

chiefly levelled against the priests. The tragedy of "Warwick" succeeded, written when he was twenty-four. It was dedicated to Voltaire, which led to an intimate acquaintance between them. Voltaire praised his work, though he regretted that La Harpe's principles were not more strictly infidel: he was, nevertheless, admitted a member of the Atheistical Society. His fame introduced him into the highest circles. He was appointed one of the editors of the "Gazette Littéraire," the object of which was to disseminate infidel principles. Here he first distinguished himself as a critic. His former success as a dramatist induced him to make another, though unsuccessful, attempt in that way. He then devoted himself to general literature.

The various academies offered to young men of talents the means of rising into notice. These were completely in the hands of the philosophers, who anxiously sought to propagate their opinions, and held out annual premiums to allure young men to join their societies. La Harpe was a successful competitor. In the space of ten years he carried off twelve medals, besides various secondary prizes.

With all his efforts, however, he could not gain a maintenance. He had married a woman of poor parents, utterly incapable of attending to her duties as a wife, her whole time being spent at the theatre, or in her husband's study. While thus destitute, they were invited to spend some time at Ferney, where Voltaire resided, and which was the grand resort of the most celebrated infidels of the age.

Caressed, and admired, especially by Voltaire himself, La Harpe and his wife remained for a year at Ferney. They then returned to Paris, where La Harpe engaged himself in various ways. It is needless to enter into the details of a wretched unbe-

liever's career, or to mark with disgust, as it must be marked, his impious attempts to dethrone the Omnipotent. The writings of the period, and La Harpe's among the number, testify the fearful rebellion of the natural heart against God, and the licentiousness which must ever predominate where the wholesome restraints of religion are cast off.

At the period of the Revolution, La Harpe became involved in the public misfortunes of France. At first he applauded the destruction of the ancient institutions, which he defended in the "Mercure;" but after two years his views were entirely changed. Threats were the consequence. He was obliged to make continual apologies and retractions. At length he could no longer dissemble his sentiments. He then became an object of proscription, was arrested, and committed to the Luxembourg, in November, 1793, which from a palace had been transformed into a prison.

Many of his associates had perished on the scaffold; and La Harpe knew not how soon the same fate might be his, for he incurred, by some expressions of contempt, the hatred of Robespierre. Unsupported by the consolations of Christianity, the philosopher fell into a state of melancholy. Providentially for him, the Bishop of St. Brieux, his fellow-prisoner, took an interest in his affliction. The bishop recommended him to read the Psalms, in which he would find poetical beauties that might entertain his fancy. This he proposed merely as a literary amusement, offering his services at the same time, in making comments or critical remarks upon them. La Harpe was delighted, and he applied himself to the study. As he proceeded, his admiration of their composition increased, and by degrees the light of divine truth broke in upon his mind; his heart was deeply impressed: he look-