

lately got himself killed before Condé for the Republic; and Beaupaire was a noble, he who blew his brains out rather than open the gates of Verdun to the Prussians."

"All of which," grumbled Marat, "does not alter the fact that on the day Condorcet said, 'The Gracchi were nobles,' Danton cried out, 'All nobles are traitors, beginning with Mirabeau and ending with thee.'"

Cimourdain's grave voice made itself heard: "Citizen Danton, Citizen Robespierre, you are perhaps right to have confidence, but the people distrust them, and the people is not wrong in so doing. When a priest is charged with the surveillance of a nobleman the responsibility is doubled, and it is necessary for the priest to be inflexible."

"True," said Robespierre.

Cimourdain added, "And inexorable."

Robespierre replied, "It is well said, Citizen Cimourdain. You will have to deal with a young man. You will have the ascendancy over him, but he must be carefully managed. It appears that he possesses military talent—all the reports are unanimous in that. He belongs to a corps which has been detached from the Army of the Rhine to go into Vendée. He arrives from the frontier where he was noticeable for intelligence and courage. He leads the exploring column in a superior way. For fifteen days he has held the old Marquis de Lantenac in check. He restrains and drives him before him. He will end by forcing him to the sea, and tumbling him into it headlong. Lantenac has the cunning of an old general, and the audacity of a youthful captain. This young man has already enemies, and those who are envious of him. The Adjutant-General Léchelle is jealous of him."

"That Léchelle wants to be commander-in-chief," interrupted Danton; "there is nothing in his favour but a pun—'It needs a ladder to mount into a cart.' All the same Charette beats him."

"And he is not willing," pursued Robespierre, "that any body besides himself should beat Lantenac. The misfortune of the Vendean war is in such rivalries. Heroes badly commanded—that is what our soldiers are. A simple captain of hussars, Chérin, enters Saumur with trumpets playing *Ca ira*; he takes Saumur; he could keep on and take Cholet, but he has no orders, so he halts. All those commands of the Vendée must be remodelled. The Body Guards are scattered, the forces dispersed; a scattered army is an army paralyzed; it is a rock crumbled into dust. At the camp of Paramé there are no longer any tents. There are a hundred useless little companies posted between Tréguier and Dinan, of which a division might be formed that could guard the whole coast. Léchelle, supported by Pallain, strips the northern coast under pretext of protecting the southern, and so opens France to the English. A half million peasants in revolt, and a descent of England upon France—that is Lantenac's plan. The young commander of the exploring column presses his sword against Lantenac's loins, keeps it there, and beats him without Léchelle's permission; now Léchelle is his general, so Léchelle denounces him. Opinions are divided in regard to this young man. Léchelle wants to have him shot. The Prieur of the Marne wants to make him adjutant general."

"This youth appears to me to possess great qualities," said Cimourdain.

"But he has one fault!" The interruption came from Marat.

What is it?" demanded Cimourdain.

"Olemency," said Marat.

Then he added, "He is firm in battle and weak afterwards. He shows indulgence, he pardons, he grants mercy, he protects devotees and nuns, he saves the wives and daughters of aristocrats, he releases prisoners, he sets priests free."

"A grave fault," murmured Cimourdain.

"A crime," said Marat.

"Sometimes," said Danton.

"Often," said Robespierre.

"Almost always," chimed in Marat.

"When one has to deal with the enemies of the country—always," said Cimourdain.

Marat turned towards him. "And what then would you do with a Republican chief who sets a Royalist chief at liberty?"

"I should be of Léchelle's opinion, I would have him shot."

"Or guillotined," said Marat.

"He might have his choice," said Cimourdain.

Danton began to laugh. "I like one as well as the other."

"Thou art sure to have one or the other," growled Marat.

His glance left Danton and settled again on Cimourdain.

"So, Citizen Cimourdain, if a Republican leader were to pinch you would cut off his head?"

"Within twenty-four hours."

"Well," retorted Marat, "I am of Robespierre's opinion—Citizen Cimourdain ought to be sent as delegate of the Committee of Public Safety to the commandant of the exploring division of the coast army. How is it you call this commandant?"

Robespierre answered, "He is a *ci-devant* noble."

He began to turn over the papers.

"Get the priest to guard the nobleman," said Danton. "I distrust a priest when he is alone; I distrust a noble when he is alone. When they are together I do not fear them. One watches the other, and they do well."

The indignant look always on Cimourdain's face grew deeper, but without doubt finding the remark just at bottom, he did not look at Danton, but said in his stern voice:

"If the Republican commander who is confided to me makes one false step the penalty will be death."

Robespierre, with his eyes on the portfolio, said, "Here is the name, Citizen Cimourdain. The commandant, in regard to whom full powers will be granted you, is a so-called viscount; he is named Gauvain."

Cimourdain turned pale. "Gauvain!" he cried.

Marat saw his sudden pallor.

"The Viscount Gauvain!" repeated Cimourdain.

"Yes," said Robespierre.

"Well?" said Marat, with his eyes fixed on the priest.

There was a brief silence, which Marat broke.

"Citizen Cimourdain, on the conditions named by yourself do you accept the mission as commissioner delegate near the Commandant Gauvain? Is it decided?"

"It is decided," replied Cimourdain. He grew paler and paler.

Robespierre took the pen which lay near him, wrote in his slow, even hand four lines on the sheet of paper, which bore the heading, "Committee of Public Safety," signed them and passed the sheet and the pen to Danton; Danton signed, and Marat, whose eyes had not left Cimourdain's livid face, signed after Danton.

Robespierre took the paper again, dated it, and gave it to Cimourdain, who read:—

"YEAR 1 OF THE REPUBLIC."

"Full powers are granted to Citizen Cimourdain, delegated Commissioner of Public Safety near the Citizen Gauvain, commanding the Exploring division of the Army of the Coasts."

"ROBESPIERRE."

"DANTON."

"MARAT."

And beneath the signatures—"June 28th, 1793."

The revolutionary calendar, called the Civil Calendar, had no legal existence at this time, and was not adopted by the Convention, on the proposition of Romme, until October 5th, 1793.

While Cimourdain read, Marat watched him.

He said in a half-voice, as if talking to himself, "It will be necessary to have all this formalized by a decree of the Convention, or a special warrant of the Committee of Public Safety. There remains something yet to be done."

"Citizen Cimourdain, where do you live?" asked Robespierre.

"Court of Commerce."

"Hold, so do I too," said Danton. "You are my neighbour."

Robespierre resumed: "There is not a moment to lose. To-morrow you will receive your commission in form, signed by all the members of the Committee of Public Safety. This is a confirmation of the commission. It will accredit you in a special manner to the acting representatives, Philippeaux, Prieur of the Marne, Lecointre, Alquier, and the others. We know you. Your powers are unlimited. You can make Gauvain a general or send him to the scaffold. You will receive your commission to-morrow at three o'clock. When shall you set out?"

"At four," said Cimourdain.

And they separated.

As he entered his house, Marat informed Simonne Evrard that he should go to the Convention on the morrow.

BOOK THE THIRD.

THE CONVENTION.

I.

We approach the grand summit. Behold the Convention. The gaze grows steady in presence of this height. Never has a more lofty spectacle appeared on the horizon of mankind. There is one Himalaya and there is one Convention. The Convention is perhaps the culminating point of History.

During its lifetime—for it lived—men did not quite understand what it was. It was precisely the grandeur which escaped its contemporaries; they were too much scared to be dazzled. Everything grand possesses a sacred horror. It is easy to admire mediocrities and hills, but whatever is too lofty, whether it be a genius or a mountain—an assembly as well as a masterpiece—alarms when seen too near. An immense height appears an exaggeration. It is fatiguing to climb. One loses breath upon acclivities, one slips down declivities, one is hurt by sharp rugged heights which are in themselves beautiful; torrents in their foaming reveal the precipices; clouds hide the mountain tops; a sudden ascent terrifies as much as a fall. Hence there is a greater sensation of fright than admiration. What one feels is fantastic enough—an aversion to the grand. One sees the abyss and loses sight of the sublimity; one sees the monster and does not perceive the marvel. Thus the Convention was at first judged. It was measured by the purblind—it, which needed to be looked at by eagles.

To-day we see it in perspective, and it throws across the deep and distant Heavens, against a background at once serene and tragic—the immense profile of the French Revolution.

II.

The 14th of July delivered.

The 10th of August thundered.

The 21st of September founded.

The 21st of September was the Equinox—was Equilibrium.

Libra—the balance. It was, according to the remark of Rousseau, that under this sign of Equality and Justice the Republic was proclaimed. A constellation heralded it.

The Convention is the first avatar of the peoples. It was by the Convention that the grand new page opened and the future of to-day commenced.

Every idea must have a visible enfolding; a habitation is necessary to any principle; a church is God between four walls; every dogma must have a temple. When the Convention became a fact the first problem to be solved was how to lodge the Convention.

At first the Manège, then the Tuilleries, was taken. A platform was raised, scenery arranged—a great grey painting by David imitating bas-reliefs—benches were placed in order; there was a square tribune, parallel pilasters with pilinths like blocks and long rectilinear stems; square enclosures, into which the spectators crowded, and which were called the public tribunes; a Roman velarium, Grecian draperies; and in these right angles and these straight lines the Convention was installed—the tempest confined within this geometrical plan. On the tribune the Red Cap was painted in grey. The Royalists began by laughing at this grey red cap, this theatrical hall, this monument of pasteboard, this sanctuary of pape-maché, this pantheon of mud and spittle. How quickly it would disappear! The columns were made of the staves from hogheads, the arches were of deal boards, the bas-reliefs of mastic, the entablatures were of pine, the statues of plaster; the marbles were paint, the walls canvas, and of this provisional shelter France has made an eternal dwelling.

When the Convention began to hold its sessions in the Riding School the walls were covered with the placards which filled Paris at the period of the return from Varennes.

On one might be read:—"The king returns. Any person who cheers him shall be beaten; any person who insults him shall be hanged."

On another:—"Peace! Hats on heads. He is about to pass before his judges."

On another:—"The king has levelled at the nation. He has hung fire: it is now the nation's turn."

On another:—"The Law! The Law!"

It was within those walls that the Convention sat in judgment on Louis XVI.

At the Tuilleries, where the Convention began to sit on the 10th of May, 1793, and which was called the Palais-National, the assembly-hall occupied the whole space between the Pavillon de l'Horloge (called the Pavillon of Unity) and the Pavillon Marsan, then named the Pavillon of Liberty. The Pavillon of Flora was called Pavillon-Egalité. The hall was reached by the grand staircase of Jean Bullant. The whole ground-floor of the palace, beneath the story occupied by the assembly, was a kind of long guard-room, littered with bundles and camp-beds of the armed troops who kept watch about the Convention. The assembly had a guard of honour styled "the Grenadiers of the Convention."

A tri-coloured ribbon separated the palace where the assembly sat from the garden in which the people came and went.

III.

Let us finish the description of that sessions-hall. Everything in regard to this terrible place is interesting.

What first struck the sight of anyone entering was a great statue of Liberty placed between two wide windows. One hundred and forty feet in length; thirty-four in width; thirty-seven feet in height; such were the dimensions of this room, which had been the king's theatre, and which became the theatre of the Revolution. The elegant and magnificent hall, built by Vigarani for the courtiers, was hidden by the rude timber-work which in '93 supported the weight of the people. This framework, whereon the public tribunes were erected, had (a detail deserving notice) one single post for its only point of support. This post was of one piece, ten metres (32 feet 6 inches) in circumference. Few caryatides have laboured like that beam; it supported for years the rude pressure of the Revolution. It sustained applause, enthusiasm, insolence, noise, tumult, riot—the immense chaos of opposing rages. It did not give way. After the Convention, it witnessed the Council of the Ancients. The 18th Brumaire relieved it.

Percier then replaced the wooden pillar by columns of marble, which did not last so well.

The ideal of architects is sometimes strange; the architect of the Rue de Rivoli had for his ideal the trajectory of a cannon-ball; the architect of Carlsruhe, a fan; a gigantic drawer would seem to have been the model of the architect who built the hall where the Convention began to sit on the 10th of May 1793; it was long, high, and flat. At one of the sides of the parallelogram was a great semicircle; this amphitheatre contained the seats of the representatives, but without tables or desks. Garau-Coulon, who wrote a great deal, held his paper on his knee. In front of the seats was the tribune; before the tribune, the bust of Lepelletier Saint-Fargeau; behind was the President's arm-chair.

The head of the bust passed a little beyond the ledge of the tribune, for which reason it was afterwards moved away from that position.

The amphitheatre was composed of nineteen semi-circular rows of benches, rising one behind the other; the supports of the seats prolonging the amphitheatre in the two corners.

(To be continued.)

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE MOUNTED POLICE.—As we announced recently, we have sent from this office a special artist to accompany the Manitoba Mounted Police on their excursion over the plains of the Northwest. We present to-day the first three of a series of sketches from our representative to which we invite the attention of our readers. These have been taken amid the hardships of prairie life, with no conveniences at hand, and under the torment of heat, wind, dust and flies. Sickness too has prevailed in the camp. The Mounted Police Force consists of 800 men, one half of whom have been stationed at Fort Garry about eight months. The other half were enlisted this summer and just went out to their destination. They were led by Lieut. Col. French who commands the whole force. They left Toronto on the 6th June with 275 horses, 75 waggons and baggage, on two special trains, and reached Chicago on the 7th, St. Paul's on the 9th and Moorehead on the 12th. At that point the train was abandoned and horses were mounted. The route lay between Moorehead to Dufferin, a distance of 200 miles, which was accomplished in six days, after much hardship and almost complete exhaustion. On the 20th, the day after the arrival at Dufferin the stampede—illustrated on our fifth page—took place. During the night, about 11.30, a formidable storm arose with such deafening thunder and vivid lightning that 200 horses broke from their fastenings and darted helter skelter over the prairie. Tents were blown down and several of the men wounded, though none dangerously. On the 6th July, the Force left Dufferin and three of the companies go direct to the Rocky Mountains; that is to Fort Edmonton. Our artist accompanies this expedition and we may expect some new and interesting sketches from him. The object of the expedition is to conclude a treaty with the Indians of that region and to drive thence a nest of American smugglers, who, it seems, are strongly entrenched there. The troops take 2 pieces of artillery with them. The provisions are drawn in waggons by 100 oxen under the charge of half-breeds. We may expect a lively time.

We learn from our special correspondent that just prior to their leaving Dufferin for Fort Edmonton, fifty men of the force were detached to act as a patrol against the Sioux who were committing depredations in the environs of Pembina, and had carried off several American women. Seven Americans were killed while pursuing the marauders.

ITALIAN MOTHER AND CHILD.—This is the delineation of a lovely type, such as most artists are willing to adopt as an ideal, especially when they study in the peninsular school.

SKETCHES ON ST. HELEN'S ISLAND.—In this double page, our artist, Mr. Scheuer, has endeavoured to portray some of the landscape beauties of that lovely island which has, this summer, become so popular among the inhabitants of Montreal. Until last year, the people of this city were utterly ignorant of the delights of that spot, and it is safe to say that throughout the rest of Canada, its advantages are utterly ignored. Hence we should recommend all tourists passing through Montreal, to pay it a visit.

PROCESSION OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST.—A truly Venetian scene. The contrast of the sturdy grim processionists with the timid boy and recalcitrant lamb conveys a deep meaning.

THE STRAWBERRY GIRL.—A lovely countenance, so full of light and mellowness that one would imagine it had borrowed the bloom and ripeness of the luscious fruit which the little maiden sells.