

Queen Antoinette was called before them she published an eloquent defence, which created an intense excitement, but which was unfortunately ineffectual to save the life of her royal mistress. When the "Reign of Terror" was at its height the bold-spoken authoress became obnoxious to those who, for the moment, ruled the destinies of France, and she was compelled to flee to Coppet, where her father was already living in seclusion. On the restoration of order, she returned to the capital with her husband, and it was in these days that she gained a great portion of her fame. About this period she also produced two remarkable pamphlets, asserting that France could only arrive at a limited monarchy through the medium of a military despotism. The events that have occurred in France have proved only too well her acute perception of the ways of her countrymen.

Madame de Staël's husband died in 1802, after having spent a great portion of her large fortune. Enough was, however, left to save her from actual poverty or the semblance of it, and her salons were nightly crowded with the celebrated artists and men of letters of France. When Bonaparte appeared she was at first one of his most ardent admirers, but by degrees her faith in him became shaken, and having become disgusted with his arbitrary proceedings, she became his tacit enemy. As an enemy she was dangerous, and was consequently ordered to leave Paris, Bonaparte sarcastically saying that he left the whole world open to the eloquent and ambitious lady, but reserved the French capital for himself! He was morbidly sensitive of her attacks upon him, and was moved to great irritation one morning on coming across one of those little philippics with which the great authoress from time to time assailed him. He complained sorely of it to one of his marshals in attendance, who sought to soothe the feeling by reminding his Majesty that one in his exalted position could afford to laugh to scorn the attacks of Madame de Staël. "I tell you, marshal," sharply retorted the Emperor, "that that woman has a quiver full of arrows, each one of which would pierce a man if he were seated on a rainbow!" Her father's home was again her refuge, and for a time she devoted herself to literary pursuits. During her stay she became enamoured of an invalid officer, named De Rocca, and, although he was many years younger, she married him. The marriage was kept secret until after her death; but her intercourse with him seems to have been the happiest time of her life, for he loved her with a romantic enthusiasm, and she realised, in his affection, some of the dreams of her youth. Her father died in 1804, and with all the ties attaching her to France thus broken, she visited Italy and Germany—the result of her travels appearing in two of her most remarkable works, "*Corinne*" and "*Germany*." In this latter production she portrayed the habits, literature, and political tendencies of the German people. The work incurred the dire displeasure of Napoleon, and her banishment from Paris was followed by a decree excluding her from France, and in addition to this, Bonaparte ordered that the *Work*, of which ten thousand had been printed, should be destroyed. A raid was therefore made upon them by Savary, the minister of police, and they were seized, and, says Jean Paul, "hacked into beautiful pulp." Unable to return to her estate, she wandered over Europe, and subsequently published "*Ten Years of Exile*." At the fall of Bonaparte she was again free, and returned to Paris, where she was treated with the greatest distinction by the allied princes, then in possession of the capital. When Bonaparte, like a brilliant meteor, reappeared, she again fled to Coppet during the famous "Hundred Days;" but returned to Paris immediately on the Restoration. As an act of justice the new government gave orders that she should receive two millions of francs, or about £80,000, which her father had left in the royal treasury.

The writings of Madame de Staël combine all the vigour of a manly intellect, whilst a subdued tone of womanly feeling pervades them. It is said that, with the exception of Rousseau and Voltaire, no French writer has displayed the same power. Her table-talk was equally forcible, and invitations to her *réunions* came to be as much, if not more courted, than invitations to royal levées and receptions. Madame de Staël died in July, 1817. Her later days were peacefully spent, surrounded by friends and acquaintances, many of whose names are now celebrated in history. Her last husband, M. de Rocca, only survived her six months.

Additional Notes to October.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF MARSHAL JUNOT.

(23.)—The career of ANDOCHÉ JUNOT, from the time of his joining the French army as a volunteer in 1791, to the end of his participation in the great military drama enacted by Bonaparte, was one of unexampled success, and forcibly reminds us of those instances of which it used to be the Frenchman's pride and boast—that the humblest soldier in the ranks carries in his knapsack a marshal's baton. Having risen rapidly through the lower grades of his profession, Junot first attracted the notice of Bonaparte by his coolness and courage when serving as a lieutenant at the siege of Toulon, in 1793. Bonaparte at once made him his aide-de-camp, and he went with him in his campaigns of Italy and Egypt, and became general in 1801. Rising in the esteem of Bonaparte, he was next appointed to the command of Paris. In 1806 he was placed at the head of the army in Portugal, where he remained two years, and was honoured with the title of Duke of Abrantes; but being defeated at the battle of Vimiera, by Sir Arthur Wellesley (the Duke of Wellington), he was compelled to capitulate. He subsequently served in Spain, and was made governor of the Illyrian provinces; but evincing signs of insanity, he was superseded by Fouché, and returning to France, to the house where he was born, in a paroxysm of madness, on the 29th of July, 1813, he committed suicide by throwing himself from a chamber window. Bonaparte was deeply affected when he received the news of Junot's death, and he exclaimed, "Voilà, encore un de mes braves de moins! Junot! O mon Dieu!"

Shortly before his death Junot wrote a letter to the Emperor, which, amidst much excitement, arising from a predisposition to insanity, contained expressions strongly descriptive of the feelings entertained by his early companions in arms at that period. The following is an extract therefrom:—

"I, who loved you with the adoration of the savage for the sun—I, who live only in you—even I implore you to terminate this eternal war. Let us have peace. I would wish to repose my worn-out head, my pain-racked limbs, in my house, in the midst of my family, of my children, of my friends. I desire to enjoy that which I have purchased with what is more precious than all the treasures of the Indies—with my blood—the blood of an honourable man, of a good Frenchman. I ask tranquillity, purchased by twenty-two years of active service, and seventeen wounds, by which my blood has flowed, first for my country, then for your glory."

Junot's wife was an extravagant and intriguing woman, and her estates being confiscated in 1814, the Emperor Alexander offered their restoration, on condition of her becoming a naturalized Russian, but this she firmly refused, preferring to remain in Paris and live by the labours of her pen. The best known of her writings are the celebrated "*Memoirs*," which had a prodigious run; and she also wrote "*Femmes Célèbres*," and "*Histoire des Salons de Paris*." But, harassed by creditors, she retired to a *maison de santé*, where she died, in 1838.

DIFFIDENCE OF A GREAT STATESMAN!

(24.)—DANIEL WEBSTER, one of the greatest American statesmen and orators which his country has produced, was in early life remarkably diffident. "Many a piece," he says, "did I commit to memory, when a boy, and rehearsed it in my own room over and over again; but when the day came, the school collected, and my name was called—when I saw all eyes turned upon my seat, I could not raise myself from it." In after life he was very eloquent—in the best style, namely, the *understandable*. A backwoodsman having heard Mr. Webster in debate, subsequently met him and accosted him thus: "Is this Mr. Webster?" "Yes, sir." "The great Mr. Webster of Massachusetts?" "I am Mr. Webster of Massachusetts." "Well, sir, I heard that you were a great man, but I don't think so; I heard your speech, and understood every word you said!" [It was Webster, who, with Lord Ashburton, negotiated the Oregon Treaty in 1842; and at his death, which occurred in 1852, Webster then occupied the position of secretary of state.]