me the fidelity which they owe me; thou hast endeavoured to betray my kingdom into the hands of another." . . . ‡ These last words, pronounced with force amidst the general silence, reached the ears of the Frankish warriors, who, stationed along the church, pressed with curiosity to the doors, which had been closed when the meeting opened. At the voice of the king saying he was betrayed, this armed multitude answered instantly by a murmur of indignation, and cries of death to the traitor; then roused to fury, they attempted to force open the doors, enter the church, drag out the bishop, and stone him to death. The members of the council, ter-

rified by this unexpected tumult, left their places, and the king himself was obliged to go to the assailants to appease them and restore them again to order.*

The assembly being sufficiently calmed to resume the proceedings, the Bishop of Rouen was permitted to speak in his defence. He was unable to exculpate himself from having infringed the canonical laws by the celebration of the marriage; but he absolutely denied the acts of conspiracy and treason which the king had imputed to him. Then Hilperik announced that he had witnesses to be heard, and ordered them to be brought forward. Several men of Frankish origin appeared, holding in their hands many valuable things which they placed under the eyes of the accused, saying to him: "Dost thou remember this? Here is what thou gavest us that we might swear fidelity to Merowig."† The bishop, not at all disconcerted, replied: "You say truly; I made you presents more than once, but it was not in order that the king should be driven out of his kingdom. When you offered me a fine horse or any thing else, could I forgive myself for not showing myself as generous as yourselves, and returning gift for gift?"‡ There was some little equivocation in this reply, however sincere it might be on the whole: but the fact of any organized plot was not able to be proved by any valid evidence. The remainder of the debate brought no proof against the accused, and the king, discontented with the failure of this first attempt, closed the meeting and left the church to return to his palace. His *leudes* followed him, and the bishops went all together to rest in the vestry.§

As they were sitting in groups, conversing familiarly, though not without a certain reserve, for they mistrusted one another, a man who was only known by name to most of them, unexpectedly presented himself. This was Aëtius, a Gaul by birth, and archdeacon of the church of Paris. After saluting the bishops, he said to them, commencing at once the most dangerous topic of conversation, "Listen to me, priests of the Lord here assembled together, the present occasion is a great and important one for you. You are either going to honour yourselves with the glory of a good name, or else you will lose in the opinion of all the world the title of ministers of God. It is necessary to choose; show yourselves firm and judicious, and do not let your brother perish."¶ This address was fol-

* Sed tamen in vestro quædam sermone notavi, Carmine de veteri furta novella loqui.

Ex quibus in paucis superaddita syllaba fregit, Et, pede læssa suo, musica clauda jacet. (Ibid.)

† Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. viii. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 316.—Abstulisti uxorem meam cum famulis ejus, et ecce, quod sacerdotem non decet, tu cum ancillis meis, et illa cum famulis tuis dedecus adulterii perpetrastis. (Greg. Turon., lib. ix. ibid. p. 352.) Tum Bertechramnus Burdigalensis civitatis episcopus cui hoc cum regina crimen impactum fuerat ... (Ibid., lib. v. p. 263.)

‡ Cui rex ait: Quid tibi visum est, o episcope, ut inimicum meum Merovechum, qui filius esse debebat, cum amita sua, id est patri sui uxore, conjungeres? An ignarus eras, quæ pro hac causa canonum statuta sanxis- sent? (Ibid., p. 243.)

* Hæc eo dicente, infremuit multitudo Francorum, vultuque ostia basilicæ rumpere, quasi ut extractum sacerdotem lapidibus urgeret: sed rex prohibuit fieri (Ibid.)

† Cùmque Prætextatus episcopus ea quæ rex dixerat facta negaret, advenērunt falsi testes, qui ostendebant species aliquas, dicentes: Hæc et hæc nobis dedisti, ut Merovecho fidem promitti deberemus (Ibid.)

‡ Ad hæc ille dicebat: Verum enim dictus vos a me sæpius muneratos, sed non hæc causa exstitit, ut rex ejiceretur a regno ... (Ibid.)

§ Recedente vero rege ad metatum suum, nos collecti in unum sedebamus in secretario basilicæ beati Patri. (Ibid.)

¶ Confabulantibusque nobis, subito advenit Aëtius, archidiaconus Parisiæ ecclesiæ, salutatisque nobis, ait: Audite me, o sacerdotes Domini, qui in unum collecti estis. (Ibid.)

lowed by a profound silence; the bishops not knowing whether they saw before them a spy sent by Fredegonda, only answered by placing a finger on their lips in token of discretion. They remembered with terror the ferocious cries of the Frankish warriors, and the blows of their war axes resounding against the doors of the church. They almost all, and the Gauls in particular, trembled to see themselves pointed out as suspicious to the distrustful loyalty of these fiery vassals of the king; they remained immovable, and as if stupefied, on their seats.*

But Gregory of Tours, more morally courageous than the others, and indignant at this pusillanimity, continued, of his own accord, the discourse and exhortations of the Archdeacon Aëtius. "I entreat you," said he, "to pay attention to my words, most holy priests of God, and especially you who are intimately admitted to familiar intercourse with the king. Give him pious counsel worthy of the sacerdotal character; for it is to be feared that his animosity against a minister of the Lord will draw down on him the Divine anger, and deprive him of his kingdom and his glory."† The Frankish bishops, to whom this discourse was especially addressed, remained silent like the rest, and Gregory added in a firm voice, "Remember, my lords and brethren, the words of the prophet, who says, 'If the watchman see the sword coming, and blow not the trumpet; if the sword come and take away any person from among them, his blood will I require at the hand of the watchman.'‡ Therefore do not keep silence, but speak boldly, and place his injustice before the eyes of the king, for fear misfortune should befall him, and you become responsible for it."§ The bishop paused for a reply, but none of the bystanders said a word. They hastened to quit the place, some to avoid all appearance of their being accomplices to such discourses, and to shelter themselves from the storm which they already saw bursting over the head of their colleague; others, like Berthramn and Raghene-mod, to pay their court to the king, and bring him the news.§ It was not long before Hilperik received a detailed account of all that had occurred. His flatterers told him that he had no greater enemy in this affair, these were their words, than the Bishop of Tours. The king, very much enraged, sent one of his courtiers instantly in all haste to fetch the bishop, and bring him before him. Gregory obeyed, and followed his conductor with an assured and

tranquil demeanour.* He found the king outside the palace, under a hut made of boughs, in the midst of the tents and huts of the soldiery. Hilperik was standing with Berthramn, Bishop of Bordeaux, on his right, and on his left Raghene-mod, Bishop of Paris, both of whom had acted the part of informers against their colleague. Before them stood a large bench covered with loaves, dressed meats, and different dishes destined to be offered to every new comer; for custom and a sort of etiquette required that no person should leave the king after a visit, without eating something at his table.†

At the sight of the man whom he had sent for in his anger, and whose inflexible character against threats he knew, Hilperik composed himself the better to attain his ends, and affecting a gentle and facetious tone instead of sharpness, he said, "O bishop, thy duty is to dispense justice to all men, and I cannot obtain it from thee; instead of that, I see clearly that thou dost connive with iniquity, and shonest the truth of the proverb: 'the crow does not pick out the crow's eyes.'‡" The bishop did not think proper to notice the joke; but with the traditional respect of the ancient subjects of the Roman empire for the sovereign power, a respect which in him, at least, excluded neither personal dignity nor the love of independence, he gravely answered, "If any one of us, O king, strays from the path of justice, he may be corrected by thee; but if thou art in fault, who will correct thee? We speak to thee, and if thou chooseth, thou listenest to us; but if thou dost not choose, who shall condemn thee? He alone who has said that he was justice itself."§ The king interrupted him, and replied, "I have found justice from all, and cannot get it from thee; but I know what I will do, that thou mayest be noted among the people, and that all may know that thou art an unjust man. I will assemble the inhabitants of Tours, and will say to them, Raise your voices against Gregory, and proclaim that he is unjust, and does justice to nobody; and while they proclaim this, I will add, If I who am king cannot obtain justice of him, how should you who are below me, obtain it?"||

This species of cunning hypocrisy, by which a man who had power to do every thing endea-

* *Dicentes: Quia nullum majorem inimicum in suis causis quam me habere. Illico unus ex aulicis cursu rapido ad me representandum dirigitur (Ibid.)*

† *Cūque venissem, stabat rex juxta tabernaculum ex ramis factum et ad dexteram ejus Berthramnus episcopus, ad lævam vero Raghene-modus stabat; et erat ante eos scamum pane desuper plenum cum diversis ferculis. (Ibid.)*

‡ *Visoque me rex ait: O episcopo, justitiam cunctis largiri debes, et ecce ego justitiam a te non accipio, sed, ut video, consensit iniquitati, et impletur in te proverbium illud, quod corvus oculum corvi non eruit. (Ibid.)*

§ *Ad hæc ego: Si quis de nobis, o rex, justitiam transgredere voluit, a te corrigi potest; si vero te excesseris, quis te corripiet? Loquimur enim tibi, sed si volueris, audis; si autem nolueris, quis te condemnabit? (Ibid.)*

|| *Ad hæc ille, ut erat ab adulatorebus contra me accensus, ait: Cum omnibus enim inveni justitiam, et tecum invenire non possum. Sed scio quid faciam, ut notis in populis ... (Ibid.)*

* *Hæc eo dicente, nullus sacerdotum ei quicquam respondit. Timebant enim reginæ furorē, cujus instinctu hæc agebantur. Quibus intentis, et ora digito comprimētibz. (Ibid.)*

† *Ego aio: Adtenti estote, quæso, sermonibus meis, o sanctissimi sacerdotes Dei, et præserim vos, qui familiares esse regi videmini: adhibete ei consilium sanctum et sacerdotale ... (Ibid.)*

‡ *Illis vero silentibus adjei: Mementote, Domini mei sacerdotes, verbi prophetici quod ait: si viderit speculator ... (Ibid.) Ezek. xxxiii. 6*

§ *Hæc me dicente, non respondit ullus quicquam, sed erant omnes intenti et stupentes. Duo tamen adulatores ex ipsis, quod de episcopo dici dolendum est, nuntiaverunt regi ... (Ibid., p. 244.)*

voured to represent himself as oppressed, raised in the heart of Gregory a contempt which he found it difficult to suppress, and which gave his words a drier and haughtier expression. "If I am unjust," he replied, "it is not thou who knowest it; it is He who knows my conscience, and sees in the depths of hearts; and as to the clamours of the people whom thou wilt call together, they will avail nothing, for every one will know that thou hast caused them. But enough on this subject; thou hast the laws and the canons; consult them carefully, and if thou dost not observe what they ordain, know that the judgment of God is on thy head."*

The king felt these severe words, and as if to efface from the mind of Gregory the disagreeable event which had called them forth, he assumed an air of cajolery, and pointing to a vase full of soup, which stood amid the loaves, the dishes of meat, and the drinking cups, he said, "Here is some soup which I have had prepared expressly for thee; nothing has been put into it but some poultry and gray pease."† These last words were intended to flatter the self-love of the bishop; for holy persons in those days, and in general all those who aspired to Christian perfection, abstained from the coarser meats, and lived on vegetables, fish, and poultry only. Gregory was not the dupe of this new artifice, and shaking his head in token of refusal, he replied, "Our nourishment should be to do the will of God, and not to take pleasure in delicate food. Thou who taxest others with injustice, commence by promising that thou wilt not disregard the law and the canons, and we will believe that it is justice which thou seekest."‡ The king, who was anxious not to break with the Bishop of Tours, and who, in an emergency, was never sparing in oaths, secure of finding later some method of eluding them, raised his head, and swore by the Almighty God that he would in no way transgress against the law and the canons. Then Gregory took some bread, and drank a little wine, a sort of hospitable communion, which could not be refused under any person's roof without sinning deeply against respect and politeness. Apparently reconciled to the king, he left him to return to his apartments in the basilica of Saint Julia, near the imperial palace.§

The following night, whilst the Bishop of Tours, after chaunting the service of nocturns, was resting in his apartment, he heard reite-

rated knocks at the door of the house. Astonished at this noise, he sent down one of his servants, who brought him word that some messengers from the Queen Fredegonda wished to see him.* These people having been introduced, saluted Gregory in the name of the queen, and told him that they came to request him not to show himself opposed to what she desired in the affair submitted to the council. They added in confidence, that they were commissioned to promise him two hundred pounds of silver, if he destroyed Prætextatus by declaring himself against him.† The Bishop of Tours, with his habitual prudence and calmness, objected merely, that he was not sole judge in the cause, and that his voice, on whichever side it was, could not decide any thing. "Yes it would," answered the envoys, "for we already have the promise of all the others; what we want is, that you should not go against us." The bishop answered in the same tone, "If you were to give me a thousand pounds of gold and silver, it would be impossible for me to do any thing but what the Lord commands; all that I can promise is, that I will join the other bishops in whatever they have decided conformably to the canonical law."‡ The envoys mistook the meaning of these words, either because they had not the smallest notion of what the canons of the church were, or because they imagined that the word *Lord* was applied to the king who in common conversation was frequently called by this title, and with many thanks they departed, joyful to be able to bring the queen the favourable answer which they thought they had received.§ Their mistake delivered Bishop Gregory from further importunities, and allowed him to rest till the next morning.

The members of the council assembled early for the second meeting, and the king, already quite recovered from his disappointment, arrived there with great punctuality.¶ In order to find a way of uniting the oath of the preceding day with the project of revenge which the queen persisted in, he had brought into play all his literary and theological learning; he had looked over the collection of canons, and stopped at the first article, which pronounced against a bishop the most severe punishment, that of deposition. There was nothing more for him to do, but to accuse the Bishop of Rouen on fresh grounds of a crime mentioned in this article, and this did

* Ad hæc ego: Quod sim injustus, tu nescis. Scit enim ille consensum meum, cui occulta cordis sunt manifesta. Quod vero falso clamore populus te insultante vociferatur, nihil est, quia sciunt omnes a te hæc emissæ. . . (Ibid.)

† At ille quasi me demulcens, quod dolose faciens putabat me non intelligere, conversus ad jussellum quod coram erat positum, ait: Propter te hæc jussella paravi, in quibus nihil aliud præter volatilia, et pauperum ciceris continetur. (Ibid.)

‡ Ad hæc ego, cognoscens adulationes ejus, dixi: Noster cibus esse debet facere voluntatem Dei, et non his delictis delectari. . . (Ibid.)

§ Ille vero, porrecta dextra, juravit per omnipotentem Deum, quod ea quæ lex et canones edocebant, nullo prætermitteret pacto. Post hæc, accepto pane, hausto etiam vino, discessi. (Ibid.)

* Ostium mansionis nostræ gravibus audio cogi verbis: missoque puero, nuntios Fredegundis reginæ adstare cognosco. (Ibid.)

† Deinde precantur pueri, ut in ejus causis contrarius non existam, simulque duascentas argenti promittunt libras, si Prætextatus me impugnantem opprimeretur. (Ibid.) According to Mr. Guérard's valuation, two hundred pounds of silver were really equivalent to £559 15s., and relatively equivalent to £5,972 10s.

‡ Dicebant enim: Jam omnium episcoporum promissionem habemus: tantum tu adversus non incedas. Quibus ego respondi: Si mihi mille libras auri argenteque donetis, numquid aliud facere possum, nisi quod Dominus agere præcipit (Ibid.)

§ At illi non intelligentes quæ dicebam, gratias agentes discesserunt. (Ibid.)

¶ Convenientibus autem nobis in basilica sancti Petri, manè rex adfuit. (Ibid.)

not in the least embarrass him; certain, as he thought himself, of all the voices of the synod, he gave himself full liberty for accusations and lies. When the judges and the accused had taken their places, as in the former meeting, Hilperik spoke, and said with the gravity of a doctor commenting on ecclesiastical law: "The bishop convicted of theft must be deprived of episcopal functions; for so the authority of the canons has decided."* The members of the synod, astonished by this opening, of which they understood nothing, asked unanimously what bishop was accused of the crime of theft. "It is he," answered the king, turning with singular impudence to Prætextatus, "he himself; and have you not seen what he robbed us of?"†

They then remembered the two bales of stuff and the bag of money, which the king had shown them without explaining whence they came, or what connection they had in his mind with this accusation. However affronting this new attack was to him, Prætextatus patiently replied to his adversary: "I think you must remember, that after Queen Brunehilda had left Rouen, I came to you and informed you that I had in my house a deposit of that queen's property, that is to say, five bales of considerable size and weight; that her servants frequently came demanding them of me, but I would not give them up without your permission. You then said to me: 'Get rid of these things, and let them return to the woman to whom they belong, for fear that enmity should result between me and my nephew Hildebert.' On my return to my metropolis, I sent one of the bales by the servants, for they could not carry any more.‡ They returned later to ask for the others, and I went again to consult your magnificence. The order that I received from you was the same as the first time: 'Send away, send away all these things, O bishop, for fear they should breed quarrels.' I therefore gave them two more bales, and the other two remained with me. Now, why do you calumniate me, and accuse me of theft, when this is no case of stolen goods, but simply of goods confided to my care?"§ "If this deposit had been placed in thy care," replied the king, giving another turn to the accusation without the least embarrassment, and abandoning the part of plaintiff to become public accuser, "if thou wert the depositary, why didst thou open one of the bales, take out the trimmings of a robe woven of golden threads, and

cut it in pieces, in order to give it to men who conspired to deprive me of my kingdom?"*

The accused answered with the same calmness: "I have already told thee once that these men had made me presents; having nothing of my own at that moment which I could give them in return, I drew from thence, and did not think I was doing wrong. I considered as my own property whatever belonged to my son Merowig to whom I stood godfather."† The king did not know how to reply to these words, which so naively expressed the paternal feeling, which was an unceasing passion, a sort of fixed idea in the old bishop. Hilperik found himself, at the end of his resources, and an air of embarrassment and confusion succeeded to the assurance he had at first shown; he abruptly ended the meeting, and retired still more disconcerted and discontented than the preceding day.‡

What most preoccupied him was the reception he would infallibly receive from the imperious Fredegonda after such a disaster, and it appears that his return to the palace was followed by a domestic storm, of which the violence consternated him. Not knowing what further to do to effect the ruin, as his wife wished, of the inoffensive old priest whose destruction she had vowed, he called to him the members of the council who were most devoted him, amongst others Berthramn and Raghenemod. "I confess," said he to them, "that I am overcome by the words of the bishop, and I know that what he says is true. What shall I do that the will of the queen respecting him may be accomplished?"§ The priests, much embarrassed, did not know what to answer; they remained grave and silent, when the king, suddenly stimulated, and as if inspired by the mixture of love and fear which formed his conjugal affection, added with spirit: "Go to him, and seeming to advise him from yourselves, say: Thou knowest that King Hilperik is kind and easy to move, that he is with facility won to mercy; humble thyself before him, and say to please him that thou hast done the things of which he accuses thee; we will then all throw ourselves at his feet, and obtain thy pardon."¶

Either the bishops persuaded their weak and credulous colleague that the king, repenting his

* Ad hæc rex: Si hoc depositum penes te habebatur ad custodiendum, cur solvisi unum ex his, et limbum aureis contextum filis in partes dissecasti, et dedisti per viros, qui me a regno deciperent? (Ibid.)

† Jam dixi tibi superius, quia munera eorum acceperam; ideoque cum non haberem de præsentis quod darem, hinc præsumpsi et eis vicissitudinem muneronum tribui. Proprium mihi esse videbatur, quod filio meo Merovecho erat, quem de lavacro regenerationis excepi (Ibid.)

‡ Videns autem rex Ch. Ipericus, quod eum his calumniis superare nequiret, adtonitus valde, a conscientia confusus, discessit a nobis (Ibid.)

§ Vocavique quosdam de adulatores suis, et ait: Victim me verbis episcopi fateor, et vera esse quæ dicit scio: quid nunc faciam, ut reginæ de eo voluntas adimpleatur? (Ibid.)

¶ Et ait: Ite, et accedentes ad eum dicite, quasi consilium ex vobismetipsis dantes; Nosti quod sit rex Chilpericus pius atque compunctus, et cito flectatur ad misericordiam: humiliare sub eo, et dicite ab eo objecta a te perpetrata fuisse ... (Ibid.)

* Dixitque: Episcopus enim in furtis deprehensus, ab episcopali officio ita evellatur canonum auctoritas sanxit. (Ibid.)

† Nobis quoque respondentibus, quis ille sacerdos esset cui furti crimen inrogetur, respondit rex: Vidisti enim species quas nobis furto abstulit. (Ibid. 245.)

‡ Hæc enim dicebat rex, sibi ab episcopo fuisse furata. Qui respondit: Recolare vos credo, discedente a Rothomagensi urbe Brunichilde regina, quod venerim ad vos, dixique vobis, quia res ejus, id est quinque sarcinas, commendatas haberem (Ibid.)

§ Reversis iterum requirebant alia: iterum consului magnificentiam vestram. Tu autem præcepisti dicens: Ejice, ejice hæc a te, o sacerdos, ne faciat scandalum hæc causa ... Tu autem quid nunc calumniaris, et me furti arguis, cum hæc causa non ad furtum, sed ad custodiam debeat deputari? (Ibid.)

accusations, only wished their truth not to be denied, or they frightened him by representing that his innocence before the council would not save him from royal vengeance if he persisted in braving it; and Prætextatus, intimidated, moreover, by his knowledge of the servile and venal disposition of most of his judges, did not reject these strange counsels. He kept in his mind as a last chance of safety, the ignominious resource which was offered him, thus giving a sad example of the moral enervation which was then spreading even to the men whose care it was to maintain the rules of duty, and the scruples of honour, in the midst of this half-destroyed society. Thanked by him whom they were betraying, as if for a kind action, the bishops brought King Hilperik news of the success of their errand. They promised that the accused, falling at once into the snare, would confess all at the first interpellation; and Hilperik, delivered by this assurance from the trouble of inventing any fresh expedient to revive the proceedings, resolved to abandon them to their ordinary course.* Things were therefore placed at the third meeting precisely at the point at which they stood at the end of the first, and the witnesses who had already appeared, were again summoned to confirm their former allegations.

The next day at the opening of the sitting, the king said to the accused, as if he had simply resumed his last speech of two days before, pointing out to him the witnesses who were standing there: "If thy only intention was to exchange gift for gift with these men, wherefore didst thou ask of them an oath of fidelity to Merowig?"† However enervated his conscience had become since his interview with the bishops, still, with an instinct of shame stronger than all his apprehensions, Prætextatus shrank from the lie he was to utter against himself: "I confess," answered he, "that I requested their friendship for him, and I would have called not only men, but the angels of heaven to his assistance, if I had the power to do so, for he was, as I have already said, my spiritual son by baptism."‡

At these words, which seemed to indicate on the part of Prætextatus the intention to continue to defend himself, the king, exasperated at finding his expectations deceived, broke out in the most terrible manner. His anger, which was as brutal at that moment as his stratagems had been patient until then, caused a nervous commotion in the feeble old man, which annihilated at once what moral courage remained to him. He fell on his knees, and prostrating himself with his face on the ground, said: "O

most merciful king, I have sinned against Heaven and against thee; I am a detestable homicide; I have wished to kill thee and place thy son on the throne."* ... As soon as the king saw his adversary at his feet, his anger was pacified, and hypocrisy again predominated. Feigning to be carried away by the excess of his emotion, he threw himself on his knees before the assembly and exclaimed, "Do you hear, most pious bishops, do you hear the criminal avow this execrable attempt?" The members of the council all rushed from their seats, and ran to raise the king whom they surrounded, some affected to tears, and others, perhaps, laughing inwardly at the singular scene which their treachery of the preceding day had contributed to prepare.† As soon as Hilperik rose, he ordered that Prætextatus should leave the basilica, as if it had been impossible for him to bear any longer the sight of so great a culprit. He himself retired almost directly, in order to leave the council to deliberate, according to custom, before pronouncing judgment.‡

On his return to the palace, the king, without losing a moment, sent the assembled bishops a copy of the collection of canons taken from his own library. Besides the entire code of canonical laws incontestably admitted by the Gallican church, this volume contained a supplement of a new book of canons attributed to the apostles, but little spread at that time in Gaul, and little studied, and imperfectly known by the most erudite theologians. It was there that the article of discipline cited with so much emphasis by the king at the second meeting, when he took a fancy to turn the accusation for conspiracy into one for theft, was to be found. This article, which decreed the punishment of deposition, pleased him much on that account; but as the text no longer coincided with the confessions of the accused, Hilperik carrying duplicity and effrontery to their utmost extent, did not hesitate to falsify it, either with his own hand, or by that of one of his secretaries. In the altered copy were these words: "The bishop convicted of homicide, adultery, or perjury, shall be degraded from episcopacy." The word *theft* had disappeared, and was replaced by the word *homicide*, and yet, what is still more strange, none of the members of the council, not even the Bishop of Tours, suspected the fraud. Only it appears that the upright and conscientious Gregory, the man of law and justice, made efforts to induce his colleagues to content themselves with the ordinary code, and to decline the authority of the pretended apostolic canons, but without success.§

* His seductus Prætextatus episcopus, pollicitus est se ita facturum. (Ibid.)

† Mane autem facto, convenimus ad consuetum locum: adveniensque rex, ait ad episcopum: Si munera pro muneribus his hominibus es largitus, cur sacramenta postulasti ut fidem Merovecho servarent. (Ibid.)

‡ Respondit episcopus Petii, fateor, amicitias eorum haberi cum eo; et non solum hominem, sed, si fas fuisset, angelum de celo evocassem, qui esset adjutor ejus; filius enim mihi erat, ut sæpe dixi, spiritualis ex lavacro. (Ibid.)

* Cùmque hæc altercatio altius tolleretur, Prætextatus episcopus, prostratus solo, ait. Peccavi in cœlum et coram te, o rex misericordissime, ego sum homicida nefandus; ego te interficere volui, et filium tuum in solo tuo erigere. (Ibid.)

† Hæc eo dicente, prosternitur rex coram pedibus sacerdotum, dicens: Audite, o pissimi sacerdotes, reum crimen execrabile confitentem. Cùmque nos fientes regem elevassemus a solo (Ibid.)

‡ Jussit eum basilicam egredi. Ipse vero ad metatum discessit (Ibid.)

§ Transmittens librum canonum, in quo erat quaternio

When the deliberation was ended, the parties were again summoned to hear sentence pronounced. The fatal article, one of those composing the one and twentieth canon, having been read aloud, the Bishop of Bordeaux, as president of the council, addressing himself to the accused, said to him, "Listen, brother and co-bishop, thou canst no longer remain in communion with us, or enjoy our charity, until the day when the king, with whom thou art not in favour, shall grant thy pardon."* At this sentence, pronounced by the mouth of a man who the day before had so shamefully taken advantage of his simplicity, Prætextatus stood silent, and as if stupefied. As to the king, so complete a victory was no longer sufficient for him, and he was trying to discover some additional means of aggravating his condemnation. Instantly raising his voice, he demanded that before the condemned man left their presence, his tunic should be torn on his back, or else that the 109th Psalm, which contains the curses applied to Judas Iscariot in the Acts of the Apostles, should be recited over him: "Let his days be few; let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let the extortioners catch all that he hath, and let the strangers spoil his labour; let there be none to extend mercy to him; let his posterity be cut off, and in the generation following, let their name be blotted out."† The first of these ceremonies was the symbol of the lowest degradation, the second was only applied in cases of sacrilege. Gregory of Tours, with his tranquil and moderate firmness, raised his voice against such an aggravation of the punishment being admitted, and the council did not admit it. Then Hilperik, always in a caviling humour, wished the judgment which suspended his adversary from episcopal functions to be put down in writing, with a clause bearing that the deposition should be perpetual. Gregory also opposed this demand, and reminded the king of his solemn promise to confine this act within the limits marked by the tenour of the canonical laws.‡ This debate, which prolonged the meeting, was suddenly interrupted by a catastrophe in which might be recognized the hand and determination of Fredegonda, wearied by the slowness of the proceedings, and the subtleties of her husband. Armed men entered the church, and carried off Prætextatus

from under the eyes of the assembly, which had then nothing left to do but to separate. The bishop was conducted to prison within the walls of Paris, in a gaol of which the ruins long existed on the left bank of the large branch of the Seine. The following night he attempted to escape, and was cruelly beaten by the soldiers who guarded him. After a day or two of captivity, he set out for his exile at the extremity of the kingdom, in an island near the shores of the Cotentin; it was probably that of Jersey, which, as well as the coast itself as far as Bayeux, had been colonized about a century before by pirates of the Saxon race.* The bishop was apparently to pass the rest of his life in the midst of this population of fishermen, and pirates; but after seven years of exile, a great event restored him to liberty and his church. In the year 584, King Hilperik was assassinated with circumstances which will be recounted elsewhere, and his death, which public opinion imputed to Fredegonda, became throughout the kingdom of Neustria the signal for a sort of revolution. All the malcontents of the last reign, all those who had to complain of annoyances and losses, righted themselves. They fell upon the royal officers who had abused their power, or who had exercised it with rigour, and without consideration for any one, caused their goods to be seized, their houses pillaged and burned; each one profited of this opportunity to retaliate on his oppressors and enemies. The hereditary feuds of family against family, of town against town, of canton against canton, were revived, and produced private broils, murders, and highway robberies.† Prisoners left their prisons, and outlaws returned to the kingdom, as if their sentence had been annulled by the death of the prince in whose name it was pronounced. It was thus that Prætextatus returned from exile, recalled by a deputation sent to him by the citizens of Rouen. He made his entry into the town escorted by an immense crowd amidst the acclamations of the people, who established him of their own authority in the metropolitan see, and expelled as an intruder the Gaul Melanius, whom the king had placed in his stead.‡

Meanwhile, Queen Fredegonda, accused of all the evils which had been done under her hus-

novus adnexus, habens canones quasi apostolicos, continentes hæc: Episcopus in homicidio, adulterio, et perjurio deprehensus, a sacerdote divellatur (Ibid.) Adriani Valesii *Rer. Francic.*, lib. x. p. 94 D Theod. Ruinart, præfat. ad Greg. Turon. p. 86.

* His ita lectus, cum Prætextatus staret stupens, Berthezmannus episcopus ait: Audi, o frater et co-episcopo, quia regis gratiam non habes, ideoque nec nostra caritate uti poteris, priusquam regis indulgentiam merearis (Greg. Turon. *Hist. Franc.*, lib. v. apud Script. *Rer. Gallic. et Francic.*, t. ii. p. 245.)

† His ita gestus, petiit rex, ut aut tunica ejus scinderetur, aut centesimus octavus psalmus, qui maledictiones Ischariotichas continet, super caput ejus recitaretur. (Ibid. p. 246.)

‡ Aut certe iudicium contra eum scriberetur, ne in perpetuum communicaretur. Quibus conditionibus ego restiti, juxta promissum regis, ut nihil extra canones gereretur. (Ibid.)

* Tunc Prætextatus a nostris raptus oculis, in custodiam positus est. De qua fugere tentans nocte, gravissimè cæsus, in insulam maris, quod adjacet civitati Constantine, in exilium est detrusus (Ibid.) V. Du-laure, *Hist. de Paris*, t. i. V. History of the Norman Conquest, books i and ii.

† Qui (Audo judex) post mortem regis ab ipsis (Francis) spoliatus ac denudatus est, ut nihil ei præter quod super se auferre potuit remaneret. Domo enim ejus incendio subdidit, abstulissent utique et ipsam vitam, si cum regina ecclesias expetisset. (Greg. Turon. *Hist. Franc.*, lib. vii. apud Script. *Rer. Gallic. et Francic.*, t. ii. p. 299.) Defuncto igitur Chilperico Aurelianenses cum Blesensibus juncti super Dunenses irruunt, eoque inopinanter proterunt, domos annonasque, vel quæ movere facile non poterant, incendio tradunt, pecora diripiunt. (Ibid.)

‡ Quem cives Rothomagenses post excessum regis de exilio expetentes cum grandi lætitia et gaudio civitati suæ restituerunt. (Ibid.)

band's reign, had been compelled to take refuge in the principal church of Paris, leaving her only son of about four months old* in the hands of the Frankish nobles, who proclaimed him king, and assumed the government in his name. Having left this place of security when the disturbance became less violent, she was obliged to conceal herself in a retreat distant from the young king's residence. Renouncing her habits of luxury and domination with much regret, she retired to the domain of Rotoialum, now the Val de Reuil, near the confluence of the Eure and the Seine. Thus circumstances led her within a few leagues of the town where the bishop whom she had caused to be deposed and banished was now re-established in spite of her. Although in her heart she neither forgot nor forgave, and although seven years of exile on the head of an old man had not rendered him less odious to her than the first day, she had not leisure at first to think about him; her thoughts and hatred were directed elsewhere †

Unhappy at finding herself reduced to an almost private condition, she had perpetually before her eyes the happiness and power of Brunehilda, who was now the uncontrolled guardian of a son fifteen years of age. She said with bitterness: "That woman will think herself above me." Such an idea in Fredegonda's mind was synonymous with the idea of murder; as soon as her mind had dwelt upon it, she had no other occupation than dark and atrocious meditations on the means of perfecting the instruments of murder, and training men of an enthusiastic disposition to crime and fearlessness.‡ Those who appeared to answer her plans best were young clerks of barbaric race, ill disciplined in the spirit of their new state, and still preserving the habits and manners of vassalage. There were several of these among the inhabitants of her house; she kept up their devotion by largesses and a sort of familiarity; from time to time she had made on them the experiment of intoxicating liquors and cordials, of which the mysterious composition was one of her secrets. The first of these young men who appeared to her sufficiently prepared, received from her lips the order to go to Austrasia, to present himself as a deserter before Queen Brunehilda, gain her confidence, and kill her as soon as he should find an opportunity.§ He departed, and succeeded in introducing himself to the queen; he even entered her service, but at the end of a few days he excited suspicion, he was put on the rack, and when he had confessed every thing, he was dismissed without

further injury, and was told, "Return to thy patroness." Fredegonda, infuriated by this clemency, which appeared to her an insult and a defiance, revenged herself on her awkward emissary by depriving him of his feet and hands.* (A. D. 585.)

At the end of a few months, when she thought the moment was come for a second attempt, concentrating all her genius for evil, she had some daggers of a new sort made from her own instructions. These were long knives with sheaths, similar in shape to those which the Franks generally wore at their girdles, but of which the blade was carved all over with indented figures. Though apparently innocent, those ornaments had a truly diabolical purpose; they were made in order that the iron might be more thoroughly poisoned, by the venomous substance becoming incrusting in the carvings instead of running off the polished steel.† Two of these arms, rubbed with a subtle poison, were given by the queen to two young clerks whose loyalty had not been cooled by the sad fate of their companion. They were ordered to go dressed like beggars to the residence of King Hildebert, to watch him in his walks, and when an opportunity presented itself, both to approach him asking for alms, and then together strike him with their knives. "Take these daggers," said Fredegonda to them, "and go quickly, that I may at last see Brunehilda, whose arrogance proceeds from that child, lose all power by its death, and become my inferior. If the child is too well guarded for you to approach it, kill my enemy; if you perish in the enterprise, I will load your relations with kindness, I will enrich them with my gifts, and will raise them to the first rank in the kingdom. Be therefore without fear, and take no concern about death."‡

At this discourse, of which the explicitness left no other prospect than a danger without chance of escape, some signs of confusion and hesitation appeared on the faces of the two young clerks. Fredegonda perceived it, and instantly brought a beverage composed with all possible art to raise the spirits and flatter the palate. Each of the young men drained a cup of this drink, and its effect was not long in showing itself in their looks and manners.§ Satisfied with the experiment, the queen then

* Redire permissus est ad patronam: reseransque quæ acta fuerant, effatus quod jussa patrare non potuisset, manum ac pedum abscissione multatur. (Ibid.)

† Fredegundis duos cultros ferreos fieri præcepit: quos etiam caraxari profundius, et veneno inficere jusserrat, scilicet si mortalis adsultus vitales non dissolveret fibras, vel ipsa veneni infectio vitam posset velocius extorquere. (Ibid., lib. viii. t. ii. p. 324.)

‡ Quos cultros duobus clericis cum his mandatis tradidit, dicens. Accipite hos gladios, et quantocius pergite ad Childbertum regem, adsimulantes vos esse mendicos . . . ut tandem Brunichildis, quæ ab illo adrogantiam sumit, eo cadente contruat, mihi que subdatur. Quod si tanta est custodia circa puerum, ut accedere nequeatis, vel ipsam intermite inimicam. (Ibid.)

§ Cumque hæc mulier loqueretur, clerici tremere cœperunt, difficile putantes hæc jussa posse compleri. At illa dubios cernens, medicatos potione direxit quo ire præcepit; statimque robur animorum adcrevit. (Ibid., p. 325.)

* Chlothar, born in 584, after the death of all the other sons of Hilperik and Fredegonda.

† Ibid. pp. 294. 299. Adriaui Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. xii. p. 214.

‡ Postquam autem Fredegundis regina ad supradictam villam (Rotoialensem) abijt, cum esset valde mœsta, quid ei potestas ex parte fuisset ablata, meliorem se existimans Brunichildem (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vii. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 299.)

§ Misit occulte clericum sibi familiarem, qui eam circumveniens dolis intermire posset, videlicet ut cum se subulter in ejus subderet famulatum (Ibid., p. 300.)

added: "When the day is come to execute my orders, I desire that before going to work, you should take a draught of this liquor, to make you alert and courageous." The two clerks departed for Austrasia, provided with their poisoned knives, and a bottle containing the precious cordial; but good watch was kept round the young king and his mother. At their arrival, Fredegonda's emissaries were seized upon as suspicious, and this time no mercy was shown them. Both perished in tortures.* These events took place in the last months of the year 585; towards the commencement of (A. D. 586) the year following, it happened that Fredegonda, weary, perhaps of her solitude, left the Val de Reuil to spend some days at Rouen. She thus found herself more than once, in public meetings and ceremonies, in the presence of the bishop whose return was a sort of denial of her power. From what she knew by experience of the character of this man, she expected at least to find him in her presence with a humble and ill-assured countenance, and timid manners, like an outlaw only by action and simply tolerated; but instead of showing her the obsequious deference of which she was still more jealous since she felt herself fallen from her former rank, Prætextatus, it appears, was haughty and disdainful; his spirit, once so weak and effeminate, had in some sort been tempered by suffering and adversity.†

In one of the meetings which civil or religious ceremonies caused between the bishop and the queen, the latter allowing her hatred and vexation to overflow, said, loud enough to be heard by every person present: "This man should remember that the time may return for him to take once more the road to exile."‡ Prætextatus did not overlook this speech, and braving the rage of his terrible enemy, he answered boldly, "In exile, and out of exile, I have never ceased to be a bishop; I am one, and shall always be one; but thou, canst thou say that thou wilt always enjoy regal power? From the depth of my exile, if I return to it, God will call me to the kingdom of heaven, and thou, from thy kingdom in this world, shalt be precipitated into the abyss of hell. It is time for thee to abandon henceforward thy follies and crimes, to renounce the pride which swells thee up, and to follow a better course, that thou mayest deserve eternal life, and lead up to manhood the child which thou hast brought into the world."§ These words, in which the most bitter irony was mingled with the stately gravity of a sacerdotal admonition, roused all the passion

contained in Fredegonda's soul; but far from giving way to furious discourses, or publicly exhibiting her shame and anger, she went out without uttering a single word, to brood over the injury and prepare her revenge in the solitude of her house.*

Melantius, an ancient protégé and client of the queen's, and who for seven years had unlawfully occupied the episcopal see, had joined her since her arrival at the domain of Reuil, and had not left her since that period.† It was he who received the first confidence of her sinister designs. This man, whom the regret of no longer being a bishop tormented enough to render him capable of daring every thing to become one again, did not hesitate to become the accomplice of a project which might lead him to the summit of his ambition. The seven years of his episcopacy had not been without influence on the persons forming the clergy of the metropolitan church. Many of the dignitaries promoted during that period, considered themselves as his creatures, and saw with displeasure the restored bishop, to whom they owed nothing, and from whom they expected little favour. Prætextatus, simple and confiding by nature, had not made himself uneasy on his return at the new faces he met in the episcopal palace; he never thought of those whom such a change could not fail to alarm, and as he was kindly disposed to all, he did not think he was hated by any one. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the warm and deep affection which the people of Rouen bore him, most of the members of the clergy felt but little zeal and attachment for him.

But with some, especially in the higher ranks, the aversion was excessive; one of the archdeacons or metropolitan vicars carried it to frenzy, either from devotion to the cause of Melantius, or because he aspired himself to the episcopal dignity. Whatever were the motives of the deadly hatred which he harboured against his bishop, Fredegonda and Melantius considered that they could not do without him, and admitted him as a third in the conspiracy. The archdeacon had conferences with them in which the means of executing it were discussed. It was decided, that among the serfs attached to the domain of the Church of Rouen, a man capable of being seduced by the promise of being enfranchised with his wife and children, should be sought for. One was found, whom the hope of liberty, however doubtful, infatuated to the extent of making him ready to commit the double crime of murder and sacrilege. This unfortunate man received two hundred pieces of gold as an encouragement; a hundred from Fredegonda, fifty given by Melantius, and the remainder by the archdeacon; all necessary measures were taken, and the blow decided for the Sunday following, the 24th of February.‡

* *Nihilominus vasculum hac potione repletum ipsos levare jubet, dicens: In die illa cum hæc quæ præcipio factis, mane priusquam opus incipiat, hunc potum sumite* (Ibid.)

† *Dum hæc agerentur, et Fredegundis apud Rothomagensem urbem commoraretur* (Ibid., p. 326)

‡ *Verba amaritudinis cum Prætextato pontifice habuit, dicens venturum esse tempus, quando exsilia in quibus detentus fuerat, reviseret.* (Ibid.)

§ *Et ille: Ego semper et in exilio et extra exilium episcopus fui, sum et ero: nam tu non semper regali potentia perfrueris Nos ab exilio provehimur, tribuente Deo, in regnum; tu vero ab hoc regno demergeris in Abyssum.* (Ibid.)

* *Hæc effatus, cum verba illius mulier graviter acciperet, se a conspectu ejus felle fervens abstraxit.* (Ibid.)

† *Ubique relinquentes eam (Fredegundem) cum Melantio episcopo, qui de Rothomago submotus fuerat* (Ibid., lib. vii. p. 299.) *Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. xiii. p. 303.*

‡ *Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. viii. apud Script.*

That day, the Bishop of Rouen, whose movements had been watched by the murderer ever since the rising of the sun, repaired early to the church. He sat down in his accustomed place, a few steps from the high altar, on an isolated seat, in front of which was a praying desk. The rest of the clergy occupied the stalls which surrounded the choir, and the bishop commenced, as was the custom, the first verse of the morning service.* While the psalmody, taken up by the chaunters, continued in chorus, Prætextatus knelt down, folding his hands and resting his head on the praying desk before him. This posture, in which he remained for some time, furnished the assassin, who had introduced himself behind, with the opportunity he had been watching for since break of day. Profiting by the bishop, who was prostrated in prayer, seeing nothing of what was passing round him, he gradually approached until within arm's length, and drawing the dagger which hung at his waist, struck him with it below the arm pit. Prætextatus, feeling himself wounded, screamed; but either from ill-will or cowardice, none of the priests present came to his assistance, and the assassin had time to escape.† Thus abandoned, the old man raised himself alone, and pressing his two hands on the wound, walked towards the altar and gathered strength enough to ascend the steps. When he reached it, he stretched out his two hands full of blood to attain the golden vase suspended with chains over the altar, and in which was kept the Eucharist reserved for the communion of the dying. He took a piece of the consecrated bread and swallowed it; then giving thanks to God that he had had time to provide himself with the holy viaticum, he fainted in the arms of his faithful attendants, and was carried by them to his apartment.‡

Informed of what had taken place, either by public rumour, or by the murderer himself, Fredegonda determined to give herself the pleasure of seeing her enemy in the agonies of death. She hastened to the house of the bishop, accompanied by the Dukes Ansowald and Beppolen, neither of whom knew what share she had taken

in this crime, nor what strange scene they were to witness. Prætextatus was on his bed, his countenance bearing all the signs of approaching death, but still retaining feeling and consciousness. The queen dissembled the joy she felt, and assuming an appearance of sympathy, she said to the dying bishop in a tone of royal dignity: "It is sad for us, O holy bishop, as well as for the rest of thy people, that such an affliction should have befallen thy venerable person. Would to God that he who has dared to commit this horrible action could be pointed out to us, that he might be punished by torture proportioned to his crime!"*

The old man, whose suspicions were confirmed by this visit, raised himself on his bed of suffering, and fixing his eyes on Fredegonda, answered, "And who has struck the blow, if it is not the hand that has murdered kings, that has so frequently shed innocent blood, and done so much evil in the kingdom?"† No sign of uneasiness appeared on the queen's face, and as if these words had been entirely devoid of meaning to her, and the simple effect of febrile derangement, she replied in the most calm and affectionate tone, "There are amongst us very learned physicians capable of healing this wound; permit them to visit thee."‡ The patience of the bishop could not hold out against such effrontery, and in a transport of indignation which exhausted the remains of his strength, he said, "I feel that God is calling me from this world; but as for thou who hast conceived and directed the attempt which deprives me of life, thou wilt be in all centuries an object of execration, and Divine justice will avenge my blood upon thy head." Fredegonda retired without uttering a word, and a few minutes afterwards, Prætextatus breathed his last.§

At the news of this event, all the town of Rouen was thrown into consternation; the citizens, Romans and Franks united, without distinction of races, in the same feelings of grief and horror. The former, possessing no political existence beyond the limits of the city, could only express an impotent sorrow at the crime of which the queen was the chief instigator; but amongst the latter, there was a certain number at least, those whose fortune or hereditary nobility procured them the title of lords, who, according to the old privilege of Germanic liberty, might find fault with any one whomsoever, and

Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 331. Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. xiii. p. 303.

* Cum sacerdos ad implenda ecclesiastica officia, ad ecclesiam maturius properasset, antiphonas juxta consuetudinem incipere per ordinem cepit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. viii. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 326.)

† Cúmque inter psallendum formulæ decumberet, crudelis adfuit homicida qui episcopum super formulam quiescentem, extracto balthei cultro, sub ascella percussit. Ille vero vocem emittens, ut clerici qui aderant adjuvarent, nullus auxilio de tantis adstantibus est adjutus. (Ibid.)

‡ Ex quo lethali ictu erumpente cruore propius ad aram accessit divinaque humiliter expetit sacramenta. Factus igitur aras et mensæ dominicæ ex voto particeps (Bollandi Acta Sanctor., t. iii. p. 465.) At ille plenas sanguine manus super altarium extendens, orationem fundens et Deo gratias agens, in cubiculo suum inter manus fidelium deportatus (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. viii. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 326.) V. Ducange, Glossar. ad Script. Med. et infim. Latinitat. voc. *Columba*.

* Statimque Fredegundis cum Beppoleno duce et Ansovaldo adfuit, dicens: Non oportuerat hac nobis ac reliquæ plebi tuæ, o sancte sacerdos, ut ista tuo culti evenirent: sed utinam indicaretur qui talia ausus est perpetrare, ut digna pro hoc scelere supplicia sustineret. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. viii. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 327.)

† Sciens autem eam sacerdos hæc dolose proferre, ait: Et quis hæc fecit, nisi is qui reges interemit, qui sapius sanguinem innocentem effudit? (Ibid.)

‡ Respondit mulier: Sunt apud nos peritissimi medici, qui huic vulneri mederi possunt; permite ut accedant ad te. (Ibid.)

§ Et ille: Jam, inquit, me Deus præcepit de hoc mundo vocari. Nam tu quæ his sceleribus princeps inventa es, eris maledicta in sæculo, et erit Deus ultor sanguinis mei de capite tuo. (Ibid.)

reach the culprit with the arm of justice.* There were in the neighbourhood of Rouen several of these chiefs of families, independent landholders, who sat in judgment on the most important cases, and showed themselves as proud of their personal rights as they were jealous of the preservation of ancient customs and national institutions. Among them was a man of courage and enthusiasm, possessing in the highest degree that fearless sincerity which the conquerors of Gaul regarded as the virtue of their race, an opinion which, becoming popular, gave rise to a new word, that of *frankness*. This man assembled some of his friends and neighbours, and persuaded them to join him in a bold undertaking, and convey to Fredegonda the announcement of a legal summons.

They all mounted their horses and departed from a domain situated at some distance from Rouen for the queen's dwelling in the centre of the town. On their arrival, one only amongst them, the one who had counselled this visit, was admitted to the presence of Fredegonda, who increasing her precautions since her last crime, kept carefully on her guard; all the others remaining in the hall or under the portico of the house. When interrogated by the queen respecting the object of his visit, the chief of the deputation answered in accents of profound indignation: "Thou hast committed many crimes in thy life-time, but the greatest of all is what thou has recently done, in ordering the murder of a priest of God. May it please God soon to declare himself the avenger of innocent blood! But meanwhile, we will all of us make inquiry into the crime and prosecute the criminal, so that it may become impossible for thee to exercise similar cruelties." After pronouncing this threat the Frank went out, leaving the queen disturbed in the depth of her soul by a declaration, of which the consequences were not without danger for her in her state of widowhood and loneliness.†

Fredegonda soon recovered her assurance and took a decisive course; she sent one of her servants to run after the Frankish lord and tell him, that the queen invited him to dinner. This invitation was received by the Frank, who had just joined his companions, as it deserved to be by a man of honour; he refused.‡ The servant having returned with his answer, again hastened to entreat him, if he would not remain for the repast, at least to accept something to drink, and not offer such an insult to a royal habitation as to leave it fasting. It was the custom always to grant such a request; habit and good manners, such as were then practised, this time got the better of the feeling of indignation, and the

Frank, who was on the point of mounting his horse, waited in the hall with his friends.*

A moment afterwards the servant descended, bearing large cups of the drink which men of barbaric race preferred between meals; it was wine mixed with honey and absinth. The Frank, to whom the queen's message was addressed, was the first served. He thoughtlessly emptied the cup of perfumed liquor at one draught; but he had hardly swallowed the last drop when atrocious sufferings and a sort of tearing in his inside told him that he had swallowed a most virulent poison.† For one instant silent under the empire of this awful sensation, when he saw his companions about to follow his example and do honour to the absinth wine, he cried out to them: "Do not touch this beverage; save yourselves, unfortunates, save yourselves, in order not to perish with me!" These words struck the Franks with a sort of panic terror: the idea of poison, which with them was inseparable from that of witchcraft and sorcery, and the presence of a mysterious danger which it was impossible to repel by the sword, put to flight these warriors, who would not have flinched from a battle. They all ran to their horses, the one who drank the poison did the same, and managed to mount, but his sight was getting dim, and his hands were losing the power to hold the bridle. Led by his horse, which he was no longer able to control, and which galloped with him after the others, he was dragged along for a few hundred paces and then fell dead on the ground.‡ The report of this adventure caused at a distance a superstitious dread, and none of the possessors of estates in the diocese of Rouen ever spoke again of summoning Fredegonda to appear before the great assembly of justice, which under the name of *mâl met* at least twice every year.

It was Leudowald, Bishop of Bayeux, who, as the first suffragan of the archbishopric of Rouen, was to undertake the government of the metropolitan church during the vacancy of the see. He went to the metropolis and from thence addressed officially to all the bishops of the province an account of the violent death of Prætextatus; then calling a municipal synod of the clergy of the town, he ordered, conformably to the advice of this assembly, that all the churches in Rouen should be closed, and that no service should be performed in them until a public inquiry had given some clue as to the authors and accomplices of the crime.§ Some men of

* Magnus tunc omnes Rothomagenses cives, et præsertim seniores loci illius Francos, mæror obedit. (Ibid.)

† Ex quibus unus senior ad Fredegundem veniens, ait: Multa enim mala in hoc sæculo perpetrasti, sed adhuc pejus non feceras, quam ut sacerdotem Dei iuberetur interficere. Sit Deus ultor sanguinis innocentis velociter. Nam et omnes erimus inquisitores mali huius, ut tibi diutius non liceat tam crudelia exercere. (Ibid.)

‡ Cum autem hæc dicens discederet a conspectu reginæ, misit illa qui eum ad convivium provocaret. Quo renuente (Ibid.)

* Rogat ut si convivio ejus uti non velit, saltem poculum vel hauriat, ne jejunus a regali domo discedat. Quo expectante (Ibid.)

† Accepto poculo, bibit absinthium cum vino et melle mixtum, ut mos barbarorum habet; sed hic potus veneno imbutus erat. Statim autem ut bibit, sensit pectori suo dolorem validum imminere; et quasi si incideretur intrinsecus (Ibid.)

‡ Exclamat suis dicens: Fugite, o miseri, fugite malum hoc, ne mecum pariter periamini. Illis quoque non bibentibus, sed festinantibus abire, ille proinus excæcatus, ascensoque equo, in tertio ab hoc loco stadio cecidit, et mortuus est. (Ibid.)

§ Post hæc, Leudowaldus episcopus epistolas per omnes sacerdotes direxit, et accepto consilio ecclesias Rotho-

Gallie race and of inferior rank were arrested as suspicious and put to the torture; most of them had had some knowledge of the plot against the life of the archbishop and had received overtures and offers on that account; their revelations served to confirm the general suspicion which rested on Fredegonda, but they did not name either of her two accomplices, Melantius and the archdeacon. The queen, feeling she could easily defeat this ecclesiastical proceeding, took the accused under her protection, and openly procured them the means of escaping from legal inquiry, either by flight, or by offering armed resistance.* Far from allowing himself to be discouraged by the obstacles of all kinds which he met with, Bishop Leudowald, a conscientious man and one attached to his sacerdotal duties, increased in zeal and endeavours to discover the author of the murder, and fathom the mysteries of this horrible plot. Fredegonda then brought into play the resources which she reserved for extreme cases; assassins were seen skulking about the bishop's house, and attempting to enter it; Leudowald was obliged to be guarded day and night by his servants and clerks.† His resolution could not withstand such alarms; the proceedings, begun at first with a certain vigour, gradually abated, and the inquiry according to the Roman law was soon abandoned, as the prosecution before the Frankish judges assembled according to the Salic law had been.‡

The rumour of these events, which little by little was spreading throughout Gaul, reached King Gonthramn at his residence at Châlons-sur-Saône. The emotion he felt at these reports was sufficiently strong to rouse him for a moment from the state of political lethargy in which he delighted. His character, as has been already seen, was formed of the most strange contrasts; of gentle piety and rigid equity, through which fermented, so to speak, or burst forth at intervals, the smouldering remains of a savage and sanguinary nature. The old leaven of Germanic ferocity betrayed its presence in the soul of the mildest of the Merovingian kings, sometimes by fits of brutal rage, sometimes by cold-blooded cruelties. Austrehilda, Gonthramn's second wife, being attacked in the year 580, by an illness which she felt to be mortal, had the barbarous fancy of not choosing to die alone, but requested that her two physicians should be decapitated on the day of her funeral. The king promised it as the most simple thing possible, and had the doctors'

heads cut off.* After this act of conjugal complaisance, worthy of the most atrocious tyrant, Gonthramn had resumed with inexplicable facility his habits of paternal government and accustomed kindness. On learning the double crime of homicide and sacrilege of which general rumour accused the widow of his brother, he felt really indignant, and as the head of the Merovingian family, he thought himself called upon for a great act of patriarchal justice. He sent three bishops on an embassy to the nobles who governed in the name of the son of Hilperik, Artemius of Sens, Agreolus of Troyes, and Veranus of Cavaillon in the province of Arles. These envoys received orders to obtain permission to seek for the person guilty of this crime by means of a solemn inquiry, and bring him by force if required into the presence of King Gonthramn.†

The three bishops repaired to Paris, where the child in whose name the kingdom of Neustria had been governed for two years was educated. Admitted into the presence of the council of regency, they delivered their message, insisting on the enormity of the crime of which King Gonthramn demanded the punishment. When they had ceased speaking, the Neustrian chief, who ranked first among the guardians of the young king, and who was called his foster-father, rose and said: "Such crimes displease us also extremely, and we more and more desire that they should be punished; but if there is any one amongst us guilty of them, it is not into your king's presence that he is to be brought, for we have means of repressing with the royal sanction all the crimes committed amongst us."‡

This language, firm and dignified as it appeared, covered an evasive answer, and the regents of Neustria had less regard for the independence of the kingdom than they had for Fredegonda. The ambassadors were not deceived, and one of them answered hastily: "Know, that if the person who has committed this crime is not discovered and brought to light, our king will come with an army and ravage all this country with fire and sword; for it is manifest that she who caused the death of the Frank by witchcraft, is the same who has killed the bishop by the sword."§ The Neustrians were little moved by such a threat; they knew that King Gonthramn was always wanting in

* Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 254.

† Itaque cum hæc ad Gunthramnum regem perlata fuissent, et crimen super mulierem jaceretur, misit tres episcopos ad filium, qui esse dicitur Chilperici... ut scilicet cum his qui parvulum nutriebant perquirerent hujus sceleris personam, et in conspectu ejus exhiberent. (Ibid., lib. viii. p. 327.)

‡ Quod cum sacerdotibus locuti fuissent, responderunt seniores: Nobis prorsus hæc facta displicent, et magis ac magis ea cupimus ulcisci. Nam non potest fieri ut si quis inter nos culpabilis invenitur, in conspectum regis vestri deducatur. (Ibid.)

§ Tunc sacerdotes dixerunt: Noveritis enim, quia si persona quæ hæc perpetravit in medio posita non fuerit, rex noster cum exercitu hac veniens, omnem hanc regionem gladio incendioque vastabit; quia manifestum est hanc interfecisse gladio episcopum, quæ maleficiis Francum jussit interfici. (Ibid.)

magenses clausit, ut in his populus solemnia divina non spectaret, donec indagatio communis reperiretur hujus auctor sceleris. (Ibid.)

* Sed et aliquos adprehendit, quibus supplicio subditis, veritatem extorsit, qualiter per consilium Fredegundis hæc acta fuerant; sed ea defensante, ulcisci non potuit. (Ibid.)

† Ferebant etiam ad ipsum percussores venisse, pro eo quod hæc inquirere sagaciter destinaret; sed custodia vallato auro, nihil ei nocere potuerunt. (Ibid.)

‡ In mallo hoc est ante Theada, vel Tunginum. (Lex Salica, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iv. p. 151.)

determination when the time came for action. They renewed their former answers, and the bishops put an end to this useless interview, by protesting beforehand against the reinstatement of Melantius in the episcopal see of Rouen.* But they had scarcely returned to King Gonthramn, before Melantius was re-established, thanks to the protection of the queen and the ascendant she had once more resumed through intrigue and terror. This man, a creature worthy of Fredegonda, went daily, for more than fifteen years, to sit and pray in the same place where the blood of Prætextatus had flowed.†

Proud of so much success, the queen crowned her work by a last stroke of insolence, a sign of the most unutterable contempt for all those who had ventured to find fault with her. She caused the hind whom she had herself paid to commit the crime, to be publicly seized and brought before her: "It is thou, then," said she to him, feigning most vehement indignation, "thou who hast stabbed Prætextatus, Bishop of Rouen, and art cause of the calumnies circulated against me!" She then had him flogged under her own eyes, and delivered him up to the relations of the bishop, without troubling herself about the consequences any more than if the man had been perfectly ignorant of the plot of which he had been the instrument.‡ The nephew of Prætextatus, one of those violent-tempered Gauls, who, taking example from the Germanic manners, only lived for private revenge, and always went armed like the Franks, seized on this unfortunate wretch, and put him to the torture in his own house. The assassin was not long in giving his answers, and confessing all: "I struck the blow," said he, "and I received

a hundred *sols* of gold from Queen Fredegonda, fifty from the bishop, and fifty from the archdeacon of the town to induce me to strike it; and, moreover, freedom was promised to me and my wife."*

However certain this information, it was clear that henceforward they could lead to no result. All the social powers of the epoch had in vain attempted to act in this frightful affair; the aristocracy, the priesthood, loyalty itself had fruitlessly endeavoured to attain the true culprits. Persuaded that there would be no justice for him but at his own hands, the nephew of Prætextatus ended all by a deed worthy of a savage, but in which despair had as large a share as ferocity; he drew his sword, and cut in pieces the slave who had been given to him as his prey.† As it almost always happened in those disorderly times, one murder brutally committed was the sole reparation of another murder. The people alone did not neglect the cause of their murdered bishop; he was honoured with the title of martyr, and whilst the church enthroned one of the assassins, and bishops called him brother,‡ the citizens of Rouen invoked the name of the victim in their prayers, and knelt on his tomb. It is with this halo of popular veneration around him, that the memory of St. Prætextatus has endured for centuries, an object of pious homage to the faithful who know little of him beyond his name. If the details of a life thoroughly human from its adversities and weaknesses diminish the glory of the saint, they will at least obtain a feeling of sympathy for the man; for is there not something touching in the character of this old man, who died for having loved too well the child whom he had held at the baptismal font, thus realizing the ideal of the spiritual paternity instituted by Christianity?

* Et his dictis discesserunt, nullum rationabile responsum accipientes, obstantes omnino ut numquam in ecclesia illa Melantius, qui prius in loco Prætextati subrogatus fuerat, sacerdotis fungeretur officio. (Ibid., p. 328.)

† Fredegundis vero Melantium, quem prius episcopum posuerat, ecclesiæ instituit. (Ibid., p. 331.)

‡ Illa quoque quo facilius detergeretur a crimine, apprehensum puerum cædi iussit vehementer, dicens: Tu hoc blasphemium super me intulisti, ut Prætextatum episcopum gladio adpeteres. Et tradidit eum nepoti ipsius sacerdotis (Ibid.) Gregory of Tours appears to me to have mistaken the motives of this strange action.

* Qui cdm eum in supplicio posuisset, omnem rem evidenter aperuit, dixitque: A regina enim Fredegunda centum solidos accepi, ut hoc facerem; a Melantio vero episcopo quinquaginta; et ab archidiacono civitatis alios quinquaginta; insuper et promissum habui ut ingenuus fierem, sicut et uxor mea. (Ibid.)

† In hac voce illius, evaginato homo ille gladio prædictum reum in frustra concidit. (Ibid.)

‡ V. Gregorii Magni Papæ I. Epist. xxix. apud Script. Rer. Gallicæ, et Francicæ, t. iv. p. 29.

FIFTH NARRATIVE.

A. D. 579—581.

THE HISTORY OF LEUDASTE, COUNT OF TOURS.—THE POET VULNANTIVS FORTUNATUS.—THE CONVENT OF RADEGONDA AT POITIERS.

DURING the reign of Chlothar the First, the island of Rhè, situated about three leagues from the coast of Saintonge, formed part of the dominions of the royal *fisc*. Its vines, the meagre produce of a soil incessantly beaten by the sea breezes, were then under the superintendence of a Gaul named Leocadius. This man had a son whom he called Leudaste, a Germanic name which probably belonged to some rich Frankish noble, well known in the country, and which the Gallic vine-dresser chose in preference to all others either to obtain useful patronage for the new-born infant, or else to place on his head a sort of omen of great success, and thus foster in him the illusions and hopes of paternal ambition.* Born a royal serf, the son of Leocadius, on emerging from childhood, was included in a body of young men chosen for the service of the kitchens, by the head steward of King Haribert's dominions.† This sort of impressment was exercised on many occasions by order of the Frankish kings on the families who peopled their vast estates; and persons of all ages, of all professions, and even of high birth, were compelled to submit to it.‡

Thus transported far from the little island where he was born, young Leudaste at first distinguished himself amongst all his companions in servitude, by his want of zeal for work, and his undisciplined spirit. He had weak eyes, and the acridity of the smoke was a great annoyance to him, a circumstance of which he availed himself with more or less reason as an excuse for carelessness and disobedience. After several useless attempts to fit him for the required duties, it was found necessary either to dismiss him or give him some other employment. The latter plan was adopted, and the son of the vine-dresser passed from the kitchen to the bakehouse, or, as his original biographer expressed it, from the pestle to the kneading

trough.* Deprived of the pretext he could allege against his former occupation, Leudaste thenceforward studied dissimulation, and appeared to take an extreme delight in his new functions. He fulfilled them for some time with so much ardour, that he contrived to lull the watchfulness of his masters and guards; then, seizing the first favourable opportunity, he ran away.† He was pursued, brought back, and thrice again ran away. The disciplinary punishment of flogging and imprisonment, to which he was successively subjected as a runaway, being judged ineffectual against such confirmed obstinacy, the last and most efficacious of all was inflicted on him, that of marking by an incision made in one of the ears.‡

Although this mutilation rendered flight more difficult and less secure for the future, he once more ran away, at the risk of not knowing where to find a refuge. After wandering in different directions, always fearful of being discovered from the sign of his servile condition, which was visible to all eyes, and weary of this life of alarm and misery, he took a bold resolution.§ This was the period when King Haribert married Markowefa, a servant of the palace, and the daughter of a woolcomber. Leudaste had perhaps some acquaintance with this woman's family; or perhaps he only confided in the goodness of her heart, and her sympathy for an old companion in slavery. Be this as it may, instead of marching forward to get at the greatest possible distance from the royal habitation, he retraced his steps, and concealing himself in some neighbouring forest, watched for the moment when he could present himself before the new queen without fear of being seen and arrested by some of the domestics.¶ He succeeded, and Markowefa, deeply interested by his entreaties, took him under her protection. She confided her best horses to his care, and gave him amongst her servants the title of

* *Cracina Pictavensis insula vocitatur, in qua a fiscalis vinitoris servo, Leocadio nomine, nascitur* (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 261.) V. Adriani Valesii Notit. Galliar., p. 463.

† *Exinde ad servitium arcessitus, culinæ regis deputatur.* (Greg. Turon., loc. sup. cit.)

‡ *Ipse vero (Chilpericus) jam regressus Parisius, familias multas de domibus fiscalibus auferri præcipit et in plaustris componi multi vero meliores nati, qui vi compellebantur abire, testamenta condiderunt.* (Ibid., lib. vi. p. 289.)

* *Sed quia lippis erat in adolescentia oculis, quibus fumi acerbitas non congruebat, amotus a pistillo promovebatur ad cophinum.* (Ibid., lib. v. t. ii. p. 261.)

† *Sed dum inter fermentatas massas se delectari consuevit, servitium fugam inens dereliquit.* (Ibid.)

‡ *Cumque bis aut tertio reductus a fugæ lapsu teneri non posset, auris unius incisione multatur.* (Ibid.)

§ *Dehinc cum notam indictam corpori occultare nulla auctoritate valeret.* (Ibid.)

¶ *Ad Marcovefam reginam, quam Charibertus rex nimium diligens, in loco sororis thoro adsciverat, fugit.* (Ibid.)

Mariskalk, as it was called in the Germanic language.*

Leudaste, encouraged by this success and unexpected favour, soon ceased to limit his desires to his present position, and aspiring still higher, coveted the post of superintendent of the whole stud of his patroness, and the title of count of the stable, a dignity which the barbarian kings had borrowed from the imperial court.† He attained it in a very short time, aided by his good star, for he had more audacity and boasting than shrewdness and real talent. In this post, which placed him on an equality, not only with freedmen, but with the nobles of Frankish race, he completely forgot his origin, and his former days of slavery and distress. He became harsh and contemptuous to those beneath him, arrogant with his equals, greedy of money and all articles of luxury, and ambitious without bounds or restraint.‡ Elevated to a sort of favouritism by the queen's affection, he interposed in all her affairs, and derived immense profits by unrestrainedly abusing her weakness and confidence.§ On her death, at the end of some years, he was already sufficiently enriched from plunder to sue by dint of presents, for the same post in King Haribert's household which he had held in that of the queen. He triumphed over all his competitors, became count of the royal stables, and far from being ruined by the death of his protectress, he found in it the commencement of a new career of honours. After enjoying for a year or two the high rank which he occupied in the household of the palace, the fortunate son of a serf of the island of Rhe was promoted to a political dignity, and made Count of Tours, one of the principal cities of the kingdom of Haribert.||

The office of count, such as it existed in Gaul ever since the conquest of the Franks, answered, according to their political ideas, to that of the magistrate whom they called *graf* in their language, and who, in every canton of Germany, administered criminal justice, aided by the heads of families or by the principal men of the canton. The naturally hostile relations of the conquerors with the population of the conquered towns, had induced the addition of military at-

tributes and dictatorial power to these functions, which the men, who exercised them in the name of the Frankish kings, almost always abused, either from violence of disposition or from personal calculation. It was a sort of barbaric proconsulate, superadded in every important town to the ancient municipal institutions, without any care having been taken to regulate it so that it might harmonize with them. Notwithstanding their rarity, these institutions still sufficed for the maintenance of order and internal peace; and the inhabitants of the Gallic cities felt more terror than pleasure when a royal letter announced to them the arrival of a count to rule them according to their customs and administer justice fairly. Such was doubtless the impression produced at Tours by the arrival of Leudaste, and the repugnance of the citizens to their new judge could hardly fail to augment daily. He was illiterate, had no knowledge of the laws he was commissioned to enforce, and destitute even of that principle of uprightness and natural equity which was to be met with, although under a rough exterior, among the *grafs* of the cantons beyond the Rhine.

First accustomed to the manners of slavery, and then to the turbulent habits of the vassals of the royal household, he had none of that ancient Roman civilization with which he was about to find himself in contact, if we except the love of luxury, pomp, and sensual enjoyments. He behaved in his new situation as if he had only received it for himself and for the indulgence of his unruly appetites. Instead of making order reign in Tours, he sowed discord by his excesses and debauches. His marriage with the daughter of one of the richest inhabitants of the country did not render him more moderate or more discreet in his conduct. He was violent and haughty towards the men; of a profligacy which respected no woman; of a rapacity which far surpassed all that had been observed in him up to that period.* He put in activity all his cunning, to create for opulent persons unjust lawsuits, of which he became the arbiter, or else he made false accusations against them, and made a profit out of the fines, which he divided with the *fisc*. By means of exactions and pillage he rapidly increased his riches, and accumulated in his house a great quantity of gold and valuables.† His good fortune and impunity lasted until the death of King Haribert, which took place in 567. Sighebert, in whose lot the city of Tours was included, had not the same affection as his elder brother for the former slave. On the contrary, his hatred was such, that Leudaste, to avoid it, hastily quitted the city, abandoning his property and the greatest portion of his treasures, which were seized or plundered by the followers of the King of Austrasia. He sought an asylum in Hileprik's kingdom, and swore fidelity to that king,

* Quæ libenter eum colligens, provocat, equorumque meliorum deputat esse custodem.—(Ibid.) Si mariskalcus, qui super xii caballis est, occiditur. (Lex Alamannor. tit. lxxix § iv.) Lex salica, tit. ii § vi.

[Hence, obviously, the modern words, Marschalk, Marischal, Maréchal, Marshal]—Ed.

† Hinc jam obseus, vanitas ac superbæ deditus, comitatum ambit stabulorum (Greg Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 261.) V. Ducange, Glossar. ad Script. med. et infn. Latini voce Comes.

‡ Quo accepto, cunctos despiciat ac postposit: inflatur vanitate, luxuria dissolvitur (Greg Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 261.)

§ Cupiditate succenditur, et in causis patronæ alumnus proprius huc illucque defertur. (Ibid.)

|| Cujus post obitum refertus prædis locum ipsum cum rege Charberto oblato munibus tenere cepit. Post hæc, peccatis populi ingruentibus, comes Turonia destituitur. (Ibid.)

* Ubique se amplius honoris gloriosi supercilio jactat; ubi se exhibit rapacem prædis, turgidum risu, adulteris lutulentum. (Ibid.)

† Ubi seminando discordias, et inferendo calumnias, non modicos thesauros adgregavit. (Ibid.)

who received him as one of his *leudes*.* During his years of adversity, the ex-count of Tours subsisted in Neustria on the hospitality of the palace, following the court from province to province, and taking his place at the immense table at which the vassals and guests of the king sat, taking precedence according to age or rank.

(A. D. 572.) Five years after the flight of Count Leudaste, Georgius Florentius, who took the name of Gregory at his accession, was named Bishop of Tours by King Sighebert, at the request of the citizens, whose esteem and affection he had won in a devotional pilgrimage which he made to the tomb of Saint Marun from Auvergne his native country. This man, whose character has been already developed in the preceding narratives, was from his religious zeal, his love of the holy Scriptures, and the dignity of his manners, a perfect type of the high Christian aristocracy of Gaul, amongst which his ancestors had shone. From the time of his installation in the metropolitan see of Tours, Gregory, in virtue of the political prerogatives then attached to the episcopal dignity, and on account of the personal consideration with which he was surrounded, found himself invested with supreme influence over the affairs of the town, and the deliberations of the senate by which it was governed. The splendour of this high position was necessarily amply compensated by its fatigues, cares, and innumerable perils; Gregory was not long before he experienced this. (573.) In the first year of his bishopric, the city of Tours was invaded by the troops of King Hilperik, and taken again immediately after by those of Sighebert. In the following year (574), Theodebert, Hilperik's eldest son, made a ravaging campaign on the banks of the Loire which filled the citizens of Tours with terror, and compelled them to submit a second time to the King of Neustria.† It appears that Leudaste, endeavouring to retrieve his fortune, had engaged in this expedition, either as leader of a company, or as one of the chosen vassals who surrounded the young son of the king.

On his entry into the town which he had compelled to acknowledge his father's authority, Theodebert presented the former count to the bishop and municipal council, saying that the city of Tours would do well to submit to the government of him who had ruled it with wisdom and firmness in the times of the former partition.‡

Independently of the recollections which Leudaste had left at Tours, and which were well calculated to revolt the upright and pious mind

of Gregory, this descendant of the most illustrious senatorial families of the Berry and Auvergne, could not see without repugnance a man of nothing, and who bore on his body the indelible mark of his servile extraction, raised to a post so near his own. But the recommendations of the young chief of the Neustrian army were commands, however deferentially expressed; the present interest of the town, menaced with plunder and fire, required that the fancies of the conqueror should be yielded to with a good grace, and this was done by the Bishop of Tours with that prudence, of which his life offers the continual example. The wishes of the principal citizens thus seemed to accord with the projects of Theodebert for the re-establishment of Leudaste in his functions and honours. This re-establishment was not long waited for; and a few days afterwards, the son of Leucadius received in the palace of Neustria his royal letter of appointment, a diploma, the tenour of which we find in the official formulas of the period, and which contrasted strangely with his character and conduct.

"If there are occasions in which the perfection of royal clemency is more especially displayed, it is in the choice it makes of upright and vigilant persons from among the whole people. It would not be proper for the dignity of judge to be conferred on some one whose integrity and firmness had not been previously tried. Therefore, being well assured of thy fidelity and merit, we have committed to thy care the office of count in the canton of Tours, to possess and exercise all its prerogatives,* in such a manner as to preserve an entire and inviolable faith with our government; that the men inhabiting within the limits of thy jurisdiction, whether Franks, Romans, or of any other nation whatsoever, may live in peace and good order under thy power and authority; that thou mayest direct them in the right way according to their laws and customs; that thou mayest show thyself the special defender of widows and orphans; that the crimes of thieves and other malefactors may be severely repressed by thee; finally, that the people, finding life pleasant under thy administration, may rejoice and remain quiet, and let what belongs to the fisc from the revenue of thy situation, be by thy care paid yearly into our treasury."†

The new Count of Tours, who did not yet feel the ground quite secure under his feet, and who feared that the fortune of arms might again reduce the town to the power of the King of Austrasia, studied to live in perfect understanding with the municipal senators, and especially with the bishop, whose powerful protection might

* Post obitum vero Chariberti, cum in Sigiberti sortem civitas illa venisset, transeunte eo ad Chilpericum, omnia que inique adregaverat, a fidelibus nominati regis direpta sunt. (Ibid.)

† Pervadente igitur Chilperico rege per Theodobertum filium urbem Turonicas, cum jam ego Turonis advenissem. (Ibid.) See above, Second Narrative.

‡ Mihi Theodeberto strenue commendatur, ut scilicet comitatu quem prius habuerat, potiretur (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 261.)

* Ergo dum et fidem et utilitatem tuam videmur habere compertam, ideo tibi actionem comitatus in pago illo..... tibi ad agendum regendumque commisimus (Charia de ducatu vel comitatu, Marculfi Formul., lib. i. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 472.)

† Viduis et pupillis maximus defensor appareas; latronum et malefactorum scelera a te severissime reprimantur; ut populi bene viventes sub tuo regimine gaudentes debeant consistere quieti: et quidquid de ipsa actione in fisci ditioribus speratur, per vosmetipsos annis singulis nostris seraris inferatur. (Ibid.)

become necessary to him.* In the presence of Gregory he was modest and even humble in his manners and conversation, observing the distance which separated him from a man of such high birth, and carefully flattering the aristocratic vanity, of which a slight leaven was mixed with the solid qualities of this great and thoughtful mind. He assured the bishop that his greatest desire was to please him, and to follow his advice in all things. He promised to refrain from all excess of power, and to take justice and reason as his rules of conduct. Finally, to render his promises and protestations more worthy of belief, he accompanied them with numerous oaths on the tomb of Saint Martin. Sometimes he swore to Gregory, like a dependent to his patron, to remain faithful to him in all circumstances, and never to oppose him in any thing, whether in affairs which interested him personally, or in those in which the interests of the church were called in question.†

Things were in this position, and the city of Tours enjoyed a quiet which no one had at first expected, when Theodebert's army was destroyed near Angoulême, and Hilperik, thinking his cause desperate, took refuge within the walls of Tournai, events of which detailed accounts are given in one of the preceding narratives.‡ The citizens of Tours, who only obeyed the King of Neustria from necessity, recognized the authority of Sighebert, and Leudaste again took flight, as he had done seven years before; but, owing, perhaps, to the mediation of Bishop Gregory, his property was this time respected, and he left the town without sustaining any loss. He retired into Lower Brittany, a country which then enjoyed complete independence from the Frankish kingdoms, and which often served as a place of refuge for outlaws, and the malcontents of those kingdoms.§

(A. D. 575.) The murder which in the year 575 put so sudden an end to Sighebert's life, caused a double restoration, that of Hilperik as King of Neustria, and that of Leudaste as Count of Tours. He returned after an exile of a year, and reinstated himself in his office.¶ Henceforth sure of the future, he no longer took the trouble of restraining himself; he threw off the mask, and resumed the vices of his first administration. Abandoning himself at once to all the evil passions which can tempt a man in power, he exhibited the spectacle of the most notorious frauds, and the most revolting brutalities. When he held his public audiences, having as assessors the principal men of the

town, nobles of Frankish origin, Romans of senatorial birth, and dignitaries of the metropolitan church, if some person with a lawsuit whom he wanted to ruin, or some culprit whom he wished to destroy, presented himself with assurance, asserting his rights and demanding justice, the count interrupted him, and shook himself on his judge's bench like a madman.* If at those times the crowd, which formed a circle round the tribunal, testified by their gestures or their murmurs sympathy for the oppressed, it was against them that the anger of Leudaste was directed, and he loaded the citizens with insults and gross epithets.† As impartial in his violence as he should have been in his justice, he respected neither the rights, the rank, nor the condition of any one; he caused priests to be brought before him handcuffed, and had warriors of Frankish origin beaten with sticks. It seemed as if this upstart slave took a pleasure in confounding all distinctions, in braving all the conventions of the social order of his epoch, above which the accident of birth had at first placed him, and in which other chances had afterwards raised him to such a height.‡

Whatever were the despotic tendencies of Count Leudaste, and his wish to level every thing before his interest and caprice, there was in the town a rival power to his own, and a man against whom, for fear of losing himself, he was unable to dare any thing. He felt this; and it was cunning, and not open violence, which he resorted to, to compel the bishop to give way, or at least be silent before him. The reputation of Gregory, which was spread throughout Gaul, was great at the court of the King of Neustria; but his well-known affection for the family of Sighebert sometimes alarmed Hilperik, always anxious about the possession of the city of Tours, which was his conquest, and the key of the country south of the Loire, which he wanted to possess. It was on this distrustful disposition of the king that Leudaste founded his hopes of annihilating the credit of the bishop, by rendering him more and more suspicious, and making himself looked upon as the man necessary to the preservation of the town, as an advanced sentinel, always on the watch, and exposed to hateful prejudices, and secret or declared enemies, on account of his vigilance. This was the surest way of obtaining absolute impunity for himself, and of finding opportunities for molesting at pleasure his most fearful antagonist the bishop, without appearing to exceed his duty.

In this war of intrigues and petty machinations, he sometimes had recourse to the most fantastic expedients. When any affair required his presence in the episcopal palace, he went there completely armed, his helmet on his head,

* Timebat enim, quod postea evenit, ne urbem illam iterum rex Sigibertus in suum dominum revocaret. (Greg. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Franc., t. ii. p. 261.)

† Multum se nobis humilem subditumque reddebat, jurans sepius super sepulcrum sancti Antistiti, numquam se contra rationis ordinem esse venturum, sequi mihi, tam in causis propriis, quam in ecclesiæ necessitatibus, in omnibus esse fidelem. (Ibid.)

‡ See above, Second Narrative.

§ Sed dum Sigibertus duos annos Turonis tenuit, hic in Britannia latuit. (Ibid.)

¶ Quo defuncto, succedente iterum Chilperico in regnum, iste in comitatum accedit. (Ibid.)

* Jam si in judicio cum senioribus, vel laicis, vel clericis resedisset, et vidisset hominem justitiam prosequentem, protinus agebatur in furias. (Ibid.)

† Ructabat convicia in cives. (Ibid.)

‡ Presbyteros manicis jubebat extrahi, milites fustibus verberari; tantaque utebatur crudelitate, ut vix referri possit. (Ibid.)

his cuirass on his back, his quiver slung in his shoulder-belt, and a long lance in his hand, either to give himself a terrible appearance, or to make people believe he was in danger of ambushes and snares in that house of peace and prayer.* In the year 576, when Merowig, passing through Tours, deprived him of every thing he possessed in money and in precious furniture, he pretended that the young prince had only committed that plunder at Gregory's counsel and instigation.† Then suddenly, from contradiction of character, or on account of the ill success of this unfounded accusation, he endeavoured to reconcile himself with the bishop, and swore to him, by the most solemn oath, holding in his hand the silken cloth which covered the tomb of Saint Martin, that he never would again in the course of his life attempt any unfriendly action against him.‡ But the inordinate desire of Leudaste to repair as promptly as possible the enormous losses he had sustained, excited him to multiply his exactions and plunderings. (A. D. 576—579.) Amongst the rich citizens whom he preferred attacking, several were intimate friends of Gregory's, and they were not spared more than the rest. Thus, notwithstanding his last promises and prudent resolutions, the Count of Tours again found himself in indirect hostility with his rival in power. More and more carried away by the desire of accumulating riches, he began to encroach upon the property of the churches, and the differences between the two adversaries became personal.§ Gregory, with a forbearance partaking both of sacerdotal patience and the circumspect policy of the men of the aristocracy, at first only opposed in this struggle a moral resistance to acts of physical violence. He received blows without striking any himself, until the precise moment of action was arrived; and then, after two years of calm expectation, which might have been mistaken for resignation, he energetically took the offensive.

(A. D. 579.) Towards the end of the year 579, a deputation secretly sent to King Hilperik, denounced to him, with irrefragable proofs, the prevarications of Count Leudaste, and the numerous evils which he inflicted on the churches and inhabitants of Tours.|| It is not known under what circumstances this deputation came to the palace of Neustria, nor what various causes contributed to the success of its mission, but it was perfectly successful; and notwithstanding the favour which Leudaste had so

long enjoyed with the king, notwithstanding the numerous friends he possessed among the vassals and confidential domestics of the palace, his removal was certain. On dismissing the ambassadors, Hilperik sent with them Ansowald, his most intimate counsellor, to take measures to effect the change which they solicited. Ansowald arrived at Tours in the month of November; and, not content with declaring Leudaste deprived of his office, he left the nomination of a new count in the hands of the bishop and the body of the citizens. The suffrages were unanimous in favour of a man of Gallic race called Eunomius, who was installed in his charge amidst the acclamations and hopes of the people.*

Struck by this unexpected blow, Leudaste, who in his imperturbable presumption had never for one moment dreamt of the possibility of such a disaster, was roused to fury, and laid the blame upon his friends in the palace, whom he thought should have upheld him. He especially, and with great bitterness, accused Queen Fredegonda, to whose service he had devoted himself for good and for evil, whom he thought all-powerful to save him from this peril, and who only repaid him by ungratefully withdrawing her patronage.† These grievances, whether imaginary or not, took such firm root in the mind of the dismissed count, that he vowed henceforth a hatred to his former patroness, equal to that he bore the cause of his disgrace, the Bishop of Tours. He no longer separated them in his desire for revenge; and roused by anger, he commenced forming the most adventurous schemes, combining plans of new fortune and future elevation, in which entered, as one of his most ardent wishes, the ruin of the bishop, and what was still more astonishing, the ruin even of Fredegonda, her divorce, and the forfeiture of her queenly state.

There was then at Tours a priest named Rikulf, who, notwithstanding his Germanic name, was, perhaps, like Leudaste, whom he a good deal resembled in character, a Gaul by origin. Born in that city, and of poor parents, he had risen in orders under the patronage of Bishop Euphronius, Gregory's predecessor. His presumption and ambition were boundless: he thought himself out of his true place so long as he was not invested with episcopal dignity.§ To attain it with certainty, he had for some years placed himself under the patronage of Chlodowig, the last son of King Hilperik and Queen Audowera.|| Although divorced and

* In tali levitate elatus est, ut in domo ecclesiæ cum thoracibus atque loriceis, præcinctus pharetra, et contum manu gerens, capite galeato ingrederetur. (Ibid.)

† Discedente autem Merovecho, qui res ejus diripuerat, nobis calumniatione existit, adserens fallaciter Merovechum nostro usum consilio, ut res ejus auferret. (Ibid.) See above, the Third Narrative.

‡ Sed post inlata damna, iterat iterum sacramenta, palmarumque sepulchri beati Martini fidejussorem donat, se nobis nunquam adversaturum. (Ibid., p. 262.)

§ Igitur post multa mala quæ in me meque intulit, post multas direptiones rerum ecclesiasticarum (Ibid.)

|| Audiens autem Chilpericus omnia mala quæ faciebat Leudastes ecclesiis Turonicis et omni populo ... (Ibid., p. 260.) Adriani Valesii Rer. Francicæ, lib. x. p. 118.

* Ansowaldum illud dirigit qui veniens ad festivitatem sancti Martini, data nobis et populo optione, Eunomius in comitatum erigitur. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallicæ et Francicæ, t. ii. p. 261.)

† See above, the Third Narrative.

‡ Adjuncto sibi Riculfo præbytero, simili malitia perverso Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallicæ et Francicæ, t. ii. p. 262.)

§ Nam hic sub Eufronio episcopo de pauperibus provocatus archidiaconus ordinatus est. Exinde ad presbyterium adnotus. Semper elatus, inflatus, præsumptuosus. (Ibid., p. 264.)

|| Riculvus vero presbyter, qui jam a tempore beati Euphronii episcopi, amicus erat Chlodovechi. (Ibid.)

banished, this queen, a woman of free and probably distinguished origin, had preserved in her misfortunes numerous partisans, who hoped for her return to favour, and believed more in the good fortune of her sons, already grown up to manhood, than in that of the young children of her rival. Fredegonda, notwithstanding the brilliancy of her success and power, had never been able entirely to obliterate the memory of her original condition, or to inspire a firm confidence in the solidity of the happiness she enjoyed. There were doubts as to the continuance of the fascination which she exercised on the mind of the king; many people accorded her the honours of a queen with regret; her own daughter Righonta, the eldest of her four children, blushed for her, and with a precocious instinct of feminine vanity, felt very keenly the shame of having for mother a former servant of the palace.* Thus mental torments were not wanting to the beloved wife of Hilperik; and the most painful of all to her, besides the stain of her birth which nothing could efface, was the apprehension caused by the competition for their father's kingdom, between her children and those of the first bed.

Delivered by a violent death of the two eldest sons of Audowera, she still saw Chlodowig, the third, holding in check the fortunes of her two sons, Chlodobert and Dagobert, the eldest of whom was not fifteen.† The ambitious hopes, desires, and opinions of the palace of Neustria, were divided between the future of the one, and that of the others; there were two opposite factions, who branched out from the palace, and were to be met with in every part of the kingdom. Both reckoned amongst them men long and firmly devoted, and passing recruits who attached and detached themselves according to the impulse of the moment. It was thus that Rikulf and Leudaste, the one an old adherent of the fortunes of Chlodowig, the other recently the enemy of that young prince, as he had been that of his brother Merowig, suddenly met and found a perfect conformity in their political sentiments. They soon became intimate friends, confided to each other all their secrets, and made their projects and hopes in common.—(A. D. 579, 580.) During the latter months of the year 579, and the beginning of the year following, these two men, equally accustomed to intrigues, had frequent conferences, to which they admitted as a third a subdeacon named Rikulf as well as the priest, the same who has been seen acting as the emissary of the cleverest intriguer of the epoch, the Austrasian, Gontramnbosse.‡

The first point agreed upon by the three associates, was to cause the rumours generally bruited respecting the conjugal infidelity and disorders of Fredegonda to reach the ears of

King Hilperik. They thought that the more blind and confiding the king's love was, in spite of evidences clear to every one else, the more terrible would his anger be, when he should be undeceived. Fredegonda expelled from the kingdom, her children hated by the king, banished with her and disinherited, Chlodowig succeeded to his father's kingdom without contest or partition, such were the results which they looked upon as certain to follow from their officious informations. To obviate the responsibility of a formal denunciation against the queen, but at the same time to compromise their second enemy, the Bishop of Tours, they resolved by a tolerably subtle trick to accuse him of having repeated before witnesses the scandalous stories which were then circulated, and which they did not venture to repeat on their own account.*

In this intrigue, there was a double chance for the deposition of the bishop, either immediately, by a blow of King Hilperik's anger, or later, when Chlodowig should take possession of the throne; and the priest Rikulf already considered himself his successor in the episcopal see. Leudaste, who guaranteed the infallibility of this promotion to his new friend, marked his place near King Chlodowig as that of the second great person in the kingdom, of which he should have the supreme administration, and the title of duke. In order that Rikulf, the subdeacon, should also find a comfortable situation, it was decided that Plato, archdeacon of the church of Tours, and the intimate friend of Bishop Gregory, should be compromised with him, and involved in his ruin.†

It appears that, after having thus arranged their plans, the three conspirators sent messages to Chlodowig to announce to him the enterprise formed in his interests, to communicate their intentions, and make conditions with him. The young prince, of a thoughtless disposition, and ambitious without prudence, promised, in case of success, to do all that was required of him, and a good deal more. The moment for action having arrived, the parts were distributed. That which devolved on the priest Rikulf, was to prepare the way for Gregory's future deposition, by exciting against him in the town the abettors of disturbances, and those who from a spirit of provincial patriotism, did not like him because he was a foreigner, and wished for a native bishop in his stead. Rikulf, the subdeacon, formerly one of the most humble domestics of the episcopal palace, and who had purposely quarreled with his patron to be more free to visit Leudaste, assiduously returned to the bishop with submission and a show of repentance; he endeavoured, by regaining his

* Rignunthis autem filia Chilperici, cum sæpius matriculumnas inferret, diceretque se esse dominam, genitricemque suam servitio redhiberi, et multis eam et crebro conviciis lacessiret. ... (Ibid., lib. ix. p. 352.)

† Samson, born at Tournay during the siege of that city, died in 577.

‡ See above, the Third Narrative.

* Ad hoc erupit ut diceret me crimen in Fredegunden reginam dixisse. (Greg Turon Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallicæ, t. ii. p. 262.)

† Hoc reginæ crimen obiectum, ut ejecta de regno, interfectis fratribus, a patre Chlodovechus regnum acciperet; Leudastes ducatum, Riculfus vero presbyter episcopatum Turonicum ambiret, huic Riculfo clerico, archidiaconatu promisso. (Ibid.)

confidence, to draw him into some suspicious act which might serve as a proof against him.* The ex-count of Tours took upon himself, without hesitation, the really perilous mission of going to the palace of Soissons, and speaking to King Hilperik.

He left Tours about the month of April 580, and immediately on his arrival, when admitted by the king to a *tête-à-tête*, said in a tone which he endeavoured to render at once serious and persuasive: "Until now, most pious king, I had guarded thy city of Tours, but now that I am dismissed from my office, thou must consider how it will be guarded for thee; for thou must know that Bishop Gregory intends to deliver it up to the son of Sighebert."† Hilperik answered abruptly, like a man who rebels against disagreeable news, and pretends incredulity not to appear frightened: "That is not true." Then, watching Leudaste's countenance for the least appearance of trouble and hesitation, he added: "It is because thou hast been deprived of thy office that thou dost make these reports."‡ But the ex-count of Tours, without losing his assurance, replied: "The bishop has done other things; he speaks in a manner offensive to thee; he says that thy queen has an adulterous connection with Bishop Bertramn."§ Wounded in his most sensitive and irritable point, Hilperik was so enraged, that losing all consciousness of his regal dignity, he fell on the author of this unexpected revelation, striking and kicking him with all his might.||

When he had thus vented his anger, without uttering a single word, and had become himself again, he found the power of speech, and said to Leudaste: "What! dost thou affirm that the bishop has said such things of Queen Fredegonda?"—"I affirm it," answered he, nowise disconcerted by the brutal reception his confidence had met with, "and if thou wouldest permit Gallienus, the friend of the bishop, and Plato his archdeacon to be put to the torture, they will convict him before thee of having said it."¶—"But," asked the king with great anxiety, "dost thou present thyself as a witness?" Leudaste replied that he could produce an auricular witness, a clerk of the church of Tours, on whose good faith he had founded his denunciation, and he named the subdeacon Rikulf, without demanding the torture for him as he had done a

moment before for the friends of Bishop Gregory.* But the distinction which he endeavoured to draw in favour of his accomplice did not enter into the thoughts of the king, who equally furious against all those who had taken a part in the scandal by which his honour was wounded, caused Leudaste himself to be put in chains, and instantly sent in order to Tours for the arrest of Rikulf.†

This man, by means of consummate treachery, had, during the last month, completely succeeded in regaining the favour of Bishop Gregory, and he was once more received as a faithful dependent in his house and at his table.‡ After the departure of Leudaste, when he supposed, from the number of days which had elapsed, and the denunciation had been made, and his name mentioned in the king's presence, he endeavoured to persuade the bishop into committing some suspicious act, by working on his kind-heartedness and pity for distress. He presented himself before him with an air of dejection and deep anxiety, and at the first words said by Gregory, inquiring what was the matter, he threw himself at his feet, exclaiming: "I am a lost man, if thou dost not quickly rescue me. Incited by Leudaste, I have said things which I ought not to have said. Grant me, without loss of time, thy permission to depart for another kingdom; for if I remain here, the king's officers will seize me, and I shall be put to the torture."§ A clerk in those days could not go any distance from the church to which he belonged without leave from his bishop, nor be received unto the diocese of another bishop, without a letter from his own, which served him as a passport. In soliciting leave to travel under pretence of the peril of death with which he said he was threatened, the subdeacon Rikulf played a double game; he endeavoured to occasion a very important circumstance capable of serving as a corroboration of Leudaste's words, and moreover procured for himself the means of disappearing from the scene of action, and awaiting the issue of this great intrigue in perfect safety.

Gregory by no means suspected the motives of Leudaste's departure, nor what was then going forwards at Soissons; but the request of the sub-deacon, obscurely worded, and accompanied with a sort of pantomimic tragedy, instead of touching, only surprised and frightened him. The excesses of the times, the sudden catastrophes which daily under his own eyes ruined the most fortunate, the feeling of the precariousness there was then in the position and life of every one, had obliged him to adopt as a habit the utmost circumspection. He there-

* Hic vero Rifulcus subdiaconus, simili levitate perfacilis, ante hunc annum consilio cum Leudaste de hac causa habito, causas offensivonis requirit, quibus scilicet me offenso, ad Leudastem transiret. nactusque tandem ipsum adivit, ac per menses quatuor dolis omnibus ac misticulis præparatis, ad me revertitur, deprecans ut eum debeam recipere excusatum (Ibid.)

† Uaque nunc, o pessime rex, custodivi civitatem Turonicam: nunc autem, me ab actione remoto, vide qualiter custodiatur... (Ibid., p. 261)

‡ Quod audiens rex ait: Nequaquam, sed quia remotus es, ideo hæc adponis. (Ibid.)

§ Et ille: Majora, inquit, de te ait episcopus: dicit enim reginam tuam in adulterio cum episcopo Berthramno misceri. (Ibid.)

|| Tunc iratus rex, cæsum pugnæ et calcibus... (Ibid.)
¶ Adersens si archidiaconus meus Plato, aut Gallienus amicus noster subderentur pænæ, convincerent me utique hæc locutum. (Ibid., p. 262)

* Nam Riculfum clericum se habere dicebat, per quem hæc locutus fuisset. (Ibid.)

† .. Oneratum ferro recludi præcepit in carcere. (Ibid.)

‡ Feci, fateor, et occultum hostem publice in domum suscepi. (Ibid.)

§ Discedente vero Leudaste, ipse se pedibus meis sternit, dicens: Nisi succurras velociter, periturus sum. Ecce, insurgente Leudaste, locutus sum quod loqui non debui. Nunc vero alius me regnis emite. Quod mihi feceris, a regalibus comprehensus, mortales pœnas sum laturus. (Ibid.)

fore held himself on his guard, and to the great disappointment of Rikulf, who had hoped by means of his feigned despair to draw him into the snare, answered, "If thou hast spoken contrary to reason and duty, may thy words rest upon thine own head; I shall not let thee go into another kingdom, for fear of making myself suspicious in the king's eyes."*

The sub-deacon arose confounded at the failure of this first attempt, and perhaps was preparing to try some other scheme, when he was quietly arrested by order of the king, and led to Soissons. Here, as soon as he arrived, he was subjected alone to an examination, in which, notwithstanding his critical position, he fulfilled in every respect the agreement he had made with his two accomplices. Declaring himself a witness of the fact, he deposed, that on the day on which Bishop Gregory had spoken ill of the queen, the archdeacon Plato and Gallienus were present, and that both had spoken in the same way. This formal testimony set at liberty Leudaste, whose veracity no longer appeared doubtful, and who seemed to have nothing further to tell.† Set at liberty whilst his companion in falsehood took his place in prison, he had a right to consider himself henceforth the object of a sort of favour; for by a singular choice, he was the person fixed upon by King Hilperik to go to Tours and seize Gallienus and the archdeacon Plato. This commission was probably entrusted to him, because, with his usual self-conceit, he boasted that he was the only man capable of succeeding in it, and that in order to make himself necessary, he gave accounts of the state of the town and the disposition of the citizens calculated to alarm the suspicious disposition of the king.

Leudaste, proud of his new character of a trustworthy man, and of the fortune he already fancied he had attained, set out during Easter-week. On the Friday of that week there was a great disturbance in the halls attached to the cathedral of Tours, occasioned by the turbulence of the priest Rikulf. This man, unmoved in his expectations, far from conceiving the least fear from the arrest of the sub-deacon, his namesake and accomplice, saw nothing in it but a step towards the conclusion of the intrigue which was to raise him to episcopacy.‡ In the hope of a success which he no longer doubted, his head became so excited that he was like a drunken man, incapable of regulating his words or actions. In one of those intervals of repose which the clergy took between the services, he passed backwards and forwards two or three times before the bishop with an air of bravado, and ended by saying aloud, that the city of Tours

should be cleared of Auvergnats.* Gregory took little notice of this unmannerly speech, of which the motive escaped him. Accustomed, especially from the plebeians of his church, to meet with the coarseness of voice and manner which was more and more extending in Gaul, from the imitation of barbarian customs, he answered without anger, and with somewhat aristocratic dignity: "It is not true that the natives of Auvergne are strangers here; for, with the exception of five, all the bishops of Tours have come of families related to ours; thou shouldst not be ignorant of that."† Nothing was more calculated to irritate to the highest pitch the jealousy of the ambitious priest than such a reply. It was so much increased, that unable to contain himself, he addressed to the bishop direct insults and threatening gestures. He would probably have passed from menaces to blows, if the other clerks, by their interposition, had not prevented the last effects of his frenzy.‡

The next day after this scene of disorder, Leudaste arrived at Tours; he entered it without show or armed followers, as if he only came about his private affairs.§ This discretion, so foreign to his character, was probably prescribed him in the king's orders, as a means of effecting more certainly the two arrests he had to make. During some portion of the day, he appeared to be otherwise occupied, and then, suddenly darting on his prey, he invaded the houses of Gallienus and the archdeacon Plato with a troop of soldiers. These two unfortunate men were seized in the most brutal manner, deprived of their garments, and bound together with iron chains.¶ Whilst leading them thus through the town, Leudaste mysteriously announced that justice was going to be executed on all the queen's enemies, and that it would not be long before a greater culprit was seized. Either wishing to give a great idea of his confidential mission, and the importance of his capture, or fearing really some ambush or insurrection, he took extraordinary precautions for leaving the town. Instead of crossing the Loire on the bridge of Tours, he took it into his head to cross it with the two prisoners and their guards, on a sort of flying bridge, composed of two boats joined together by boards, and towed by other boats.‡

* In die sexta Paschæ, in tantum me convicius et sputis egit (Ibid.) Turonicam urbem ab Arvernus populus emundavit. (Ibid., p. 264)

† Ignorans miser, quod præter quinque episcopos, reliqui omnes qui sacerdotum Turonicum susceperunt, parentum nostrorum prosapiæ sunt conjuncti. (Ibid.)

‡ Ut vix a manibus temperaret fidus scilicet et dolique præparaverat (Ibid.)

§ In crastina autem die, id est sabbati in ipso Pascha, venit Leudastes in urbem Turonicam, adsimilaneque aliud negotium agere. (Ibid.)

¶ Adprehensos Platoneum archidiaconum et Gallienum in vincula connectit; catenatosque ac exutos veste jubet eos ad reginam deduci. (Ibid.)

‡ Interea ingressi in fluvium super pontem qui duabus lintribus tenebatur. — (Ibid., p. 262.) This interpretation appears to me the only one capable of giving an explanation of this obscure passage. It would be utterly impossible to throw over the Loire in the month of April, a

* Cui ego aio: Si quid incongruum rationi effatus es, sermo tuus in caput tuum erit; nam ego alteri te regno non mittam, ne suspectus habear coram rege. (Ibid.)

† At ille iterum vinctus, relaxato Leudaste, custodiæ deputatur, dicens Gallienum eadem die et Platoneum archidiaconum fuisse præsentem, cum hæc est episcopus elocutus. (Ibid.)

‡ Sed Rikulfus presbyter, qui jam promissionem de episcopatu a Leudaste habebat, in tantum elatus fuerat, ut magi Simonis superbiæ æquaretur. (Ibid.)

When the news of these events reached the ears of Gregory, he was in the episcopal palace, occupied with numerous affairs, the regulation of which filled up every hour which his sacred ministry left vacant. The two certain misfortunes of his two friends, and the danger existing to himself in the vague but sinister reports which were beginning to spread, all this, joined to the still lively impression of the painful event of the preceding day, caused him profound emotion. Struck by a sadness mixed with anxiety and depression, he interrupted his occupations and entered his oratory alone.* He knelt down and prayed: but his prayer, fervent as it was, did not calm him. What is about to happen? he asked himself with grief; this question, full of doubts impossible to solve, he turned over in his mind, without being able to find an answer. To escape the torments of uncertainty, he did a thing which he had more than once censured in common with the councils and fathers of the church, he took the Psalms of David, and opened them at hazard, to see if he should not find, as he himself says, some consoling text.† The passage on which his eyes fell was the following: "They went forth full of hope, and were not afraid, and their enemies were swallowed up in the depths of the sea." The accidental coincidents of these words with the ideas which beset him, made a stronger impression than either reason or faith alone had been able to do. He thought he saw in it an answer from on high, a promise of Divine protection for his two friends, and for whoever should be involved in the sort of proscription which public rumour announced, and of which they were the first victims.‡

Meanwhile, the ex-count of Tours, with the air of a prudent chief, accustomed to ambushes and stratagems, was endeavouring to effect the passage of the Loire with an attempt at military order. The better to direct the working of the plan, and to keep on the look-out, he took his place in the fore part of the raft; the prisoners were in the stern, the troop of guards occupied the middle of the flooring, and thus this clumsily built craft was loaded with people. The middle of the river, a spot which the violence of the current might render dangerous, was already passed, when a rash and inconsiderate order given by Leudaste, suddenly brought a great number of people on the fore part of the bridge. The boat which served to support it, sinking under the weight, became filled with water; the floor was weighed down on one side, and most of those who stood there, lost their balance, and fell into the river. Leudaste fell in among the first, and swam ashore, while the

raft, partly beneath the water, partly sustained by the second boat on which the chained prisoners were, made its way with great difficulty towards the place of landing.* Excepting this accident, which failed to give a literal fulfilment to the text of David, the journey from Tours to Soissons took place without difficulty, and with all the celerity possible.

As soon as the two captives had been led before the king, their conductor made the greatest efforts to excite his anger against them, and to draw from him, before he had time for reflection, a sentence of capital punishment, and an order of execution.† He felt that such a blow struck at first would render the position of the Bishop of Tours an extremely critical one, and that once engaged in this path of atrocious violence, the king could no longer draw back; but his calculations and hopes were frustrated. Blinded anew by the seductions under the empire of which his life was passed, Hilperik had recovered from his doubts of Fredegonda's fidelity, and the same violent irritability was no longer to be found in him. He looked at this affair with greater calmness. He wished to follow it for the future slowly, and even to carry the regularity of a lawyer into the examination of facts, and the whole proceeding; a sort of pretension he combined to that of being a clever versifier, a connoisseur in the fine arts, and a profound theologian.

Fredegonda employed all her strength and prudence in restraining herself. She artfully judged, that the best way for her to dissipate all shade of suspicion in her husband's mind was to appear dignified and serene, to assume a matronly attitude, and appear in nowise anxious to see the legal inquiries ended. This double disposition, which Leudaste had not anticipated on either side, saved the lives of the prisoners. Not only was no harm done to them, but by a caprice of courtesy difficult to explain, the king, treating them far better than the subdeacon their accuser, left them in a kind of half-liberty under the guard of his officers of justice.‡

It then became necessary to seize the principal criminal; but there commenced King Hilperik's embarrassment and perplexities. He had shown himself formerly full of decision, and even of animosity, in his prosecution of Bishop Prætextatus.§ But Gregory was not an ordinary bishop; his reputation and influence extended throughout Gaul; in him, so to speak, the moral power of episcopacy was concentrated and personified. Against such an adversary violence would have been dangerous, it would have given universal offence, which Hilperik, in the heat of his anger, might perhaps have disregarded, but which in cool blood he did not

bridge of planks supported only by two boats *duabus lintribus*. Besides, the rest of the passage indicates, in the most positive manner, that the two boats which supported the planks were not moored, but at liberty: *navis illa quæ Leudastem vehebat* . . .

* Hæc ego audiens, dum in domo ecclesiæ residerem moestus, turbatusque ingressus oratorium. (Ibid.)

† Davidicè carminis sumo librum, ut scilicet apertus aliquem consolationis versiculum daret (Ibid.)

‡ In quo na repertum est: Eduxit eos in spe, et non timuerunt; et inimicos eorum operuit mare. (Ibid.)

* Navis illa quæ Leudastem vehebat, demergitur; et nisi nandi fuisset, adminiculo liberatus, cum sociis forsitian interesset. Navis vero alia, quæ huic innexa erat, quæ et victos vehebat, super aquas, Dei auxilio, elevatur. (Ibid.)

† Igaur deducti ad regem qui vincti fuerant, incusantur instantur, ut capitali sententia finirentur. (Ibid.)

‡ Sed rex recogitans, absolutos a vinculo in libera custodia reservat inlætos. (Ibid.)

§ See above, the Fourth Narrative.

venture to face. Renouncing the idea of violence, therefore, he thought only of employing one of those palpably artful contrivances in which he delighted. Whilst reasoning with himself, it entered his head that the bishop, whose popularity frightened him, might in his turn be afraid of the power of royalty, and endeavour to secure himself by flight from the fearful chances of an accusation of high treason. This idea, which appeared to him a most luminous one, became the basis of his plan of action, and the text of the confidential orders which he hastily dispatched. He addressed them to Duke Berulf, who being, in virtue of his title, invested with a provincial government, commanded in chief at Tours, Poitiers, and several other towns recently conquered to the south of the Loire by the Neustrian generals.* According to these instructions, Berulf was to go to Tours, without any other apparent object than that of inspecting the means of defending the town. He was to await with circumspection and perfect dissimulation, the instant at which Gregory should openly compromise himself, and expose himself to be taken, by any attempt at flight.

The news of the great trial which was about to commence had reached Tours officially, confirmed and magnified as usual by a number of popular exaggerations. It was probably on the effect of these threats of danger that the confidant of King Hilperik relied for the success of his mission. He flattered himself that this sort of bugbear would serve, as in a hunt, to surround the bishop, and drive him into taking some step which would lead him into the snare. Berulf entered the city of Tours, and visited the ramparts, as was his custom at his periodical progresses. The new count, Eunomius, accompanied him, to receive his observations and orders. Whether the Frankish duke allowed the Roman to divine his secret, or whether he wished to deceive him, he said that King Gontramm designed to seize the town, either by surprise or open force, and added, "This is the moment to watch incessantly; in order that there may be no negligence to fear, the town must have a garrison."† Under cover of this fable, and the terror of an imaginary peril which soon spread, troops of soldiers were introduced without awakening the smallest suspicion; guard-houses were established, and sentinels placed at every gate of the town. Their orders were, not to look towards the country to see if the enemy was coming, but to watch the goings out of the bishop, and to arrest him if he passed in any disguise, or equipped for a journey.‡

These stratagems were useless, and the time passed in expectation of their effect. The Bishop of Tours appeared to be in no way

thinking of flight, and Berulf found himself obliged to work underhand to determine him to it, or to suggest the idea to him. By means of money he gained over some persons intimately acquainted with Gregory, who went one after another with an air of deep sympathy to speak to him of the danger he was in, and of the fears of all his friends. Probably, in these treacherous insinuations, the character of King Hilperik was not spared; and the epithets of the Herod and Nero of the century, which were applied to him secretly by many, were this time pronounced with impunity by the agents of treason.* Recalling to the bishop these words of the holy Scriptures, "*Fly from city to city before thy persecutors,*" they advised him to carry away secretly the most valuable things his church possessed, and retire to one of the cities of Auvergne, there to await better days. But, either because he suspected the true motives of this strange proposal, or because such advice, even if sincere, appeared to him unworthy of adoption, he remained unmoved, declaring that he would not depart.†

There was therefore no other way left of securing the person of this man, whom they dared not touch unless he gave himself up; and it was necessary for the king to come to the determination of awaiting the voluntary appearance of the accused, whom he wished to prosecute legally. As a preparation for this great trial, letters of convocation were addressed to all the bishops of Neustria, as in the cause of Prætextatus; they were ordered to be at Soissons at the beginning of the month of August of the year 580. From all appearances this synod was to be still more numerous than that of Paris in 577; for the bishops of several southern cities recently conquered from the kingdom of Austrasia, and amongst others, that of Albi, were summoned to attend.‡ The Bishop of Tours received this summons in the same form as his colleagues; and making it in some sort a point of honour, he hastened to obey it instantly, and arrived one of the first at Soissons.

Public expectation was then raised to the utmost in the town, and this arrangement of one of such high rank, virtue, and renown, excited universal interest. His calm and dignified bearing, perfectly free from affectation, his serenity, as great as if he had come to sit as judge in the cause of another, his assiduous vigils in the churches of Soissons, at the tombs of the martyrs and confessors, turned the popular respect and curiosity into a real enthusiasm. All the men of Gallo-Roman birth, that is to say, the mass of the inhabitants, took part, before any legal inquiry had been made, with the Bishop of Tours against his accusers, whoever they were. The lower classes especially, less reserved and less timid in presence of power, gave free career to their sentiments, and ex-

* Adriani Valesii *Rer. Francic.*, lib. x. p. 119

† Berulfus dux cum Eunomio comite fabulam fingit, quod Guntchramnus rex rapere vellet Turonicam civitatem: et idcirco ne aliqua negligentia accederet, oportet, ait, urbem custodia consignari. (Greg. Turon. *Hist. Franc.*, lib. v. apud Script. *Rer. Gallic.* et *Francic.*, t. ii. p. 262.)

‡ Ponunt portas dolose custodes, qui civitatem tuam adsimulantes, me utique custodirent. (*Ibid.*)

* Chilpericus, Nero nostri temporis et Herodes. (*Ibid.*, lib. vi. p. 290.)

† Mittunt etiam qui mihi consilium ministrarent, ut occulte adsument melioribus rebus ecclesie, Arvernum fuga secederem; sed non adquevi. (*Ibid.*, lib. v. p. 263.)

‡ Igitur rex, arcessitis regni sui episcopos, causam diligenter jussit exquiri. (*Ibid.*, pp. 263, 264.)

pressed them in public with the most undaunted vehemence. While awaiting the arrival of the members of the synod and the opening of the debates, the preparations for the trial were continued upon no other foundation than the evidence of one man. The subdeacon Rikulf, who was never weary of making fresh declarations in support of the first, and of multiplying the lies against Gregory and his friends, was frequently led from the prison to the king's palace, where his examinations took place with all the mystery observed in the most important affairs.* On the way there and back, a number of mechanics, leaving their work-shops, assembled on his passage, and pursued him with murmurs, hardly restrained by the fierce aspect of the Frankish vassals who escorted him. Once, as he returned, his head erect, and with an air of triumph and satisfaction, a carpenter, named Modestus, said to him, "Miserable man! who plottest with such animosity against thy bishop, wouldst thou not do better to ask his pardon, and endeavour to obtain thy forgiveness?"† At these words, Rikulf, pointing to the man who addressed him, exclaimed in the Germanic language to his guards, who had not understood the apostrophe of the Roman, or else cared little for it, "There is one who counsels me silence, that I may not assist in discovering the truth: there is an enemy of the queen, who wants to prevent those who have slandered her from being informed against."‡ The Roman workman was seized amidst the crowd, and led away by the soldiers, who went immediately to inform Queen Fredegonda of the scene which had taken place, and ask what was to be done with the man.

Fredegonda, wearied, perhaps, by the news which was daily brought her of what was said in the city, had a moment of impatience in which she relapsed into her natural character, and departed from the mildness she had hitherto observed. By her orders, the unfortunate workman was flogged; other tortures were then inflicted on him, and finally he was thrown into prison in irons.§

Modestus was one of those men, not uncommon at that period, who combined unlimbed faith with an ecstatic imagination. Persuaded that he was suffering in the cause of justice, he never for a moment doubted that the Almighty Power would interfere to release him. Towards midnight, the two soldiers who guarded him fell asleep, and he instantly began to pray with all the fervour of his soul, entreating God to visit him in his distress, by sending the holy bishops,

Martin and Medardus, to him.* His prayer was followed by one of those strange but attested facts, in which the belief of former days saw miracles, and which the science of our own has endeavoured to explain by attributing them to the phenomena of the ecstatic state. Perhaps the firm conviction that his prayer had been granted, suddenly gave the prisoner an extraordinary increase of strength and adroitness, a kind of new sense more subtle and powerful than the others. Perhaps there was nothing more in his deliverance than a series of lucky accidents; but, from the authority of an eyewitness, he succeeded in breaking his chains, opening the door, and escaping. Bishop Gregory, who kept watch that night in the basilica of Saint Medardus, to his great surprise saw him enter and weeping implore his blessing.†

The report of this adventure, which spread from mouth to mouth, was well calculated to increase the general excitement at Soissons. However inferior the condition of men of Roman race was at that epoch in the social state, there was something in the voice of a whole town exclaiming against the prosecution of the Bishop of Tours, which must have annoyed the adversaries of the bishop to the last degree, and even acted in his favour in the minds of the judges. Either to withdraw the members of the synod from this influence, or to remove himself from the scene of a popularity which displeased him, Hilperik decided that the assembly of bishops and the judgment of the cause should take place at the royal estate of Braine. He went thither with all his family, followed by all the bishops already assembled at Soissons. As there was no church there, but only private oratories, the members of the council received orders to hold their assemblies in one of the houses on the estate, perhaps in the great hall of wood which was used twice a year when the king resided at Braine, for the national meetings of the chiefs and freedmen of the Frankish race.‡

The first event which signalized the opening of the synod was a literary one; it was the arrival of a long piece of poetry composed by Venantius Fortunatus, and addressed to King Hilperik and to all the bishops assembled at Braine.§ The singular career which this Italian, the last poet of the aristocratic Gallo-Roman society, had created for himself by his talents and the elegance of his manners, demands here an episcological digression.¶

* Cùmque inter duos custodes catenis et in cippo tenebatur vincitus, media nocte dormientibus custodibus, orationem fudit ad Dominum, ut dignaretur ejus potentia miserum visitare, et qui innocens conligatus fuerat, visitatione Martini præsulis ac Medardi absolveretur. (Ibid.)

† Mox disruptis vinculis, confracto cippo, reserato ostio, sancti Medardi basilicam nocte, nobis vigilantibus, introivit. (Ibid.)

‡ Congregati igitur apud Brennacum villam episcopi, in unam domum residere jussi sunt. (Ibid.)

§ Ad Chilpericum regem quando synodus Brinnaco habita est. Fortunati Pictavi, episc., lib. ix. carmen i. apud ejus Opera, Romæ, 1786, in 4to.

¶ See the First Narrative,

* Cùmque Rikulfus clericus sæpius discuteretur occulte, et contra me vel meos multas fallacias promulgaret . . . (Ibid., p. 264.)

† Modestus quidam faber lignarius ait ad eum: O infelix, qui contra episcopum tuum tam contumaciter ista meditaris! satius tibi erat silere . . . (Ibid.)

‡ Ad hæc ille clamare cæpit voce magna, ac dicere: En ipsum, qui mihi silentium indicit, ne prosequar veritatem: en reginæ inimicum, qui causam criminis ejus non sinit inquiri (Ibid.)

§ Nuntiantur protinus hæc reginæ. Adprehenditur Modestus, torquetur, flagellatur, et in vincula compactus custodiæ deputatur. (Ibid., p. 263.)

Born in the environs of Treviso, and educated at Ravenna, Fortunatus came to Gaul to visit the tomb of St. Martin, in fulfilment of a pious vow; but this journey being in all ways delightful to him, he made no haste to terminate it.* After having accomplished his pilgrimage to Tours, he continued to travel from town to town, and was sought and welcomed by all the rich and noble men who still piqued themselves on their refinement and elegance.† He travelled all over Gaul, from Mayence to Bordeaux, and from Toulouse to Cologne, visiting on his road the bishops, counts, and dukes, either of Gallic or Frankish origin, and finding in most of them obliging hosts, and often truly kind friends.

Those whom he left, after a stay of a longer or shorter period in their episcopal palaces, their country houses, or strong fortresses, kept up a regular correspondence with him from that period, and he replied to their letters by pieces of elegiac poetry, in which he retraced the remembrances and incidents of his journey. He spoke to every one of the natural beauties and monuments of their country; he described the picturesque spots, the rivers and forests, the culture of the land, the riches of the churches and the delights of the country-houses.‡ These pictures, sometimes tolerably accurate, and sometimes vaguely emphatic, were mixed up with compliments and flattery. The poet and wit praised the kindness, the hospitality of the Frankish nobles, not omitting the facility with which they conversed in Latin, and the political talents, the ingenuity, and the knowledge of law and business which characterized the Gallo-Roman nobles.§ To praise of the piety of the bishops and their zeal in building and consecrating new churches, he added approbation of their administrative works for the prosperity, ornament, or safety of towns. He praised one for having restored ancient edifices, a prætorium, a portico, and baths; a second for having turned the course of a river, and dug canals for irrigation; a third for having erected a citadel fortified with towers and machines of war.|| All this, it must be owned, was marked with signs of extreme literary degeneracy, being written in a style at once pedantic and careless, full of incorrect and distorted expressions and of puerile puns; but, setting these aside, it is pleasant to witness the appearance of Venantius Fortunatus rekindling a last spark of intellect-

ual life in Gaul, and to see this stranger becoming a common bond of union between those who, in the midst of a society declining into barbarism, here and there retained the love of literature and mental enjoyments.* Of all his friendships, the deepest and most permanent was one which he formed with a woman, Radegonda, one of the wives of King Chlothar the First, then living retired at Poitiers in a convent which she had herself founded, and where she had taken the veil as a simple nun.

(A. D. 529.) In the year 529, Chlothar, King of Neustria, had attached himself as an auxiliary to his brother Theoderik, who was marching against the Thorings or Thuringians, a people of the Saxon confederacy, and both a neighbour and enemy of the Austrasian Franks.† The Thuringians lost several battles; the bravest of their warriors were cut in pieces on the banks of the Unstrut; their country, ravaged with fire and sword, became tributary to the victorious kings, who made an equal division of booty and prisoners.‡ Two children of royal race fell to the lot of the King of Neustria, the son and daughter of Berther, the last king but one of the Thuringians. The young girl, Radegonda, was hardly eight years old; but her grace and precocious beauty made such an impression on the sensual mind of the Frankish prince, that he resolved to have her educated so that she might one day become one of his wives.§

(A. D. 529 to 538.) Radegonda was carefully guarded in one of the royal palaces of Neustria, on the estate of Autes on the Somme. There, from a praiseworthy fancy of her master and future husband, she received, not the simple education of girls of the Germanic race, who learnt little besides spinning and hunting, but the refined education of rich Gallic women. To all the elegant occupations of a civilized woman, were added the study of Roman literature, and an acquaintance with the profane poets and the ecclesiastical writers.||

Either her mind was naturally sensitive to all delicate impressions, or else the ruin of her country and family, and the scenes of barbaric life which she had witnessed, had saddened and disgusted her, for she loved books as if they had opened to her an ideal world, better than that which surrounded her.¶ When she read the

* Vita Fortunati, præfixa ejus Operibus, auctore Michaelæ Angelo Luchini.

† Quemdam virum religiosum, nomine Fortunatum, metricis versibus insignem, qui a multis potentibus honorabilibus viris, in his Gallicis et Belgicis regionibus per diversa loca, tunc vitæ ac scientiæ suæ merito invitabatur. ... Hincmarus de Egidio Rem. Episc. in Vita S. Remigii, apud Fortunati Vitam, p. 61.

‡ V. Fortunati, lib. i. carm. 19–21; lib. iii. carm. 6, 8, et passim.

§ Fortunati Opera, lib. i. carm. 1–5, 15, 16; lib. ix. carm. 16 et passim; lib. vii. carm. 7–13, 14; lib. x. carm. 23, et passim.

|| Fortunati lib. i. carm. 18, ad Leontium Burdegallensem Episcopum de Bissono, *vila Burdegallensi*. Ibid., lib. iii. carm. 10, ad Felicam Nannetensem episcopam *alibi detorquet fluvium*. Ibid. carm. 12, ad Nicetium Trevirensis de castello super Mosellam.

* Vita Fortunati, p. 47–49. Fortunatus Italicus apud Gallias in metrica insignis habebatur. (Floodard, Hist. Rem. Eccl. (Ibid., p. 61.)

† Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iii. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 190.

‡ Patratæ ergo victoria regionem illam capessunt, in suam redigunt potestatem (Ibid.)

§ Chlotharius vero rediens, Radegundem filiam Bertharii regis secum captivum adduxit, ubique eam in matrimonium sociavit. (Ibid.) Quæ veniens in sortem præcelsi regis Chlotharii ... (Vita sanctæ Radegundis, auctore Fortunato, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iii. p. 456.)

|| In Veromandensem ducta Attæias in villa regia nutriendi causa custodibus est deputata. Quæ puella inter alia opera quæ sexui ejus congruebant, literis est erudita. (Ibid.)

¶ Tempestate barbarica, Francorum victoria regione vastata ... (Vita S. Radegundis, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iii. p. 456.)

Scriptures and the lives of the saints, she wept and longed for martyrdom; and probably also, less dismal dreams, dreams of peace and of liberty, accompanied her other readings. But religious enthusiasm, which then absorbed all that was noble and elevated in human faculties, soon predominated in her; and this young barbarian, in attaching herself to the ideas and customs of civilization, embraced them in their purest form, a Christian life.*

Turning her thoughts more and more from the men and things of this century of violence and brutality, she saw a marriageable age, and the moment (538) of becoming wife to the king whose captive she was, approach with terror. When the order was given to send her to the royal residence for the celebration of the nuptials, compelled by an instinct of invincible repugnance, she took flight; but she was caught, brought back, and against her will was married at Soissons, and became queen, or rather one of the queens of the Neustrian Franks; for Chlothar, faithful to the customs of ancient Germany, was not, in spite of his numerous concubines, contented with one wife.† Inexpressible disgust, which in a mind like Radeconda's the attractions of power and riches could not diminish, followed this forced union between the barbarian king and the woman who was estranged from him by the very moral perfections which he had rejoiced to find, and which he himself had caused to be cultivated in her.

(A. D. 538 to 544.) In order to withdraw herself, at least partly, from the duties of her condition, which weighed on her like a chain, Radeconda imposed on herself others apparently more rigorous; she devoted all her leisure to works of charity or of Christian austerity; she devoted herself personally to the service of the poor and sick. The royal house of Aties, where she had been brought up, and which she had received as a wedding gift, became a hospital for indigent women. One of the queen's favourite occupations was, going, not merely to visit it, but to fulfil the office of nurse in all its most revolting details.‡ The pleasures of the

court of Neustria, the noisy banquets, the perilous chases, the reviews and warlike tilts, the society of vassals with their loud voices and uncultivated minds, fatigued and saddened her. But if any bishop, or polished and well-informed clerk, a man of peace and mild conversation arrived, she instantly abandoned all for his society; she remained with him for hours, and when the time came for his departure, she loaded him with presents as tokens of remembrance, wished him a thousand times adieu, and relapsed into her former melancholy.*

She was never ready, either purposely or from forgetfulness, at the hours of meals which she took with her husband, and was always absorbed in instructive reading or pious exercises. It was necessary to remind her several times, and the king, tired of waiting, quarreled with her violently, without succeeding in making her more exact.‡ At night, under some pretext or other, she got up from his side, and went to sleep on the ground on a simple mat or hair-cloth, only returning to the nuptial couch when she was benumbed with cold, and associating in a curious manner Christian mortifications with the sentiment of insurmountable aversion with which her husband inspired her.‡ All these signs of disgust did not, however, weary the love of the King of Neustria. Chlothar was not a man to feel any scruples of delicacy on that point; provided the woman whose beauty pleased him remained in his possession, he was quite indifferent to the moral violence which he exercised over her. Radeconda's reluctance irritated him without causing any real discomfort, and in his conjugal annoyances, he contented himself with saying: "It is a nun, and not a queen that I have got."§

And in truth, there was but one refuge, a conventual life, for this soul, wounded in all the ties which bound it to the world. Radeconda's whole wishes aspired to it; but the obstacles were great, and six years passed before she ventured to brave them. (544.) A last family misfortune gave her courage to do so. Her brother, who had grown up at the court of Neustria as a hostage of the Thuringian nation, was put to death by the king's orders, perhaps for some patriotic regrets or inconsiderate menaces.¶ As soon as the queen

* Nec fuit arduum rudimentis illam liberalibus informari, cujus annos et sexum non minus acumen ingenii quam castitatis insignia superabant (Vita S. Radegundis, auctore Hildeberto, Cenoman episc. apud Bolland Acta Sanctorum Augusti, t. iii. p. 84) Frequenter loquens cum parvulis, sibi conferret sors temporis, martyri fieri cupiens ... (Vita S. Radegundis, auctore Fortunato, ibid. p. 68)

† Quam cum præparatis expensis Victoriaci voluisset rex prædictus accipere, per Betarcham ab Ateias nocte cum paucis elapsa est. Deinde Suessionis cum eam direxisset, ut reginam erigeret (Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iii. p. 456) The probabilities of this polygamous union are a great cause of anxiety to the modern historians, who have occupied themselves about Saint Radeconda's actions. Father Mabillon remarks the difficulty, and despairs of solving it *locus sane lubricus ac difficilis*. (Annales Benedictini, t. i. p. 124)

‡ Sic devota femina, nata et nupta regina, palatii domina, pauperibus serviebat ancilla (Vita S. Radegundis, auctore Fortunato, apud Bolland Acta Sanctorum Augusti, t. iii. p. 68) Ateias domum instruit, quo lectis culte compositis, congregatis egenis feminis, ipsa eas lavans in thermis, morborum curabat putredines. (Ibid.)

* Ad ejus opinionem si quis servorum Dei visus fuisset, vel per se, vel vocatus occurrere, videres illam cœlestem habere lætitiā. Ipsa se totam occupabat juxta viri justæ verba . . . retentabatur per dies. Et si venisset pontifex, in aspectu ejus lætificabatur et remuneratum relaxabat, ipsa tristis, ad propria. (Ibid., p. 69)

† Unda hora serotina, dum si nuntiaretur tarde quod eam rex quæreret ad mensam circa res Dei dum salagebat, rixas habebat a conjuge (Ibid.)

‡ Nocturno tempore, cum reclinarat cum principe, rogans se pro humana necessitate consurgere, et levans egressa cubiculo, tandem ante secretum orationi incumbere pactato cilicio, ut solo calens spiritu, jaceret gelu penetrata, tota carne præmorta. (Bolland. Acta Sanctorum Augusti, p. 68)

§ De qua regi dicebatur habere se magis jugalem monacham quam reginam. (Ibid. p. 69.)

¶ Cujus fratrem postea injuste per homines iniquos occidit. Illa quoque ad Deum conversa . . . (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. iii. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et

learnt this horrible news, her resolution was taken; but she concealed it. Feigning only to seek religious consolation, but in reality seeking a man capable of becoming her deliverer, she went to Noyon, to the Bishop Medardus, the son of a Frank and a Roman, a personage then celebrated throughout Gaul for his reputation of sanctity.* Chlothar had not the least suspicion of this pious step, and not only did not oppose it, but even ordered every thing for the queen's departure himself; for her tears annoyed him, and he was anxious to see her more calm and in a less melancholy humour.†

Radegonda found the Bishop of Noyon in his church, officiating at the altar. When she found herself in his presence, the feelings which agitated her, and which she had until then repressed, burst forth, and her first words were a cry of distress: "Most holy priest, I wish to leave this world, and to change my costume! I entreat thee, most holy priest, to consecrate me to the Lord!"‡ Notwithstanding the intrepidity of his faith, and fervour of proselytism, the bishop, surprised at this sudden request, hesitated, and begged for time to reflect. It was a perilous determination, that of breaking a royal marriage contracted according to the Salic law and the Germanic customs—customs, which the church, though it abhorred them, still tolerated for fear of alienating the minds of the barbarians.§

Moreover, a combat of another kind also sprang up for St. Medardus, besides the internal struggle between prudence and zeal. The Frankish nobles and warriors who had followed the queen, surrounded her, and cried to him with menacing gestures: "Do not dare to give the veil to a woman who has united herself to the king! Priest, beware of depriving the prince of a solemnly espoused queen!" The most violent, laying hands on him, dragged him with vehemence from the steps of the altar into the nave of the church, whilst the queen, frightened by the tumult, sought a refuge with her women in the vestry.† But there, collecting her thoughts, instead of abandoning herself to despair, she conceived an expedient in which there was as much feminine address as strength of will. To give it the best chance of success, and to

put the religious zeal of the bishop to the greatest trial, she threw the dress of a nun over her royal apparel, and marched in this disguise towards the sanctuary, where sat St. Medardus, sad, pensive, and irresolute.* "If thou delayest to consecrate me," said she in a firm voice, "and fearest men more than God, thou wilt have to render an account, and the shepherd will demand of thee the soul of his lamb."† This unexpected apparition, and these mystical words, struck the imagination of the old bishop, and suddenly revived his expiring will. Elevating his conscience as a priest above human fears and politic cautions, he hesitated no longer, but of his own authority annulled the marriage of Radegonda, and ordained her a deaconess.‡ The nobles and vassals also partook of the enthusiasm; they did not dare to bring back by force to the royal abode, one who to them bore in future the doubly sacred character of a queen and a woman devoted to God.

The first thought of the new convert (that was the name then given to express the renunciation of the world), was to strip herself of all the jewels and valuables she wore. She covered the altar with her head ornaments, her bracelets, her clasps of precious stones, and the fringes of her robes, woven of purple and golden threads; she broke her rich girdle of massive gold with her own hands, saying, "I give it to the poor;"§ and then thought of saving herself from all danger by instantaneous flight. Free to choose her road, she directed her steps towards the south, leaving the centre of Frankish domination from an instinct of safety, and perhaps also from an instinct of refinement, which attracted her towards those regions of Gaul, in which barbarism had made least inroads; she arrived at the town of Orleans, and embarked on the Loire, which she descended as far as Tours. There she halted, to await, under the protection of the numerous sanctuaries open near the tomb of St. Martin, what the husband whom she had abandoned, would determine respecting her.¶ She led thus for some time the disturbed and restless life of the outlaws who sought refuge in sanctuaries, trembling for fear of being surprised, if she took one step beyond the protecting bounds, sending petitions to the king, sometimes haughty, sometimes suppliant, negotiating with him through the medium of the bishops, to induce him to resign himself to never seeing

Francic., t. ii. p. 190) Ut hæc religiosus viveret, frater interficeretur innocenter. (Vita S. Radegundis, auctore Fortunato Ibid., t. iii. p. 456)

* Paer igitur hujus nomine Nectardus de forti Francorum genere, non fuit infimus libertate mater vero Romanus, nomine Protagia, absolutis claruit servitute natalibus. (Vita S. Medardi, ibid., p. 451, 452.)

† Directa a rege veniens ad B. Medardum Noviomagum (Vita S. Medardi, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iii. p. 456)

‡ Supplicat instantem ut ipsam, mutata veste, Domino consecraret. (Ibid.)

§ Sed memor dicentes apostoli, Si qua ligata sit conjugi, non quærat dissolvi; differabat reginam ne veste tegeter monachica. (Ibid.)

¶ Adhuc beatum virum perturbabant proceres, et per basilicam graviter ab altari retrahebant, ne velaret principi conjunctam, ne videretur sacerdoti ut præsumeret reginam subducere reginam, non publicanam sed publicam. (Vita S. Radegundis, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iii. p. 456.)

* Intrans in sacrum, monachica veste indutus, proccidit ad altare, beatissimum Medardum his verbis allocutur dicens .. (Ibid.)

† Si me consecrare distuleris, et plus hominem quam Deum timeris, de manu tua a pastore ovis anima requiratur. (Ibid.)

‡ Quo ille contestationis concussus tonitruo, manu super posita, consecravit diaconam (Ibid.)

§ Mox indumentum nobile ... exuta ponit in altare, blattas gemmatuque ornamenta ... Cingulum auri ponderatum fractum dat in opus pauperum. (Ibid.) Stipodium, camisas, manicas, cofeas, fibulas, cuncta auro, quædam gemmis exornata (Ibid., p. 457)

¶ Hinc felici navigio Turonis appulsa ... quid egerit circa S. Martini atria, templa basilicam, flens lachrymis insatiata, singula jacens per limina. (Acta Sanctorum Augusti, t. iii. p. 70.)

her again, and permitting her to accomplish her monastic vows.

(A. D. 544 to 550.)—Chlothar at first showed himself deaf to prayers and entreaties; he claimed his right as a husband, attested the laws of his ancestors, and threatened to go himself to seize the fugitive, and bring her back. Terrified when public rumour or the letters of her friends brought her news of this kind, Radegonda then gave herself up to an increase of austerities, to fasts, vigils, and macerations in hair cloth, in hopes at the same time of obtaining assistance from above, and losing all the charms she possessed for the man who persecuted her with his love.* To augment the distance which separated them, she went from Tours to Poitiers, from the sanctuary of Saint Martin to the no less revered sanctuary of Saint Hilary. The king, however, was not to be discouraged, and he once came to Tours under the false pretext of devotion; but the energetic remonstrances of Saint Germain, the illustrious Bishop of Paris, prevented his going any further.† Controlled, so to speak, by that moral power before which the vehement will of the barbarian kings was forced to give way, he, weary of the struggle, consented that the daughter of the Thuringian kings should found a monastery for women at Poitiers; following the example given in the town of Arles by a Gallo-Roman matron, Cæsaria, the sister of the Bishop Cæsarius, or Saint Cæsaire.‡

Every thing which Radegonda had received from her husband, according to the Germanic custom, either as dowry or as morning gift, was devoted by her to the establishment of the congregation which was to form her chosen family in the place of that which she had lost by the disasters of a conquest, and the suspicious tyranny of the conquerors of her country. She laid the foundations of the new monastery, which was to be an asylum open to all women who wished to escape by retreat, from the seductions of the world or the invasions of the barbarians, in a piece of ground which she possessed at the gates of the city of Poitiers. Notwithstanding the anxiety of the queen and the assistance of Pientius, Bishop of Poitiers, several years elapsed before the building was completed;§ it was a Roman villa, with all its

appurtenances, gardens, porticos, baths, and a church. Either as some symbol, or as a precaution for bodily safety against the violence of the times, the architect had given a military aspect to the exterior of this peaceful convent. The walls were high and strong like ramparts, and several towers were erected at the principal entrance.* These somewhat strange preparations made a strong impression on the general imagination, and the announcement of their progress spread abroad like news of great importance: "See," it was said in the mystical language of the time; "see the ark which is building amongst us against the deluge of the passions, and the storms of this world."†

The day on which every thing was ready, and the queen entered this place of refuge, which her vows ordered her never to quit until she was dead, was a day of popular rejoicing. The squares and streets of the town which she was to pass through were filled by an immense crowd; the roofs of the houses were covered with spectators anxious to see her, before the gates of the convent closed upon her.‡ She made the passage on foot, escorted by a large number of young girls, who, attracted to her by the fame of her Christian virtues, and perhaps also by the grandeur of her rank, were going to share her seclusion. Most of them were of Gallic race, and daughters of senators.§ These were the women who, from their habits of reserve and domestic tranquillity, were most likely to profit by the maternal care and pious intentions of their directress; for the women of Frankish race brought some of the original vices of barbarism even into the cloister. Their zeal was impetuous, but of short duration; and, incapable of keeping within any rule or measure, they suddenly passed from the most unbending rigidity to the complete forgetfulness of all duty and subordination. ||

(A. D. 550.)—It was about the year 550 when Radegonda commenced the life of peace and retirement which she had so long desired. This long dreamed-of life was a sort of com-

* Cùm in villa ipsa adhuc esset, fit sonus quasi eam rex iterum vellet accipere. hæc audiens beatissima, nullo terrore perturbata, se amplius cruciandam tradidit cilicio asperitimo, ac tenero corpori aptavit. (Ibid., p. 76.)

† Sicut enim jam per internuntios cognoverat quod timebat, præcelsus rex Chlotharius cum filio suo præcelsentissimo Sigiberto Turones alventi, quasi devotionis causa, quo facilius Pictavis accederet, ut suam reginam acciperet. (Ibid. Vita S. Radegundis, auctore Baudonivia moniali æquali.)

‡ Tunc rex iuvenis Dei iudicium. quia regina magis Dei voluntatem fecerat quam suam. . . . (Ibid.) Pictavis inspirante et co-operante Deo, monasterium sibi per ordinationem præcelsi regis Chlotharii construxit. (Ibid. Script. Rer. Gallicæ, et Francicæ, t. ii. p. 356, 357, 359.)

§ Quam fabricam vir apostolicus Pientius, episcopus, et Austrasius dux, per ordinationem dominicam celeriter fecerunt. (Vita S. Radegundis, apud Script. Rer. Gallicæ et Francicæ, t. iii. p. 457.)

* Transeuntibus autem nobis sub muro, iterum caterva virginum per fenestras turrium, et ipsa quoque muri propugnacula, voces proferre ac lamentari desuper cepit. (Greg. Turon., lib. de Gloria Confessorum, cap. cvi.) Tota congregatio supra murum lamentans. . . Rogaverunt desursum ut subitus turrim repauseretur feretrum. (Acta Sanctorum Augusti, t. iii. p. 82.)

† Quasi recentior temporis nostri Noë, propter turbines et procellas, sodalibus vel sororibus in laiere ecclesiæ monasterii fabricat arcam. (Vita S. Cæsarii, Arelat. episc. apud Annal. Franc. Ecclesiæ, t. i. p. 471.)

‡ Quanta vero congressio popularis exiit die quæ sancta deliberavit recludere, ut quos plateæ non caperent, ascendentes tecta complerent. (Acta Sanctorum Augusti t. iii. p. 72.)

§ Multitudo immensa sanctimonialium, ad numerum circiter ducentarum, quæ per illius prædicationem conversæ vitam sanctam agebant, quæ secundum sæculi dignitatem non modo de senatoribus, verum etiam nonnullæ de ipsa reali stirpe hæc religionis furma florabant. (Greg. Turon., lib. de Gloria Confessorum, cap. cvi.)

|| Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., (de Chrothilde, moniali filia Chariberti regis, et de Basina filia Chilperici,) lib. ix. p. 334 et seq. (De Ingeltrude religiosa et Berthegunde ejus filia,) p. 351. 359. (De Theodechilde regina, lib. iv. p. 216.)

promise between the monastic austerity and the indolently luxurious habits of civilized society. The study of literature occupied the first rank among the occupations imposed on all the community; two hours of each day were to be devoted to it, and the rest of the time was employed in religious exercises, the reading of holy books, and needlework. One of the sisters read aloud during the working, which was done all together; and the most intelligent, instead of spinning, sewing, or embroidering, were busy in another room transcribing books, to multiply the copies of them.* Although severe on certain points, such as abstinence from meat and wine, the rules tolerated some of the comforts, and even some of the pleasures of a worldly life: the frequent use of the bath in large tanks of warm water, and amusements of all kinds were permitted, and, amongst others, the game of dice.† The foundress and dignitaries of the convent received as visitors not only bishops and members of the clergy, but also laymen of distinction. A sumptuous table was frequently spread for visitors and friends; delicate collations, sometimes perfect banquets were set before them, of which the queen did the honours out of courtesy, although abstaining from taking any part in them herself.‡ (A. D. 550 to 567.) This craving for society gave rise to parties of another kind in the convent; dramatic scenes were represented on various occasions, in which young girls from without, and probably also the novices of the house, appeared in brilliant costumes.§

Such was the order established by Radegonda in her convent of Poitiers, a compound of her personal inclinations and of the traditions preserved for half a century in the celebrated convent of Arles. After having thus traced out the plan and given the impulse to it, either from Christian humility or a stroke of policy, she abdicated all official supremacy, and made the community elect an abbess whom she took care to point out, placing herself as well as the other sisters, under her absolute authority. The wo-

man she selected for this office was named Agnes, a girl of Gallic race, much younger than herself, but whom she had loved from infancy, and who was in turn devoted to her.* Thus willingly reduced to the rank of a simple nun, Radegonda, when her turn came, cooked, swept the house, and carried wood and water, like the rest; but, notwithstanding this apparent equality, she was queen in the convent, from her royal birth, her title of foundress, and the ascendancy of intellect, learning, and goodness.† It was she who maintained the rules, or modified them at pleasure; she who strengthened wavering souls by daily exhortations; she who explained and commented on the text of the Holy Scriptures, mingling her grave homilies with little sentences full of tenderness and peculiarly feminine grace: "You, whom I have chosen, my daughters; you tender plants, objects of all my cares; you, my eyes; you, my life—you, my repose and sole happiness. . . ."

(A. D. 567.)—The monastery of Poitiers had already attracted the attention of the whole Christian world for more than fifteen years, when Venantius Fortunatus, in his pilgrimage of devotion and pleasure through Gaul, visited it as one of the most remarkable sights which his travels afforded him. He was received there with flattering distinction; the warm reception which the queen was accustomed to give to men of talent and refinement was lavished on him as the most illustrious and amiable of their guests. He saw himself loaded by her and the abbess with care, attentions, and praises. This admiration, reproduced each day under various forms, and distilled, so to speak, into the ear of the poet by two women, the one older, the other younger than himself, detained him by some new charm longer than he had expected.§ Weeks, months passed, and all delays were exhausted; and when the traveller spoke of setting forth again, Radegonda said to him: "Why should you go? Why not remain with us?" This wish, uttered by friendship, was to Fortunatus a decree of fate (A. D. 567 to

* Omnes litteras discant. Omni tempore duabus horis, hoc est a mane usque ad horam secundam, lectioni vacent. Reliqui vero diei spatio faciant opera sua . . . Reliqui vero in unum operantibus, una de sororibus usque ad tertiam legat. (Regula S. Cæsariæ, apud Annal. Franc. Ecclesiast., t. i. p. 477.) Acta Sanctorum Augusti, t. iii. p. 61.

† De balneo vero . . . pro calcis amaritudine, ne lavantibus noceret novitas ipsius fabricæ jussisse domnam Radegundem, ut servientes monasterii publice hoc visitarent, donec omnis odor nocendi discederet . . . De tabula vero respondit, et si lussisset vivente domna Radegunde, se minus culpa respiceret: tamen nec in regula perscriptionum prohiberi, nec in canonibus retulit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. ix. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 374.)

‡ Aique seculares cum abbatissa reficerent . . . De convivis etiam ait se nullam novam fecisse consuetudinem, nisi sicut actum est sub domna Radegunde. (Ibid., p. 374, 375.)

§ De palla holoserica vestimenta nepti sue temerarie fecerit: foliola aurea, quæ fuerant in gyro pallæ, inconsulte sustulit, et ad collum neptis sue facinorose suspendit: vitam de auro exornatam eidem nepti sue superflue fecerit: barbatorias intus eo quod celebraverit. (Ibid.) Mabillon, Annales Benedictini, t. i. p. 199.

* Electione etiam nostræ congregationis domnam et sororem meam Agnetem, quam ab ineunte ætate loco filię colui et educavi, abbatissam institui, ac me post Deum ejus ordinationi regulariter obedituram commisi. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. ed. Rünart, p. 472.)

† Nos vero humiles desideramus in ea doctrinam, formam, vultum, personam, scientiam, pietatem, bonitatem, dulcedinem, quam specialem a Domino inter ceteros homines habuit. (Vita S. Radegundis, auctore Baudonivia, apud Acta Sanctorum Augusti, t. iii. p. 81.) See Fortunatus' poems on Saint Radegonda's sciences and readings. She read assiduously Saint Gregory Nazianzen, Saint Basilus, Saint Athanasius, Saint Hilary, Saint Ambrose, Saint Jerome, Saint Augustin, Sedulius, and Paul Orosius. (Lib. v. carm. i.)

‡ Nobis dum prædicabat dicebat: Vos elegi filias, vos mea lumina, vos mea vita, vos mea requies totaque felicitas, vos novella plantatio . . . (Vita S. Radegundis, apud Acta Sanctorum Augusti, t. iii. p. 77.)

§ Hoc quoque quod delectabiliter adjecistis: me domne me Radegunde muro charitatis includam, scio quidem quia non ex meis meritis, sed ex illius consuetudine quam circa conatos novit impendere, colligatis (Fortunatus epist. ad Felicem, episc. Namnet, inter ejus Opera, lib. iii. p. 78.)

580); he no longer thought of crossing the Alps, but settled at Poitiers, took orders there, and became a priest of the metropolitan church.*

This change of profession facilitated his intercourse with his two friends, whom he called his mother and sister, and it became still more assiduous and intimate than before.† Apart from the ordinary necessity of women being governed by a man, there were imperious reasons in the case of the foundress and abbess of the convent of Poitiers, which demanded an union of attention and firmness only to be met with in a man. The monastery had considerable property, which it was not only necessary to manage, but also to guard with daily vigilance against impositions and robberies. This security was only to be obtained by means of royal diplomas, threats of excommunication from the bishops, and perpetual negotiations with dukes, counts, and judges, who were little anxious to act from duty, but who did a great deal from interest or private friendship. A task like this demanded both address and activity, frequent journeys, visits to the courts of kings, the talent of pleasing powerful men, and of treating with all sorts of people. Fortunatus employed in it all his knowledge of the world and the resources of his mind with as much success as zeal; he became the counsellor, confidential agent, ambassador, steward, and secretary, of the queen and the abbess.‡ His influence, absolute in external matters, was hardly less so on the internal order and arrangements of the house; he was the arbitrator of little quarrels, the moderator of rival passions and feminine spite. All mitigations of the rules, all favours, holidays, and extra repasts were obtained through his intervention and at his request.§ He even had, to a certain extent, the direction of consciences; and his advice, sometimes given in verse, always inclined to the least rigid side.|| Moreover, Fortunatus combined great suppleness of mind with considerable freedom of manners. A Christian chiefly through his imagination, as has been frequently said of the Italians, his orthodoxy was irrep- roachable, but in his practice of life he was effeminate and sensual. He abandoned himself without restraint to the pleasures of the table; and not only was he always found a jovial guest, a great drinker, and an inspired singer at the banquets given by his rich patrons, both Romans and barbarians, but, in imitation of the customs of imperial Rome, he sometimes

dined alone on several courses.* Clever as all women are at retaining and attaching to themselves a friend by the weak points of his character, Radegonda and Agnes rivaled each other in encouraging this gross propensity, in the same way that they flattered in him a less ignoble defect, that of literary vanity. They sent daily to Fortunatus' dwelling the best part of the meals of the house;† and not content with this, they had dishes, which were forbidden them by the rules, dressed for him with all possible care. These were meats of all kinds, seasoned in a thousand different ways, and vegetables dressed with gravy or honey, and served up in dishes of silver, jasper, and crystal.‡ At other times he was invited to take his repast at the convent, and then not only was the entertainment of the most delicate kind, but the ornaments of the dining-room were of a refined coquetry. Wreaths of odoriferous flowers adorned the walls, and rose-leaves covered the table instead of a table-cloth.§ Wine flowed into beautiful goblets for the guests to whom it was interdicted by no vow; there was almost a reflex of the suppers of Horace or Tibullus in the elegance of this repast, offered to a Christian poet by two recluses dead to the world. The three actors in this singular drama addressed each other by tender names, the meaning of which a heathen would certainly have misunderstood. The names of mother and sister, from the lips of the Italian, were accompanied by such epithets as these: *my life, my light, delight of my soul*; and all this was only, in truth, an exalted but chaste friendship, a sort of intellectual love.|| With regard to the abbess, who was little more than thirty when this liaison began, this intimacy appeared suspicious, and became the subject of scandalous insinuations. The reputation of

* V Fortunati Opera, lib iii. carm 15—19, lib vii. carm 25, 26, 29, 30; lib ix. carm. 22; lib. x. carm. 12; lib xi. carm 16 22—24, et passim.

† Fortunat, lib. xi. carm 12 de eulogiis, 13 pro castaneis, 14 pro lacte, 15 aliud pro lacte, 18 pro prunellis, 19 pro aliis delictis et lacte, 20 pro ovis et prunis.

Delictis variis tumido me ventre tetendi,
Omnia sumendo lac, holus, ova, butyr.

(Ibid. carm. 23)

‡ Hæc quoque prima fuit hodie meæ copiæ cœnæ:
Quod mihi perfuso melle dedisti holus ...
Præterea venit missus cum collibus altis,
Undique carnali monte superbus apex
Delictis cunctis quas terra vel unda ministrant,
Compositis epulis hortulus inius erat.

(Fortunati, lib. xi. carm. 9)

Carnea dona tumens, gavata argentea perfert,
Quo nimium pingui jure natabat olus.
Marmoreus desert discus quod gignitur hortis.
Quo mihi mellitus fluxit in ore sapor.
Intumuit pulvis vitreo scutella rotatu
Subductus pennis, quam grave pondus habent!

(Ibid., carm. 10.)

§ Multiter arridet rutilantum copia florum,
Vix tot campus habet quot modo mensas rosas.
Insultant epulæ stillanti germine fœtæ,
Quod mantile solet; cur rosa pulchra tegit?
Entant paries viridi pendente chorymbo.
Quæ loca calces habet, huc rosa pressa rubet.

(Ibid., carm. 11)

|| V. Fortunati Opera, lib. xi. passim.

* Mabillon, Annales Benedictini, t. i. p. 155.

Martimum cupiens, voto Radegundis adhæsit,
Quam genuit cælo terra Toringa sacro.

(Fortunati, lib vii. carm i.)

† V Fortunati Opera, lib viii. carm. 2, et passim.

‡ Vita Fortunati, præfixa ejus Operibus, pp. xlii. xlix.

§ Accessit votis sortis jucundissima nostris,
Dum meruere meæ sumere dona preces:
Profecti nihil est potius cibus ille sororum:
Hæc satias epulis, me pietate foveo
(Fortunati, lib xi. carm. 8, ad Abbatissam)

|| Fortunatus agens Agnes quoque versibus orant.
Et lassata nimis vina benigna bibas
(Ibid., carm. 4. ad domnam Radegundem.)

the priest Fortunatus suffered from them, and he was obliged to defend himself, and to protest that he only felt for Agnes like a brother, a purely spiritual love, a celestial affection. He did it with dignity, in some verses, in which he takes Christ and the Virgin as witnesses of the innocence of his heart.*

This man of frivolous and gay disposition, whose maxim was to enjoy the present, and always to look on the bright side of life, was, in his conversations with the daughter of the King of Thuringia, the confidant of deep suffering, of melancholy reminiscences of which he felt himself incapable.† Radegonda had attained the age when the hair begins to whiten, without having forgotten any of the impressions of her early childhood; and at fifty, the memory of the days spent in her own country amidst her friends, came to her as fresh and as painful as at the moment of her capture. She often said, "I am a poor captive woman."‡ she delighted in retracing, even in their smallest details, the scenes of desolation, of murder, and of violence, of which she had been a witness, and partly a victim.§ After so many years of exile, and notwithstanding a total change of tastes and habits, the remembrance of the paternal fireside, and the old family affections, remained to her objects of worship and of love; it was the remnant, the only one she had retained, of the Germanic manners and character. The images of her dead or banished parents never ceased to be present to her, in spite of her new attachments, and the peace of mind she had acquired. There was even something vehement, an almost savage ardour, in her yearnings towards the last remnants of her race, towards the son of her uncle, who had taken refuge at Constantinople, towards cousins born in exile, and whom she only knew by name.§ This woman, who, in a strange land, had never been able to love any thing which was not both Christian and civilized, coloured her patriotic regrets with a rude poetry, a reminiscence of national songs which she had formerly heard in the wooden palace of her ancestors, or on the heaths of her country. The traces of them are still visibly, though certainly in a softened degree, to be met with here and there in some pieces of poetry, in which the Italian poet, speaking in the name of the queen of the barbarians, endeavours to

render her melancholy confidences in the way that he received them from her:

"I have seen women carried into slavery, with bound hands and flowing hair; one walked barefooted in the blood of her husband, the other passed over the corpse of her brother.* Each one has had cause for tears, and I, I have wept for all. I have wept for my relations who have died, and I must weep for those who remain alive. When my tears cease to flow, when my sighs are hushed, my sorrow is not silent. When the wind murmurs, I listen if it brings me any news; but no shadow of my relations presents itself to me.† A whole world divides me from what I love most. Where are they? I ask it of the wind that whistles; I ask it of the clouds that float by: I wish some bird would come and tell me of them.‡ Ah! if I was not withheld by the sacred walls of this convent, they would see me arrive at the moment when they least expected me. I would set out in bad weather; I would sail joyfully through the tempest. The sailors might tremble, but I should have no fear. If the vessel split, I would fasten myself to a plank, and continue my voyage; and if I could seize no fragment, I would swim to them."§

Such was the life which Fortunatus had led since the year 567, a life consisting of religion without moroseness, of affection without anxiety, of grave cares, and leisure filled with agreeable trifling. This last and curious example of an attempt at uniting Christian perfection with the social refinements of ancient civilization, would have passed away without leaving any trace, if the friend of Agnes and Radegonda had not himself, in his poetical works, noted even the smallest phases of the destiny, which with so perfect an instinct of happiness, he had chosen for himself. In them is found inscribed almost day by day, the history of this society of three persons connected by a strong sympathy, the love of every thing elegant, and the want of lively and intellectual conversation. There are verses on all the little events of which this sweet and monotonous mode of existence was made up—on the pain of separation, the dulness of absence and the delights of return; on little presents made and received, on flowers, fruits, and all sorts of dainties, on willow-baskets, which the poet amused himself in plaining with his own.

* Mater honore mihi, soror autem dulcis amore,
Quam pietate, fide, pectore, corde, colo.
Celesti affectu, non crimine corporis ullo.
Non caro, sed hoc quod spiritus optet, amo
Testis adest Christus ...

(Ibid., lib. xi. carm. 6.)

† Quamvis doctissimoque tenet seria cura fatigat,
Huc veniens festos misce poeta jocos ...
Pelle palatinas post multa negotia rixas,
Vivere jucunde mensa benigna monet.

(Ibid., lib. vii. carm. 26. 28.)

‡ Post patriæ cineres, et culmina lapsa parentum,
Quæ hostili acie terra Thuringa tulit,
Si loquar infausto certamine bella peracta,
Quæ prius ad lacrymas femina rapta trahar.
(Fortunatus libellus ad Artarchin ex persona Radegundis, inter ejus Opera, t. i. p. 482.)

§ Ibid. et libel. de Excidio Thuringiæ, p. 474.

* Nuda maritalem calcavit planta cruorem,
Bleedaque transibat, fratre jacente, soror.

(Fortunatus Opera, t. i. p. 475.)

† Sæpe sub humecto confidens lumina vultu,
Murmura clausa latent, nec mea cura tacet.
Specto libens aliquam si nunciet aura salutem,
Nullaque de cunctis umbra parentis adest.

(Ibid.)

‡ Quæ loca te teneant, si sibilat aura, requiro,
Nubila si volitant pendula, posco locum ...
Quod si signa mihi nec terra nec æquora mittunt,
Prospera vel veniens nuntia ferret avis.

(Ibid., p. 467.)

§ Imbribus infestis si solveret unda carinam,
Te peterem tabula remige vecta mari.
Sorte sub infausta si prendere ligna venarar,
Ad te venissem lassæ natante manu.

(Ibid.)

hands as gifts for his two friends.* There are some on the suppers of the three in the convent, animated by *delicious chats*,† and for the solitary repasts in which Fortunatus, whilst eating his utmost, regretted having only one pleasure at a time, and not having his eyes and ears charmed as well.‡ Finally, there are some on the sad and happy days which every year brought round, such as the anniversary of Agnes' birth, and the first day of Lent, when Radegonda, in obedience to a vow, shut herself up in a cell, to pass there the time of that long fast § "Where is my light hidden? Wherefore does she conceal herself from my eyes?" the poet then exclaimed in a passionate accent which might have been thought profane; and when Easter-day, and the end of this long absence arrived, he then, mingling the similes of a madrigal with the grave reflections of the Christian faith, said to Radegonda: "Thou hadst robbed me of my happiness; now it returns to me with thee: thou makest me doubly celebrate this solemn festival."||

To the delights of a tranquillity unique in that century, the Italian emigrant added that of a glory which was no less so, and he was even able to deceive himself as to the duration of the expiring literature of which he was the last and most frivolous representative. The barbarians admired him, and did their best to delight in his witticisms;¶ his slightest works, such as notes written whilst the bearer was waiting, simple distichs improvised at table, spread from hand to hand, were read, copied, and learned by heart; his religious poems and verses addressed to the

kings were objects of public expectation.* On his arrival in Gaul, he had celebrated the marriage of Sighebert and Brunehilda, in the heathen style, and the conversion of the Arian Brunehilda to the Catholic faith in the Christian style.† The warlike character of Sighebert, the conqueror of the nations beyond the Rhine, was the first theme of his poetical flatteries; later, when settled at Poitiers in the kingdom of Haribert, he wrote the praise of a pacific king in honour of that unwarlike prince.‡ Haribert died in the year 567, and the precarious situation of the town of Poitiers, alternately taken by the Kings of Neustria and Austrasia, obliged the poet to observe a prudent silence for a long while, and his tongue became unloosed only on the day on which the city he inhabited appeared to him to have definitely fallen into the power of King Hilperik. He then composed for that king his first panegyric in elegiac verses; this was the piece mentioned above, and the sending of which to Braine gave rise to this long episode.

(A. D. 580.) The occasion of the holding of this council was adroitly seized by Fortunatus in the interest of his literary success, for the bishops assembled at Braine were the first of the men of science and talent of Gaul, forming a real academy. Besides, in placing his work under their patronage, he carefully refrained from making the slightest allusion to the difficult case they were called upon to judge. Not a word on the painful trial to which Gregory of Tours, the first of his literary confidants, his friend and benefactor, was about to submit.§ Nothing, in this piece of a hundred and fifty lines, which related to the circumstances which presented a reflection of the local colouring, or a feature of individual physiognomy. Nothing was to be seen in it but fine generalities applicable to all times and places; an assembly of venerable prelates, a king, a model of justice, enlightenment, and courage, a queen admirable for her virtues, grace, and amiability; fancy figures, pure abstractions, as unlike the reality, as was the political state of Gaul to the peaceful retreat of the convent of Poitiers.||

After the bishops had admired with the false feeling and easy taste of epochs of literary degeneracy, the poetical tricks, the exaggerations and subtleties of the panegyrist, they were obliged to return from the chimeras of this ideal to the impressions of real life. The opening of

* Fortunati, lib. viii. carm. 2, de itinere suo, cum ad domnum Germanum ire deberet, et a domina Radegunde teneretur. Lib. viii. carm. 10, ad domnam Radegundem de violis et roseis, 12 ad eandem, pro floribus transmissis. Lib. xi. carm. 7, ad Abbatissam et Radegundem, absens, 17, de munere suo; 21, de absentia sua; 26, de munere suo; 27, de itinere suo; 28, aliud de itinere suo. See the Cours d'Histoire Moderne de M. Guizot, in the year 1829, the Eighteenth Part.

† Blanda magistra suum verbis recreavit et escis,
Et satiat vario deliciante joco

(Fortunati, lib. xi. carm. 25.)

‡ Quis mihi det reliquas epulas, ubi voce fideli,
Delicias animæ te loquor esse meæ?

A vobis absens colui jejunia prandens,
Nec sine te poterat mie saturare cibum

(Ibid., carm. 16.)

§ Fortunati, lib. xi. carm. 3, de natalitio Abbatissæ, 5, ad Abbatissam de natali suo. Lib. viii. carm. 13, ad domnam Radegundem, cum se recluderet, 14, ad eandem cum redit. Lib. xi. carm. 2, ad domnam Radegundem quando se recluserat.

|| Quo sine me mea lux oculis errantibus abdit,
Nec patitur visu se reserare meo?

(Fortunati, lib. xi. carm. 2.)

Abstuleras tecum, revocas mea gaudia tecum,
Paschalemque facis bis celebrare diem.

(Ibid., lib. viii. carm. 14.)

¶ Ubi mihi tantumdem volebat raucum gemere quod cantare, apud quos nihil dispar erat aut stridor anseris aut canor oloris; sola sæpe bombicans, barbaros leudus harpa reludebat quo residentes auditores inter acernea pocula, laute bibentes, insana, Baccho iudice, debacchant. (Fortunati, lib. i. Proœmium ad Gregorium episc. Turon. p. 2.)

* Hic B. Martini vitam quatuor in libris heroico in versu contexit, et multa alia, maximeque hymnos singularum festivitatum, et præcipue ad singulos amicos versiculos, nulli poetarum secundus, suavi et disertio sermone composuit. (Paulus diaconus, apud Fortunati Vitam, p. lxi.)

† Fortunati, lib. vi. carm. 2, 3. See the First Narrative.

‡ Fortunati, lib. vi. carm. 4.

§ V. Fortunati, Opera, lib. v. carm. 3—5. 9—12 14—16. 19, 20. Lib. viii. carm. 19—26.

|| Quid de justitie referam moderamine, princeps,

Quo male nemo redit, si bene justa petit . . .

Te arma ferunt generi similem sed luctra præfert,

Sic veterum regum par simul atque prior . . .

Omnibus excellens meritis, Fredegundis optima

Atque serena suo fulget ab ore dies.

(Fortunati, lib. ix. carm. 1.)

the synod took place, and all the judges took their seats on benches set round the hall of assembly. The vassals and Frankish warriors pressed in crowds to the doors of the hall, as in the trial of *Prætextatus*, but with very different dispositions with regard to the accused.* Far from trembling with rage and indignation at his sight, they showed him only respect, and even shared the exalted sympathies of the Gallo-Roman population in his favour. King Hilperik's face wore a look of starchy gravity which was not habitual to him. It seemed either as if he was afraid to face the adversary whom he had himself provoked, or that he felt himself embarrassed by the scandal of a public inquiry into the queen's morals.

At his entrance he saluted all the members of the council, and having received their blessing, he sat down.† Then Berthramn, Bishop of Bordeaux, who passed for the accomplice of Fredegonda's adulteries, spoke as the accusing party; he exposed the facts of the case, and summoning Gregory, he required him to declare if it was true that he had uttered any such imputations against him and the queen.‡ "Truly, I have never said any thing of the kind," answered the Bishop of Tours. "But," instantly returned Berthramn with a vivacity which might appear suspicious, "these wicked rumours have been spread; thou must know something about them!" The accused answered in a calm voice: "Others have said so; I may have heard them, but I never believed them."§

The slight murmur of satisfaction which these words excited in the assembly, was converted outside into stamping and clamour. Notwithstanding the king's presence, the Frankish vassals, strangers to the idea which the Romans entertained of the majesty of royalty, and the sacredness of judiciary assemblies, suddenly interposed in the debate with exclamations expressive of a rude liberty of speech. "Why are such things imputed to a priest of God? Whence comes it that the king prosecutes such an affair? Is the bishop capable of saying such things even about a slave? Ah! Lord God! help thy servant!"|| At these cries of opposition, the king rose, but without anger, and as if used by long experience to the brutal frankness of his *leudes*. Raising his voice so that the crowd outside might hear his apology, he said to the assembly, "The imputation directed

against my wife is an outrage to me; it was my duty to resent it. If you think right that witnesses against the bishop should be produced, here they are present; but if you think that this should not be done, but that the veracity of the bishop should be trusted, say so, and I willingly abide by whatever you determine."*

The bishops, delighted and somewhat surprised at this moderation and docility in King Hilperik, permitted him immediately to bring forward the witnesses whose presence he announced; but he was only able to introduce one, the subdeacon Rikulf.† Plato and Gallienus persisted that they had nothing to declare. As to Leudaste, profiting by his liberty and the disorder which prevailed at the settling of these proceedings, not only had he not come to the meeting, but had moreover taken the precaution of absenting himself from the scene of the debates. Rikulf, audacious to the end, began to speak; but the members of the synod stopped him, calling out on all sides, "A priest of inferior rank cannot in law be believed against a bishop.‡"

All witnesses being thus set aside, nothing remained but to be satisfied with the word and oath of the accused; the king, faithful to his promise, made no objection to the principle, but caviled respecting the form. Either from some caprice of imagination, or because vague remembrances of some old Germanic superstitions came into his mind under Christian forms, he wanted the justification of Bishop Gregory to be accompanied by strange acts, tending to make it resemble a sort of magic trial. He insisted that the bishop should say mass three times following at three different altars, and that, at the end of each mass, standing on the steps of the altar, he should swear that he had not held the language which was attributed to him.§

There was already something unsuited to the ideas and practices of orthodoxy in the celebration of mass added to an oath, with the view of rendering it more terrible; but the accumulation of oaths for one and the same fact was formally contrary to the canons of the church. The members of the synod acknowledged this, but were nevertheless of opinion that this concession to the king's singular fancies should be made. Gregory himself consented to infringe the rule which he had so many times proclaimed. Perhaps, being personally accused, he made it a point of honour not to draw back from any kind of trial; perhaps also, in that house, where every thing had a Germanic look, where the appearance of the men was that of barbarians, and customs still half heathenish, he did not

* See the Fourth Narrative.

† *Dehinc adveniente rege, data omnibus salutatione ac benedictione accepta, resedit* (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 263.)

‡ *Tunc Berthramnus Burdegalensis civitatis episcopus, cui hoc cum regina crimen impactum fuerat, causam proponit, meque interpellat, dicens a me sibi ac reginæ crimen obiectum* (Ibid.)

§ *Negavi ego in veritate me hæc locutum, et audisse quidem alios me non excogitasse.* (Ibid.) See the opinion of the learned editor Dom Ruinart, on the meaning of this passage, præfat. p. 114.

|| *Nam extra domum rumor in populo magna erat dicentium: Cur hæc super sacerdotem Dei obijciuntur? cur talia rex persequitur? Numquid potuit episcopus talia dicere de servo?* † *Heu, heu! Domine Deus, largire auxilium servo tuo* (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 263.)

* *Rex autem dicebat Crimen uxoris meæ meum habetur opprobrium. Si ergo censetur ut super episcopum testes adhibeantur, ecce adsum. Certe si videatur ut hæc non fiant, et in fidem episcopi committantur, dicite, libenter audiam quæ jubetis* (Ibid.)

† *Mirati sunt omnes regis prudentiam vel patientiam simul.* (Ibid.)

‡ *Tunc cunctis dicentibus: Non potest persona inferior super sacerdotem credi . . .* (Ibid.)

§ *Restitit ad hoc causa, ut dictis missis in tribus altaribus, me de his verbis exuerem sacramenta.* (Ibid.)

possess the same energy, the same liberty of conscience, as in the inclosure of the Gallic towns, or under the roofs of the basilicas.*

Whilst these events were passing, Fredegonda, retired at some distance, awaited the decision of the judges, feigning a passive calmness, and meditating in her heart on a cruel retaliation on the condemned, whoever they might be. Her daughter Rigontha, more from antipathy to her than any sincere feeling of affection for the Bishop of Tours, seemed to be deeply moved by the tribulations of this man, whom she hardly knew but by name, and whose merits she was moreover incapable of appreciating. Shut up that day in her apartment, she fasted and made her attendants fast, until the hour that a servant whom she had bribed came to announce that the bishop was declared innocent.† It appears that the king, in order to give a sign of his full and entire confidence in the members of the council, abstained from following up in person the trials which he had demanded, and left the bishops alone to accompany the accused to the oratory of the palace of Braine, where the three masses were said and the three oaths taken on the three altars. Immediately afterwards, the council met again; Hilperik had already taken his seat; the president of the assembly remained standing, and said with majestic gravity, "O king! the bishop has accomplished all the things which had been prescribed to him; his innocence is proved; and now what have we to do? It only remains for us to deprive thee and Berthramn, the accuser of one of his Christian brethren, of Christian communion."‡ Astonished at this unexpected sentence, the king changed countenance, and, with the confused look of a schoolboy who throws his fault on his accomplices, he answered, "But I said nothing but what I had heard." "Who said it first?" asked the president of the council in a firmer tone of authority.§ "It is from Leudaste that I learned all," replied the king still agitated by having heard the sound of the terrible word *excommunication* in his ears.

The order was at once given to bring Leudaste to the bar of the assembly, but he was neither to be found in the palace nor its neighbourhood; he had prudently made his escape. The bishops determined to outlaw and excommunicate him.|| When the deliberation was ended, the president of the synod rose, and pronounced the anathema according to the accustomed formula:—

* Et Hæc canonibus essent contraria, pro causa tamen regia impleta sunt. (Ibid.)

† Sed nec hoc sileo, quod Riguntis regina condolens doloribus meis jejunium cum omni domo sua celebravit, quousque puer nuntiaret me omnia sic implese, ut fuerant instituta. (Ibid.)

‡ Impleta sunt omnia ab episcopo quæ imperata sunt, o rex. Quid nunc ad te nisi ut cum Berthramno accusatore fratris communionem priveris? (Ibid.)

§ Et ille: Non, inquit, ego nisi audita narraui. Querentibus illis quis hæc dixerit, respondit se hæc a Leudaste audisse. (Ibid.)

|| Ille autem, secundum infirmitatem vel consilii vel propositionis suæ, jam fugam inerat. Tunc placuit omnibus sacerdotibus ut (Ibid.)

"By the judgment of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and in virtue of the power granted to the apostles and the successors of the apostles, of loosing and unloosing in heaven and on earth, we all together decree that Leudaste, a sower of scandal, the accuser of the queen and false denouncer of a bishop, seeing that he has avoided the assembly to avoid its decision, shall henceforth be separated from the pale of the holy mother church, and excluded from Christian communion in the present life, and in the life to come.* Let no Christian salute him, or give him the kiss of peace. Let no priest celebrate mass for him, nor administer to him the holy communion of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Let no person keep company with him, nor receive him in his house, nor treat of any affair with him, nor eat, drink, nor converse with him, unless it be to induce him to repent.† Let him be cursed by God the Father, who made man; let him be cursed by God the Son, who suffered for man; let him be cursed by the Holy Ghost, who enters into us when we are baptized; let him be cursed by all the saints who since the commencement of the world have found grace in the sight of God. Let him be cursed wherever he is, in the house or in the field, in the high road or in the footpath. Let him be cursed living or dying, waking or sleeping, working or resting. Let him be cursed in all the vigour and all the organs of his body. Let him be cursed in all his limbs, and let him not have a single healthy part, from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet.‡ Let him be delivered to eternal torments with Dathan and Abiron, and with those who have said to the Lord: Retire thou from us. And as fire is extinguished in the water, so let his light be extinguished forever, unless he should repent and come to give satisfaction." At these last words all the members of the council, who had listened until then in devout silence, raised their voices, and exclaimed several times, "Amen, so be it, so be it; let him be anathematized; Amen, Amen."§

This verdict, of which the religious threats were truly fearful, and the civil effects equivalent to outlawry for the condemned, was announced in a circular letter to all those bishops of Neustria who had not attended the

* Formulæ excommunicationum, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iv. p. 611 et 612. Ut sator scandalii, infinator reginæ, accusator episcopi, ab omnibus arcetur ecclesiis, eo quod se ab audientia subtraxisset. (Greg. Turon., loc. supr. cit.)

† Nullus Christianus ei ave dicat, aut eum osculari præsumat. Nullus presbyter cum eo missam celebrare audeat. Nemo ei jungatur in consorcio, neque in aliquo negotio. . . . (Formulæ excommunicationem, apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iv. p. 611 et 612.)

‡ Maledictus sit ubicunque fuerit, sive in domo, sive in agro, sive in via, sive in semita. . . . Maledictus sit in totis viribus corporis. . . . Maledictus sit in totis compaginibus membrorum; a vertice capitis usque ad plantam pedis non sit in eo sanitas. (Ibid., p. 613.)

§ Et sicut aqua ignis extinguitur, sic extinguitur lacerne ejus in secula seculorum, nisi resipuerit et satisfactionem venerit. (Ibid., p. 612.) Et respondeant omnes tertio: Amen, aut fiat, fiat, aut anathema sit. (Ibid., p. 611.)

council.* They then passed to the judgment of the subdeacon Rikulf, convicted, by the justification of the Bishop of Tours, of giving false evidence. The Roman law, which was that of all ecclesiastics, without distinction of race, punished the calumnious accusation of a capital crime, such as high treason, with death;† this law was applied in all its rigour, and the synod pronounced a sentence against the priest Rikulf, which delivered him over to the secular arm. This was the last act of the assembly; it separated immediately afterwards, and each of the bishops, having taken leave of the king, prepared to return to his diocese.‡ Before thinking of departure, Gregory solicited the pardon of the man who had pursued him with his impostures with such perversity and effrontery. Hilperik was then in a mild mood, either from the joy which he felt at the termination of the embarrassments into which the care of his conjugal honour had hurried him, or because he had at heart the wish of atoning, by polite attention, for the wrongs of the Bishop of Tours. At his prayer, he remitted the capital punishment, and only retained the torture, which, according to the Roman legislature, was inflicted, not as a punishment, but as a supplementary examination.§

Fredegonda herself decided that it was in her policy to ratify this act of clemency, and to leave life to one whom a solemn judgment had delivered into her hands. But it seems as if in sparing him she wanted to try on him the experiment of how much pain a man could endure without dying; and in this ferocious amusement, she was but too well seconded by the officious zeal of the vassals and servants of the palace, who emulated each other as the executioners of the condemned. "I do not think," says the cotemporary narrator, who is here no other than the Bishop of Tours, "I do not think that any inanimate thing, any metal could have resisted all the blows with which this poor unfortunate was bruised. From the third hour of the day to the ninth, he remained suspended from a tree by his hands tied behind his back. At the ninth hour he was taken down, and stretched on a rack where he was beaten with sticks, rods, and leathern straps doubled, and this, not by one or two men, but as many as could approach him set to work and struck him."||

* Unde et epistolam subscriptam aliis episcopis qui non adfuerant transmissit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 263.)

† Comprimitur unum maximum humanæ vitæ malum, delatorum execranda perniciēs . . . ita ut iudices nec calumniam nec vocem prorsus deferentes admittant. Sed qui delator extiterit capitali sententiæ subijgetur. (Cod. Theod. constit. anni 319.) Ibid., constit. anni 323, de calumniatoribus.

‡ Et sic unusquisque in locum suum regressus est. (Greg. Turon. loc. supr. cit.)

§ At Riculphus clericus ad interficiendum deputatur, pro cuius vita vix obtinuit; tamen de tormentis excusare non potuit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 263.) V. Cod. lib. ix. tit. xii. de questionibus, et Digest, lib. xlviii. tit. xviii.

|| Nam nulla res, nullum metallum tanta verbera potuit sustinere, sicut hic miserrimus . . . Cædebatur fustibus, virgis, ac loris duplicibus, et non ab uno vel duobus,

His sufferings, as well as his resentment against Leudaste, whose tool he had been, combined to make him reveal the still unknown foundation of this dark intrigue. He said that in accusing the queen of adultery, his two accomplices and himself had for object her expulsion from the kingdom with her two sons, in order that Chlodowig, the son of Audowera, should alone remain to succeed his father. He added that, according to their hopes, in case of success, Leudaste was to be made a duke, the priest Rikulf a bishop, and himself Archdeacon of Tours.* These revelations did not directly charge young Chlodowig with participating in the plot, but his interests had been connected with those of the three conspirators; Fredegonda did not forget it, and from that moment she was marked in her mind among her mortal enemies.

News traveled slowly in that century, unless carried by express; and thus several weeks elapsed before the issue of the trial carried on at Soissons and judged at Braine, could be known. During these days of uncertainty, the citizens, anxious respecting the fate of their bishop, suffered moreover from the troubles caused by the turbulence and boasting of the enemies of Gregory. Their chief, the priest Rikulf, had of his own private authority, installed himself in the episcopal palace, and there, as if he had already possessed the title of bishop, the object of his vain ambition, exercised the absolute power then attached to that title.‡ Disposing of the property of the metropolitan church as if he was its master, he made out an inventory of all the plate; and to secure himself adherents, he began by distributing rich gifts to the principal members of the clergy, giving valuable furniture to one, and fields or vineyards to others. As to the priests of inferior rank, of whom he thought he was in no want, he treated them in a perfectly different manner, and only let them feel the power he had arrogated to himself, by acts of rigour and violence. For the least fault, he had them beaten with sticks, or struck them with his own hand, saying, "acknowledge your master."‡ He repeated constantly in a tone of emphatic vanity: "It is I, who by my wisdom, have purged the city of Tours of that brood which came from Auvergne."§ If his intimate friends ever expressed any doubt of the success of this

sed quot accedere circa miseros potuissent artus, tot cæsores erant. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 263, 264.)

* Cùm autem jam in discrimine esset, tunc aperuit veritatem, et arcana doli publice patefecit. Dicebat enim ob hoc reginæ crimen obiectum, ut ejecta de regno. (Ibid.)

† Nam me adhuc commorante cum rege, hic, quasi jam esset episcopus, in domum ecclesiæ ingreditur impudenter. (Ibid.)

‡ Argentum describit ecclesiæ, reliquasque res sub suam redigit potestatem. Majores clericos muneribus ditat, largitur vineas, prata distribuit. minores vero subitus plagaque multos, etiam manu propria adfectit, dicens: Recognoscite dominum vestrum . . . (Ibid., p. 264.)

§ Cujus ingenium Turonicam urbem ab Arvernâ populis emundavit. (Ibid.)

usurpation, and the sincerity of those whom his extravagant largesses attracted to him, he said with a smile of superiority: "Leave me alone; a prudent man is never taken by surprise; he can only be deceived by perjury."*

This braggart, so full of himself, was suddenly roused from his dreams of ambition by the arrival of Gregory, who made his entry into Tours amidst universal rejoicing. Compelled to restore the episcopal palace to its legitimate possessor, Rikulf did not come to salute the bishop, as not only the members of the clergy but all the other citizens did on that day. At first he affected airs of scorn, and a kind of silent bravado; then his impotent malice turned to frenzy, he used furious language, and talked of nothing but threats of death.†

Gregory, always observant of forms, did not hasten to use force against this dangerous enemy; but, proceeding calmly and without intimidation, he united the suffragans of the see of Tours in a provincial synod. His letters of convocation were addressed individually to the bishops of all the cities of the third Lyonnese province, excepting those possessed by the Bretons, a people as jealous of their religious as of their political independence, and whose national church had no fixed and regular relations with the church of the Gauls.‡ The bishops of Angers, of the Mans, and of Rennes, took deeply to heart the peace of the church of Tours, and the interest of its bishop. But Felix, Bishop of Nantes, either by his absence from the synod, or the part he took in the deliberations, gave unequivocal signs of ill-will to Gregory, and partiality to his enemies. He was a man of Gallic race and of high birth, who said he was descended from the ancient sovereign chiefs of the territory of Aquitania, and reckoned amongst his ancestors prefects of the pretorium, patricians and consuls.§ To this nobility, of which he was very proud, he added qualities rare in his time; a strong and enterprising mind, the talent of speaking with eloquence and writing with facility, and a spark of that administrative genius which shone in Gaul under the Roman government.||

Bishop of a frontier incessantly menaced by the hostile inroads of the Bretons, and which the Merovingian kings were unable always to protect, Felix had taken upon himself to provide for every thing, to watch at the same time over

the safety and prosperity of his diocese.* In default of an army, he opposed vigilant policy and adroit negotiations to the encroachments of the Bretons; and when security was restored around him, he executed out of his own funds works of public utility.† In the midst of this life of activity and impulses given to improvements, his character had contracted something fierce and imperious, very different from the ideal of a priest according to the apostolical traditions. He once happened to have a great desire for a domain which the church of Tours possessed near Nantes, and which was perhaps necessary to him for the accomplishment of a great enterprize, that of altering the course of the Loire, and of making a new bed for the river, a plan advantageous both to agriculture and commerce.‡ With his scrupulous and somewhat rigid regularity, Gregory refused to give up the smallest portion of the property of the church; and this dispute becoming violent by degrees, gave rise to a pen and ink warfare, which doubtless caused great scandal. (A. D. 576—580.) They addressed to one another, in the form of letters, diatribes, which they took care to communicate to their friends, and which circulated publicly like real pamphlets.

In this conflict of bitter words and injurious accusations, the Bishop of Tours, more candid, less bad tempered, and less witty than his adversary, was far from having the advantage.—To the cutting and furious reproaches with which Felix loaded him on account of his refusal to relinquish the contested property, he answered with doctoral good humour: "Remember the words of the prophet: Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!"§ And when the irascible Bishop of Nantes, setting aside the object of the controversy, endeavoured to throw ridicule and odium on the person and family of his antagonist, Gregory found only sallies of this kind in reply: "Oh! if Mar-seilles had thee for its bishop, the ships would

* *Restituis terris quod publica jura petebant.*

Temporibus nostris gaudia prisca ferens

(Fortunati Opera, lib. iii. *carm.* 5.)

† *Britanni eo anno valde infesti circa urbem fuere Namneticum atque Rhedonicam* Ad quos cum Felix episcopus legationem misisset. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 251.) Fortunati Opera, lib. iii. *carm.* 12.

Auctor apostolicus, qui jura Britannica vincens, Tulus in adversis, spe crucis, arma fugas.

(Ibid., *carm.* 5.)

‡ *Quæ prius in præceps, veluti sine fruge, rigabant, Ad victum plebis nunc famulantur aquæ; Altera de fluvio mittitur seges orta virorum, Cum per te populo parturit unda cibum.*

(Fortunati Opera, lib. iii. *carm.* 5.)

§ Felix, Namneticæ urbis episcopus, litteras mihi scripsit plenas obprobrii, scribens etiam fratrem meum ob hoc interfecit, eo quod ipse cupidus episcopatus episcopum interfecisset Villam ecclesiæ concupivit. Quam cum dare nollem, evomuit in me, ut dixi, plenis furore, obprobria mille. Cui aliquando ego respondi: Memento dicti prophetici (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 235.) Isaiah 5. 8.

* *Illud sæpe suis familiaribus dicere erat solitus, quod hominem prudentem non aliter, nisi in perjuris, quis decipere possit.* (Ibid.)

† *Sed cum me reversum adhuc despiceret, nec ad salutationem meam, sicut reliqui cives fecerant, adveniret, sed magis me interficere minitaretur* (Ibid.)

‡ *V. Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. vi. p. 281. et ceteros libros passim.*

§ *Maxima progenies titulis ornata vetustis, Cujus et a proavis gloria celsa tonat; Nam quicumque potens Aquitanica rura subegit, Extitit ille tuo sanguine, luce, parens.* (Fortunati Opera, lib. iii. *carm.* 8.)

|| *Flos generis, tutor patriæ, correctio plebis ... Cujus in ingenium huc nova Roma venit.* (Ibid.)

no longer bring in oil or other provisions of that kind; nothing but cargoes of papyrus, that thou mightest have wherewith to write at thy ease, to defame worthy people; but the want of paper puts a stop to thy idle talk . . .”*

Perhaps the misunderstanding which divided the Bishops of Tours and Nantes had deeper causes than this accidental dispute. The imputation of immoderate pride, which Gregory addressed to Felix, gives us reason to think that some rivalry of aristocracy existed between them.† It seems as if the descendant of the ancient princes of Aquitania suffered at finding himself hierarchically submitting to a man of nobility inferior to his own, or that, from an exaggerated sentiment of local patriotism, he would have wished the ecclesiastical dignities in the western provinces to have been the exclusive patrimony of the great families of the country. Thence arose probably his sympathy and understanding with the faction at Tours, who hated Gregory because he was a stranger; for he had long known and even favoured the intrigues of the priest Rikulf.‡

(A. D. 580.) These evil dispositions of the most powerful and talented of the suffragans of the bishopric of Tours, did not prevent the provincial synod from assembling regularly and administering justice. Rikulf, condemned as an abettor of disturbances and a rebel to his bishop, was sent into seclusion in a monastery, the place of which is not mentioned.§ Hardly a month had elapsed after he had been shut up there under careful superintendence, when some trusty adherents of the Bishop of Nantes dexterously introduced themselves to the abbot who governed the monastery. They employed all sorts of stratagems to circumvent him; and with the aid of false oaths they obtained from him permission for the absence of the prisoner, under promise of his return. But Rikulf, when he found himself outside, took flight, and hastened to Felix, who received him with pleasure, thus braving the authority of his metropolitan in the most insulting manner.|| This was the last and perhaps the keenest annoyance caused to the Bishop of Tours by this wretched affair; for it was the work of a man of the same origin, the same rank, and the same education as himself; a man of whom he could not say, as of his other enemies, whether of barbarian race, or equally ignorant and slaves to their pas-

sions as the barbarians, “My God, they know not what they do.”

Meanwhile, Leudaste, outlawed by a sentence of excommunication, and by a royal edict, which forbade every one from procuring for him either a home, bread, or shelter, led a wandering life, full of perils and obstacles. He came from Braine to Paris with the intention of taking refuge in the basilica of St. Peter; but the anathema which declared him excluded from the asylum offered to all outlaws, obliged him to renounce this plan, and confide in the fidelity and courage of some friend.* Whilst he was hesitating what direction he should take, he learnt that his only son was just dead; this news, it appears, awoke in him all his family affections, and inspired him with an irresistible desire to see his own fireside again. Concealing his name, and walking alone in the poorest dress possible, he took the road to Tours; and on his arrival crept stealthily into the house which his wife inhabited.† When he had devoted to paternal emotions some moments which the fickleness of his character and his pressing anxieties must have rendered very short, he hastened to place in safety the money and valuables which he had amassed by his plunder while in office.

He kept up relations of mutual hospitality in the country of Bourges with some persons of Germanic origin, relations which, according to the barbarian customs, imposed duties so sacred that neither the prohibitions of the law nor even the menaces of religion could prevail against them. It was in the care of his hosts that he resolved to place all the riches he possessed, until better days; and he had time to send off the largest portion of them before the edict of proscription issued against him was promulgated at Tours.‡ But these moments of respite were not of long duration; the royal messengers brought the fatal decree, escorted by a troop of armed men, who, from evidence gathered from stage to stage, followed the trace of the outlaw. They surrounded Leudaste's house; he had the good fortune to escape; but his wife, less fortunate, was seized and conveyed to Soissons, and afterwards, by the king's orders, exiled to the neighbouring country of Tournai.§

The fugitive, taking the same road as the wagons which carried his treasure, went towards the town of Blois, and entered the territory of King Gonthramn, where Hilperik's followers could not venture to pursue him. He arrived at his host's house at the same time as his baggage, the aspect and volume of which, unfortunately for him, tempted the inhabitants of the place.|| Thinking the property of a

* O si te habuisset Massilia sacerdotem! nunquam nave oleum aut reliquias species detulissent, nisi tantum chartam, quo majorem opportunitatem scribendi ad bonos infamandos haberes (Sed paupertas chartæ finem imponit verborum) (Greg. Turon. loc. supr. cit.)

† Immensæ enim erat cupiditatis atque jactantiæ (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 235)

‡ Felices episcopi . . . qui memoratæ causæ fautor extiterat. (Ibid., p. 264)

§ Cum consilio comprovincialium eum in monasterium removeri præcipio. (Ibid.)

|| Cùmque ibidem actus distringeretur, intercedentibus Felices episcopi missis . . . circumvento perjuris abbate, fuga elabatur, et usque ad Felicem accessit episcopum; eumque ille ambienter colligit quem execrari debuerat. (Ibid.)

* Leudastes vero . . . basilicam sancti Petri Parisius expetit. Sed cùm audisset edictum regis, ut in suo regno a nullo colligeretur . . . (Ibid., p. 263.)

† Et præsertim quod filius ejus, quem domi reliquerat, obisset, Turonis occulte veniens . . . (Ibid.)

‡ Quæ optima habuit in Biturico transposuit. (Ibid.)

§ Prosequentibus vero regalibus pueris, ipse per fugam labitur. Capta quoque uxor ejus in pagum Tornacensem exsilio retruditur (Ibid.)

|| Leudastes vero in Bituricum pergens, omnes thesau-

stranger a fair prize, they assembled to seize it; and the judge of the district placed himself at their head, in order to have his share of the booty. Leudaste had with him no power able to repulse such an attack, and if his hosts endeavoured to assist him, their resistance was fruitless. Every thing was pillaged by the aggressors, who carried off the money-bags, the gold and silver plate, the furniture, and the clothes, only leaving the plundered man what he had on, and threatening to kill him if he did not depart as quickly as possible.* Again obliged to fly, Leudaste retraced his steps, and audaciously took the road to Tours: the want to which he now found himself reduced, had inspired him with a desperate resolution.

As soon as he had reached the frontier of the kingdom of Hilperik, and of his own former government, he announced in the first village, that there was a good move to be made on the estates of King Gontram, at the distance of a day's march, and that every man of courage who would run the risk of this adventure, should be generously rewarded. Young peasants and vagabonds of all classes, who were then never wanting on the high roads, assembled at this news, and followed the ex-count of Tours without much inquiring where he was leading them. Leudaste took his measures so as to arrive speedily at the spot which his spoilers inhabited, and fell suddenly on the house where he had seen the produce of their plunder stored away. This bold manœuvre was perfectly successful; the Tourangeaux attacked bravely, killed one man, wounded several, and took back a considerable portion of the booty which the people of the Berri had not yet divided amongst themselves.†

Elated by this stroke of policy, and the protestations of devotion which he received after distributing his bounty, Leudaste thought himself in future powerful against any enemy whomsoever, and recovering his former presumption, took up his abode in (581) the neighbourhood of Tours, taking no care to conceal his presence. On the reports of it which were spread, Duke Berulf sent his officers with a troop of armed men to seize the outlaw.‡ Leudaste narrowly escaped falling into their hands; just on the point of being seized, he contrived to slip away, but it was by abandoning all the money and furniture which remained to him.

Whilst an inventory of the wrecks of his fortune was being made out, as belonging to the *fisc*, and sent off to Soissons, he himself, follow-

ing the opposite road, endeavoured to reach Poitiers, there to take refuge, despairing of his cause, in the basilica of St. Hilary.*

It seems as if the neighbourhood of the convent of Radegonda, and even the character of this mild and revered woman had shed over the church of Poitiers an indulgent spirit which distinguished it from all others. This is, at least, the only possible explanation of the charitable reception which a man at once outlawed and excommunicated found in the bosom of this church, after having found the sanctuary of St. Martin of Tours and the basilicas of Paris closed against him. Leudaste's joy at finding himself once more in safety was at first very great, but it soon diminished; and he felt only what was insupportable to his vanity, the humiliation of being one of the poorest of those who shared with him the sanctuary of St. Hilary. To avoid this, and to satisfy his inveterate love of sensuality and debauchery, he organized into a band of robbers the most worthless and the most determined of his companions in the sanctuary. When the police of the town was less strong or less vigilant than usual, the ex-count of Tours, informed of it by his spies, left the basilica of St. Hilary at the head of his troop, and running to some house which had been pointed out to him as a rich one, he carried off by force the money and valuable plate, or ransomed the terrified proprietors on his own terms.‡ Loaded with booty, the bandits instantly re-entered the inclosure of the basilica, where they divided it, and then ate, drank, quarreled, or played dice together.

Sometimes the holy sanctuary became the scene of still more shameful excesses; Leudaste brought there women of disorderly lives, some of whom, married women, were found in adultery with him under the porticos of the church.‡ Either because at the report of these scandalous occurrences, an order was issued from the Court of Soissons prescribing the rigorous execution of the sentence passed at Braine, or because Radegonda herself, shocked by these profanations, begged for the expulsion of Leudaste, he was driven from the sanctuary of St. Hilary as unworthy of all pity.§ Not knowing where to rest his head, he once more applied to his friends in the Berri. Notwithstanding the obstacles raised around them by

ros quos de spoliis pauperum detraxerat secum tulit. (Ibid., p. 264.)

* Nec multo post inruentibus Bituricis cum iudice loci super eum, omne aurum argentumque, vel quod secum detulerat, abstulerunt, nihil ei nisi quod super se habuit relinquentes, ipsamque abstulissent vitam, nisi fuga fuisset elapsus. (Ibid.)

† Resumitis dehinc viribus, cum aliquibus Turonicis iterum inruit super prædones suos; interfectoque uno, aliqua de rebus ipsis recepit. (Ibid.)

‡ Et in Turonicum revertitur. Audiens hæc Berulfus dux, misit pueros suos cum armorum adparatu ad comprehendendum eum. (Ibid.)

* Ille vero cernens se jam jamque capi, relictis rebus, basilicam sancti Hilarii Pictavensis expetit. Berulfus vero dux res captas regi transmiit. (Ibid.)

† Leudastes enim egrediebatur de basilica, et inruens in domos diversorum prædas publicas exercebat. (Ibid.)

‡ Sed et in adulteriis sæpe infra ipsam sanctam porticum deprehensus. (Ibid.)

§ Commota autem regina, quod scilicet locus Deo sacrosus taliter pollueretur, jussit eum a basilica sancti ejici. (Ibid.) Quem sancta Radegundis, quæ ibi morabatur, jussit citius removeri, ne per eum ecclesia pollueretur. (Chron. Turon. apud Edmundi Martene Collect. t. v. col. 940.) It is probable that the author of this chronicle, who lived at the close of the twelfth century, had seen in some manuscript of Gregory of Tours a comment, in which the name of Radegonda followed the word *Regina*.

recent events, their friendship contrived to find him a retreat, which he himself abandoned after some time, impelled to it by his petulant humour and vicious inclinations.* He resumed the wandering and adventurous life which was to lead him to his ruin: but even had he been en-

dowed with prudence and foresight, there was no longer any safety for him; an inevitable fatality hung over his head, the revenge of Fredegonda, who could sometimes wait, but never could forget.

SIXTH NARRATIVE.

580—583.

HILPERIK A THEOLOGIAN.—THE JEW PRISCUS.—CONTINUATION AND END OF THE HISTORY OF LEUDASTE.

(A.D. 580.)—AFTER the fortunate issue of the accusation made against him, the Bishop of Tours had resumed the course of his religious and political occupations which had been for a short time interrupted. Not only the affairs of his diocese and the care of his municipal government demanded daily vigilance on his part, but interests still more general, those of the Gallican church, and the national peace, continually broken by the Frankish kings, caused him much anxiety. Alone, or in company with other bishops, he made frequent journeys to the various residences which the court of Neustria successively occupied; and in that palace of Braine, where he had been summoned, accused of high treason, he found himself surrounded with honours and attentions.† In order suitably to receive such a guest, King Hilperik studied to assume all the externals of Roman civilization, and to give proofs of his knowledge and good taste. He even made confidential readings of his compositions to the bishop, asking his advice, and displaying before him with naïve vanity his slightest literary performances.

These rude essays, the fruits of a praiseworthy, but useless, because unsteady love of imitation, touched upon all sorts of studies, grammar, poetry, the fine-arts, jurisprudence, theology; and in his fits of love of civilization, the barbarian king passed from one subject to another with all the petulance of an inexperienced scholar. The last of the Latin poets, Fortunatus, had celebrated this royal caprice as a subject of hope for the friends of ancient intellectual cultivation, who were more and more discouraged;‡ but Bishop Gregory, less san-

guine in disposition, and less dazzled by the splendour of power, did not share those illusions. Whatever might be his countenance and language on receiving the literary confidences of the grandson of Chlodowig, he felt only a bitter contempt for the writer, whom as king he was obliged to flatter. He saw only in the Christian poems composed by Hilperik, on the model of those by the priest Sedulius, trashy, unformed verses, *crippled in all their feet*, and in which, for want of the simplest notions of prosody, long syllables were substituted for short, and short for long. As to his less ambitious works, such as hymns or parts of the mass, Gregory considered them *inadmissible*; and amid the awkward stumblings of this rude mind striving on all sides to develop itself, he did not sufficiently distinguish the many serious attempts and good intentions there were.*

Guided by a spark of real good sense, Hilperik had thought of the possibility of rendering the sounds of the Germanic language in the Latin character. With this view, he imagined the addition of four letters, of his own invention, to the alphabet, among which was one added to the pronunciation, which has since been rendered by the *w*. The proper nouns of Germanic origin were thus to receive a fixed and exact orthography in the Latin writings. But neither this result, which was sought for later with great difficulty, nor the measures then taken to obtain it, appear to have found favour in the eyes of the too fastidious or too prejudiced bishop. He only smiled with pity to see a potentate of barbarian race with the pretension of

* Qui ejectionis, ad hospites suos iterum in Bituricum expetit, deprecans se oculi ab eis. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 264.)

† Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. et seq. passim.

‡ Fortunatus, lib. ix. carm. l. ad Chilpericum regem.

* Scripsit alios libros idem rex versibus, quasi Sedulium secutus; sed versiculi illi nulli penitus metricæ conveniunt rationi. (Ibid., p. 260.) Confecitque duos libros, quasi Sedulium imitatus, quorum versiculi debiles nullis pedibus subsistere possunt, in quibus dum non intelligebat, pro longis syllabas breves posuit, et pro brevibus longas statuebat; et alia opuscula, vel hymnos, sive missas, quæ nulla ratione suscipi possunt. (Ibid., lib. vi. p. 291.)

rectifying the Roman alphabet, and ordering, by letters addressed to the counts of towns and the municipal senates, that in all public schools the books used for teaching should be erased with pumice-stone, and re-written according to the new system.*

One day King Hilperik, having taken the Bishop of Tours apart as if for an affair of the greatest importance, made one of his secretaries read to him a little treatise he had just written on important theological points. The principal thesis sustained in this singularly daring book was, that the Holy Trinity should not be designated by the distinction of persons, and that it should have but one name, that of God; that it was an unworthy thing that God should receive the appellation of person, like a man of flesh and blood; that He who is the Father is the same as the Son and the same as the Holy Ghost; and that He who is the Holy Ghost, is the same as the Father and the same as the Son; that it was thus that He appeared to the patriarchs and the prophets, and that He was announced by the law.† At the first words of this new creed Gregory was violently agitated, for he recognized with horror the heresy of Sabellius, the most dangerous of all after that of Arius, because, like the latter, it seemed to rest on some rational foundation.‡ Whether the king had imbibed from his reading the doctrine he thus reproduced, or had arrived at it himself by abuse of reasoning, he was then as convinced that he held the truth of the Christian tenets, as he was proud of having learnedly expounded it. The more and more visible signs of dislike which escaped from the bishop, surprised and irritated him to the last degree. With the vanity of the logician who believes himself perfectly right, and the despotism of the master who will not allow any one to think him wrong, he said in a sharp tone, "I insist that thou and the other doctors of the Church shall believe this."§

At this imperious declaration, Gregory, resuming his calmness and habitual gravity, replied, "Most pious king, it is necessary for thee to abjure this error, and follow the doctrine left us by the apostles, and after them by the fathers of the Church, which Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, and Eusebius, Bishop of Vercelli, have taught, and which thou thyself didst profess at thy baptism."|| "But," replied Hilperik, with increas-

ing ill-humour, "it is manifest that Hilary and Eusebius were strongly opposed to one another on this point." This objection was embarrassing, and Gregory found that he had placed himself upon dangerous ground. To elude the difficulty of a direct answer, he spoke in these terms: "Thou must be careful not to utter words which offend God or his saints;"* then passing to an exposition of the orthodox creed, such as he might have pronounced from the pulpit, he continued, "Know that, considering them in their separate persons, the Father is one, the Son is one, the Holy Ghost is one. It is not the Father who made Himself flesh, nor is it the Holy Ghost; it is the Son who for the redemption of mankind, being the Son of God, became also the son of a Virgin. It is not the Father who suffered death, nor is it the Holy Ghost; it is the Son; that He who made Himself flesh in this world, might be offered as a sacrifice for the world. As to the persons of whom thou speakest, they are not to be understood literally, but figuratively; and thus, although in reality they are three, there is among them but one glory, one eternity, one power."†

This sort of pastoral instruction was interrupted by the king, who, not choosing to listen to any thing further, exclaimed angrily, "I shall have it read to wiser persons than thou, and they will be of my opinion."‡ Gregory was piqued by his speech, and excited on his side into incautiously answering, "There will not be one man of sense or learning, there will be none but a fool who will ever admit what thou propoundest."§ It is impossible to say what passed in Hilperik's mind at that minute; he left the bishop without saying a word, but a shudder of rage proved that the literary and theological king had lost none of his ancestral violence of temper. Some days afterwards, he made a trial of his book upon Salvius, Bishop of Alby; and this second attempt not being more successful than the first, he was immediately discouraged, and abandoned his opinions on the Divine nature with as much ease as he had at first been obstinate in maintaining them.||

(A. D. 581.) There was no vestige remaining of this grave dissension, when, in the year 581, King Hilperik chose as a summer residence the domain of Nogent, on the banks of

* Addidit autem et litteras litteris nostris, id est sicut Græci habent, *Æ, The, Vvi*, quorum characteres subscripsimus: hi sunt *Ω, Ψ, Ζ, Δ*. Et misit epistolas in universas civitates regni sui, ut sic pueri docerentur, et libri antiquius scripti, planati pumice, rescriberentur. (Ibid., lib. v. t. ii. p. 260.) Nullamque se asserebat esse prudentiorem. (Ibid., lib. vi p. 291.)

† Per idem tempus Chilpericus rex scripsit indiculum, ut sancta Trinitas non in personarum distinctione, sed tantum Deus nominaretur: adserens indignum esse, ut Deus persona, sicut homo carnes, nominaretur Cumque hæc mihi recitari jussisset, ait (Ibid., lib. v. t. ii. p. 259.)

‡ V. Fleury, Hist. Ecclésiast., t. ii p. 338.

§ Sic, inquit, volo ut tu et reliqui doctores ecclesiarum credatis. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. v. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Franc., t. ii. p. 259.)

|| Cui ego respondi: Hac credulitate relicta, pie rex,

hoc te oportet sequi, quod nobis, post apostolos, alii doctores ecclesiæ reliquerunt (Ibid.)

* Observare te convenit, neque Deum, neque sanctos ejus habere offensos. (Ibid.)

† Nam et cæcis, quia in persona aliter Pater, aliter Filius, aliter Spiritus Sanctus. Non Pater adsumsit carnem, neque Spiritus Sanctus, sed Filius De personis vero quod ais, non corporaliter, sed spiritaliter sentiendum est (Ibid.)

‡ At ille commotus ait: Sapientioribus te hæc pandam qui mihi consentiant. (Ibid.)

§ Et ego: Nunquam erit sapiens, sed stultus, qui hæc quæ proponis sequi voluerit. (Ibid.)

|| Ad hæc ille frendens siluit. Non post multos vero dies adveniente Salvio, Albigeni episcopo, hæc ei præcepit recenseri Quod ille audiens ita respuit, ut si chartam in qua hæc scripta tenebantur, potuisset adtingere, in frusta discerperet. Et sic rex ab hac intentione quievit. (Ibid.)

the Marne, and near its confluence with the Seine. The Bishop of Tours, perfectly reconciled, came to pay the king a visit in his new domicile, and whilst he was inhabiting it, a great event occurred, which caused a diversion to the habitual monotony of the internal life of the palace.* This was the return of an embassy sent to Constantinople to congratulate the Emperor Tiberius, the successor of Justin the Younger, on his accession to the throne. The ambassadors, loaded with presents from the new emperor to King Hilperik, had returned by sea to Gaul; but instead of landing at Marseilles, a city which King Gonthramn and the guardians of young King Hildebert were then disputing about, they had preferred a strange harbour, that of Agde, in the kingdom of the Goths, as being safer for them.† Overtaken by a storm in sight of the coast of Septimania, their vessel struck on some breakers, and whilst they were trying to save themselves by swimming, all the cargo was pillaged by the inhabitants of the country. Fortunately, the officer who governed the town of Agde in the name of the King of the Goths, thought it either his duty or his policy to interfere, and caused, if not all the baggage, at least the greatest part of the rich presents destined to their king to be restored to the Franks.‡ They arrived thus at the palace of Noment to the great delight of Hilperik, who hastened to display to his *leudes* and guests all the precious stuffs, gold plate and ornaments of all kinds which had been sent him by the emperor.§ Amongst a large number of curious and magnificent things, what the Bishop of Tours examined most attentively, perhaps because he was delighted to see in them a symbol of civilized sovereignty, were large golden medals bearing on one side the head of the emperor with this inscription: *TIBERIUS CONSTANTINUS FOR EVER AUGUSTUS*, and on the other a winged figure and these words: *GLORY OF THE ROMANS*. Every coin weighed a pound, and they had been struck in commemoration of the beginning of the new reign.|| In the presence of these splendid productions of the arts of the empire, and signs of imperial grandeur, the King of Neustria, as if he feared for himself some unfavourable comparison, was piqued into

displaying proofs of his own magnificence. He sent for, and placed by the side of the presents which his *leudes* contemplated, some with naïve astonishment, others with looks of envy, an enormous golden basin decorated with precious stones, which had been made by his orders. This basin, destined to appear on the royal table on grand occasions, weighed no less than fifty pounds.* At the sight of it, all the bystanders exclaimed with admiration on the costliness of the material and the beauty of the workmanship. The king enjoyed for some time in silence the pleasure which these praises caused him, and then said with a mingled expression of pride and satisfaction: "I have done this to give splendour and renown to the nation of the Franks, and if God gives me life, I will do many other things.†"

The counsellor and agent of Hilperik in his plans of royal luxury and purchases of valuable things, was a Parisian Jew, named Priscus. This man, whom the king liked very much, and often sent for, and with whom he condescended to indulge in a certain degree of familiarity, was then at Nogent.‡ After having devoted some time to the superintendence of the works, and the verification of the agricultural produce of his great estate on the Marne, Hilperik took a fancy to go and settle at Paris, either in the ancient imperial palace, of which the ruins still exist, or in another less extensive palace built within the walls of the city at the western extremity of the island. On the day of departure, at the moment when the king was giving the order to put the horse to the baggage wagons, the file of which he was to follow on horseback with his *leudes*, Bishop Gregory came to take leave of him, and whilst the bishop was making his adieu, the Jew Priscus arrived to make his also.§ Hilperik, who was that day in a good-humoured mood, playfully took the Jew by the hair, and pulling him gently to make him bend his head, said to Gregory: "Come, priest of God, and bless him.||"

As Priscus excused himself, and drew back with terror from a benediction which would, according to his belief, have rendered him guilty of sacrilege, the king said to him: "Oh! hard of heart and ever incredulous race, which will not comprehend the Son of God promised by the voice of its prophets, which does not understand the mysteries of the church as symbolized in its services.¶" As he uttered this exclamation,

* *Tunc ego Novigentum villam ad occursum regis abieram.* (Ibid., lib. vi. p. 266.) *Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. xi. p. 125.*

† *Legati Chilperici regis, qui ante triennium ad Tiberium imperatorem abierant, regressi sunt non sine gravi damno atque labore. Nam cum Massiliensem portum, propter regum discordias, adire ausi non essent* (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 266.)

‡ *Res autem quas undæ littori invexerant, incolæ rapuerunt: ex quibus quod melius fuit recipientes, ad Chilpericum regem reitulerunt. Multa tamen ex his Agathenses secum retinuerunt.* (Ibid.)

§ *Multa autem et alia ornamenta quæ a legatis sunt exhibitæ, ostendit.* (Ibid.)

|| *Aureos etiam singularum librarum pondere, quos imperator misit, ostendit, habentes ab una parte iconem imperatoris pictam, et scriptum in circulo: TIBERII CONSTANTINI PERPETUI AUGUSTI; ab alia vero parte habentes quadrigam et ascensorem, continentesque scriptum: GLORIA ROMANORUM.* (Ibid.)

* *Ibiq; nobis rex missorium magnum, quod ex auro gemmisq; fabricaverat in quinquaginta librarum pondere ostendit.* (Ibid.)

† *Ego hæc ad exornandam atque nobilitandam Francorum gentem feci. Sed et plurima adhuc, si vita comes fuerit, faciam.* (Ibid.)

‡ *Judæus quidam, Priscus nomine, qui ei ad species coemendas familiaris erat ...* (Ibid., p. 267.)

§ *Igitur Chilpericus rex impedimenta moveri præcipiens Parisius venire disponit. Ad quem cum jam vale dicturus accederem, Judæus adventit.* (Ibid.)

|| *Qujus cæsarie rex blande adprehensa manu, ait ad me, dicens: Veni, sacerdos Dei, et impone manum super eum.* (Ibid.)

¶ *Illo autem renitente, ait rex: O mons dura, et generatio semper incredula, quæ non intelligit Dei Filium sibi prophetarum vocibus repromissum!* (Ibid.)

tion, Hilperik let go the Jew's hair, and left him at liberty; the latter, immediately recovering from his fright, and returning attack for attack, answered: "God does not marry, he does not need it, he has no posterity born to him, and he suffers no companion of his power, he who has said by the mouth of Moses: '*See, see, I am the Lord, and there is no other God but me! It is I who kill and who give life, I who smite and who make whole.*'"*

Far from feeling indignant at such boldness of speech, King Hilperik was delighted that what had at first been only play, furnished him with an opportunity of displaying in a regular controversy his theological science, free this time from all reproach of heresy. Assuming the grave look and solemn tone of an ecclesiastical doctor instructing his catechumens, he replied: "God has spiritually engendered from all eternity a Son who is neither younger than himself, nor less powerful, and of whom he has himself said, '*I have conceived you before the morning star.*' This Son, born before all centuries, he sent him some centuries ago into the world to save it, according to what thy prophet says: '*He sent his Holy Spirit, and they were made whole.*' And when thou dost pretend that he does not generate, listen to what thy prophet says, speaking in the name of the Lord: '*Shall not I, who cause others to bring forth, bring forth myself likewise?*' By that, he means the people who were to be regenerated in him through faith."† The Jew, more and more emboldened by the discussion, resumed: "Is it possible that God should have been made man, that he should have been born of a woman, should have been beaten with rods, and have been condemned to death?"‡

This objection, which addressed itself to the simplest, and it may also be said, the commonest human understanding, touched one of the weak points of the king's mind; he appeared astonished, and finding nothing to answer, he remained silent. This was the moment for the Bishop of Tours to interfere.§ "If the Son of God," said he to Priscus, "if God himself made himself man, it is for us, and by no means from a necessity of his own; for he could only redeem man from the chains of sin and the dominion of the devil, by assuming human nature. I will not take my proofs from the Gospels and the apostles, in whom thou dost not believe, but from thine own books, in order to kill thee with thine own sword, as it is said David formerly

killed Goliath.* Learn, then, from one of the prophets that God was to become man: '*God is man,*' said he, '*and who doth not know it?*' and elsewhere, '*This is our God, and there shall none other be accounted of in comparison of him; he hath found out all the way of knowledge, and hath given it unto Jacob his servant, and to Israel his beloved; afterward did he shew himself upon earth, and conversed with men.*' Respecting his being born of a virgin, listen likewise to thy prophet when he says, '*Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, that is, God with us.*' And about his being beaten with rods, pierced with nails, and submitted to other ignominious tortures, another prophet has said, '*they pierced my hands and feet, and they parted my garments among them;*' and again: '*they gave me gall to eat; and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink.*'†

"But," replied the Jew, "what obliged God to submit to these things?" The bishop saw by this question that he had been little understood, and perhaps badly listened to; however he resumed, without betraying the least impatience:‡ "I have already told thee; God created man innocent, but deceived by the cunning of the serpent, man disobeyed God's commands, and for this fault he was expelled from Paradise, and subjected to the labours of this world. It is by the death of Christ, the only Son of God, that he has been reconciled to the Father."§

"But," again retorted the Jew, "could not God send prophets or apostles to bring men back into the paths of salvation, without humiliating himself by becoming flesh?"¶ The bishop, always calm and grave, replied: "The human race has never ceased to sin from the beginning: neither the inundation of the deluge, the burning of Sodom, the plagues of Egypt, nor the miracles which opened the Red Sea, and the waters of the Jordan, none of these were able to terrify it. It has always resisted the law of God, it has not believed the prophets, and not only has not believed, but has put to death those who came to preach repentance. Thus, if God himself had not come to redeem it, no other could have accomplished the work of redemption.¶ We have been regenerated by his birth, cleansed by his baptism, healed by his wounds, raised by his resurrection, glorified by his ascension; and to tell us that He was to come

* Ut Deus, Dei filius, homo fieret, non sum sed nostræ necessitatis existit causa Ego vero, non de evangelis et apostolo, quæ non credis, sed e tuis libris testimonia præbens, proprio te mucrone confodiam, sicut quondam David Goliath legitur cruciassæ. (Ibid.)

† Igitur quod homo futurus esset, audi prophetam tuum ... Quod autem de Virgine nasceretur, audi similiter prophetam tuum dicentem (Ibid.) Baruch iii. 36-38. Isa. vii. 14. Ps. xxi. 17; lxix. 22.

‡ Judæus respondit: Quæ Deo fuit necessitas, ut ista pateretur? Cui ego (Greg. Turon., lib. vi. p. 268.)

§ Jam dixi tibi, Deus hominem creavit innoxium, sed astu serpentis circumventus (Ibid.)

¶ Non poterat Deus mittere prophetas aut apostolos, qui eum ad viam revocarent salutis, nisi ipse humiliatus fuisset in carne? (Ibid.)

¶ Ad hæc ego: A principio genus semper deliquit humanum, quem nunquam terruit nec submersio diluvii, nec incendium Sodomæ, nec plaga Egypti. (Ibid.)

* Judæus ait: Deus non eget conjugio, neque prole ditatur, neque ullum consortem regni habere patitur (Ibid.)

† Ad hæc rex ait: Deus ab spiritali utero Filium genuit sempiternum, non ætate juniorem, non potestate minorem, de quo ipse ait Quod autem ais, quia ipse non generet, audi prophetam tuum dicentem ex voce dominici (Ibid.) Ps. cxix. 3. cvi. 21. Isaiah lxvi. 9.

‡ Ad hæc Judæus respondit: Numquid Deus homo fieri potuit, aut de muliere nasci, verberibus subditi, morte damari? (Greg. Turon., loc. supr. cit.)

§ Ad hæc regis tacente, in medium me ingerens dixi (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 267.)

bringing the remedy for all our ills, one of thy prophets has said, '*with his stripes are we healed.*' And elsewhere: '*and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*' And again: '*he is brought like a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth; he was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation?*' His name is the Lord of Hosts.' Jacob himself, from whom thou boastest thou art descended, when blessing his son Judah, said, as if he were speaking to Christ the Son of God: '*thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art grown up; he stoopeth down to sleep like a lion; who shall rouse him up?*'" * ...

These discourses, desultory in their logic, but bearing in their very rudeness the marks of a certain grandeur of character, produced no effect on the mind of the Jew Priscus; he ceased to dispute, but without appearing the least shaken in his belief†. When the king saw that he remained silent like a man who will not give way, he turned to the Bishop of Tours and said, "Holy priest, let this wretched man go without thy blessing; I will say to thee what Jacob said to the angel with whom he conversed: 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.'"[‡] After these words, which were neither wanting in grace nor dignity, Hilperik asked for some water for himself and the bishop to wash their hands in; and when both had washed, Gregory, laying his right hand on the king's head, pronounced the blessing in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.§

There stood near, on a table, some bread and wine, and probably other dishes, destined to be offered to the persons of distinction who came to pay their farewell salutations to the king. According to the rules of Frankish politeness, Hilperik invited the Bishop of Tours not to leave him without eating something at his table. The bishop took a piece of bread, made the sign of the cross upon it, then breaking it in two, he kept one piece, and presented the other to the king, who ate with him standing. Then having both poured out a little wine, they drank together, wishing each other adieu.|| The bishop prepared to resume the road to his diocese; the king mounted on horseback in the midst of his *leudes* and attendants, escorting with them the covered wagon which contained the queen and her daughter Rignontha. The

royal family of Neustria, once so numerous, was now reduced to these two persons. The two sons of Hilperik and Fredegonda had been carried off in the preceding year by an epidemic; the last of Audowera's sons had perished almost at the same time by a bloody catastrophe, the sombre details of which will form the subject of our next narrative.*

This scene of religious controversy, so singularly produced by a jest, had, it appears, left a strong impression on the mind of King Hilperik. During his residence in Paris, he reflected seriously on the impossibility of convincing the Jews, and drawing them into the pale of the church by reasoning with them. These reflections continued to preoccupy him even in the midst of great political troubles, and the cares of the invasive war he was making on his southern frontier† the result was, in the year 582, a royal proclamation, which ordered that all the Jews living at Paris should be baptized. This decree, addressed in the usual style to the count or judge of the town, ended with a formula of the king's invention, a truly barbarous one, which he was accustomed to use, sometimes as a bugbear, and sometimes with the serious intention of conforming to the letter of it: "If any one disregard our command, let him be punished by having his eyes put out."[‡]

Struck with terror, the Jews obeyed, and went to church to receive Christian instruction. The king took a childish pride in attending the ceremonies of their baptism with great pomp,§ and even in standing godfather to some of these converts by compulsion. One man, however, dared to resist, and refused to abjure; it was the same Priscus whose logical defence had been so obstinate. Hilperik was patient; he tried anew the power of persuasion on the mind of the reasoner who had contended with him;|| but, after an useless conference, irritated at finding for the second time his eloquence of no avail, he exclaimed, "If he will not believe willingly, I will make him believe whether he will or no."[¶] The Jew Priscus, then thrown into prison, did not lose courage; adroitly profiting by the intimate knowledge he possessed of the king's character, he took advantage of his foible, and offered him rich gifts, on condition of obtaining a short respite in return. His son, he said, was soon to marry a Jewess at Marseilles, and he

* Quod autem morbis nostris mederi venturus erat, propheta tuus ait. De hoc et Jacob ille, de cujus te jactas venisse generatione, in illa filii sui Judæ benedictione, quas ad ipsum Christum Filium Dei loquens, ait. (Ibid.) Isa. liii. 5 12; vii. 8, liv. 5. Gen. lix. 8, 9 12

† Hæc et alia nobis dicentibus, nunquam compunctus est miser ad credendum. (Ibid.)

‡ Tunc rex, silente illo, cum videret eum his sermonibus non compungi, ad me conversus, posulat ut, accepta benedictione, discederet; ait enim: Dicam, inquit, tibi, o sacerdos, quod Jacob dixit ad angelum. (Ibid., t. ii. p. 268) Gen xxxii. 26.

§ Et hæc dicens, aquam manibus porrigi jubet, quibus abluit, facta oratione. (Greg. Turon., loc. supr. cit.)

|| Accepto pane, gratias Deo agentes, et ipsi accepimus, et regi porreximus, haustusque mero, vale dicentes discessimus. (Ibid.)

* Rex vero, ascenso equite, Parisius est regressus cum conjuge et filia et omni familia sua (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 268.)

† See the Third and Fifth Narratives.

‡ Rex vero Chilpericus multos Judæorum eo anno baptizari præcepit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 275) Et in præceptionibus, quas ad judices pro suis utilitatibus dirigebat, hæc addebat: Si quis præcepta nostra contemnerit, oculorum avulsione mulctetur. (Ibid., p. 291.)

§ Ex quibus plure excepti e sancto lavacro (Ibid., p. 275)

|| Priscus vero ad cognoscendam veritatem nulla penitus potuit ratione deflecti. (Ibid., p. 276)

¶ Tunc iratus rex jussit eum custodiæ mancipari, scilicet ut cum credere voluntarie non poterat, saltem credere faceret vel invitum. (Ibid.)

only wanted the time to conclude this marriage, after which he would submit like the others and change his religion.* Hilperik cared little whether the pretext was true, and the promise sincere, and the bait of the gold suddenly calming his proselytizing mania, he ordered the Jew merchant to be set at liberty. Thus Priscus alone remained free from apostasy, and calm of conscience amongst his fellow believers, who, agitated in various ways by fear and remorse, assembled secretly to celebrate the Sabbath-day, and the next attended as Christians the services of the church.†

Amongst those of the new converts whom King Hilperik had honoured by the favour of his spiritual paternity, was a certain Phaur, a native of the kingdom of the Burgondes, and recently established at Paris. This man, of a gloomy disposition, had no sooner forsaken the faith of his ancestors, than he felt deep remorse for so doing; the consciousness of the opprobrium into which he had fallen soon became insupportable to him. The bitterness of his feelings turned into a violent jealousy of Priscus, who, more fortunate than himself, could walk with his head erect, exempt from the shame and torments which gnaw the heart of an apostate.‡ This secretly-cherished hatred increased to frenzy, and Phaur resolved to assassinate the man whose happiness he envied. Every Sabbath day Priscus went secretly to fulfil the rites of Jewish worship, at a lone house south of the town, on one of the two Roman roads which met at a short distance from the little bridge.—Phaur conceived the plan of awaiting his passage, and taking with him his slaves armed with swords and daggers, posted himself in ambush in the portico of the basilica of Saint Julian. The unfortunate Priscus, suspecting nothing, followed his usual road: according to the custom of the Jews when they went to the temple, he had no sort of weapon, but wore, tied round his body like a sash, the veil with which he was to cover his head during the prayer and the chaunting of the psalms.§ Some of his friends accompanied him, but they were, like himself, without means of defence. As soon as Phaur saw them within his reach, he fell upon them, sword in hand, followed by his slaves, who, animated by their master's fury, struck without distinction of persons, and massacred both Priscus and his friends. The murderers, instantly making for the safest and near-

est sanctuary, took refuge in the basilica of Saint Julian.*

Either because Priscus was highly esteemed by the inhabitants of Paris, or because the sight of dead bodies lying on the ground was sufficient to rouse public indignation, the people flocked to the place where the murder had been committed, and a considerable crowd, crying out, "death to the murderers," surrounded the basilica on all sides. The alarm was so great among the clerks, guardians of the church, that they sent in great haste to the king's palace to ask for protection, and orders as to what they were to do. Hilperik replied, that it was his will that the life of his godson Phaur should be saved, but that the slaves were all to be turned out of the sanctuary, and punished with death. These, faithful to the last to the master whom they had served in evil as well as in good, saw him escape alone by the help of the clerks, without murmuring, and prepared to die.† To escape from the sufferings with which the anger of the people threatened them, and the torture which, according to the law, was to precede their execution, they resolved unanimously that one of them should kill the others, and then kill himself; and they named by acclamation the one who was to undertake the office of executioner. The slave who was to execute the general desire struck his companions one after the other; but when he saw himself alone remaining, he hesitated at turning the steel against his own breast.‡ A vague hope of escape, or the thought of at least selling his life dearly, impelled him to rush from the basilica into the midst of the assembled people. Brandishing his sword dripping with blood, he attempted to force a passage through the crowd; but, after a struggle of a few moments, he was crushed by the multitude, and perished, cruelly mutilated.§ Phaur solicited from the king, for his own security, permission to return to the country whence he came; he departed from Gonthramn's kingdom, but the relations of Priscus followed in his traces, overtook him, and by his death avenged that of their relation.||

Whilst these things were passing in Paris, an unexpected event, about the end of the year 582, set the city of Tours in an uproar, after the tolerably peaceful state it had enjoyed under the government of Eunomius, its new count. Leudaste, the ex-count, reappeared there, no longer in a mysterious manner, but publicly, with his habitual confidence and presumption. He was

* Séd ille, datus quibusdam muneribus, spatium postulabat, donec filius ejus Massiliensem Hebræam accipiat. pollicetur dolose se deinceps quæ rex jusserat impliturum. (Ibid.)

† Nonnulli tamen eorum corpore tantum, non corde abluti, ad ipsam quam prius perfidiam habuerant, Deo mentili regressi sunt, ita ut et sabbatum observare, et diem dominicam honorare viderentur. (Ibid., p. 275, 276.)

‡ Interea oritur intentio inter illum et Phairem ex Judæo conversum, qui jam regis filius erat ex lavacro (Ibid.)

§ Cùmque die sabbati Priscus præcinctus orario, nulum in manus ferens ferramentum, Mosaiscas leges quasi impliturus, secretiora competere. (Ibid., p. 276.)

* Subito Phaur adveniens, ipsum gladio cum sociis qui aderant jugulavit. Quibus interfectis, ad basilicam sancti Juliani cum pueris suis, qui ad propinquam plateam erant, confugit (Ibid.)

† Cùmque ibidem residerent, audiunt quod rex domini vita excessum, famulos tamquam malefactores a basilica tractos, juberet interfici (Ibid.)

‡ Tunc unus ex his evaginato gladio, domino suo jam fugato, socios suos interficit. (Ibid.)

§ Ipse postmodum cum gladio de basilica egressus ... sed inruente super se populo, crudeliter interfectus est. (Ibid.)

|| Phaur autem, accepta licentia, ad regnum Gonthramni, unde venerat, est regressus: sed non post multos dies a parentibus Prisci interfectus est. (Ibid.)

the bearer of a royal edict which gave him permission to recall his wife from exile, to resume his estates, and inhabit his former residence.* He owed this favour, which he looked upon as the first step to new prosperity, to the solicitations of the numerous friends he possessed at court among the chiefs of the Frankish race, whose turbulent dispositions sympathized with his own. During nearly two years, they had never ceased to importune with their entreaties, sometimes King Hilperik, sometimes the bishops of the council of Braine, sometimes Fredegonda herself, who had become more accessible to them since the death of her two sons on whom her fortunes depended. Yielding to a desire of popularity, and her hatred and love of revenge giving way before the interest of the moment, she consented on her side, that the man who had accused her of adultery should be released from the sentence of excommunication pronounced against him. At this promise of pardon and oblivion, the friends of Leudaste set out to solicit more earnestly the indulgence of the bishops. They went from one to the other, praying them to place their names at the bottom of a written paper, in the form of a pastoral letter, which contained a declaration that the condemned of Braine should be in future received into the bosom of the church and the Christian communion. They succeeded in this way, in collecting the adhesion and signature of a considerable number of bishops; but, either from delicacy, or the fear of not succeeding, no application was made to the one whom Leudaste had endeavoured to ruin by his false accusations.

Gregory was therefore extremely surprised to learn that his greatest enemy, who had been excommunicated by a council and outlawed by the king, was returning with a letter of pardon to inhabit the territory of Tours. He was still more so, when an emissary from Leudaste came and presented to him the letter signed by the bishops, requesting him to consent with them to a repeal of the excommunication.† Suspecting some new plot designed to compromise him, he said to the messenger: "Canst thou also show me letters from the queen, on whose account in particular he was separated from the Christian communion?" The answer was in the negative, and Gregory resumed: "When I have seen orders from the queen, I will receive him without delay into my communion."‡ The prudent bishop did not confine himself to these words; he sent off an express, with orders to obtain information for him of the authenticity of the document which had been presented to him, and of the intentions of Queen Fredegonda. She replied to his questions by a letter couched in these terms: "Pressed by a number of persons,

I was unable to do otherwise than permit him to return to Tours; I now beg thee not to grant him thy peace, nor to give him the *eulogies* with thy hand, until we have fully determined what ought to be done."*

Bishop Gregory knew Fredegonda's style; he saw clearly that she was meditating, not pardon, but revenge and murder.† Forgetting his own wrongs, he took compassion on the man who had formerly plotted his ruin, and who was now rushing to his own destruction for want of judgment and prudence. He sent for Leudaste's father-in-law, and showing him this note of sinister brevity, conjured him to see that his son-in-law acted with caution, and again keep himself concealed until he was quite certain of having pacified the queen.‡ But this counsel, inspired by evangelical charity, was misunderstood, and ill received; Leudaste, judging others by himself, imagined that a man whose enemy he was could only think of laying snares for him, or doing him some bad turn. Far from becoming more cautious, he acted as if he had taken the advice in a contrary sense, and passing from security to the most audacious rashness, he resolved to go of his own accord and present himself before King Hilperik. He left Tours in the middle of the year 583, and took the direction of the town of Melun which the king was then attacking, and which he besieged in person.§

This siege was to be the prelude only of an entire invasion of the states of Gonthramn, an invasion planned by Hilperik, from the moment that he had seen his first ambitious hopes realized by the conquest of almost all the towns of Aquitania. Having become in less than six years, owing to the military talent of the Gallo-Roman Desiderius,|| sole master of the vast territory contained within the southern limits of the Berri, the Loire, the Ocean, the Pyrenees, the Aude and the Cevennes, he conceived, perhaps at the instigation of that adventurous warrior, a still more daring project, that of uniting to the Neustrian provinces the entire kingdom of the Burgondes. To insure the execution of this difficult enterprise, he intrigued with the principal nobles of Austrasia, gained over several by money, and received from them an embassy empowered to conclude with him, in the name of young King Hildebert, an offensive

* Interea ad eam dirigo quæ mihi scripta remisit dicens: Compressa a multis, aliud facere non potui, nisi ut eum abire permitterem; nunc autem rogo, ut pacem tuam non mereatur, neque eulogias de manu tua suscipiat, donec a nobis quid agi debeat plenius pertractetur. (Ibid.) For the distribution of the *eulogies* to non-excommunicated persons, see the Third Narrative.

† At ego hæc scripta relegens timui ne interficeretur. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 282.)

‡ Acceritque socero ejus hæc ei innotui, obsecrans ut se cautum redderet, donec reginæ animus leniretur. (Ibid.)

§ Sed ille consilium meum, quod pro Dei intuitu simpliciter insinuavi, dolose suspiciens, cum adhuc nobis esset inimicus, noluit agere quæ mandavi Spreto ergo hoc consilio, ad regem dirigit, qui tunc cum exercitu in pago Migildunensi degebat. (Ibid.)

|| See Third Narrative.

* Leudastes in Turonicum cum præcepto regis adventi, ut uxorem reciperet, ibique commoraretur. (Ibid., p. 282.)

† Sed et nobis epistolam sacerdotum manu subscriptam detulit, ut in communionem acciperetur. (Ibid.)

‡ Sed quoniam litteras reginæ non vidimus, cujus causa maxime a communionem remotus fuerat, ipsum recipere distulit dicens. Cum reginæ mandatum suscepero, tunc eum recipere non morabor. (Ibid.)

alliance against Gonthramn.* The compact was made and confirmed by reciprocal oaths, in the early months of the year 583; King Hilperik instantly assembled his troops, and commenced the war on his own account, without waiting for the actual co-operation of the Austrasian forces.†

His plan of campaign, in which it was easy to trace the ideas of an intellect superior to his own, and another fruit of the counsels of the talented Gallo-Roman chief, consisted in seizing at once, by a simultaneous attack, the two most important places of the eastern frontier of the kingdom of the Burgondes, the town of Bourges and the castle of Melun. The king chose to command the army that was to march against the latter place himself, and gave Desiderius, whom he had made Duke of Toulouse, the care of conducting the operations against Bourges, with the assistance of a great body of men levied south of the Loire. The order sent from the Neustrain chancery to the dukes of Toulouse, Poitiers, and Bordeaux, for the general arming of the militia of their provinces was of singularly energetic conciseness: "Enter the territory of Bourges, and having arrived as far as the city, administer the oath of fidelity in our name."‡

Berulf, Duke of Poitiers, proclaimed war in Poitou, Touraine, Anjou, and the country of Nantes. Bladaste, Duke of Bordeaux, called to arms the inhabitants of the two banks of the Garonne, and Desiderius, Duke of Toulouse, assembled under his banners the freedmen of the countries of Toulouse, Alby, Cahors, and Limoges. The two last-mentioned chiefs, uniting their forces, entered the Berri by the southern, and Duke Berulf by the western road.§ The two invading armies were almost entirely composed of men of the Gallo-Roman race; the southern one, commanded in chief by Desiderius, the best of the Neustrian generals, was more expeditious than the other, and notwithstanding the enormous distance it had to travel over, arrived first in the territory of Bourges. Informed of his approach, the inhabitants of Bourges and its district were unimpressed by the peril which threatened them. Their city, formerly one of the most powerful and warlike in Gaul, preserved ancient traditions of glory and courage; and to this national pride was added the splendour with which it had shone under the Roman administration, by its title of metropolis of a province, its public edifices, and the nobility of its senatorial families.

Although very much fallen since the reign of the barbarians, such a town could still give proofs of energy, and it was not easy to compel it to do what it did not choose. Therefore, either on account of the bad reputation of Hilperik's government, or that they might not see themselves banded about from one domination to another, the citizens of Bourges clung firmly to that of which they had formed a part ever since the union of the ancient kingdom of Orleans and the kingdom of the Burgondes into one state. Resolved not only to sustain a siege, but also to go out themselves and face the enemy, they sent out of the city 15,000 men completely equipped for war.*

This army encountered a few leagues to the south of Bourges that of Desiderius and Bladaste, far more numerous, and moreover superior from the talent of its commander-in-chief. Notwithstanding such disadvantages, the men of the Berri did not hesitate to accept the combat; they held out so well, and the struggle was so obstinate, that according to public report, more than seven thousand men perished on either side.† For one moment thrown back, the southrons were victorious at last by the superiority of their numbers. Chasing before them the remains of the vanquished army, they continued their march towards Bourges, and all along the road imitated the barbarian hordes in the recklessness of their ravages; they burned houses, pillaged churches, tore up vines, and cut off trees at the roots. It was thus they arrived under the walls of Bourges, where the army of Duke Berulf joined them.‡ The city had closed its gates, and the defeat of its citizens in the open plain rendered it neither less haughty nor more disposed to surrender at the summons of the Neustrian chiefs. Desiderius and his two colleagues of Frankish race, surrounded it on all sides, and according to the almost extinct traditions of the art of the Romans, they began to trace their intrenchments and construct besieging machines.§

The place of meeting assigned to the troops who were to act against Melun, was the city of Paris; during several months they flowed in from all sides, and made the inhabitants suffer all sorts of vexations and losses.|| In this army, recruited in the north and centre of Neustria, the men of Frankish origin formed the greater number, and the indigenous Gallic race was found only in a minority. When King Hilperik

* Chilpericus rex legatos nepotis sui Childeberti suscepit, inter quos primus erat Egidius Remensis episcopus (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 281.)

† Quod cum juramento firmasset, obsidesque inter se dedissent, discesserunt. Igitur fidens in promissis eorum Chilpericus, commoto regni sui exercitu (Ibid.)

‡ Tunc misit nuntios ad supradictos duces, dicens: Ingredimini Bituricum, et accedentes usque ad civitatem, sacramenta fidelitatis exigit de nomine nostro. (Ibid.)

§ Berulfus vero dux cum Turonicis Pictavis Andegavique, atque Namneticis, ad terminum Bituricum venit; Desiderius vero et Bladastes, cum omni exercitu provincie sibi commissæ, ab alia parte Bituricum vallant. (Ibid.)

* Biturici vero cum quindecim millibus ad Mediolanense castrum (Château Meillan) confluunt (Ibid.)

† Ibiq. contra Desiderium duces configunt: factaque est ibi strages magna, ita ut de utroque exercitu amplius quam septem milia cecidissent. (Ibid.)

‡ Duces quoque cum reliqua parte populi, ad civitatem pervenerunt, cuncta diripientes vel devastantes: talisque depopulatio inibi acta est, qualis nec antiquius est audita fuisse, ut nec domus remaneret, nec vinea nec arbores; sed cuncta succiderent, incenderent, debellerent. Nam et ab ecclesiis auferentes sacra ministeria (Ibid., p. 281, 282.)

§ Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. xi. p. 157.

|| Chilpericus Parisius venit; ubi cum resedisset, magnum dispendium rerum incolis intulit. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 281, 212.)

thought he had assembled a sufficient number, he gave the order for departure, and set out at the head of his troops by the south-eastern Roman road. The troops followed the left bank of the Seine, which, in the immediate neighbourhood of Paris, belonged to the kingdom of Gontramm. They marched without order or discipline, went out of their way right and left to pillage and burn, carrying off the furniture of the houses, the cattle, horses, and men, who, tied two and two as prisoners of war, followed the long file of baggage wagons.*

The devastation spread over the country to the south of Paris, from Etampes to Melun, and continued round the latter city when the Neustrian bands halted to besiege it. Under the command of so inexperienced a warrior as King Hilperik, it was impossible for the siege not to be of long duration. The castle of Melun, situated like Paris in an island of the Seine, was then reputed very strong from its position; it had almost nothing to fear from the violent but irregular attacks of a body of men unskilful in military warfare, and capable only of bravely skirmishing in boats at the foot of its walls. Days and months passed in fruitless renewed attempts at assault, in which the Frankish warriors no doubt displayed much valour, but which exhausted their patience. Weary of so prolonged an encampment, they became more and more unruly, neglected the service which was commanded them, and only busied themselves with ardour in scouring the country to amass booty.†

Such were the dispositions of the army encamped before Melun, when Leudaste arrived at King Hilperik's quarters full of hope and assurance. He was welcomed by the *leudes*, who found in him an old companion in arms, brave in combat, jovial at table, and enterprising at play; but when he endeavoured to gain admission to the king's presence, his requests for an audience, and the solicitations of the highest in rank and credit among his friends, were repulsed. Tolerably forgetful of injuries when his anger was calmed, and he did not feel his interests especially wronged, Hilperik would have complied with the entreaties of those who surrounded him, and admitted the accuser of Fredegonda to his presence, if the fear of displeasing the queen, and incurring her reproaches, had not withheld him. The ex-count of Tours, after having employed the mediation of nobles and chiefs of tribes, to no purpose, thought of a new expedient, that of making himself popular in the inferior ranks of the army, and exciting in his favour the interests of the multitude.‡

He succeeded completely, owing to the very faults of his character, his capricious disposition and imperturbable assurance, and this crowd of men, whom idleness rendered inquisitive and easy to excite, soon became animated

with a passionate sympathy for him. When he thought the time for trying his popularity had arrived, he begged the whole army to entreat the king to receive him into his presence; and one day, when Hilperik was passing through the camp, this request, uttered by thousands of voices, suddenly resounded in his ears.* The entreaties of armed troops, undisciplined and discontented, were equivalent to commands; the king submitted, for fear of his refusal causing a disturbance, and he announced that the outlaw of Braine might present himself before him. Leudaste instantly appeared, and prostrated himself at the king's feet, begging forgiveness.—Hilperik raised him up, said that he sincerely forgave him, and added in an almost paternal tone of kindness: "Behave thyself prudently until I have seen the queen, and it is settled that thou art to be restored to her good graces; for thou knowest that she has a right to consider thee very guilty."†

Meanwhile the report of the double aggression attempted against Melun and Bourges, roused King Gontramm from his inertia and unwarlike habits. Ever since the first conquests of the Neustrians in Aquitania, he had only lent assistance to the cities of his division by sending his generals, and he had never placed himself in person at the head of an army. Threatened with seeing his western frontier attacked at two different points, and the Neustrian invaders penetrate this time into the heart of his kingdom, he did not hesitate to march himself against the King of Neustria, and to provoke a decisive battle, which, according to his belief, a compound of Germanic traditions and Christian ideas, was to declare the judgment of God. He prepared himself for this great event by prayer, fasting, and alms-giving, and assembling his best troops, he took with them the road to Melun.‡

When arrived at a short distance from that town, and Hilperik's encampment, he stopped, and whatever confidence in the Divine protection he might feel, he chose, following the instinct of his cautious nature, leisurely to observe the position and arrangement of the enemy. He was not long before he received information of the want of order which prevailed in the camp, and the carelessness with which guard was kept both night and day. At this news, he took his measures to approach as near as he could to the besieging army, without inspiring sufficient fear to induce greater vigilance; and one night, seizing the occasion when a large body

* Deprecatusque est populum, ut regi preces funderet ut ejus præsentiam mereretur. Deprecante igitur omni populo (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 282.)

† Rex se videndum ei præbuit, prostratusque pedibus ejus veniam flagitavit: cui rex. Cautum, inquit, te reddere paulisper, donec visa regina conveniat qualiter ad ejus gratiam revertaris, cui multum inveniris esse culpabilis. (Ibid., p. 282, 283.)

‡ Gunthramnus vero rex cum exercitu contra fratrem suum advenit totam spem in Dei judicio collocans (Ibid.) Ipse autem rex, ut sæpe diximus, in elemosynis magnus, in vigiliis atque jejuniis promptus erat. (Ibid., lib. ix. p. 347.)

* Chilpericus vero jussit exercitum qui ad eum accessit, per Parisius transire. Quo transeunte et ipse transit, atque ad Migildunense castrum abiit, cuncta incendio tradens atque devastans. (Ibid., p. 281.)

† Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. xi. p. 157.

‡ Ibid., p. 160.

of the troops had dispersed abroad to forage and plunder, he directed a sudden and well-conducted attack against the diminished forces. The Neustrian soldiers, surprised in their camp at the moment when they least expected to fight, were unable to sustain the shock of the assailants, and the gangs of foragers, returning one by one, were cut to pieces. At the end of a few hours, King Gonthramn remained master of the field of battle, and thus won his first and last victory as a general.*

It is not known what King Hilperik's behaviour was in this bloody fray; perhaps he fought bravely during the action; but after the defeat, when it was necessary to rally the remains of his army and prepare a retaliation, his courage failed him. As he was quite wanting in foresight, the least reverse disconcerted him, and suddenly deprived him of all bravery and presence of mind. Disgusted with the enterprise for which he had made such warlike preparations, he thought only of peace, and on the morning which followed this night of disasters, he sent proposals of reconciliation to King Gonthramn. Gonthramn, always pacific, and nowise elated by the pride of triumph, had himself but one wish, that of promptly ending the quarrel, and returning to his usual state of repose. He on his side deputed envoys, who, meeting those of Hilperik, concluded with them a compact of reconciliation between the two kings.†

According to this compact, worded after the ancient Germanic custom, the kings treated together, not as independent sovereigns, but as members of one tribe, submitting, notwithstanding their rank, to a superior authority, that of the national law. They agreed to refer to the decision of the elders of the people, and the bishops, and promised each other, that whoever of the two was convicted of having exceeded the limits of the law, *should compound with the other, and indemnify him according to the decision of the judges.*‡ To suit his actions to his words, the King of Neustria sent off on the spot orders to three dukes who were besieging Bourges, to raise the siege and evacuate the country. He himself took the road to Paris, his army diminished in numbers, and followed by a crowd of wounded; less haughty in appearance, but with the same want of discipline, and avidity of devastation.§

* Qui die una jam vespere, misso exercitu, maximam partem de germani sui exercitu interfecit. (Ibid lib. vi t. ii. p. 282.) Cuneumque hostium, præ cupiditate ab aliis segregatum, crepusculo noctis egressus ultima labefactavit pernicie. (Aimoin, Monachi Floriac. de Gest. Franc. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. iii. p. 90.)

† Mane autem concurrentibus legatis, pacem fecerunt. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 282.) Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. xi. p. 158.

‡ Pollicentes alter alterutro, ut quicquid sacerdotes vel seniores populi judicarent, pars parti componeret quæ terminum legis excesserat. (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 282.)

§ Et sic pacifici discesserunt..... At isti qui Biturigas obsidebant, accepto mandato ut reverterentur ad propria... (Ibid.)

Peace thus restored, the army returned through a friendly country; but of this the Neustrian soldiery took no account, and began to plunder, ravage, and take prisoners on the road. Either from some scruple of conscience which was unusual with him, or from some latent feeling of the necessity of order, Hilperik saw with sorrow these acts of robbery, and resolved to suppress them. The injunction which he gave the chiefs, to watch their people and keep them strictly within bounds, was too unusual not to meet with resistance; the Frankish nobles murmured at it, and one of them, the Count of Rouen, declared that he should not prevent any body from doing what had always been allowed. As soon as these words had their effect, Hilperik, suddenly finding his energy, had the count seized and put to death, to serve as an example to others. He ordered, moreover, that all the booty should be restored and all the captives released, measures which, if taken in time, would no doubt have prevented the ill success of his campaign.* Thus he entered Paris more master of his troops, and more capable of leading them successfully, than he had been at his departure; unfortunately, these qualities, so essential to the leader of an army, were developed in him at a time when his thoughts were entirely turned to peace. The rude lesson of the battle of Melun had put an end to his projects of conquest, and for the future he thought only of keeping by stratagem what he had hitherto gained by force.

Leudaste, who returned safe and sound, had followed the king to Paris, where Fredegonda then resided. Instead of avoiding this town, a dangerous one for him, or only passing through it with the army, he stayed there, reckoning that the good graces of the husband would in case of necessity be his protection against the ill-will of the wife.† After some days spent without much precaution, finding himself neither pursued nor threatened, he thought he was forgiven by the queen, and judged that the time was come when he might present himself before her. One Sunday, when the king and queen attended mass together in the cathedral of Paris, Leudaste went to the church, traversed with an air of bold assurance the crowd which surrounded the royal seat, and prostrating himself at the feet of Fredegonda, entreated her to forgive him.‡

At this sudden apparition of a man she so mortally hated, and who seemed to have come there less to implore pardon than to brave her anger, the queen was seized with a most violent fit of rage. The colour mounted to her brow, tears streamed down her cheeks, and casting a bitterly disdainful look at her husband, who stood immovable by her side, she exclaimed: "Since I have no son left on whom I can repose

* Chilpericus vero rex cùm exercitum suum a prædis arcere non posset, Rothomagensem comitem gladio trucidavit: et sic Parisius rediit omnem relinquens prædam, captivosque relaxans. (Ibid.)

† At ille, ut erat incautus ac levis, in hoc fidens quod regis præsentiam meruisset. (Ibid. p. 283.)

‡ Die dominica in ecclesia sancta reginæ pedibus provolvitur veniam deprecans. (Ibid.)

the care of avenging my injuries, it is to thee, Lord Jesus, that I must leave that care."* Then, as if to make a last appeal to the conscience of him whose duty it was to protect her, she threw herself at the feet of the king, saying with an expression of violent grief and wounded dignity: "Wo is me! who see my enemy and can do nothing against him."† This strange scene touched all who witnessed it, and King Hilperik more than any one, for on him fell both the reproach and the remorse of having too easily forgiven an insult to his wife. To atone for his premature indulgence, he ordered that Leudaste should be turned out of the church, promising himself to abandon him for the future, without mercy or redress, to the vengeance of Fredegonda. When the guards had executed the order of expulsion which they had received, and the tumult had ceased, the celebration of mass, for a moment suspended, was resumed and continued without any new incident.‡

Simply conducted out of the church, and left free to escape wherever he liked, Leudaste never thought of profiting by this good fortune, which he owed only to the precipitation with which Hilperik had given his orders. Far from having his eyes opened to the peril of his position by such an admonition, he imagined that if he had been unsuccessful with the queen, it was from having been wanting in address, and presenting himself suddenly before her, instead of preceding his request by some handsome present. This absurd idea prevailing over every other, he decided to remain in the town, and immediately to visit the shops of the most renowned jewelers and merchants of stuffs.§

There was near the cathedral, and on the road from the church to the king's palace, a vast space, limited on the west by the palace and its appurtenances, and on the east, by the road where the bridge which joined the two banks of the southern branch of the Seine ended. This space, destined to commerce, was lined with counters and shops in which merchandize of all kinds was displayed.|| The ex-count of Tours walked through it, going from one shop to another,¶ looking carefully at every thing, playing the rich man, talking of his affairs, and saying to those who stood there: "I have suffered great losses, but I still possess treasures of gold and silver." Then, like an experienced purchaser, he began deliberating with himself and choosing with discretion; he handled the stuffs, tried the jewels on his own person, weighed the valuable plate, and when

his choice was made, he added in a loud and haughty tone: "This is good; put this aside; I intend taking all that."*

Whilst he was thus buying things of great value, without troubling himself as to where he should find money to pay for them, mass ended, and the faithful left the cathedral in large numbers. The king and queen, walking together, took the most direct road to the palace, and crossed the square of Commerce.† The crowd which followed them, and the people who made way before them, admonished Leudaste of their passage; but he took no notice of it, and continued to converse with the merchants under the wooden portico which surrounded the square, and served as a sort of anteroom to the different shops.‡ Although Fredegonda had no reason to expect to meet him there, with the piercing eye-sight of a bird of prey, she discovered her enemy at the first glance among the crowd of loungers and buyers. She passed on, not to frighten the man whom she wanted to seize by a well-aimed blow, and as soon as she had set her foot within the threshold of the palace, she sent several of her bravest and most dextrous men to surprise Leudaste, seize him alive, and bring him chained before her.§

In order to approach him without inspiring any mistrust, the queen's servants laid their swords and bucklers behind one of the pillars of the portico; then, distributing their parts, they advanced in such a manner as to render flight and resistance impossible.|| But their plan was badly executed, and one of them, too impatient for action, laid hands on Leudaste before the others were near enough to surround and disarm him. The ex-count of Tours, guessing the peril with which he was threatened, drew his sword, and struck the man who attacked him. His companions drew back, and seizing their arms, returned sword in hand and bucklers on their arms, furious against Leudaste and determined no longer to spare his life.¶ Assailed before and behind at the same time, Leudaste received in this unequal combat a blow with a sword on his head, which carried off the hair and skin of a great part of the skull. He succeeded, in spite of his wound, in scattering the enemy in his front, and ran, covered

* Species rimatur, argentum pensat, atque diversa ornamenta prospicit, dicens: Hæc et hæc comparabo, quia multum mihi aurum argentumque resedit. (Ibid.)

† Igitor egresso rege cum regina de ecclesia sancta... (Ibid.)

‡ Ista illo dicente (Ibid.) The absence of any vestige of Roman masonry leads us to conjecture that the buildings of that public place were of wood, a very common occurrence at that period in the northern cities of Gaul. The wood architecture often employed in the construction of churches, and other large edifices, was not without taste (V Fortunati carmen de Domo lignea, apud Biblioth. Patrum, t. x p. 583)

§ Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. xi. p. 161.

|| Subito advenientes reginæ pueri, voluerunt eum vincere catenis. (Greg. Turon Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 283.)

¶ Ille vero evaginato gladio unum verberat: reliqui exinde succensi felle adprehensis parmis et gladiis, super eum intruerunt. (Ibid.)

* At illa frendens et execrans, adspectum ejus a se repulit, fuscisque lacrymis, ait: Et quia non exstat de filiis, qui criminis mei causas inquirat, tibi eas, Jesu Domine, inquirendas committo (Ibid.)

† Prostrataque pedibus regis adjecit; Væ mihi, quæ video inimicum meum, et nihil ei prævaleo. (Ibid.)

‡ Tunc repulso eo a loco sancto, missarum solemnitas celebrata sunt. (Ibid.)

§ Adriani Valesii Rer. Francic., lib. xi. p. 161.

|| See Dulaure's History of Paris, vol. i.

¶ Leudastes usque ad plateam est prosecutus, inopinans quid ei accideret: domosque negotiarum circumiens. . . (Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc., lib. vi. apud Script. Rer. Gallic. et Francic., t. ii. p. 283.)

with blood, towards the little bridge, in order to leave the city by the southern gate.*

This bridge was of wood, and its state of decay bespoke either the decay of municipal authority, or the rapine and exactions of the agents of the royal *fisc*. There were places in which the planks rotten with age, left empty spaces between two rafters of the wood-work, and obliged the passengers to walk with caution. Close pressed in his flight, and compelled to cross the bridge at full speed, Leudaste had no time to avoid false steps; one of his feet, slipping between two ill-joined beams, became so entangled, that he was thrown down, and in falling broke his leg †. His pursuers having captured him, owing to this accident, tied his hands behind his back, and as they could not present him to the queen in such a state, they put him on a horse, and conveyed him to the town prison until further orders.‡

Orders came, given by the king, who, impatient to regain Fredegonda's good graces, tortured his wits to devise something perfectly agreeable to her. Far from having the least pity for the unfortunate man, whose presumptuous delusions and imprudence had been encouraged by his own acts of forgetfulness and pardon, he began to think what sort of death could be inflicted on Leudaste, calculating in his own mind the advantages and disadvantages of various kinds of torture, to discover what would best succeed in contenting the queen's revenge. After mature reflections, made with atrocious coolness, Hilperik found that the prisoner, so seriously wounded as he was, and weakened by great loss of blood, would sink under the slightest torture, and he resolved to have him cured, to render him capable of supporting to the end the agonies of a prolonged punishment.§

Entrusted to the care of the most skilful physicians, Leudaste was taken from his unhealthy prison, and carried out of the town to one of the royal domains, that the fresh air and delightfulness of the spot might hasten his recovery.

Perhaps, by a refinement of barbarous precautions, he was allowed to think that this kind treatment was a sign of mercy, and that he would be set free when he recovered his health; but all was useless, his wounds mortified, and his condition became desperate.¶ This news reached the queen, who was unable to let her enemy die in peace; and whilst a little life still remained in him, she ordered he should be finished by a singular punishment, which she

had apparently the pleasure of inventing. The dying man was dragged from his bed and stretched on the pavement, with the nape of his neck resting on an immense iron bar, whilst a man armed with another bar struck him on the throat, and repeated the blows until he had breathed his last sigh.*

Thus ended the adventurous existence of this *parvenu* of the sixth century, the son of a Gallo-Roman serf, raised by an act of royal favour to the rank of the chiefs of the conquerors of Gaul. If the name of Leudaste, hardly mentioned in the most voluminous histories of France, was not deserving of being rescued from oblivion, his life, intimately connected with that of many celebrated persons, affords one of the most characteristic episodes of the general life of the century. Problems on which the opinions of the learned have been divided, are, it may be said, solved by the facts of this curious history. What fortune the Gaul and the man of servile condition could make under the Frankish domination? How the episcopal towns were then governed, placed under the double authority of their count and bishop? What the mutual relations of these two powers, naturally enemies, or at least rivals, of one another, were! These are questions which the simple narrative of the adventures of the son of Leucadius clearly answer.

Other points of historical controversy will have been, I hope, set beyond any serious debate by the preceding narratives. Although full of details, and marked by essentially individual touches, these narratives have all a general meaning, easy to trace in each of them. The history of the Bishop Prætextatus is the picture of a Gallo-Frankish council; that of young Merowig describes the life of an outlaw, and the interior of religious sanctuaries; that of Galeswintha paints conjugal life and the domestic customs of the Merovingian palaces; finally, that of Sighebert presents in its origin the national hostility of Austrasia against Neustria. Perhaps these different views of men and things in the sixth century, rising from a purely narrative groundwork, may on that account alone become to the reader more clear and precise. It has been said that the object of the historian is to narrate, and not to prove. I know not how that may be, but I am persuaded that the best sort of proof in history,—that which is most capable of striking and convincing all minds, that which admits of the least mistrust, and which leaves the fewest doubts, is a complete narrative, exhausting texts, assembling scattered details, collecting even to the slightest indications of facts and of characters, and from all these forming one body, into which science and art unite to breathe the breath of life.

* Ex quibus unus librans ictum maximam partem capitis ejus a capillis et cute detexit. (Ibid.)

† Cùmque per pontem urbis fugeret, elapso inter duos axes qui pontem faciunt pede, effracta oppressus est tubia. (Ibid.)

‡ Ligatusque post tergum manibus custodiæ mancipatur. (Ibid.)

§ Pulsique rex ut sustentaretur a medicis quoadusque ab his icubus sanatus diuturno supplicio cruciaretur. (Ibid.)

¶ Sed cùm ad villam fiscalem ductus fuisset, et com putrescentibus plagis exiremam ageret vitam. (Ibid.)

* Jussu reginæ in terram projicitur resupinus, postoque ad cervicem ejus vecte immenso ab alio ei gulam verberant; sicque semper perfidam ægeus vitam, justa morte finivit. (Ibid.)