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## MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF THE LATE M. DE MIRABEAU.

[From the *Universal Magazine*.]

**G**ABRIEL Honoré Riquetti de Mirabeau was born at Paris, in the year 1749. The count, his father, a man of illustrious birth and uncommon attainments, who had distinguished himself in the republic of letters, by a celebrated work, entitled 'L'Ami des Hommes,' (The Friend of Mankind) after having occupied several high offices under government, retired to his family chateau, a venerable and majestic building, which he inherited from one of his ancestors, who enjoyed the confidence of Henry IV, and was in the carriage with that monarch, when he was assassinated by Ravillac. In this remote and romantic retreat, the count still cultivated letters; but he was a singular and inconsistent nobleman, and was too eagerly occupied about his own fame, to lay a proper foundation for that of his children! The countess too, a haughty, intriguing, and discontented woman, did not pay the necessary attention to the education of her offspring; and her frequent and violent contentions with her lord, rendered the old Gothic castle but a melancholy and disagreeable residence.

The subject of these memoirs, who was their eldest son, at an early age, displayed talents not unworthy of his future reputation; but they were neither cultivated,

nor ripened, by the fostering hand of a father. Driven to extremities by the severities of this parent for some youthful indiscretions, before he was twenty years of age he fled from the persecutions of his family, and took refuge in Holland. The future character, the pursuits, and the ruling passions of the human mind, often originate in trivial incidents, that make a strong and indelible impression in early life. Oppressed and pursued by the vengeance of his own father, Mirabeau became the avowed enemy to tyranny, and even wrote and printed a book against despotism, both local and parental; and before he could be properly termed a man, he had actually, and unknown to himself, become a patriot.

On his return to his native country, he was seized and immured in a state prison: but the walls of a dungeon could not repress the fervid vigour of his mind, nor damp the activity of his genius; for amid the gloom and melancholy, naturally attendant on a close and rigorous confinement, he composed his eloquent declamation against *Lettres-de-Cachet*. This work, was published soon after he had procured his liberty, and circulated in France, and indeed throughout Europe, by the industry of the officers of the police,\* whose inter-

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\* The superior abilities of M. de Mirabeau were no where more eminently displayed than on this occasion. He knew that his book could not be published in France, without the connivance of the police; and, to procure this, he dedicated his work to M. le Noir, who presided over that *respectable* body. This man, one of the most base and cruel minions of despotism, possessed, as the count well knew, an egregious and insatiable vanity, which operated so forcibly on the present occasion, that he mistook the satirical compliments of the author for so many marks of esteem, and thought that the circulation of this book tended greatly to the propagation of his own reputation. So blinded was he with the incense of flattery, that he did not perceive, until too late, that this was one of the most dangerous libels on the government of France, that had ever been printed.