

## ALDERLIEFEST.

Long had I wandered in Circean lands,  
Where dreams of love are only dreams that pass,  
And known the callid kindness of white hands,  
And lips like lilies set in adder's-grass :  
True love came not, Marie; I turned aside,  
And stayed, and felt a cursed one as I stood,  
Till you were with me as a gracious guide,  
And then I knew the world that it is good.

Love's garden had erewhile begun to parch  
In thunder heat, and no sweet rain to sing;  
And I was fainting in my weary march,—  
The day to me was but a deadly thing,  
And night a terror; and the sun heat grew;  
It choked green things with dust and cracked the land;  
And no rain fell on earth and no wind blew;  
Then, sinking, I was saved by your dear hand.

And then the coolness came, and drought was done,  
And blessed showers of rain fell through the night,  
With quiet hopeful music, till the sun  
Showed all my blossoms staining red and white;  
You were my rainbow-love, the promise given,  
On that blue silent morning after rain,  
That my new heart should not be sorely riven,  
Nor my new garden bent with blight again.

GUY ROSLYN.

## NINETY-THREE.

BY VICTOR HUGO.

## PART THE SECOND.

IN PARIS.

## BOOK THE SECOND.

IX.

At the same time that it threw off revolution, this Assembly produced civilization. Furnace, but forge too. In this cauldron, where terror bubbled, progress fermented. Out of this chaos of shadow, this tumultuous flight of clouds, spread immense rays of light parallel to the eternal laws. Rays that have remained on the horizon, visible for ever in the heaven of the peoples, and which are, one, Justice; another, Tolerance; another, Goodness; another, Right; another, Truth; another, Love. The Convention promulgated this grand maxim: "The liberty of each citizen ends where the liberty of another citizen commences;" which comprises in two lines all human social law. It declared indigence sacred; it declared infirmity sacred in the blind and the deaf and dumb, who became wards of the State; maternity sacred in the girl-mother whom it consoled and lifted up; infancy sacred in the orphan whom it caused to be adopted by the country; innocence sacred in the accused who was acquitted, whom it indemnified. It branded the slave-trade; it abolished slavery. It proclaimed civic joint responsibility. It decreed gratuitous instruction. It organized national education by the normal school of Paris; central schools in the chief towns; primary schools in the communes. It created the academies of music and the museums. It decreed the unity of the Code, the unity of weights and measures, and the unity of calculation by the decimal system. It established the finances of France, and caused public credit to succeed to the long monarchical bankruptcy. It put the telegraph in operation; to old age it gave endowed almshouses; to sickness, purified hospitals; to instruction, the Polytechnic School; to science, the Bureau of Longitudes; to human intellect, the Institute. At the same time that it was national it was cosmopolitan. Of the eleven thousand two hundred and ten decrees which emanated from the Convention, a third had a political aim, two-thirds a human aim.

It declared universal morality the basis of society, and universal conscience the basis of law. And all that servitude abolished, fraternity proclaimed, humanity protected, human conscience rectified, the law of work transformed into right and from onerous made honourable, national riches consolidated, childhood instructed and raised up, letters and sciences propagated, light illuminating all heights, aid to all sufferings, promulgation of all principle, the Convention accomplished, having in its bowels that hydra, the Vendée, and upon its shoulders that heap of tigers, the kings.

X.

Stupendous concourse! All types were there, human, inhuman, superhuman. Epic gathering of antagonisms. Guillotin avoiding David, Basire insulting Chabot, Gaudet mocking Saint-Just, Vergniaud disdaining Danton, Louvet attacking Robespierre, Busot denouncing Égalité, Chambon branding Fache, all execrating Marat. And how many names remain still to be registered! Armonville, styled Bonnet Rouge, because he always attended the sittings in a Phrygian cap, a friend of Robespierre, and wishing, "after Louis XVI, to guillotine Robespierre in order to restore an equilibrium." Massieu, colleague and counterpart of that good Lamourette, a bishop destined to leave his name to a kiss. Lehardy du Morbihan, stigmatizing the priests of Brittany; Berère, the man of majorities, who presided when Louis XVI. appeared at the bar, and who was to Pamela what Louvet was to Lodoiska; the Oratorian Daunou, who said, "Let us gain time;" Dubois Crancé, close to whose ear leant Marat; the Marquis de Châteauneuf, Laclès, Hérault de Séchelles, who recoiled before Henriot, crying, "Grunners, to your pieces!" Julien, who compared the mountain to Thermopylæ; Gamon, who desired a public tribune reserved solely for women; Laloy, who adjudged the honours of the séance to the Bishop Gobel coming into the Convention to lay down his mitre and put on the red cap; Lecomte, who exclaimed, "So the honours are for whoever will unfrock himself."

Féraud, whose head Boissy d'Anglas saluted, leaving this question to history, "Did Boissy d'Anglas salute the head, that is to say the victim, or the pike, that is to say the assassins?" The two brothers Duprat, one a member of the Mountain, the other of the Gironde, who hated each other like the two brothers Chénier.

At this tribune were uttered those mysterious words which sometimes possess, unconsciously to those who pronounce them, the prophetic accent of revolutions, and in whose wake material facts appear suddenly to assume an inexplicable discontent and passion, as if they had taken umbrage at the things just heard; events seemed angered by words; catastrophes follow furious, and as if exasperated by the speech of men. Thus a voice upon a mountain suffices to set the avalanche in motion. A word too much may be followed by a landslide. If no one had spoken the catastrophe would not have happened. You might say sometimes that events are irascible.

It was thus, by the hazard of an orator's ill-comprehended word, that Madame Elizabeth's head fell. At the Convention intemperance of language was a right. Threats flew about and crossed one another like sparks in a conflagration.

Pétion: "Robespierre, come to the point."  
Robespierre: "The point is yourself, Pétion. I shall come to it, and you will see it."

A voice: "Death to Marat."  
Marat: "The day Marat dies there will be no more Paris, and the day that Paris expires there will be no longer a Republic."

Billaud Varennes rises, and says, "We wish"—  
Barère interrupts him: "Thou speakest like a king."  
Another day Phillippeaux says, "A member has drawn his sword upon me."

Audouin: "President, call the assassin to order."  
The President: "Wait."  
Paris: "President, I call you to order, I!"  
There was rude laughter, moreover.

Lecointre: "The curé of Chant de Bout complains of Fauchet, his bishop, who forbids his marrying."  
A voice: "I do not see why Fauchet, who has mistresses, should wish to hinder others from having wives."

A second voice: "Priest, take a wife."  
The galleries joined in the conversation. They said "thee" and "thou" to the members. One day the representative Ruamps mounted to the tribune. He had one hip very much larger than the other. A spectator, crying out thus jeered him: "Turn that toward the Right, since thou hast a cheek à la Jacob."

Such were the liberties the people took with the Convention.

On the occasion, however, during the tumult of the 11th of April, 1793, the president commanded a disorderly person in the tribunes to be arrested.

One day when the session had for witness the old Buonarrotti, Robespierre takes the floor and speaks for two hours, starting at Danton, sometimes straight in the face, which was serious, sometimes obliquely, which was worse. He thunders on to the end, however. He closes with an indignant outburst full of menacing words. "The conspirators are known; the corrupters and the corrupted are known; the traitors are known; they are in this assembly. They hear us; we see them and we do not move our eyes from them. Let them look above their heads, and they will see the sword of the law; let them look into their conscience, and they will see their own infamy. Let them beware." And, when Robespierre had finished, Danton, with his face raised toward the ceiling, his eyes half-closed, one arm hanging loosely down, throws himself back in his seat, and is heard to hum—

"Cadet Roussel fait des discours,  
Qui ne sont pas longs quand ils sont courts."\*

Imprecations followed one another. Conspirator! Assassin; Scoundrel! Factionist! Moderate! They denounced each other to the bust of Brutus that stood there. Apostrophes, insults, challenges. Furious glances from one side to the other; fists shaken; pistols allowed to be seen; poniards half-drawn. Terrible blazing forth in the tribune. Certain persons talked as if they were driven back against the guillotine. Heads wavered, frightened and awed. Mountainists, Girondists, Feuillantists, Moderates, Terrorists, Jacobins, Cordeliers, eighteen regicide priests.

All these men, a mass of vapours driven wildly in every direction.

XI.

Spirits which were a prey of the wind.

But this was a miracle-working wind. To be a member of the Convention was to be a wave of the ocean. This was true even of the greatest there. The force of impulsion came from on high. There was a Will in the Convention which was that of all and yet not that of any one person. This Will was an Idea, an idea indomitable and immeasurable, which swept from the summit of Heaven into the darkness below. We call this Revolution. When that idea passed, it beat down one and raised up another; it scattered this man into foam and dashed that one upon the reef. This idea knew whither it was going, and drove the whirlpool before it. To ascribe the Revolution to men is to ascribe the tide to the waves.

The Revolution is a work of the Unknown. Call it good or bad, according as you yearn toward the future or the past, but leave it to the Power which caused it. It seems the joint work of grand events and grand individualities mingled, but it is in reality the result of events. Events dispense; men suffer. Events dictate; men sign. The 14th of July is signed Camille Desmoulin; the 10th of August is signed Danton; the 2nd of September is signed Marat; the 21st of September is signed Grégoire; the 21st of January is signed Robespierre; but Desmoulin, Danton, Marat, Grégoire, and Robespierre are mere scribes. The great and mysterious writer of these grand pages has a name—God; and a mask—Destiny. Robespierre believed in God—yes, verily!

The Revolution is a form of the eternal phenomenon which presses upon us from every quarter, and which we call necessity.

Before this mysterious complication of benefits and sufferings arises the Wherefore of History.

\* "Cadet Roussel doth make his speech  
Quite short when it no length doth reach."

Because—This answer of him who knows nothing is equally the response of him who knows all

In presence of these climacteric catastrophes which devastate and revivify Civilization, one hesitates to judge their details. To blame or praise men on account of the result is almost like praising or blaming cyphers on account of the total. That which ought to happen happens; the blast which ought to blow blows. The Eternal Serenity does not suffer from these north winds. Above revolutions Truth and Justice remain as the starry sky lies above and beyond tempests.

XII.

Such was this unmeasured and immeasurable Convention; a camp cut off from the human race, attacked by all the powers of darkness at once; the night-fires of the besieged army of Ideas; a vast bivouac of Minds upon the edge of a precipice. There is nothing in history comparable to this group, at the same time senate and populace; conclave and street-crossing; Arcopagus and public square; tribunal and the accused.

The Convention always bent to the wind; but that wind came from the mouth of the people and was the breath of God. And to-day, after eighty-four years have passed away, always when the Convention presents itself before the reflection of any man, whosoever he may be, historian and philosopher, that man pauses and meditates. It would be impossible not to remain thoughtfully attentive before this grand procession of shadows.

XIII.—MARAT IN THE GREEN-ROOM.

Marat, in accordance with his declaration to Simonne Evrard, went to the Convention on the morning after that interview in the Rue du Paon.

There was in the Convention a marquis who was a Maratist, Louis de Montaut, the same who afterwards presented to the Convention a decimal clock surmounted by the bust of Marat. At the moment Marat entered, Chabot had approached De Montaut. He began: "Ci-devant"

Montaut raised his eyes. "Why do you call me ci-devant?"

"Because you are so."

"I?"

"For you were a marquis"

"Never."

"Bah!"

"My father was a soldier; my grandfather was a weaver."

"What song is that you are singing, Montaut?"

"I do not call myself Montaut."

"What do you call yourself then?"

"Maribon."

"In point of fact," said Chabot, "it is all the same to me."

And he added, between his teeth. "No marquis on any terms"

Marat paused in the corridor to the left and watched Montaut and Chabot.

Whenever Marat entered, there was a buzz, but afar from him. About him people kept silence. Marat paid no attention thereto. He disclaimed "the croaking of the mud-pool."

In the gloomy obscurity of the lower row of seats, Compé de l'Oise, Prunelle, Villars, a bishop who was afterwards a member of the French Academy, Boutroue, Petit, Plaichard, Bonet, Thiébaudeau, and Valdruche, pointed him out to one another.

"See, Marat!"

"Then he is not ill?"

"Yes, for he is here in a dressing-gown."

"In a dressing-gown!"

"Zounds, yes!"

"He takes liberties enough;"

"He dares to come like that into the Convention!"

"As he came one day crowned with laurels, he may certainly come in a dressing-gown."

"Face of brass and teeth of verdigris."

"His dressing-gown looks new."

"What is it made of?"

"Reps."

"Striped."

"Look at the lapels."

"They are fur."

"Tiger skin."

"No; ermine."

"Imitation."

"He has stockings on!"

"That is old."

"And shoes with buckles!"

"Of silver!"

"Camboulas's sabots will not pardon that."

People in other seats affected not to see Marat. They talked of indifferent matters. Santhonax accosted Dussaulx. "Have you heard, Dussaulx?"

"What?"

"The ci-devant Count de Brienne?"

"Who was in La Force with the ci-devant Duke de Ville-roy?"

"Yes."

"I knew them both. Well?"

"They were so horribly frightened that they saluted all the red caps of all the turnkeys, and one day they refused to play a game of piquet because somebody offered them cards that had kings and queens among them."

"Well?"

"They were guillotined yesterday."

"The two of them?"

"Both."

"Indeed; how had they behaved in prison?"

"As cowards."

"And how did they show on the scaffold?"

"Intrepid."

Then Dussaulx ejaculated, "It is easier to die than to live!"

Barère was reading a report; it was in regard to the Vendée. Nine hundred men of Morbihan had started with cannon to assist Nantes. Redon was menaced by the peasants. Paimbœuf had been attacked. A fleet was cruising about Mairdram to prevent invasions. From Ingrande, as far as Maure, the entire left bank of the Loire was bristling with Royalist bat-