

## A FAITH-CONFESSION.

BY THEODORE TILTON.

As other men have creeds, so I have mine;  
I keep the holy faith in God, in man,  
And in the angels ministrant between.

I hold to one true church of all true souls;  
Whose churchly seal is neither bread nor wine,  
Nor laying on of hands, nor holy oil,  
But only the anointing of God's grace.

I hate all kings, and caste, and rank of birth:  
For all the sons of men are sons of God;  
Nor limps a beggar but is nobly born;  
Nor wears a slave a yoke, nor czar a crown,  
That makes him less or more than just a man.

I love my country and her righteous cause:  
So dare I not keep silent of her sin;  
And after Freedom, may her bells ring Peace!

I love one woman with a holy fire,  
Whom I revere as priestess of my house;  
I stand with wondering awe before my babes,  
Till they rebuke me to a nobler life;  
I keep a faithful friendship with my friend,  
Whom loyally I serve before myself;  
I look my lips too close to speak a lie;  
I wash my hands too white to touch a bribe;  
I owe no man a debt I cannot pay—  
Except the love that man should always owe.

Withal, each day, before the blessed heaven,  
I open wide the chambers of my soul,  
And pray the Holy Ghost to enter in.

Thus reads the fair confession of my faith,  
So crossed with contradictions by my life,  
That now may God forgive the written lie!  
Yet still, by help of Him who helpeth men,  
I face two worlds, and fear not life nor death!  
O Father! lead me by thy hand! Amen.

## NINETY-THREE.

BY VICTOR HUGO.

## PART THE SECOND.

IN PARIS.

## BOOK THE SECOND.

## IV.—LIFE UNDERGROUND.

The men grew weary of their wild-beast lairs. Sometimes in the night they came forth at any risk, and went to dance upon the neighbouring moor, else they prayed, in order to kill time. "Every day," says Bourdoiseau, "Jean Chouan made us count our rosaries."

It was almost impossible to keep those of the Bas-Maine from going out for the Fête de la Gerbe, when the season came. Some of them had ideas peculiar to themselves. "Denys," says Franche Montagne, "disguised himself as a woman, in order to go to the theatre at Laval, then went back into his hole."

Suddenly they would rush forth in search of death, exchanging the dungeon for the sepulchre.

Sometimes they raised the cover of their trench, and listened to hear if there was fighting in the distance; they followed the combat with their ears. The firing of the Republicans was regular; the firing of the Royalists open and dropping; this guided them. If the platoon-firing ceased suddenly, it was a sign that the Royalists were defeated; if the irregular firing continued, and retreated towards the horizon, it was a sign that they had the advantage. The Whites always pursued; the Blues never, because they had the country against them.

These underground belligerents were kept perfectly informed of what was going on. Nothing could be more rapid, nothing more mysterious, than their means of communication. They had cut all the bridges, broken up all the waggons, yet they found means to tell each other everything, to give each other timely warning. Relays of emissaries were established from forest to forest, from village to village, from farm to farm, from cottage to cottage, from bush to bush. A peasant with a stupid air passed by;—he carried despatches in his hollow stick.

A former constituent, Boétidoux, furnished them, to pass from one end of Brittany to the other, with Republican passports according to the new form, with blanks for the names, of which this traitor had bundles. It was impossible to discover these emissaries. Puyssage says, "The secrets confided to more than four hundred thousand individuals were religiously guarded."

It appeared that this quadrilateral, closed on the south by the line of the Sables to Thouars on the east by the line of Thouars le Saumur and the river of Thoué, on the north by the Loire, and on the west by the ocean, possessed everywhere the same nervous activity, and not a single point of this soil could stir without shaking the whole. In the twinkling of an eye Luçon had information in regard to Noirmoutier, and the camp of La Loué knew what the camp of Croix-Morineau was doing. It seemed as if the very birds of the air carried tidings. The 7th Messidor, Year III., Hoche wrote: "One might believe that they have telegraphs."

They were in clans, as in Scotland. Each parish had its captain. In that war my father fought, and I can speak advisedly thereof.

## V.—THEIR LIFE IN WARFARE.

Many of them were only armed with pikes. Good fowling-pieces were abundant. No marksman could be more expert than the poachers of the Bocage and the smugglers of the

Loroux. They were strange combatants—terrible and intrepid. The decree for the levy of three hundred thousand men had been the signal for the tocsin to sound in six hundred villages. The blaze of the conflagration burst forth in all quarters at the same time. Poitou and Anjou exploded on one day. Let us add that a premonitory rumbling had made itself heard on the moor of Kerbader upon the 8th of July, 1792, a month before the 10th of August. Alain Redeler, to-day forgotten, was the precursor of La Rochejacquelein and Jean Chouan. The Royalists forced all able-bodied men to march under pain of death. They requisitioned harnesses, carts, and provisions. At once Sapinaud had three thousand soldiers, Cathelineau ten thousand, Stofflet twenty thousand, and Charette was master of Noirmoutier. The Viscount de Scepeaux roused the Haut Anjou; the Chevalier de Dienzie, the approaches of Vilaine et Loire; Tristan l'Hermite, the Bas-Maine; the barber Gaston, the city of Gueméné; and Abbé Bernier all the rest. It needed but little to rouse all those multitudes. In the altar of a sworn priest—a "priest swearer," as the people said—was placed a great black cat, which sprang suddenly out during mass. "It is the devil!" cried the peasants, and a whole canton rose in revolt. A breath of fire issued from the confessionals. In order to attack the Blues and to leap the ravines, they had their poles fifteen feet in length, called *ferles*, an arm available for combat and for flight. In the thickest of the fray, when the peasants were attacking the Republican squares, if they chanced to meet upon the battle-field a cross or a chapel, all fell upon their knees and said a prayer under the enemy's fire; the rosary counted, such as were still living sprang up again and rushed upon the foe. Alas, what giants! They loaded their guns as they ran; that was their peculiar talent. They were made to believe whatever their leaders chose. The priests showed them other priests whose necks had been reddened by means of a cord, and said to them, "These are the guillotined who have been brought back to life." They had their spasms of chivalry; they honoured Fesque, a Republican standard-bearer, who allowed himself to be sabred without his losing hold of his flag. The peasants had a vein of mockery; they called the Republican and married priests "*des sans-calottes devenus sans-culottes*," "the un-tonsured become the un-breeched."

They began by being afraid of the cannon, then they dashed forward with their sticks and took them. They captured first a fine bronze cannon, which they baptized "The Missionary;" then another which dated from the Roman Catholic wars, upon which were engraved the arms of Richelieu and a head of the Virgin; this they named "Marie Jeanne." When they lost Fontenay, they lost Marie Jeanne, about which six hundred peasants fell without finching; then they retook Fontenay in order to recover Marie Jeanne; they brought it back beneath a fleur-de-lys-embroidered banner and, covered with flowers, forced the women who passed to kiss it. But two cannons were a small store. Stofflet had taken Marie Jeanne; Cathelineau, jealous of his success, started out of Pin-en-Mange, assaulted Jallais, and captured a third. Forest attacked Saint Florent and took a fourth. Two other captains, Chouppée and Saint Pol, did better; they simulated cannons by the trunks of trees, gunners by mannikins, and with this artillery, about which they laughed heartily, made the Blues retreat to Mareuil. This was their great era. Later, when Chablos routed La Massonière, the peasants left behind them on the dishonoured field of battle thirty-two cannon bearing the arms of England. England at that time paid the French princes, and, as Nantial wrote on the 10th of May, 1794, "sent funds to Monseigneur, because Pitt had been told that it was proper so to do."

Mellinel, in a report of the 31st of March, said, "Long live the English! is the cry of the rebels!" The peasants delayed themselves by pillage. These devotees were robbers. Savages have their vices. It is by these that civilization captures hem later. Puyssage says, volume ii. page 187: "I several times preserved the burg of Phélan from pillage." And further on, page 434, he recounts how he avoided entering Montfort: "I made a circuit in order to prevent the plundering of the Jacobins' houses."

They robbed Chotet; they sacked Chalons. After having failed at Granville, they pillaged Ville-Dieu. They styled the "Jacobin herd" those of the country people who had joined the Blues, and exterminated such with more ferocity than other foes. They loved battle like soldiers, and massacre like brigands. To shoot the "clumsy fellows," that is, the bourgeois, pleased them; they called that "breaking Lent." At Fontenay, one of their priests, the Curé Barbotin, struck down an old man by a sabre stroke. At Saint-Germain-sur-Ille, one of their captains, a nobleman, shot the solicitor of the Commune and took his watch. At Machecoul, for five weeks, they shot Republicans at the rate of thirty a day, setting them in a row, which was called "the rosary." Back of the line was a trench, into which some of the victims fell alive; they were buried all the same. We have seen a revival of such actions. Joubert, the president of the district, had his hands sawed off. They put sharp handcuffs, forged expressly, on the Blues whom they made prisoners. They massacred them in the public places, uttering fierce war-whoops.

Charette, who signed "Fraternity, the Chevalier Charette," and who wore for head-covering a handkerchief knotted about his brows after Marat's fashion, burned the city of Pornic and the inhabitants in their houses. During that time Carrier was horrible. Terror replied to terror. The Breton insurgent had almost the appearance of a Greek rebel with his short jacket, his gun slung over his shoulder, his leggings, and large breeches similar to the capote. The peasant lad resembled the Sciot.

Henri de la Rochejacquelein, at the age of one-and-twenty, set out for this war armed with a stick and a pair of pistols. The Vendean army counted a hundred and fifty-four divisions. They undertook regular sieges; they held Bressuire invested for three days. One Good Friday ten thousand peasants canonaded the town of the Sables with red-hot balls. They succeeded in a single day in destroying fourteen Republican cantons, from Montigné to Courbevilles. On the high wall of Thouars this dialogue was heard between La Rochejacquelein and a peasant lad as they stood below:—"Charles! Here I am. Stand so that I can mount on your shoulders. Jump up. Your gun. Take it." And Rochejacquelein leaped into the town, and the towers which Duguesclin had besieged were taken without the aid of ladders. They preferred a cartridge to a gold louis. They wept when they lost sight of their vil-

\* *La Calotte Noire* is the black cap of a priest; but the antithesis perhaps requires the above rendering.

† Puyssage, vol. ii. p. 35.

age belfry. To run away seemed perfectly natural to them; at such times the leaders would cry, "Throw off your sabots, but keep hold of your guns." When munitions were wanting they counted their rosaries and rushed forth to seize the powder in the caissons of the Republican artillery; later, D'Elbée demanded powder from the English. If they had wounded men among them, at the approach of the enemy they concealed these in the grain-fields or among the ferns, and went back in search of them when the fight was ended. They had no uniforms. Their garments were torn to bits. Peasants and nobles wrapped themselves in any rags they could find. Roger Moulinière wore a turban and a pelisse taken from the wardrobe of the theatre of Flèche; the Chevalier de Beauvilliers wore a barrister's gown, and set a woman's bonnet on his head over a woollen cap. All wore the white belt and a scarf; different grades were marked by the knots. Stofflet had a red knot; La Rochejacquelein had a black knot; Wimpfen, who was half a Girondist, and who for that matter never left Normandy, wore the leather jacket of the Carabots of Caen. They had women in their ranks; Madame de Lescure, who became Madame de la Rochejacquelein; Thérèse de Mollien, the mistress of La Rouarie; she who burned the list of the chiefs of the parishes; Madame de la Rochefoucauld, beautiful, young, who, sabre in hand, rallied the peasants to the foot of the great tower of the castle of Puy Rousseau; and that Antoinette Adams, styled the Chevalier Adams, who was so brave that, when captured, she was shot standing, out of respect for her courage.

This epic period was a cruel one. Men were mad. Madame de Lescure made her horse tread upon the Republicans stretched on the ground; they were dead, she averred; they were only wounded, perhaps. Sometimes the men proved traitors; the women, never. Mademoiselle Fleury, of the Théâtre Français, went from La Rouarie to Marat, but it was for love. The captains were often as ignorant as the soldiers. Monsieur de Sapinaud could not spell; he was at fault in regard to the orthography of the commonest word. There was enmity among the leaders. The captains of the Marais cried—"Down with those of the High County!" Their cavalry was not numerous and difficult to form. Puyssage writes: "Many a man who would cheerfully give me his two sons grows lukewarm if I ask for one of his horses." Poles, pitchforks, reaping-hooks, guns (old and new), poachers' knives, spits, cudgels bound and studded with iron, these were their arms; some of them carried crosses made of dead men's bones.

They rushed to an attack with loud cries, springing up suddenly from every quarter, from the woods, the hills, the bushes, the hollows of the roads, killing, exterminating, destroying, then were gone. When they marched through a Republican town they cut down the Liberty Pole, set it on fire, and danced in circles about it as it burned. All their habits were nocturnal. The Vendean rule was always to appear unexpectedly. They would march fifteen leagues in silence, not so much as stirring a blade of grass as they went. When evening came, after the chiefs had settled what Republican posts should be surprised on the morrow, the men loaded their guns, mumbled their prayers, pulled off their sabots, and filed in long columns through the woods, marching barefoot across the heath and moss, without a sound, without a word, without an audible breath. It was like the march of wild cats through the darkness.

## VI.—THE SPIRIT OF THE PLACE.

The Vendée in insurrection did not number less than five hundred thousand, counting men, women, and children. A half million of combatants is the sum total given by Tuffin de la Rouarie.

The Federalists helped them; the Vendée had the Gironde for accomplice. La Lozère sent thirty thousand men into the Bocage. Eight departments coalesced; five in Brittany, three in Normandy. Évreux, which fraternised with Caen, was represented in the rebellion by Chaumont, its mayor, and Gardembas, a man of note. Buzot, Gorsas, and Barbaroux, at Caen; Brissot, at Moulins; Chassau, at Lyons; Babant Saint-Étienne, at Nîmes; Mollien and Duchâtel, in Brittany; all these mouths blew the furnace.

There were two Vendean armies; the great, which carried on the war of the forests, and the little, which waged the war of the thickets; it is that shade which separates Charette from Jean Chouan. The little Vendée was honest, the great corrupt; the little was much the better. Charette was made a marquis, lieutenant-general of the king's armies, and received the great cross of Saint Louis; Jean Chouan remained Jean Chouan. Charette borders on the bandit; Jean Chouan resembled a paladin.

As to the magnanimous chiefs, Bonchamps, Lescure, La Rochejacquelein, they deceived themselves. The grand Catholic army was an insane attempt; disaster could not fail to follow it. Let any one imagine a tempest of peasants attacking Paris, a coalition of villages besieging the Pantheon, a troop of herdsmen flinging themselves upon a host governed by the light of intellect. Le Mans and Savenay chastised this madness. It was impossible for the Vendée to cross the Loire. She could accomplish everything except that leap. Civil war does not conquer. To pass the Rhine establishes a Caesar and strengthens a Napoleon; to cross the Loire killed La Rochejacquelein. The real strength of Vendée was Vendée at home; there she was invulnerable, unconquerable. The Vendean at home was smuggler, labourer, soldier, shepherd, poacher, sharpshooter, goatherd, bell-ringer, peasant, spy, assassin, sacristan, wild beast of the wood.

La Rochejacquelein is only Achilles; Jean Chouan is Proteus.

The rebellion of the Vendée failed. Other revolts have succeeded; that of Switzerland, for example. There is this difference between the mountain insurgent like the Swiss and forest insurgent like the Vendean, that the one almost always fights for an ideal, the other for a prejudice. The one soars, the other crawls. The one combats for humanity, the other for solitude. The one desires liberty, the other wishes isolation. The one defends the commune, the other the parish. "Commons! commons!" cried the heroes of Marat. The one has to deal with precipices, the other with quagmires; the one is the man of torrents and foaming streams, the other of stagnant puddles, where pestilence lurks; the one has his head in the blue sky, the other in the thicket; the one is on a summit, the other in a shadow.

What we learn from heights and shallows is very different. The mountain is a citadel, the forest is an ambushade; the one inspires audacity, the other teaches trickery. Antiquity placed the gods on heights and the satyrs in copses. The