

a hundred thousand more.' When the peasant insurrection is prepared, the English descent will be made. Look at the plan—follow it on the map."

Robespierre put his finger on the chart and went on: "The English have the choice of landing-place from Cancale to Paimpol. Craig would prefer the Bay of Saint Brieu; Cornwallis, the Bay of Saint Cast. That is mere detail. The left bank of the Loire is guarded by the rebel Vendean army, and as to the twenty-eight leagues of open country between Ancenis and Pontorson, forty Norman parishes have promised their aid. The descent will be made at three points—Plérin, Ifiniac, and Pléneuf. From Plérin they can go to Saint Brieu; and from Pléneuf to Lamballe. The second day they will reach Dinan, where there are nine hundred English prisoners, and at the same time they will occupy Saint Jouan and Saint Méen; they will leave cavalry there. On the third day two columns will march, the one from Jouan on Bedée, the other from Dinan on Becheral, which is a natural fortress, and where they will establish two batteries. The fourth day they will reach Rennes. Rennes is the key of Brittany. Whoever has Rennes has the whole. Rennes captured, Châteauneuf and Saint Malo will fall. There are at Rennes a million cartridges and fifty artillery field pieces"—

"Which they will sweep off," murmured Danton.

Robespierre continued: "I conclude. From Rennes three columns will fall, the one on Fougères, the other on Vitré, the third on Redon. As the bridges are cut, the enemy will furnish themselves—you have seen this fact particularly stated—with pontoons and planks, and they will have guides for the points fordable by the cavalry. From Fougères they will radiate to Avranches; from Redon to Ancenis; from Vitré to Laval. Nantes will capitulate. Brest will yield. Redon opens the whole extent of the Vilaine; Fougères gives them the route of Normandy; Vitré opens the route to Paris. In fifteen days they will have an army of brigands numbering three hundred thousand men, and all Brittany will belong to the King of France."

"That is to say to the King of England," said Danton.

"No, to the King of France."

And Robespierre added—"The King of France is worse. It needs fifteen days to expel the stranger, and eighteen hundred years to eliminate monarchy."

Danton, who had reseated himself, leaned his elbows on the table and rested his head in his hands in a thoughtful attitude.

"You see the peril," said Robespierre. "Vitré lays open to the English the road to Paris."

Danton raised his head and struck his two great clenched hands on the map as on an anvil.

"Robespierre, did not Verdun open the route to Paris to the Prussians?"

"Very well!"

"Very well, we will expel the English as we expelled the Prussians." And Danton rose again.

Robespierre laid his cold hand on the feverish fist of the other.

"Danton, Champagne was not for the Prussians, and Brittany is for the English. To retake Verdun was a foreign war; to retake Vitré will be civil war."

And Robespierre murmured in a chill, deep tone, "A serious difference." He added aloud—

"Sit down again, Danton, and look at the map instead of knocking it with your fist."

But Danton was wholly given up to his own idea.

"That is madness!" cried he. "To look for the catastrophe in the west when it is in the east. Robespierre, I grant you that England is rising on the ocean; but Spain is rising among the Pyrenees; but Italy is rising among the Alps; but Germany is rising on the Rhine. And the great Russian bear is at the bottom. Robespierre, the danger is a circle, and we are within it. On the exterior, coalition; in the interior, treason. In the south, Lervaut half opens the door of France to the King of Spain. At the north, Dumouriez passes over to the enemy. For that matter he always menaced Holland less than Paris. Nerwinde blots out Jemmappes and Valmy. The philosopher Rebut Saint Etienne, a traitor like the Protestant he is, corresponds with the courtier Montesquieu. The army is destroyed. There is not a battalion that has more than four hundred men remaining; the brave regiment of Deux-Ponts is reduced to a hundred and fifty men; the camp of Pamars has capitulated; there are only five hundred sacks of flour left at Givet; we are falling back on Landau; Wurmsers presser Kleber; Mayence succumbs bravely; Condé, like a coward, Valenciennes also. But all that does not prevent Chancel, who defends Valenciennes, and old Féraud, who defends Condé, being heroes, as well as Meunier, who defended Mayence. But all the rest are betraying us. Dharville betrayed us at Aix-la-Chapelle; Mouton at Brussels; Valence at Bréda; Neully at Limbourg; Miranda at Maastricht; Stingel, traitor; Lanvue, traitor; Ligonnier, traitor; Menon, traitor; Dillon, traitor, hideous coin of Dumouriez. We must make examples. Custine's counter-marches look suspicious to me; I suspect Custine of preferring the lucrative prize of Frankfurt to the useful capture of Coblenz. Frankfurt can pay for your millions of war tribute; so be it. What would that be in comparison with crushing that nest of refugees? Treason, I say. Meunier died on the 13th of June. Kleber is alone. In the meantime, Brunswick strengthens and advances. He plants the German flag on every French place that he takes. The Margrave of Brandenburg is to-day the arbiter of Europe; he pockets our provinces; he will adjudge Belgium to himself—you will see. One would say that we were working for Berlin. If this continues, and we do not put things in order, the French revolution will have been made for the benefit of Potsdam; it will have accomplished for unique result the aggrandisement of the little state of Frederick II., and we shall have killed the King of France for the King of Prussia's sake."

And Danton burst into a terrible laugh. Danton's laugh made Marat smile.

"You have each one your hobby," said he. "Danton, yours is Prussia; Robespierre, yours is the Vendée. I am going to state facts in my turn. You do not perceive the real peril; it is this—the cafés and the gaming-houses. The Café Choiseul is Jacobin; the Café Pitou is Royalist; the Café Rendez-Vous attacks the National Guard; the Café de the Porte Saint Martin defends it; the Café Régence is against Brissot; the Café Coratza is for him; the Café Procope swears by Diderot; the Café of the Théâtre Français swears by Voltaire; at the Rotonde they tear up the assignats; the Cafés Saint Marceau are in a fury; the Café Manouri debates the question of flour; at the Café Foy uproars and fist-cuffs; at the Perron the hor-

nets of the finance buzz. These are the matters which are serious."

Danton laughed no longer. Marat continued to smile. The smile of a dwarf is worse than the laugh of a giant.

"Do you sneer at yourself, Marat?" growled Danton. Marat gave that convulsive movement of his hip which was celebrated. His smile died.

"Ah, I recognize you, Citizen Danton! It is indeed you who in full Convention called me 'the individual Marat.' Listen; I forgive you. We are playing the fool! Ah! I mock at myself! See what I have done. I denounced Chazot; I denounced Pétion; I denounced Kersaint; I denounced Mouton; I denounced Dufliche Velazé; I denounced Ligonnier; I denounced Menou; I denounced Banneville; I denounced Genonné; I denounced Biron; I denounced Lidon and Chambon. Was I mistaken? I smell treason in the traitor, and I find it best to denounce the criminal before he can commit his crime. I have the habit of saying in the evening, that which you and others say on the following day. I am the man who proposed to the Assembly a perfect plan of criminal legislation. What have I done up to the present? I have asked for the instruction of the sections in order to discipline them for the Revolution; I have broken the seals of thirty-two boxes; I have reclaimed the diamonds deposited in the hands of Roland; I proved that the Brissotins gave to the Committee of the General Safety blank warrants; I noted the omissions in the report of Luald upon the crimes of Capet; I voted the torture of the tyrant during the twenty-four hours; I defended the battalions of Manconseil and the République; I prevented the reading of the letter of Narbonne and of Malouet; I made a motion in favour of the wounded soldiers; I caused the suppression of the Commission of Six; I foresaw the treason of Dumouriez in the affair of Mons; I demanded the taking of a hundred thousand relatives of the refugees as hostages for the commissioners delivered to the enemy; I proposed to declare traitor any representative who should pass the barriers; I unmasked the Roland faction in the troubles at Marsilles; I insisted that a price should be set on the head of Egalité's son; I defended Bonchotte; I called for a nominal appeal in order to chase Isnard from the chair; I caused it to be declared that the Parisians had deserved well of the country. That is why I am called a dancing-puppet by Louvet; that is why Finisterre demands my expulsion; why the city of London desires that I should be exiled, the city of Amiens that I should be muzzled; why Coburg wishes me to be arrested, and Lecentre Puiraveau proposes to the Convention to decree me mad. Ah there! Citizen Danton, why did you ask me to come to your conventicle if it was not to have my opinion? Did I ask to belong to it? Far from that. I have no taste for dialogues with counter-revolutionists like Robespierre and you. For that matter I ought to have known that you would not understand me; you no more than Robespierre—Robespierre no more than you. So there is not a statesman here? You need to be taught to spell at politics; you must have the dot put over the i. What I said to you meant this: you both deceive yourselves. The danger is not in London, as Robespierre believes; nor in Berlin, as Danton believes; it is in Paris. It consists in the absence of unity; in the right of each one to pull on his own side, commencing with you two; in the blinding of minds; in the anarchy of wills."

"Anarchy!" interrupted Danton. "Who causes that, if not you?"

Marat did not pause. "Robespierre, Danton, the danger is in this heap of cafés, in this mass of gaming-houses, this crowd of clubs—clubs of the Blacks, the Federals, the Women—the club of the Imperialists, which dates from Clermont-Tonnerre, and which was the Monarchical Club of 1790, a social circle conceived by the priest Claude Fauchet; Club of the Woollen Caps, founded by the gazetteer Prudhomme, &c., without counting your club of the Jacobins, Robespierre, and your club of the Cordeliers, Danton. The danger comes from the famine which caused the sack-porter Blin to hang up to the lamp of the Hôtel de Ville the baker of the Market Palu, François Denis, and in the justice which hung the sack-porter Blin for having hanged the baker Denis. The danger is in the paper money which the people depreciate. In the Rue du Temple an assignat of a hundred francs fell to the ground, and a passer-by, a man of the people, said, 'It is not worth the pains of picking it up.' The stockbrokers and the monopolists—there is the danger. To have nailed the black flag to the Hôtel de Ville—a fine advance! You arrest Baron Trenc; that is not sufficient. I want this old prison intriguer's neck wrung. You believe that you have got out of the difficulty because the President of the Convention puts a civic crown on the head of Labertiche, who received forty-one sabre-cuts at Jemmappes, and of whom Chenier makes himself the elephant driver? Comedies and juggling! Ah, you will not look at Paris! You seek the danger at a distance when it is close at hand. What is the use of your police, Robespierre? For you have your spies—Pazan at the Commune; Coffinal at the Revolutionary Tribunal; David at the Committee of General Safety; Couthon at the Committee of Public Well-being. You see that I know all about it. Very well, learn this—the danger is over your heads—the danger is under your feet—conspiracies, conspiracies! The people in the streets read the newspapers to one another and exchange nods; six thousand men, without civic papers, returned emigrants, Muscadins and Mathévons are hidden in cellars and garrets and the wooden galleries of the Palais Royal. People stand in a row at the bakers' shops; the women stand in the doorways and clasp their hands, crying, 'When shall we have peace?' You may shut yourselves up as close as you please in the hall of the Executive Council, in order to be alone; every word you speak is known, and as a proof, Robespierre, here are the words you spoke last night to Saint-Just—'Barbaroux begins to show a fat paunch; it will be a trouble to him in his flight.' Yes, the danger is everywhere, and above all in the centre. In Paris the 'Retrogrades' plot while patrols go barefooted; the aristocrats arrested on the 9th of March are already set at liberty; the high-bred horses which ought to be harnessed to the frontier cannon spatter mud on us in the streets; a loaf of bread weighing four pounds costs three francs twelve sous; the theatres play indecent pieces, and Robespierre will presently have Danton guillotined."

"Oh, there, there!" said Danton.

Robespierre attentively studied the map.

"What is needed," cried Marat abruptly, "is a dictator. Robespierre, you know that I want a dictator."

Robespierre raised his head. "I know, Marat—you or me?"

"Me or you," said Marat.

Danton grumbled between his teeth—"The dictatorship; only try it."

Marat caught Danton's frown. "Hold!" he began again: "One last effort. Let us get some agreement. The situation is worth the trouble. Did we not come to an agreement for the day of the 31st of May? The entire question is a more serious one than that of Girondism, which was a question of detail. There is truth in what you say, but the truth, the whole truth, the real truth, is what I say. In the south Federalism; in the west, Federalism; in Paris, the duel of the Convention and the Commune; on the frontiers, the retreat of Custine and the treason of Dumouriez. What does all this signify? Dismemberment. What is necessary to us? Unity. There is safety, but we must hasten to reach it. Paris must assume the government of the Revolution. If we lose an hour tomorrow the Vendéans may be at Orleans, and the Prussians in Paris. I grant you this, Danton; I accord you that, Robespierre. So be it. Well, the conclusion is—a dictatorship. Let us seize the dictatorship, we three who represent the Revolution. We are the three heads of Cerberus. Of these three heads one talks, that is you, Robespierre; one roars, that is you, Danton."

"The other bites," said Danton—"that is you, Marat."

"All three bite," said Robespierre.

There was silence. Then the dialogue, full of dark threats, recommenced.

"Listen, Marat; before entering into a marriage people must know each other. How did you learn what I said yesterday to Saint-Just?"

"That is my affair, Robespierre."

"Marat!"

"It is my duty to enlighten myself, and my business to inform myself."

"Marat!"

"I like to know things."

"Marat!"

"Robespierre, I know what you say to Saint-Just, as I know what Danton says to Lacroix; as I know what passes on the Quay of the Theatins, at the Hôtel Labriffe, the den where the nymphs of the emigration meet; as I know what happens in the house of the Thilles, near Gonesse, which belongs to Valmerange, former administrator of the ports, where since Maurzand Cazalis went, where, since then, Siyès and Vergniaud went, and where now some another goes once a week." In saying "another" Marat looked significantly at Danton.

Danton cried—"If I had two farthings' worth of power this would be terrible."

Marat continued—"I know what I am saying to you, Robespierre, just as I knew what was going on in the Temple tower when they fattened Louis XVI. there so well that the he-wolf, the she-wolf, and the cubs ate up eighty-six baskets of peaches in the month of September alone. During that time the people were starving. I know that as I know that Roland was hidden in a lodging looking on a back-court in the Rue de la Harpe—as I know that 600 of the pikes of July 14th were manufactured by Faure, the Duke of Orleans' locksmith—as I know what they do in the house of the Saint-Hilaire, the mistress of Sillery; on the days when there is to be a ball it is old Sillery himself who chalks the floor of the yellow saloon of the Rue Neuve des Mathurins; Buzot and Kersaint dined there. Saladin dined there on the 27th, and with whom, Robespierre? With your friend Lasource."

"Mere words," muttered Robespierre. "Lasource is not my friend."

And he added, thoughtfully, "In the meanwhile there are in London eighteen manufactories of false assignats."

Marat went on in a voice still tranquil, though it had a slight tremulousness that was threatening: "You are the faction of the All-Important! Yes; I know everything, in spite of what Saint-Just calls 'the silence of State'."

Marat emphasised these last words, looked at Robespierre, and continued:

"I know what is said at your table the days when Lebas invites David to come and eat the dinner cooked by his betrothed, Elizabeth Dupleix—your future sister-in-law, Robespierre. I am the far-seeing eye of the people, and from the bottom of my cave I watch. Yes, I see; yes, I hear; yes, I know! Little things content you. You admire yourselves. Robespierre poses to be contemplated by his Madame de Chalabre, the daughter of that Marquis de Chalabre who played whist with Louis XV. the evening Damien was executed. Yes, yes; heads are carried high. Saint-Just lives in a cravat. Legendre's dress is scrupulously correct; new frockcoat and white waistcoat, and a shirtfrill to make people for it his apron. Robespierre imagines that history will be interested to know that he wore an olive-coloured frockcoat à la Constituante, and a sky-blue dresscoat à la Convention. He had his portrait hanging on all the walls of his chamber."

Robespierre interrupted him in a voice even more composed than Marat's own: "And you, Marat, have yours in all the sewers."

They continued this style of conversation, in which the slowness of their voices emphasised the violence of the attacks and retorts, and added a certain irony to menace.

"Robespierre, you have called those who desire the overthrow of thrones 'the Don Quixotes of the human race.'"

"And you, Marat, after the 4th of August, in No. 559 of the *Friend of the People* (ah, I have remembered the number; it may be useful), you demanded that the titles of the nobility should be restored to them. You said, 'A duke is always a duke.'"

"Robespierre, in the sitting of December 7th, you defamed the woman Roland against Viard."

"Just as my brother defended you, Marat, when you were attacked at the Jacobin Club. What does that prove? Nothing!"

"Robespierre, we know that cabinet of the Tuilleries where you said to Garat, 'I am tired of the Revolution!'"

"Marat, it was here, in this public-house, that, on the 29th of October, you embraced Barbaroux."

"Robespierre, you said to Buzot, 'The Republic! what is that?'"

"Marat, it was also in this public-house that you invited three Marseilles suspects to keep you company."

"Robespierre, you have yourself escorted by a stout fellow from the market, armed with a club."

"And you, Marat, on the eve of the 19th of August, you asked Buzot to help you flee to Marseilles disguised as a jockey."

(To be continued.)