THE QUEBEC TRANSCRIPT,

AND GENERAL ADVERTISER.

VOL. II.—No. 91.] MONDAY, 23RD SEPTEMBER, 1839. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

A STORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY THE OLD SAILOR, AUTHOR OF "TOUGH YARNS," &c. &c. &c.

"Till then I banish thee, on pain of death."
King Henry IV.

The period of my narrative is in the year 1797, and the opening scene is in the city of Paris. The parties in the French Directory were at daggers' points; and notwithstanding the efforts of Madame de Staël to bring about a reconciliation, the Constitutionalists refused to swear fealty to regicide supremacy, or to acknowledge a power formed exclusively from the most sanguinary faction of the Revolution. The great dependence of the Terrorists was upon the army, under Generals Hoche and Bonaparte, who contemplated a *coup d'etat* to overwhelm the Girondists, who, though in a great measure sensible that danger was hanging its dark clouds over them, yet knew not from what quarter the thunder would burst, and felt themselves unable to shun or counteract it when the storm should roll its overwhelming force to destroy them.

It was on the evening of the 15th of Sept., and Madame Michaud sat with her husband in a parlour of their house, which commanded a view of the Boulevards. The evening was rather sultry; there was but little wind; the sun was hastening down to the verge of the western horizon, mantled in his richest splendour of gold, and purple, and vermillion. Martial music filled the air, for the morrow was to present a grand review to the citizens of Paris, and the troops under Augereau were marching into the capital to take up their positions.

"How delightfully those strains come upon the ear?" said Madame to her devoted and attached husband, as he stood gazing with emotion upon the beautiful horizon. "I dearly love at all times to listen to the soul-inspiring harmony of music, but never more so than when the swell of a full military band breaks the silence of approaching twilight. Hark!" she continued; "and yet it makes one shudder to think that such heavenly sounds should herald the messengers of warfare and blood." Michaud started, and a paleness overspread his cheeks. "It is but too true, Eulalie," said he, mournfully;" they are indeed the agents of death. And perhaps even now—" he added hastily, but instantly checked himself, and paced too and fro in the apartment.

"You appear to be disturbed, my dear," uttered the lady, rising, and throwing her fine-formed white arms round his neck.—"Surely I could have said nothing to displease you."

"You! Eulalie? Oh no!" responded the husband; you have ever been a treasure to me, and had I followed your counsel—but it is too late now. But come what may, I must meet it as a brave man ought."

"What do you apprehend, Michaud?" inquired the lady, labouring under painful alarm. "Do you suspect the troops? I cannot think of any evil is intended. It would be a death-blow to the liberty the councils have struggled through seas of gore to attain. It must be but a show to please us women. Hark! can any thing sanguinary be connected with such exquisite music?"

"I may be mistaken, my love," replied the husband, endeavouring to assume a composure that was far from feeling, for Pierre Michaud was a Constitutionalist and a national representative, against whom the vengeance of the ruling party would be unsparingly levelled, should he had looked upon the expected review as a mere subterfuge to get possession of the capital. He would not, however, terrify a mind that he felt it was his duty, as well as his affectionate inclination, to soothe and tranquillize; therefore he concealed the presentiments of evil that had seized upon his mental faculties, so as greatly to depress his usual flow of animation, and forced nature into a burst of gaiety foreign to his heart.

That night the faithful and attached pair sat till near morning holding sweet converse, and enjoying that delightful communion which flows from purity of affection. It was a night of exquisite gratification, and in the stillness of the hour did the eloquent Michaud pour forth, in energetic language, his ardent and faithful love for his wife; he seemed as if inspired; there was an usual glow of feeling in his breast that he himself could not account for; a heavy weight hung upon his mind, and seemed to force out the ardour of his soul in beautiful and energetic language, and Madame Michaud was happy.

Suddenly the heavy report of a cannon came booming through the silence of midnight; the deputy started; he caught his wife to his arms, and clasped her to him with a fervour and strength which seemed to say, "They shall not part us." For several minutes a death-like stillness prevailed; neither of them scarcely breathed; but the discharge was not repeated, for the sound of a single unshotted gun had annihilated the French republic. Augereau had surrounded the Tuileries—the guard surrendered—the palace was taken possession of—several members of the Five Hundred were arrested, and conveyed to the Temple, that prison to which many of them had been instrumental in consigning the unfortunate Louis—and the army was triumphant. But Pierre Michaud knew nothing of all this; and the next morning, after a most tender parting with his lovely wife, he repaired to the hall of sitting, was apprehended on his entrance, and shared to join his companions in the very apartments which had been occupied by the royal martyr and his devoted queen. Some of the prisoners had been in the Convention, and had given their votes for the death of their sovereign; and now the wheel had nearly performed its revolution—the period of blood had approximated to its cycle—they knew and felt themselves to be victims appointed to die. Oh! could it have been possible to enter into the secret recesses of their hearts, and witness what was passing there, when retributive justice unbared her arm, and demanded "as they had meted out to others, so should it be measured back to them again." But, in this instance, the guillotine was not resorted to; there was a cruelty in the mercy that condemned the prisoners to perpetual banishment to Cayenne. Michaud was not allowed the mockery of a trial; and without any attention to his prayers and entreaties to give one last embrace to his beloved and almost heart-broken wife, he was hurried to Brest, and embarked, with many others, on board a frigate bound across the Atlantic. The ship remained but a few days in port; orders came for her sailing; the wind was fair, her anchors were weighed, and she stood out to sea. There is a feeling connected with the departure from our native shore that operates even upon the roughest nature. The bold land which, when near, seems to lift its head with daring pride from the depths of the ocean, sinks lower and lower as the vessel recedes; and to the uninitiated in this deception, the ship appears to be stationary, and the land departing. It was this that made Michaud exclaim, in the extreme of his agony, "The land is leaving me—beloved of my heart, I shall see thee no more!" Each believed the separation was eternal. The God of Nature and of Providence has implanted in the human heart a veneration for the place of its nativity—an attachment to the soil on which we first drew our breath. Men may affect philosophy; they may call themselves "citizens of the world;" but, oh! even the most crude and callous cannot resist the appeal which is made to the kindlier emotions by the mention of the word "HOME." All here were individuals banished from *their home*, and all that endeared them to existence; here were individuals bidding farewell to their native land—a long, an eternal farewell; here were parents, brothers, all the male ties of relationship, torn from those loved ones whom they could never hope to see again. Nor were these the poor, the destitute, or the outlawed felon—many of them had inhabited palaces, and lived in splendour; there were the once wealthy and highly privileged noblesse; there were the ministers of religion, the learned scholar, and the devoted patriot, but there were also the sanguinary regicides who had consigned their monarch to a public execution, and had been present at the scaffold to witness his last sufferings. Recollections of such a spectacle were not calculated to relieve misery.

Pierre Michaud was about 27 years of age, possessed of a very fair estate, and fairer prospects, when he contracted marriage with a lady whom he long had loved. They had only been united a short time, when he found himself dragged into the vortex of the Revolution, by being chosen one of the deputies for the south of France. To have declined, would have been tantamount to rendering himself suspected; and having a liberal bias towards a constitutional form of government, he repaired to Paris, accompanied by his young wife. His only crime in the eyes of the Terrorists was his being a Constitutionalist. Had he been permitted to choose, he would have retired from the revolting scenes that shocked his spirit, to homely peace and love. He was no regicide. He loved his country, and ardently longed to see the wolves that preyed upon it destroyed. Yet Pierre Michaud was a banished man.

And what had become of his attached wife? After parting with her husband, she employed herself in such little offices as she knew would gratify him, and win a smile and embrace on his return to take her to the review. Martial music was once more filling the air with its thrilling swells; but there came a sound mingling with it that brought the chillness of fear. There is no other sound like it in creation. It proceeds from the voice of assembled thousands, uttering wild but simultaneous shouts of revolutionary vengeance. I have heard those rolling shouts in different parts of the world, when all that is human have been laid aside, and all that is infernal reigned paramount in savages, and the cry has been the same, though dissimilar in language. Eulalie had not been habituated to those fearful explosions of brutal passion, when the yells of multitudes roll upon the breeze; but a shuddering instinct crept through her frame, as, mingled with the pealing of the trumpets, she heard the sounds, more like the dying groans of a prostrate army, then the triumphant cheers of conquering victors. She listened with an indefinable sensation that she could not account for: never had any sounds which she had heard, produced such strange and appalling effects. They evidently grew louder, and indicated a nearer approach to her dwelling. A presage of some calamity, but of what nature she knew not, darkened her mind, and caused a tremor to shake her frame. Suddenly a friend of her husband rushed frantically into the room. "Fly, fly, Madame!" he hurriedly exclaimed; "fly while there is yet hope of escape. The blood-hounds are coming to wreak their fury. Hark to their advent!"

"And Pierre? what has become of him?—where is my husband!" inquired Madame Michaud, rallying all her energies to meet the approaching danger.

"There is no time for converse now," returned the person addressed. "Pierre is a prisoner, and well needs your best exertions to support him in his adversity."

"And he shall have them," responded the lady, with firmness. "This is his home and his property, and I will not abandon it to strangers."

"You will defeat your own purposes," uttered the man; "if you remain, you perish, & the prospect of saving your husband lost. Hark! they are close at hand, and even now it may be too late. A fiacre awaits. Slip on your bonnet and shawl. Heed no other dress, and hasten, for your life."

Thus solemnly warned, Madame Michaud complied. The fiacre was gained and drove off. The mob assailed the dwelling; the work of demolition commenced; and in one short hour, the place presented a scene of revolutionary ruffianism and wreck. The unfortunate lady, though she had saved her life, could not obtain a refuge. She was a women of talent and integrity, two dangerous qualities to the regicidal faction; and, consequently, she was proscribed, and driven into obscurity, at the very period that her husband was quitting Brest harbour for the colony of Cayenne.

Away flew the ship over the foaming waves, bearing within, hearts sad, and striken, and despairing—consciences, over which a sense of crime was exercising a despotic sway—blood-guiltiness, that left a stain upon the immortal soul—groans, and complaints, and cries, mingling with the clanking of chains, and the ringing of fetters, came up the hatchways, and were wasted on the desert waters. Yet the sun by day, and the stars by night, shone bright and clear. The heavens wore a smiling and a cheerful aspect, and none who saw that gallant vessel proudly stemming the billows, could have conjectured that she carried a freight of such appalling misery. The dreadful Bay of Biscay was crossed in pleasant weather, and Cape Ortegal appeared. It was opening daylight when they made the dark blue land arising from the azure ocean, and a few minutes afterwards a strange sail was visible from the deck. Glasses and straining eyes were directed towards the object; many a conjecture was hazarded; many a gasconade was uttered; but none, though several were well assured of the fact, declared her to be what she actually was—a British frigate, full of eager spirits to engage. Being under the land, she had advantage of the Frenchman in being the enemy first; and, when discovered, was already crowded with canvas, in chase. But the French captain was fully acquainted with the admirable qualities of his noble ship. She was one of the fastest sailers in the republican navy, and carried her broadcloth with the stiffness of an alderman. Nor was the British frigate any way inferior, either in fleetness or stability; and from the moment of interview at daybreak, till the twilight hour of evening, when sombre shades were gradually deepening into night, no perceptible change had taken place in their relative positions. Oh, what anxious moments were these for the wretched prisoners in the hold! They would be content to remain captives, if taken; but then it would be in England, where the hand of the oppressor could not reach them.

To be contin. l.

BLOWING-UP OF THE ROYAL GEORGE.—During the last fortnight much interest has been manifested at Chatham by the preparation now in operation in the dock-yards for effecting the blowing-up of the wreck of the Royal George at Spithead, which is expected to take place in the early part of the ensuing week, under the direction of Colonel Pasley, of the Royal Engineers, and his men. The mode of effecting the demolition of the wreck will be on a similar principle to that practised on the blowing up of the brig *William*, off Gravesend, last August. The apparatus consists of two large cylinders, about seven feet in height, and three feet in diameter. They are bound with iron and lead, and filled with powder, which will be fired by a galvanic battery.

The population of Paris amount to 1,200,000 souls, and that of London to 1,700,000. Thus the two capitals of the civilized world contain a population of 2,900,000 inhabitants, a number exceeding the united populations of all the other capitals of Europe. In 1814 the populations of London was only 826,000 souls, and that of Paris 795,000.—*Capitol.*

THE NAVAL RESOURCES OF ENGLAND.—It is not generally known that a steamer of very large tonnage is to be launched in a day or two from Chatham Dockyard. It will have been begun and finished within the incredibly short space of eight weeks. We are informed that this extreme expedition is an experiment under direction of the Government, in order to ascertain the shortest possible time in which such a vessel can be completed. The number of hands have been unlimited; in fact, the men are working on her at the present moment as thick as bees in a hive, and they are allowed to make as many working hours per day as they can. The sum apportioned for the labour, we understand, is four thousand pounds; and should it not cost that, the overplus is to be divided