TAEDIUM VITAE.

Come, O my soul, let's steal away
From out this murky frame of clay,
To seek a purer, brighter day
Where Discord doth not lower;
Let's turn our face from earthy sin,
From earthy greed, from earthy din,
To peaceful dwell ourselves within
If only for one hour.

Let us away from charlatan,
From scheming knave—from enslaved man,
From all that's base in mortal plan
So near us ever found;
Forgetting dull mortality,
Aspiring heavenly paths to see,
We'll trend where only those may be
From worldly ties unbound.

We try, we launch our little bark,
No more to mundane things we hark,
We now will rise as lithesome lark
Leaving this world behind;
Soaring in realms of Poesy,
Elated heart, surcharged with glee,
With angel pinions and "fancy free"
In voyage of the mind.

Sail on, my bark! On, on we'll flee
And live for o'er in our own sea,
Nor other ventures shall there be
Nor others' pastimes ban;
The thirst for fame, the crave for gold,
All that the eye longs to behold,
The joys, the pains, of young and old
We leave to brother Man.

Still on, my bark! nor look below,
Disorders there in full-tide flow,
At home, abroad, where'er we go
Sad misery is seen;
The charity of Christ's pure creed,
The mammon grasp for selfish greed,
All disregard of human need
As if He ne'er had been.

Upwards, upwards! On, on my soul,
We leave afar life's tiresome goal,
Alone we roam from Pole to Pole
Enfranchised every thought;
Returning ne'er to wear the chain,
Retiring from the wretched strain,
Nor further struggle to maintain
By sad experience taught.

Still high, and higher! soul of mine
And let God's blessed sunlight shine,
Illumining with joy divine
The dark cup to its brim;
Away from earth we take our flight,
We speed afar from wrong to right,
We revel in the spirit's light
Ascending unto Him.

Still higher! O my soul we'd go
But silent is the lyric flow,
And wasted is the pulse's glow
And past the fleeting ray;
Sent shivering back to earth again,
Beholding there our fellow-men,
Re-entering our narrow pen
Opposed by mortal clay.

Here shackled cabined cribbed confined,
Triumphant matter over mind,
Communing with the baser kind
And nobler thoughts forget;
Cramped every faculty He gave,
Of petty circumstance the slave,
To fume, to fret, hence to the grave
My soul it suits us not.

PATRICK M. KING, in San Francisco.—*Monitor.*

'Forgive us Our Trespasses.'

An Episode of the Commune.

The Abbe Delaunay, pale, venerable, slight of figure, was reading his breviary at the window of a third story in the Rue de Montbard, a modest street in the northeastern district of Paris, not far from the cemetery of Pere la Chaise. He had a worn face with a soft expression on it, a face of patience and meekness and forgiving tenderness. A skull-cap crowned his crop of silvery hair, spectacles covered his tired eyes, and the red rosette of the Legion of Honor came out in relief on his rusty soutane beside the falls of his clerical necktie. It was a soutane which had seen much service, but though faded it was well-brushed and neat, except for a line of intermittent spots to the girdle, a trickle of coppery dust. The Abbe was a great snuff-taker. That was his one weakness.

He closed his book and sighed as the door turned on its hinges and a lady, many years his junior but bearing a strong family likeness to him, entered. A smile lit up the tired eyes as he rose and helped to uncloak her.

'Well, Celine,' he said, 'you are back.'

'Oh? my brother,' she cried as she laid a long roll of bread on the table, 'why do you sit so near the window? Some of those wretches might have seen you and denounced you. The life of a priest, you know, is not worth the price of this loaf at present, and what would happen me if you were to be cast into prison?'

'Be calm my dear,' the Abbe replied, 'our destiny is in the hands of the All-Powerful. Besides they are not such ogres as you picture them. If they did cast me into prison, it might be for the best, under Providence. I might be able to bring consolation to some fellow captive.'

'For the best! Little you know them. I have been to see Madame Bonnery in the Rue d'Argenteuil, and she told me one of them threatened the Cure of St. Roch, and the Cure, as you know, is a great friend of the poor, and when the good man remonstrated with him, and asked what harm he had done him that he should injure him, do you know what the answer was?'

'What benefit he had conferred upon him, the Cure should have asked,' said the Abbe smiling.

'You are right, brother, but the ruffian coolly said, 'None; it's enough for me that you're a priest. I'd like to throttle you because of the gown you wear.'

'God enlighten them, poor fools,' said the Abbe. 'This is what comes of the teaching of their papers and the clubs, and their indifference to religion.'

'But Sylvester, my beloved, I beg of you not unnecessarily to expose yourself in that dress as you have done. None of the neighbors would injure you, but there are frantic fellows of the type of Lanbeck in the parish.'

'Sister, this is my uniform,' said the Abbe, unconsciously fondling the red rosette; shall I change it through timidity as if I were afraid or ashamed of it? Ah! no. If I were weak, God has spared me the temptation, for I have no other suit. The Cure of St. Eustache, I go bail, he does not disguise himself.'

'Yes, but the wives of the Central Market are his bodyguard. They [illegible]

'And yet,' continued the Abbe, musing, 'it was the ancestors of those very women, the Dames de la Halle, who went to Versailles in '89 and dragged the baker, the baker's wife and the baker's son, as they called them, to the Tuileries. Time may work a like change in these people. Indeed they have a certain palliation now. They behaved well during the trials of the seige; they had drink when they had not sufficient to eat, and insensibly fell into bad habits; they were served up false bulletins of victory, and when the end came and they were heart-sick and smarting with humiliation, it was easy to persuade them that they were betrayed. They had weapons in their hands; they had been idle for months, long enough to acquire the vices of the soldier without the virtues of discipline, and their anger was raised against those whom they accused of misleading them. There is much palliation for them.'

'There may be some truth in what you say,' acceded Seline, 'but that did not justify them in breaking into the Church of Our Lady of Victories and putting the bones of the dead in a heap outside the gates under armed guards and spreading such scandals about the confessional and priests—and oh! such nameless horrors. Brother, there is no excuse for that. They are sacrilegious scoundrels.'

'Alas! my dear, we can only pray God to bring them to repentance.'

'And cowards with that, for see how they made processions to the ramparts with their Masonic emblems and flags, thinking to cajole our troops not to fire upon them.'

'I will not believe in their cowardice, sister. I have seen some of the free-corps wear Masonic emblems during the war. These revolutionists have always fought sternly on the barricades, and besides they know that their heads are forfeit if they are caught.'

'I cannot forgive them. They began by murder; they took the lives of Generals Lecompte and Clement Thomas, and now they are adding to their laurels—*their* laurels, by lies Do you know, brother, I hear they are boasting that they have captured a flag from the Pontifical Zouaves and are exhibiting it in one of their halls.'

'What! From the heroes of Patay! That *must* be a lie. I do not believe Charette's men are at Versailles, and I do not believe they would allow themselves to be deprived of their colors. It is not difficult to manufacture a flag.'

At the moment a tumult arose from the street as a body of armed men passed, preceded by a row of sprightly damsels in vivandiere costume, but more resembling that sported at a fancy dress ball than the worn garb of the weather-beaten, wrinkled soldiers' wives who attend canteens in peace, and carry succor to the wounded on active service. Their hats were overcrowded with ribbons and feathers, there was a profusion of furbelows to their short petticoats, their kegs were gaily painted, and the daggers at their sides were too palpably toy-daggers. Altogether their mien was too theatrical. There were buglars blowing out their cheeks as they played a light infantry quickstep, and a personage with a red scarf round his waist, and any amount of silver bands on his *kepi* and silver chevrons on his sleeves rode, sword in hand, at the head of a battalion. He looked very proud but not quite at his ease in the saddle. The battalion which followed was in the National Guard uniform, and raised obstreperous cries, peals of laughter and boisterous snatches of song. It was marching out to relieve its comrades on the fighting front at the west of the city.

It was the May of 1871. A bright month, but in the evil-hearted capital of civilization neither a merry month, a poet's month nor a month of Mary. Far different—a month of trouble, of grim realities, of rampant sin. Anarchy was supreme; order had been dethroned; religion was scoffed.

To-day Peter was ruler, to-morrow Paul, to-morrow next day both had been sent to the right about, and a committee composed of nobodies, inspired by an inner circle of less than nobodies, ruled the roost in the Hotel de Ville. Society was topsy-turvy. There was such an upheaval as France had not witnessed since the epoch of the Terror. The shops were shut, capitalists had fled or were hiding, the wine-shops and taverns drove a roaring trade, the churches were empty; those fanatics had it all their own way who held with Bertrand Barere of the Convention, that the wearing of the tonsure should be a capital offence. It was a sickening and perilous season. Toward the western zone of ramparts cannon roared as at the period, a couple of months previously, of the investment by the Germans; but now the strife was fratricidal—Frenchmen levelled their guns at the breasts of Frenchmen.

And all this time the flag of the foreigner drooped over the Double Crown fort of St. Denis, and stiffly built officers in spiked helments watched the episode of civil war from the terrace of St. Germain.

Alas for unfortunate France, her soil swarming with the hordes of the invader, the flower of her army captive, her prestige abased, two of her provinces lost and an enormous indemnity hanging over her—a graver misfortune still had assailed her. The last bitter blow had been struck by her own children, who had arisen in most impious insurrection at Paris, even as the enemy, in insulting pomp, was parading at the gates.

Those who were not present at that mock-heroic drama, leading up to a carnival of carnage, can form no conception of its awful miseries, its strange surprises, its whirl wind of fierce emotions. The times, indeed, were wofully out of joint.

King Mob held court in the Tuileries and gave concerts in the Saloon of the Marshals, where Bordas, a singer of the music halls, with disheveled hair sang "*La canaille, j'en suis*"—sang it from the the very spot where the Empress had hearkened to the New Year's Day *aubade* a year before. The Place Vendome was in possession of upstart leaders and pullulated with "Avengers of Flourens," Garibaldians in opera comique dress and a motley "mixtum gatherum" of amateur warriors. The red flag, that ominous rag which had made the circuit of the Champ de Mars in blood, was everywhere; the principal thoroughfares were [illegible] build of permanent works than the improvised formation of an insurrection. The "Marseillaise" was voted slow, and was replaced by the "Carmagnole," and choruses were raised of

> La pie dans les cachots,
> La torche dans les chateaux,
> Et la paix aux chaumieres,

with occasional hoarse shouts of "the aristos to the lantern." The Lord of Misrule was regnant. The wildest doctrines were proclaimed, a debauched medical student was prefect of police, the most delirious parody of government the world ever stared at in amaze was playing its pranks. It was chaotic hurly-burly. It would have been grotesque were it not so wild, so sad, so lugubriously tragic. The house where M. Theirs had dwelt had been demolished; the column raised to the glory of the first Napoleon had been pulled down—this last as a protest against military conquest and a pledge of peace among the nations! Mgr. Darboy, the Archbishop of Paris, was thrown into the Mazas prison, under the pretext that he was a hostage—one of the enemy, when, true minister of the gospel of peace, he had set an example by remaining at the post of duty.

Day by day, as the utter hopelessness of the conflict provoked by the Reds became more apparent, as one redoubt after another was ceded to the army of order at Versailles, and finally the fort of Issy had to be evacuated, reckless measures of resistance were authorized, a battalion of women was formed, and a stringent conscription of every man capable of bearing arms in Paris was ordained; newspapers were suppressed by the partisans of liberty, the silver ornaments in the churches were seized, two millions of franc were levied on the railway companies, and a reckless fury gradually swelled to a white heat.

On the 22nd of May, the humble suite of rooms tenanted by the Abbe Delaunay and his sister, were abruptly entered by a revolutionary delegate girdled with a red scarf. The priest who again was reading his breviary at the window, rose and politely asked:

"Monsieur, what do you require?"

"You, citizen; a warrant has been issued for your arrest."

"I am at your service. God's will be done. Celine, farewell," and brother and sister embraced with a long, lingering look of affection.

"Where did you get that ribbon—from the Bonaparte?"

"No, but from the republic, for my conduct at Champigny as chaplain"

"Ha! I, Emile Lefranc, was at Champigny too; it was hard there, my faith. You may wear it as it was gained before the enemy. Good morning citizeness. I am sorry to have disturbed you, but I had no alternative. I had my orders to execute, and Prefect Rigault will not be trifled with. *Allons, mens enfants,*' and the delegate, stopping behind a moment, lifted his *kepi* with a survival of courtesy and assured Mademoiselle Delauney that no annoyance would be offered to her brother which it was in his power to avert. As the party passed through the streets, jeers and hoots and cries of "*a bas la calotte*" were raised, and one foul, tipsy "patriot" spat upon the Abbe, but was immediately thrust back by the delegate, who told him that he should be at the front with his brothers, not boozing at the wine-shops.

"Hearken to that!" and the air was filled with the din of an awful explosion. The tipsy patriot reeled It was high noon. The powder-magazine of the staff riding-school had blown up.

"Whither are you conducting me?' said he Abbe gently.

"Not far. To the Roquette."

The Roquette is the Newgate of Paris, a gloomy, dingy, low-lying prison of forbidding aspect, in front of which malefactors are publicly done to death. As they neared the gate a hackney carriage drew beside it and an aged ecclesiastic alighted. The Abbe recognized him and before his escort could intervene had dropped on his knees and besought his blessing. A beneficent smile played across the features of the old man, and he raised his right hand in benediction. It was the Archbishop of Paris.

The Communists were in the act of transferring the so-called hostages from Mazas to the Roquette for the sake of greater security. It was a sign that the end was apppoaching.

And so it was. At two the previous afternoon the Versailles troops had penetrated the city by the gates of St. Cloud and Montrouge, and by this hour had seized the south and west.

Inside the prison there was no pretense of humanity, except on the part of some of the former warders who had no opportunity to escape and in their embarasment stopped and, perforce, had to obey the orders of their new masters. Some of these treated their prisoners with a surreptitious clemency.

The hostages in confinement numbered over two hundred and thirty, and these felt that they were doomed, save miracle, to a violent death. No favor was shown to them by the keepers put in charge by the Commune. They were leering, coarse brutal caitiffs of a political school of the most pronounced Red, and had sought the office partly because it gave them a chance of gratifying their malignant spleen against their superiors in education, wealth or social position, but principally because it was a guarantee to an extent of the safety of their skins. They had no relish for being potted at on the outposts. The Abbe-Delaunay was singularly unfortunate in the fellow to whose care he was committed. His nickname was Bouc-Errant. He might have been a descendant in right line of Simon the Cobbler. As he led him to a cell off one of the corridors his first question was had he any money.

"None," returned the abbe.

"That's bad for you. Any valuables?"

"This," said the Abbe, producing a small crucifix attached to his rosary.

"Better than nothing," said the keeper gruffly. "I'll take care of it lest you might lose it, and these pretty marbles. All in a string—oh! they ain't no good. You don't want them." And he put beads and crucifix into his pocket.

The Abbe sighed and said:

"Surely you will leave me my breviary, friend."

"Impossible, citizen, we have to be very attentive to the morals of our children here," and he took the book

Running his hands rudely over the prisoner in search, he came across his snuff box, a plain wooden one which might have purchased for a couple of sous. That he magnanimously left to him. Had it been silver there is no knowing how he would have behaved. Bonc-Errant caught sight of the red rosette, and expressing his dissappointment that the bauble belonging to it was not there, he growled that he must be going. Causually opening the breviary, which was richly illustrated, he was mollified.

"Ah!" he cried, the pretty images. They will do for a present to my little Estelle; but as you a prisoner, must have something to read. I'll give you a capital substitute for this thrash by and bye—witty reading, wise reading, reading that will fatten you. To our next meeting."

As he was pausing at the threshold, the glem of the Abbe's spectacles attracted him, and he returned and begged to be allowed to look through them.

"Curious. Can't see an inch through them. But a famous idea—I'll make a present of them, in your name worthy citizen, to my old father, whose sight is getting weak," and he left.

The Abbe fell on his knees and murmured a prayer, in which a petition for his jailer was not forgotten, nor yet one for the revered Archbishop who was a prisoner under the same roof.

"Hola! citizen," was roared at the aperture in the door of his cell soon after, and a copy of the *Pere Duchesne* jerked through it. A ribald little periodical it was. There was a colored caricature of a Communist general in square Polish cap on the frontispiece. The letter-press was worse than that of the gutters, or even the stews; it was an ignominious string of blasphemous scurrity. The Abbe did not even touch it.

The noise of combat moved nigher, and even through and over the thick walls on the prison surged ominous echoes from the outside—the hoarse vibration of distant cheers, the crackle of rifles and the resonant clatter of field pieces. It was evident the forces of order were making headway. The checks of the hostages glowed with hopefulness; those of their custodians became anxious. As the hours passed this anxiety deepened. Their food was flung to the prisoners moodily, almost threateningly. The Communists grew morose. Some were intoxicated; as if beset with a danger they did not care to meet, they had flown to the cup to screw their courage to the concert-pitch of action. But there was premonition of violence in their angry mutterings, their lowered brows, their dogged, frowning bearing. By some underground channel tidings filtered into the corridors and got to the ears of the captives that the Versailles troops held the heights of Montmartre and were advancing victoriously toward the heart of the town. Delescluze and a committee of public safety were in permanent session in the Hotel de Ville; but Dombrowski, the Pole pictured on the *Pere Duchesne*, one of the boldest leaders of the Commune, had been slain in the fight. At night the canopy of sky was broadly lit with a lurid reflection. The Tuileries was on fire.

That night there were jarring noises now and again swirling in eddies of the warm air—noises as of bursting shells, falling masonry, the rumble of heavy wagons on paved streets, interpolated with an occasional demoniac yell or hysterical shriek. The firmament was almost as bright as day. No wonder. Mid-Paris was in flames. The Palais Royal, the Hotel de Ville, the Ministry of Finance were all in conflagration wilfully enkindled and fed with petroleum.

On the morning of the 24th the Abbe's cell was visited by Bouc-Errant, who asked him would he not like to change his soutane for a uniform, put on the Phrygian cap and take a shot for liberty and vengeance on the butchers of Versailles. If so, he might walk out on the instant.

The Abbe did not deign to reply to him, and the brute flung him a hunk of bread as if he were some unclean animal.

Somewhat later the grating in his door was opened and a voice whispered: 'Courage, the troops will soon be here.' It was one of the former warders of the prison.

At one o'clock there was a thunderous detonation as if a volley of big guns had been discharged, and the earth in the neighborhood quivered to its entrails. The Abbe thought that this must surely be the turning point, the crisis of the struggle. God grant Celine might have been spared in that destructive shock. Torn with anguish, but never losing faith, he knelt and stormed the throne of mercy with prayers for the afflicted and defenseless, especially lone women, for France and for the conversion of the wicked. The Abbe was wrong in his surmise. The detonation was caused by the blow-up of the powder magazine at the Luxemburg Palace. The last scene was not yet.

While in the act of prayer, the venerable Abbe dropped off to sleep. He was in his native Chevreuse, on the day of his first Communion; he wore the white satin armlet, symbolic of purity, and was very proud of the *Paroissien Romain* he had got from his mother, prouder even than of the silver watch given him by his uncle. The procession from the convent to the chapel was being marshaled in the sunshine. It was so bright, so peaceful, so happy, that a smile hovered round the thin, wan lips of the old man, dreaming. And as the procession, bearing tapers and singing canticles of praise, passed with its banners by the hill on which were the ruins of a former abbey, an appalling darkness suddenly enshrouded it, and the ruins toppled and came tumbling down with a deafening crash. The Abbe started to wakefulness in a tremor. That crash was not all a dream. It was an irregular roll of musketry close by. The door of his cell was wide open. Emile Lefranc, the man who had arrested him, stood at the entrance and motioned him out, as the coarse voice of Bouc-Errant was overheard in the passage, shouting with a hideous pleasantry:

"Don't let the oven cool. Hurry on with another batch."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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April 8, 1891.—1yr

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Ch'town, Sept. 17, 1890.—tf

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