

# HRONICLE. CATHOLIC

### VOL. X.

#### NEVER DESPAIR.

A STORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. "Till then I banish thee, on pain of death." KING HENRY IV.

The period of my narrative is in the year 1797, and the opening scene is in the city of Paris. The parties in the French Directory were at daggers' points; and notwithstanding the efforts of Madame de Stael to bring about a reconciliation, the Constitutionalists refused to acknowledge a power formed exclusively from the most sanguinary faction of the Revolution. The great dependence of the Terrorists was upon the army, under Generals Hoche and Bonaparte who contemplated a coup d'etat to overwhelm the Girondists, who, though in a great measure sensible that danger was hanging its dark clouds over them, yet knew not from what quarter the thunder would burst, and felt themselves unable to shun or counteract it when the storm should roll its overwhelming force to destroy them.

It was on the evening of the 15th of September, and Madame Michaud sat with her husband in a parlor of their house, which commanded a view of the Boulevards. The evening was ra-ther sultry; there was but little wind; the sun was hastening down to the verge of the western horizon, mantled in the richest splendor of gold, and purple, and vermillion. Martial music filled the air, for the morrow was to present a grand review to the citizens of Paris, and the troops under Augereau were marching into the capital to take up their positions.

"How delightful those strains come upon the ear," said Madame to her devoted and attached husband, as he stood gazing with emotion upon the beautiful woman. "I dearly love at all times to listen to the soul-inspiring harmony of music, but never more so than when the swell of a full military band breaks the silence of an-heavenly sounds should herald the messengers of warfare and blood."

Michaud started, and a paleness overspread his cheeks. "It is but too true, Eulalie," said he; mournfully ; " they are indeed the agents of death. And perhaps even now"-he added hastily, but instantly checked himself, and paced to and fro in the apartment.

"You appear to be disturbed, my dear," uttered the lady, rising, and throwing her finely moulded white arms around his neck. "Surely I could have said nothing to displease you." "You! Eulalie? Oh no !" responded the husband; "you have always been a treasure to me, and had I followed your counsel-but it is too late now. But come what may, 1 must meet it as a brave man ought." "What do you apprehend, Michaud ?" in-that any evil is intended. It would be a deathblow to the liberty that the councils have struggled through seas of gore to attain. It will be but a show to please us women. Hark ! can anything sanguinary be connected with such exquisite music ?" "I may be mistaken, my love," replied the husband, endeavoring to assume a composure he was far from feeling, for Pierre Michaud was a Constitutionalist and a national representative, against whom the vengeance of the opposing party would be unsparingly levelled, and he looked upon the expected review as a mere subterluge to get possession of the capital. He would not, however, terrify a mind that he felt it was his duty as well as his affectionate inclination, to soothe and tranquillise; therefore, he concealed the presentiments of evil that had seized upon his mental faculties, so as to depress his usual flow of animation, and forced nature into a burst of inilarity foreign to his heart. That night the faithful and attached pair sat till near morning holding sweet converse, and enjoying that delightful communion which flows from purity of affection. It was a night of exquisite gratification, and in the stillness of the hour did the eloquent Michaud pour forth, in energetic language, his ardent and faithful love for his wife. He seemed to be inspired ; there was an unusual glow of feeling in his breast that he himself could not account for ; a heavy weight bung upon his mind, and seemed to force out the sic was once more filling the air with its thrilling ardor of his soul in beautiful and energetic language, and Madame Michaud was happy. Suddenly the heavy report of a cannon came booming through the silence of midnight; the deputy started; he caught his wife to his arms, and clasped her to hun with a fervor and strength which seemed to say, "They shall not part us." For several minutes a death-like stillness prevailed; neither of them scarcely breathed; but the discharge was not repeated, for the sound of been the same, though dissimilar in language .--a single unshotted gun had annihilated the French | Eulalie had not been habituated to those fearful republic. Augereau had surrounded the Tuileries-the guards surrendered-the palace was

## MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JUNE 8, 1860.

victors. She listened with an indefinable sensa-Louis-and the army was triumphant. But Pierre Marchaud knew nothing of all this; and tion that she could not account for; never had latter plainly evidenced that there was no chance | wants of nature, and whose wolfish eyes glared the next morning, after a most tender parting any sounds which she had heard produced such of nearing the French ship but by running on a wikily upon each other as unbidding longings with his lovely wife, he repaired to the hall of strange and appalling effects. They evidently parallel line, and occasionally hauling up, for the large that made them tick to chuldering. strange and appalling effects. They evidently grew louder, and indicated a nearer approach to sitting, was apprehended on his entrance, and her dwelling. A presage of some calamity, but sent to join his companions in the very apartof what nature she knew not, darkened her mind ments which had been occupied by the royal victim and his devoted queen. Some of the pri- and caused a tremor to shake her frame. Sud- course two points to windward; and though a soners had been in the Convention, and given denly a friend of her husband rusbed franticly few shots were exchanged, yet but trifling injury their votes for the death of their sovereign ; and into the room. now the wheel had nearly performed its revolu-tion—the period of blood had approximated to its cycle—they knew and felt themselves victims "Fly, fly, Madame !" he hurriedly exclaimed, "fly whilst there is yet hope of escape. The bloodhounds are coming to wreak their fury. -

in this instance, the guillotine was not resorted

to; there was a crucity in the mercy that con-

demned the prisoners to perpetual banishment in

Cayenne. Michaud was not even allowed the

mockery of a trial; and without any attention

to his prayers and entreaties to give one last em-

brace to his beloved and almost beart-broken

wife, he was hurried to Brest, and embarked,

with many others, on board a frigate bound

across the Atlantic. The ship remained a few

days in port; orders came for her sailing; the

nected with the departure from our native shore

that operates even upon the roughest nature .---

To the bold land which, when near, seems to

lift its head with daring pride from the depths of

the ocean, sinks lower and lower as the vessel

recedes; and to the uninitiated in this deception,

the ship appears to be stationary, and the land departing. It was this that made Michaud ex-

claim, in the extreme of his agony, "The land

is leaving me-beloved of my heart, I shall see

thee no more." Providence has implanted in

the human heart a veneration for the place of

nativity-an attachment to the soil on which we

first drew our breath. Men may affect philoso-

phy; they may call themselves "citizens of the

appointed to die. On ! could it have been possi-Hark to their advent ? " And Pierre ? what has become of him ?ble to enter into the secret recesses of their hearts, where is my husband ?" inquired Madame Michwhen retributive justice unbared her arm, and aud, rallying all her energies to meet the apdemanded, " as they had meted out to others, so should it be measured back to them again." But, proach of danger.

> "There is no time for converse now," returned the person addressed. " Pierre is a prisoner, and well needs your best exertions to support him in his adversity."

"And he shall have them," responded the lady with firmness. "This is his house and his property, and I will not abandon it to strangers.'

"You will defeat your own purposes," uttered the man; "if you remain you perish, and the prospect of saving your husband lost. Hark ! wind was fair; her anchors were weighed, and she stood out to sea. There is a feeling conthey are close at hand, and even now it may be too late. A fiacre awaits. Slip on your bonnet and shawl. Heed no other dress, and hasten, for you life."

> Thus solemnly warned, Madame Michaud complied. The fiacre was gained and drove off. The mob assailed the dwelling; the work of demolition commenced, and in one short hour the place presented a scene of revolutionary ruffianism and wreck. The unfortunate lady, though she had saved her life, could not obtain a refuge. She was a woman of talent and integrity, two dangerous qualities to the regicidal faction; and consequently she was proscribed and driven into obscurity, at the very period that her husband was quitting Brest barbor for the colony of Cayenne.

world !" but, oh ! even the most crude and cal-Away flew the ship over the foaming waves, lous cannot resist the appeal which is made to bearing within hearts sad, and stricken, and desthe kindlier emotions by the mention of the word pairing -- consciences over which a scene of "Home " And here were individuals banished crime was exercising a despotic sway-bloodfrom their home, and all that endeared them to guiltiness, that left a stain upon the immortal existence, here were individuals bidding faregroans, and complaints, and cries, ming souiling with the clanking of chains and the ringing of fetters, came up the hatchways and were wasted on the desert waters. Yet the sun by day and the stars by night shone bright and clear. The heavens wore a siniling and a cheerful aspect, and none who saw that gallant vessel proudly stemming the billows, could have conjectured that she carried a freight of such apwas crossed in pleasant weather, and Cape Ortegal appeared. It was opening daylight when they made the dark blue land arising from the lemancipation had blessed him. azure ocean, and a few minutes afterwards a strange sail was visible from the deck. Glasses and straining eyes were directed towards the obtect : many a conjecture was hazarded ; many gasconade was uttered ; but none, though several were well assured of the fact, declared her to be what she actually was-a British frigate, full united a short time, when he found himself drag- of eager spirits to engage. Being under the land, she had the advantage of the Frenchman in seeing the enemy first ; and when discovered, France. To have declined, would have been she was already crowded with canvas in chase. But the French captain was fully acquainted with the admirable qualities of his noble shin .--She was one of the fastest sailers in the republican navy, and carried her broadcloth with all the stiffness of an alderman. Nor was the British frigate any way inferior, either in fleetness would have retired from the revolting scenes or stability; and from the moment of interview at daybreak till the twilinght hour of evening, Day after day passed on, and still those heardwhen sombre shades were gradually deepening into night, no perceptible change had taken place in their relative positions. Oh, what anxious of a single biscuit, about a quarter of a nound of moments were those for the wretched prisoners in the hold! Sometimes, during the day, the Lulwark of St. George, by various manœuvres, contrived to fully over her, and at length she became leaky, draw upon the democratic citizens; but the French captain was a seaman, and by cutting out crew incessauly at the pumps, But the away his anchors, and retrimming his ship, was again enabled to walk ahead ; and as they were not within reach of shot, no actual hostility had other sound like it in creation. It proceeds from | occurred. Anxious and earnest, were the gazers during the whole of that night; and though sometimes, when a haze was on the horizon, it was hoped by the French captain that he had escaped from his pursuer, yet no sooner did the mistiness evaporate into thin air, than the indefatigable and watchful enemy was once more visible, and carrying on to come up with the longitude ; and when emergency demanded chase. During the darkness, the British frigate had thrown up rockets, burnt blue lights, and multitudes roll upon the breeze; but a shudder- fired guns, to attract the attention of any friendtaken possession of-several members of the ing instinct crept through her frame, as, mingled ly cruiser; and when daylight again dawned up- which, however, was not long before it came in Five Hundred were arrested, and conveyed to the | with the pealings of the trumpets, she heard the | on the waters, another large lrigate was seen reality.

been instrumental in consigning the unfortunate army than the triumphant cheers of conquering miles distant. At first she was standing towards spairing countenances of those unhappy creathe republican, but the superior sailing of the now appeared inevitable ; but the French captain dexterously avoided it, by changing his and caused a tremor to shake her frame. Sud- course two points to windward; and though a was done on either side. For four days and three nights did this chase continue ; the British sometimes bringing up a fresh wind, and getting within gunshot, and then the French frigate would catch the breeze, and again outsail them. The fourth night a heavy gale of wind came on, that continued for nearly a week. The furious elements, though they did not calm the passions of the hostile parties towards each other, yet drew all their attention to their own peculiar safety, and the ships narted to meet no more.

Nothing scarcely could exceed the horrible situation of the state prisoners during the storm. From their countrymen they suffered the utmost indignity and inhumanity. Several of them perished in that loathsome and pestilential hold; and eight or ten having held a solenn council, frienziedly determined on self-destruction.

At length the frigate arrived at Cayenne. The appearance of the island in its rich fertility was beautiful, and the verdure presented a grateful spectacle to the eyes of the wretched captives. But on landing, the intense heat of the climate almost overpowered them, and sickly apprehensions aided the atracks of fever that speedily diminished their numbers. They were placed in a coffee logie as a temporary prison and provisions of the worst quality were served out to them in very scanty allowances, and they were kent under extremely rigid restrictions.

Pierre Michaud, although the bitterest anger oppressed him when he thought of his home and his wife, yet struggled with his afflictions, and, like many others, determined upon attempting to escape. It is true that several had lost their lives in their endeavors to reach Surinam or fact, after almost incredible hardships, succeeded mbark in an American brig for the purpose of conducting a sick wife to Europe, to obtain conbound to Gottenburgh ; and oh ! the delight that swelled in the heart of the banished man when they gained the mouth of the river, and were it came laden with the perfumes from the mind ; he was free, free ; and he felt in his

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tures, whose hollow cheeks soon betrayed the Englishman was to leeward. An engagement means had been resorted to that human invention could suggest to prolong existence, but the last resource was failing. No vessel appeared in sight; the gates of heaven seemed to be closed to their earnest supplications, and despair triumphed over even the consolation of religion. And there sat the father gazing with tender anxsety, verging upon agony, at his wife and child, but with his tenderness there came also a mingling of ferocity that he could not subdue. The demon hunger was preying upon his vitals, and the corroding tooth of the monster poisoned the source of generous feelings. Madame Berthollon possessed a most kind and indulgent busband; disease had made her petulant, but impatience and repining were swallowed up in the prospect of the dreadful death which awaited them, and the affliction of the wife and the mother raised her above the ebullitions of corporeal suffering. The incessant breaches made by the sea kept them constantly wet; their bedding, everything was saturated with water ; whilst. so add to their misery, they had seventeen hours of darkness to seven of light.

In time, the gale suddenly shifted to the westnorth-west, and bore them along with great rapidity towards England. Hope once more revived, that, though they might not reach a friendly port, yet, getting in the faw-way of the Channel, there was a chance of falling in with a vessel from which they could obtain assistance. A day and a night passed away, and still they were careering forward without having Leen able to speak one ship, although several had hove in sight. Disappointment increased their writability; there was a maddening unnatural savageness in all that the crew did; they wrangled, they fought, without knowing why or wherefore; and there was a tiger-like desire to gratify their appetites with flesh. A little vegro lad, belonging to Monsieur Berthollon, disappeared ; it was Berbice, or to penetrate into the interior to the reported he had been washed overboard, and one Spanish settlements of Paraguay. Some, in or two asserted that they had seen him struggling for his life. It might be true, but the men in getting to Pernambuco. Michaud, at length had food : where they procured it none could was enabled, through the generous aid of a tell; but conjecture was not long in deciding as Swedish gentleman, a planter, who was about to to what the horrible banquet actually was, and nany partook without questioning further. At the close of the second day, the wind veered round cealment in the same vessel. The brig was more to the northward, and increased in fury so as to compel them to lay to, and before its close the land was dimly seen, through the dense haze. dead under their lee. Where they were, wheranidly running off from the land. The air, as ther on the coast of Ireland, England or France, no one could tell. They had not been able to brange blossoms, was now breath of liberty to obtain a meridian altitude for ten days; the palling misery. The dreaded Bay of Biscay him, and hope resumed its wonted hold upon his reckoning had been wholly neglected ; and the' to the passengers the land presented a prospect whole frame the expansive powers with which of safety, yet to the seamen it threatened wreck and death. A long dark dreary night was before them ; there was the blackness of darkness above, there was the blackness of darkness below, and the gloom of the sky and ocean were united by links of white sparkling fonm. The water gained so fast on the brig that she was nearly ungovernable; the billows threw their lofty feathery heads clear over her, washing everything from the decks. About two o'clock in the morning, a tremendous shock told them of them fate; the brig had struck the ground, and shook and trembled as in agony. She was lifted on the curling summit of a mountain breaker, borne along with irresistible velocity ; and then, as she descended, was dashed upon the rocks, that rent her stout timbers. already shattered by the gales. The crew and passengers had crowded on the deck, grasping any thing that promised security ; but their hands were benumbed by the cold, and the relentless billows washed them away into the yawning abyss, or crushed them on the craggy rock on which the brig was heaving with convulsive throes. Agam rolled in a mountain wave, roaring and raging in the power of its might, the remnant of the wreck was hove farther in and fixed, where, though the sea was not so violent. it still beat incessantly over them in showers of snrav. At the first shock, Monsseur Bertholion, aided by his friend Michaud, succeeded in lashing the mother and daughter to the stancheons of the winch near the mainmast. Berthollon was performing the same office for himself ; his wife and child clung to him so as to impede his labors. Alas! the second wave tore him from and terrifying look = tuch ravening hunger and their grasp. He caught a rope, but it was not parching thirst create. The captain of the brig fast. Wild shrieks mingled with the howling ot the gale, as the dark form disappeared for ever. Pierre Michaud beheld the catastrophe, but he could not avert it. He had been with diffculty enabled to make himself fast near the ladies: and futile as his attempts were likely to be to soothe them under affliction, he could not refrain from offering consolatory kindness. But their hearts were bereaved and desolate ; the Temple, that prison to which many of them had sounds more like the dying groans of a prostrate nearly abeam of the Frenchman, and about two | It was a pitiable spectacle to witness the de- voice of the comforter-oh. it was almost a

well to their native land-a long, an eternal farewell; here were parents, brothers, and the male ties of relationship, torn from those loved ones whom they could never hope to see again .---Nor were those the poor, the destitute, or the outlawed felon-many of them had inhabited palaces, and lived in splendor; there were the once wealthy and highly privileged noblesse ;--there were the ministers of religion, the learned scholar, and the devoted patriot : but there were also the sanguinary regicides, who had consigned their monarch to a public execution, and had been present at the scaffold to witness his last sufferings. Recollections of such a spectacle were not calculated to alleviate misery.

Pierre Michaud was about twenty-seven years of age, possessed of a very fair estate, and fairer prospects, when he contracted marriage with a lady whom he had loved. They had only been ged into the vortex of the Revolution, by being chosen one of the deputies for the south of tantamount to rendering himself suspected : and having a liberal bias towards a constitutional form of government, he repaired to Paris, accompanied by his young wife. His only crune in the eyes of the Terrorists was his being a Constitutionalist. Had he been vermitted to choose, he that shocked his spirit, to homely peace and love. He was no regicide. He loved his country, and ardently longed to see the wolves that preyed upon it destroyed. Yet Pierre Michaud was a banished man.

And what had become of his attached wife ? After parting with her husband, she employed herself in such little offices as she knew would gratify him and win a smile and embrace on his return to take her to the review. Martial muswells; but there came a sound mingling with it that brought the chillness of fear. There is no the voices of assembled thousands, uttering wild but simultaneous shouts of revolutionary vengeance. I have heard those rolling shouts in different parts of the world, when all that is human has been laid aside, and all that is infernal reigned paramount in savages, and the cry has explosions of brutal passion when the yells of

### Oh, blest liberty ! it is thon alone That gives to fleeting life its sweetness and perfume, And we are slaves without it.

The winds were fair, the weather favorable, and the captain promised a speedy passage .---Monsieur Berthollon had laid in his own provisions for himself, his wife, his daughter, and his friend; and trusting to the assurances of the captain, who was poorly supplied, they lived merrily and unsparingly upon their stock, which was daily decreasing. It was the month of December when the brig neared the British isles, intending to run through the British Channel .-But north-easterly gales set in; the cold became piercing; and to their dismay, they discovered that there was, even upon the most economical scale, not more than a week's victual remaining, and a very scanty supply of water .-hearted winds prevailed. Gradually the food disappeared, till their only nourishment consisted salt pork, and one glass of water, for twentylour hours. Several of the sails were split; the brig being deep in the water, the sea broke fearso as to keep the half-famished and nearly worn thrilling dread of starvation overcame the prospective shipwreck ; scarcely a morsel of nourishment was left: the water, except a very small portion, which, to the eternal honor of the seamen. was preserved for the females, was gone, and death stared them in the face with that gaunt proved inadequate to his duty ; by his soundings he discovered that he was considerably out in his prompt activity and exertion, terror overcame hun, and he shrunk back dismayed, confining lunself to his cabin under pretence of illness,