

Confessions of J. J. Rousseau, the — Volume 11 eBook

Confessions of J. J. Rousseau, the — Volume 11 by Jean-Jacques Rousseau

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BOOK XI.

Although Eloisa, which for a long time had been in the press, did not yet, at the end of the year, 1760, appear, the work already began to make a great noise. Madam de Luxembourg had spoken of it at court, and Madam de Houdetot at Paris. The latter had obtained from me permission for Saint Lambert to read the manuscript to the King of Poland, who had been delighted with it. Duclos, to whom I had also given the perusal of the work, had spoken of it at the academy. All Paris was impatient to see the novel; the booksellers of the Rue Saint Jacques, and that of the Palais Royal, were beset with people who came to inquire when it was to be published. It was at length brought out, and the success it had, answered, contrary to custom, to the impatience with which it had been expected. The dauphiness, who was one of the first who read it, spoke of it to, M. de Luxembourg as a ravishing performance. The opinions of men of letters differed from each other, but in those of any other class approbation was general, especially with the women, who became so intoxicated with the book and the author, that there was not one in high life with whom I might not have succeeded had I undertaken to do it. Of this I have such proofs as I will not commit to paper, and which without the aid of experience, authorized my opinion. It is singular that the book should have succeeded better in France than in the rest of Europe, although the French, both men and women, are severely treated in it. Contrary to my expectation it was least successful in Switzerland, and most so in Paris. Do friendship, love and virtue reign in this capital more than elsewhere? Certainly not; but there reigns in it an exquisite sensibility which transports the heart to their image, and makes us cherish in others the pure, tender and virtuous sentiments we no longer possess. Corruption is everywhere the same; virtue and morality no longer exist in Europe; but if the least love of them still remains, it is in Paris that this will be found.—[I wrote this in 1769.]

In the midst of so many prejudices and feigned passions, the real sentiments of nature are not to be distinguished from others, unless we well know to analyze the human heart. A very nice discrimination, not to be acquired except by the education of the world, is necessary to feel the finesses of the heart, if I dare use the expression, with which this work abounds. I do not hesitate to place the fourth part of it upon an equality with the Princess of Cleves; nor to assert that had these two works been read nowhere but in the provinces, their merit would never have been discovered. It must not, therefore, be considered as a matter of astonishment, that the greatest success of my work was at court. It abounds with lively but veiled touches of the pencil, which could not but give pleasure there, because the persons who frequent it are more



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accustomed than others to discover them. A distinction must, however, be made. The work is by no means proper for the species of men of wit who have nothing but cunning, who possess no other kind of discernment than that which penetrates evil, and see nothing where good only is to be found. If, for instance, *Eloisa* had been published in a certain country, I am convinced it would not have been read through by a single person, and the work would have been stifled in its birth.

I have collected most of the letters written to me on the subject of this publication, and deposited them, tied up together, in the hands of Madam de Nadillac. Should this collection ever be given to the world, very singular things will be seen, and an opposition of opinion, which shows what it is to have to do with the public. The thing least kept in view, and which will ever distinguish it from every other work, is the simplicity of the subject and the continuation of the interest, which, confined to three persons, is kept up throughout six volumes, without episode, romantic adventure, or anything malicious either in the persons or actions. Diderot complimented Richardson on the prodigious variety of his portraits and the multiplicity of his persons. In fact, Richardson has the merit of having well characterized them all; but with respect to their number, he has that in common with the most insipid writers of novels who attempt to make up for the sterility of their ideas by multiplying persons and adventures. It is easy to awaken the attention by incessantly presenting unheard of adventures and new faces, which pass before the imagination as the figures in a magic lanthorn do before the eye; but to keep up that attention to the same objects, and without the aid of the wonderful, is certainly more difficult; and if, everything else being equal, the simplicity of the subject adds to the beauty of the work, the novels of Richardson, superior in so many other respects, cannot in this be compared to mine. I know it is already forgotten, and the cause of its being so; but it will be taken up again. All my fear was that, by an extreme simplicity, the narrative would be fatiguing, and that it was not sufficiently interesting to engage the attention throughout the whole. I was relieved from this apprehension by a circumstance which alone was more flattering to my pride than all the compliments made me upon the work.

It appeared at the beginning of the carnival; a hawker carried it to the Princess of Talmont—[It was not the princess, but some other lady, whose name I do not know.]—on the evening of a ball night at the opera. After supper the Princess dressed herself for the ball, and until the hour of going there, took up the new novel. At midnight she ordered the horses to be put into the carriage, and continued to read. The servant returned to tell her the horses were put to; she made no answer. Her people perceiving she forgot herself, came to



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tell her it was two o'clock. "There is yet no hurry," replied the princess, still reading on. Some time afterwards, her watch having stopped, she rang to know the hour. She was told it was four o'clock. "That being the case," she said, "it is too late to go to the ball; let the horses be taken off." She undressed herself and passed the rest of the night in reading.

Ever since I came to the knowledge of this circumstance, I have had a constant desire to see the lady, not only to know from herself whether or not what I have related be exactly true, but because I have always thought it impossible to be interested in so lively a manner in the happiness of Julia, without having that sixth and moral sense with which so few hearts are endowed, and without which no person whatever can understand the sentiments of mine.

What rendered the women so favorable to me was, their being persuaded that I had written my own history, and was myself the hero of the romance. This opinion was so firmly established, that Madam de Polignac wrote to Madam de Verdelin, begging she would prevail upon me to show her the portrait of Julia. Everybody thought it was impossible so strongly to express sentiments without having felt them, or thus to describe the transports of love, unless immediately from the feelings of the heart. This was true, and I certainly wrote the novel during the time my imagination was inflamed to ecstasy; but they who thought real objects necessary to this effect were deceived, and far from conceiving to what a degree I can at will produce it for imaginary beings. Without Madam d'Houdetot, and the recollection of a few circumstances in my youth, the amours I have felt and described would have been with fairy nymphs. I was unwilling either to confirm or destroy an error which was advantageous to me. The reader may see in the preface a dialogue, which I had printed separately, in what manner I left the public in suspense. Rigorous people say, I ought to have explicitly declared the truth. For my part I see no reason for this, nor anything that could oblige me to it, and am of opinion there would have been more folly than candor in the declaration without necessity.

Much about the same time the 'Paix Perpetuelle' made its appearance, of this I had the year before given the manuscript to a certain M. de Bastide, the author of a journal called Le Monde, into which he would at all events cram all my manuscripts. He was known to M. Duclos, and came in his name to beg I would help him to fill the Monde. He had heard speak of Eloisa, and would have me put this into his journal; he was also desirous of making the same use of Emilius; he would have asked me for the Social Contract for the same purpose, had he suspected it to be written. At length, fatigued with his importunities, I resolved upon letting him have the Paix Perpetuelle, which I gave him for twelve louis. Our agreement was, that he should print it in his journal;



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but as soon as he became the proprietor of the manuscript, he thought proper to print it separately, with a few retrenchments, which the censor required him to make. What would have happened had I joined to the work my opinion of it, which fortunately I did not communicate to M. de Bastide, nor was it comprehended in our agreement? This remains still in manuscript amongst my papers. If ever it be made public, the world will see how much the pleasantries and self-sufficient manner of M. de Voltaire on the subject must have made me, who was so well acquainted with the short-sightedness of this poor man in political matters, of which he took it into his head to speak, shake my sides with laughter.

In the midst of my success with the women and the public, I felt I lost ground at the Hotel de Luxembourg, not with the marechal, whose goodness to me seemed daily to increase, but with his lady. Since I had had nothing more to read to her, the door of her apartment was not so frequently open to me, and during her stay at Montmorency, although I regularly presented myself, I seldom saw her except at table. My place even there was not distinctly marked out as usual. As she no longer offered me that by her side, and spoke to me but seldom, not having on my part much to say to her, I was well satisfied with another, where I was more at my ease, especially in the evening; for I mechanically contracted the habit of placing myself nearer and nearer to the marechal.

Apropos of the evening: I recollect having said I did not sup at the castle, and this was true, at the beginning of my acquaintance there; but as M. de Luxembourg did not dine, nor even sit down to table, it happened that I was for several months, and already very familiar in the family, without ever having eaten with him. This he had the goodness to remark, upon which I determined to sup there from time to time, when the company was not numerous; I did so, and found the suppers very agreeable, as the dinners were taken almost standing; whereas the former were long, everybody remaining seated with pleasure after a long walk; and very good and agreeable, because M. de Luxembourg loved good eating, and the honors of them were done in a charming manner by madam de marechale. Without this explanation it would be difficult to understand the end of a letter from M. de Luxembourg, in which he says he recollects our walks with the greatest pleasure; especially, adds he, when in the evening we entered the court and did not find there the traces of carriages. The rake being every morning drawn over the gravel to efface the marks left by the coach wheels, I judged by the number of ruts of that of the persons who had arrived in the afternoon.



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This year, 1761, completed the heavy losses this good man had suffered since I had had the honor of being known to him. As if it had been ordained that the evils prepared for me by destiny should begin by the man to whom I was most attached, and who was the most worthy of esteem. The first year he lost his sister, the Duchess of Villeroy; the second, his daughter, the Princess of Robeck; the third, he lost in the Duke of Montmorency his only son; and in the Comte de Luxembourg, his grandson, the last two supporters of the branch of which he was, and of his name. He supported all these losses with apparent courage, but his heart incessantly bled in secret during the rest of his life, and his health was ever after upon the decline. The unexpected and tragical death of his son must have afflicted him the more, as it happened immediately after the king had granted him for his child, and given him the promise for his grandson, the reversion of the commission he himself then held of the captain of the Gardes de Corps. He had the mortification to see the last, a most promising young man, perish by degrees from the blind confidence of the mother in the physician, who giving the unhappy youth medicines for food, suffered him to die of inanition. Alas! had my advice been taken, the grandfather and the grandson would both still have been alive. What did not I say and write to the marechal, what remonstrances did I make to Madam de Montmorency, upon the more than severe regimen, which, upon the faith of physicians, she made her son observe! Madam de Luxembourg, who thought as I did, would not usurp the authority of the mother; M. de Luxembourg, a man of mild and easy character, did not like to contradict her. Madam de Montmorency had in Borden a confidence to which her son at length became a victim. How delighted was the poor creature when he could obtain permission to come to Mont Louis with Madam de Boufflers, to ask Theresa for some victuals for his famished stomach! How did I secretly deplore the miseries of greatness in seeing this only heir to a immense fortune, a great name, and so many dignified titles, devour with the greediness of a beggar a wretched morsel of bread! At length, notwithstanding all I could say and do, the physician triumphed, and the child died of hunger.

The same confidence in quacks, which destroyed the grandson, hastened the dissolution of the grandfather, and to this he added the pusillanimity of wishing to dissimulate the infirmities of age. M. de Luxembourg had at intervals a pain in the great toe; he was seized with it at Montmorency, which deprived him of sleep, and brought on slight fever. I had courage enough to pronounce the word gout. Madam de Luxembourg gave me a reprimand. The surgeon, valet de chambre of the marechal, maintained it was not the gout, and dressed the suffering part with beaume tranquille. Unfortunately the pain subsided, and when it returned the same remedy was



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had recourse to. The constitution of the marechal was weakened, and his disorder increased, as did his remedies in the same proportion. Madam de Luxembourg, who at length perceived the primary disorder to be the gout, objected to the dangerous manner of treating it. Things were afterwards concealed from her, and M. de Luxembourg in a few years lost his life in consequence of his obstinate adherence to what he imagined to be a method of cure. But let me not anticipate misfortune: how many others have I to relate before I come to this!

It is singular with what fatality everything I could say and do seemed of a nature to displease Madam de Luxembourg, even when I had it most at heart to preserve her friendship. The repeated afflictions which fell upon M. de Luxembourg still attached me to him the more, and consequently to Madam de Luxembourg; for they always seemed to me to be so sincerely united, that the sentiments in favor of the one necessarily extended to the other. The marechal grew old. His assiduity at court, the cares this brought on, continually hunting, fatigue, and especially that of the service during the quarter he was in waiting, required the vigor of a young man, and I did not perceive anything that could support his in that course of life; since, besides after his death, his dignities were to be dispersed and his name extinct, it was by no means necessary for him to continue a laborious life of which the principal object had been to dispose the prince favorably to his children. One day when we three were together, and he complained of the fatigues of the court, as a man who had been discouraged by his losses, I took the liberty to speak of retirement, and to give him the advice Cyneas gave to Pyrrhus. He sighed, and returned no positive answer. But the moment Madam de Luxembourg found me alone she reprimanded me severely for what I had said, at which she seemed to be alarmed. She made a remark of which I so strongly felt the justness that I determined never again to touch upon the subject: this was, that the long habit of living at court made that life necessary, that it was become a matter of amusement for M. de Luxembourg, and that the retirement I proposed to him would be less a relaxation from care than an exile, in which inactivity, weariness and melancholy would soon put an end to his existence. Although she must have perceived I was convinced, and ought to have relied upon the promise I made her, and which I faithfully kept, she still seemed to doubt of it; and I recollect that the conversations I afterwards had with the marechal were less frequent and almost always interrupted.



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Whilst my stupidity and awkwardness injured me in her opinion, persons whom she frequently saw and most loved, were far from being disposed to aid me in gaining what I had lost. The Abbe de Boufflers especially, a young man as lofty as it was possible for a man to be, never seemed well disposed towards me; and besides his being the only person of the society of Madam de Luxembourg who never showed me the least attention, I thought I perceived I lost something with her every time he came to the castle. It is true that without his wishing this to be the case, his presence alone was sufficient to produce the effect; so much did his graceful and elegant manner render still more dull my stupid propositi. During the first two years he seldom came to Montmorency, and by the indulgence of Madam de Luxembourg I had tolerably supported myself, but as soon as his visits began to be regular I was irretrievably lost. I wished to take refuge under his wing, and gain his friendship; but the same awkwardness which made it necessary I should please him prevented me from succeeding in the attempt I made to do it, and what I did with that intention entirely lost me with Madam de Luxembourg, without being of the least service to me with the abbe. With his understanding he might have succeeded in anything, but the impossibility of applying himself, and his turn for dissipation, prevented his acquiring a perfect knowledge of any subject. His talents are however various, and this is sufficient for the circles in which he wishes to distinguish himself. He writes light poetry and fashionable letters, strums on the cithern, and pretends to draw with crayon. He took it into his head to attempt the portrait of Madam de Luxembourg; the sketch he produced was horrid. She said it did not in the least resemble her and this was true. The traitorous abbe consulted me, and I like a fool and a liar, said there was a likeness. I wished to flatter the abbe, but I did not please the lady who noted down what I had said, and the abbe, having obtained what he wanted, laughed at me in his turn. I perceived by the ill success of this my late beginning the necessity of making another attempt to flatter 'invita Minerva'.

My talent was that of telling men useful but severe truths with energy and courage; to this it was necessary to confine myself. Not only I was not born to flatter, but I knew not how to commend. The awkwardness of the manner in which I have sometimes bestowed eulogium has done me more harm than the severity of my censure. Of this I have to adduce one terrible instance, the consequences of which have not only fixed my fate for the rest of my life, but will perhaps decide on my reputation throughout all posterity.



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During the residence of M. de Luxembourg at Montmorency, M. de Choiseul sometimes came to supper at the castle. He arrived there one day after I had left it. My name was mentioned, and M. de Luxembourg related to him what had happened at Venice between me and M. de Montaigu. M. de Choiseul said it was a pity I had quitted that track, and that if I chose to enter it again he would most willingly give me employment. M. de Luxembourg told me what had passed. Of this I was the more sensible as I was not accustomed to be spoiled by ministers, and had I been in a better state of health it is not certain that I should not have been guilty of a new folly. Ambition never had power over my mind except during the short intervals in which every other passion left me at liberty; but one of these intervals would have been sufficient to determine me. This good intention of M. de Choiseul gained him my attachment and increased the esteem which, in consequence of some operations in his administration, I had conceived for his talents; and the family compact in particular had appeared to me to evince a statesman of the first order. He moreover gained ground in my estimation by the little respect I entertained for his predecessors, not even excepting Madam de Pompadour, whom I considered as a species of prime minister, and when it was reported that one of these two would expel the other, I thought I offered up prayers for the honor of France when I wished that M. de Choiseul might triumph. I had always felt an antipathy to Madam de Pompadour, even before her preferment; I had seen her with Madam de la Popliniere when her name was still Madam d'Etioles. I was afterwards dissatisfied with her silence on the subject of Diderot, and with her proceedings relative to myself, as well on the subject of the 'Muses Galantes', as on that of the 'Devin du Village', which had not in any manner produced me advantages proportioned to its success; and on all occasions I had found her but little disposed to serve me. This however did not prevent the Chevalier de Lorenzy from proposing to me to write something in praise of that lady, insinuating that I might acquire some advantage by it. The proposition excited my indignation, the more as I perceived it did not come from himself, knowing that, passive as he was, he thought and acted according to the impulsion he received. I am so little accustomed to constraint that it was impossible for me to conceal from him my disdain, nor from anybody the moderate opinion I had of the favorite; this I am sure she knew, and thus my own interest was added to my natural inclination in the wishes I formed for M. de Choiseul. Having a great esteem for his talents, which was all I knew of him, full of gratitude for his kind intentions, and moreover unacquainted in my retirement with his taste and manner of living, I already considered him as the avenger of the public and myself; and being at that time writing the conclusion of my Social Contract,

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I stated in it, in a single passage, what I thought of preceding ministers, and of him by whom they began to be eclipsed. On this occasion I acted contrary to my most constant maxim; and besides, I did not recollect that, in bestowing praise and strongly censuring in the same article, without naming the persons, the language must be so appropriated to those to whom it is applicable, that the most ticklish pride cannot find in it the least thing equivocal. I was in this respect in such an imprudent security, that I never once thought it was possible any one should make a false application. It will soon appear whether or not I was right.

One of my misfortunes was always to be connected with some female author. This I thought I might avoid amongst the great. I was deceived; it still pursued me. Madam de Luxembourg was not, however; at least that I know of, attacked with the mania of writing; but Madam de Boufflers was. She wrote a tragedy in prose, which, in the first place, was read, handed about, and highly spoken of in the society of the Prince Conti, and upon which, not satisfied with the encomiums she received, she would absolutely consult me for the purpose of having mine. This she obtained, but with that moderation which the work deserved. She besides had with it the information I thought it my duty to give her, that her piece, entitled 'L'Esclave Genereux', greatly resembled the English tragedy of 'Oroonoko', but little known in France, although translated into the French language. Madam de Boufflers thanked me for the remark, but, however, assured me there was not the least resemblance between her piece and the other. I never spoke of the plagiarisms except to herself, and I did it to discharge a duty she had imposed on me; but this has not since prevented me from frequently recollecting the consequences of the sincerity of Gil Blas to the preaching archbishop.

Besides the Abbe de Bouffiers, by whom I was not beloved, and Madam de Bouffiers, in whose opinion I was guilty of that which neither women nor authors ever pardon, the other friends of Madam de Luxembourg never seemed much disposed to become mine, particularly the President Henault, who, enrolled amongst authors, was not exempt from their weaknesses; also Madam du Deffand, and Mademoiselle de Lespinasse, both intimate with Voltaire and the friends of D'Alembert, with whom the latter at length lived, however upon an honorable footing, for it cannot be understood I mean otherwise. I first began to interest myself for Madam du Deffand, whom the loss of her eyes made an object of commiseration in mine; but her manner of living so contrary to my own, that her hour of going to bed was almost mine for rising; her unbounded passion for low wit, the importance she gave to every kind of printed trash, either complimentary or abusive, the despotism and transports of her oracles, her excessive admiration or dislike of everything, which did not permit her



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to speak upon any subject without convulsions, her inconceivable prejudices, invincible obstinacy, and the enthusiasm of folly to which this carried her in her passionate judgments; all disgusted me and diminished the attention I wished to pay her. I neglected her and she perceived it; this was enough to set her in a rage, and, although I was sufficiently aware how much a woman of her character was to be feared, I preferred exposing myself to the scourge of her hatred rather than to that of her friendship.

My having so few friends in the society of Madam de Luxembourg would not have been in the least dangerous had I had no enemies in the family. Of these I had but one, who, in my then situation, was as powerful as a hundred. It certainly was not M. de Villeroy, her brother; for he not only came to see me, but had several times invited me to Villeroy; and as I had answered to the invitation with all possible politeness and respect, he had taken my vague manner of doing it as a consent, and arranged with Madam de Luxembourg a journey of a fortnight, in which it was proposed to me to make one of the party. As the cares my health then required did not permit me to go from home without risk, I prayed Madam de Luxembourg to have the goodness to make my apologies. Her answer proves this was done with all possible ease, and M. de Villeroy still continued to show me his usual marks of goodness. His nephew and heir, the young Marquis of Villeroy, had not for me the same benevolence, nor had I for him the respect I had for his uncle. His harebrained manner rendered him insupportable to me, and my coldness drew upon me his aversion. He insultingly attacked me one evening at table, and I had the worst of it because I am a fool, without presence of mind; and because anger, instead of rendering my wit more poignant, deprives me of the little I have. I had a dog which had been given me when he was quite young, soon after my arrival at the Hermitage, and which I had called Duke. This dog, not handsome, but rare of his kind, of which I had made my companion and friend, a title which he certainly merited much more than most of the persons by whom it was taken, became in great request at the castle of Montmorency for his good nature and fondness, and the attachment we had for each other; but from a foolish pusillanimity I had changed his name to Turk, as if there were not many dogs called Marquis, without giving the least offence to any marquis whatsoever. The Marquis of Villeroy, who knew of the change of name, attacked me in such a manner that I was obliged openly at table to relate what I had done. Whatever there might be offensive in the name of duke, it was not in my having given but in my having taken it away. The worst of it all was, there were many dukes present, amongst others M. de Luxembourg and his son; and the Marquis de Villeroy, who was one day to have, and now has the title, enjoyed in the most cruel manner the embarrassment into which he had thrown me. I was told the next day his aunt had severely reprimanded him, and it may be judged whether or not, supposing her to have been serious, this put me upon better terms with him.

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To enable me to support his enmity I had no person, neither at the Hotel de Luxembourg nor at the Temple, except the Chevalier de Lorenzy, who professed himself my friend; but he was more that of D'Alembert, under whose protection he passed with women for a great geometrician. He was more, over the cicisbe, or rather the complaisant chevalier of the Countess of Boufflers, a great friend also to D'Alembert, and the Chevalier de Lorenzy was the most passive instrument in her hands. Thus, far from having in that circle any counter-balance to my inaptitude, to keep me in the good graces of Madam de Luxembourg, everybody who approached her seemed to concur in injuring me in her good opinion. Yet, besides Emilius, with which she charged herself, she gave me at the same time another mark of her benevolence, which made me imagine that, although wearied with my conversation, she would still preserve for me the friendship she had so many times promised me for life.

As soon as I thought I could depend upon this, I began to ease my heart, by confessing to her all my faults, having made it an inviolable maxim to show myself to my friends such as I really was, neither better nor worse. I had declared to her my connection with Theresa, and everything that had resulted from it, without concealing the manner in which I had disposed of my children. She had received my confessions favorably, and even too much so, since she spared me the censures I so much merited; and what made the greatest impression upon me was her goodness to Theresa, making her presents, sending for her, and begging her to come and see her, receiving her with caresses, and often embracing her in public. This poor girl was in transports of joy and gratitude, of which I certainly partook; the friendship Madam de Luxembourg showed me in her condescensions to Theresa affected me much more than if they had been made immediately to myself.

Things remained in this state for a considerable time; but at length Madam de Luxembourg carried her goodness so far as to have a desire to take one of my children from the hospital. She knew I had put a cipher into the swaddling clothes of the eldest; she asked me for the counterpart of the cipher, and I gave it to her. In this research she employed La Roche, her valet de chambre and confidential servant, who made vain inquiries, although after only about twelve or fourteen years, had the registers of the foundling hospital been in order, or the search properly made, the original cipher ought to have been found. However this may be, I was less sorry for his want of success than I should have been had I from time to time continued to see the child from its birth until that moment. If by the aid of the indications given, another child had been presented as my own, the doubt of its being so in fact, and the fear of having one thus substituted for it, would have contracted my affections, and I should not have tasted of the



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charm of the real sentiment of nature. This during infancy stands in need of being supported by habit. The long absence of a child whom the father has seen but for an instant, weakens, and at length annihilates paternal sentiment, and parents will never love a child sent to nurse, like that which is brought up under their eyes. This reflection may extenuate my faults in their effects, but it must aggravate them in their source.

It may not perhaps be useless to remark that by the means of Theresa, the same La Roche became acquainted with Madam le Vasseur, whom Grimm still kept at Deuil, near La Chevrette, and not far from Montmorency.

After my departure it was by means of La Roche that I continued to send this woman the money I had constantly sent her at stated times, and I am of opinion he often carried her presents from Madam de Luxembourg; therefore she certainly was not to be pitied, although she constantly complained. With respect to Grimm, as I am not fond of speaking of persons whom I ought to hate, I never mentioned his name to Madam de Luxembourg, except when I could not avoid it; but she frequently made him the subject of conversation, without telling me what she thought of the man, or letting me discover whether or not he was of her acquaintance. Reserve with people I love and who are open with me being contrary to my nature, especially in things relating to themselves, I have since that time frequently thought of that of Madam de Luxembourg; but never, except when other events rendered the recollection natural.

Having waited a long time without hearing speak of Emilius, after I had given it to Madam de Luxembourg, I at last heard the agreement was made at Paris, with the bookseller Duchesne, and by him with Neaulme, of Amsterdam. Madam de Luxembourg sent me the original and the duplicate of my agreement with Duchesne, that I might sign them. I discovered the writing to be by the same hand as that of the letters of M. de Malesherbes, which he himself did not write. The certainty that my agreement was made by the consent, and under the eye of that magistrate, made me sign without hesitation. Duchesne gave me for the manuscript six thousand livres (two hundred and fifty pounds), half in specie, and one or two hundred copies. After having signed the two parts, I sent them both to Madam de Luxembourg, according to her desire; she gave one to Duchesne, and instead of returning the other kept it herself, so that I never saw it afterwards.

My acquaintance with M. and Madam de Luxembourg, though it diverted me a little from my plan of retirement, did not make me entirely renounce it. Even at the time I was most in favor with Madam de Luxembourg, I always felt that nothing but my sincere attachment to the marechal and herself could render to me supportable the people with whom they were connected, and all the difficulty I had was in conciliating this attachment with a manner of life more agreeable to my inclination,



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and less contrary to my health, which constraint and late suppers continually deranged, notwithstanding all the care taken to prevent it; for in this, as in everything else, attention was carried as far as possible; thus, for instance, every evening after supper the marechal, who went early to bed, never failed, notwithstanding everything that could be said to the contrary, to make me withdraw at the same time. It was not until some little time before my catastrophe that, for what reason I know not, he ceased to pay me that attention. Before I perceived the coolness of Madam de Luxembourg, I was desirous, that I might not expose myself to it, to execute my old project; but not having the means to that effect, I was obliged to wait for the conclusion of the agreement for 'Emilius', and in the time I finished the 'Social Contract', and sent it to Rey, fixing the price of the manuscript at a thousand livres (forty-one pounds), which he paid me.

I ought not perhaps to omit a trifling circumstance relative to this manuscript. I gave it, well sealed up, to Du Voisin, a minister in the pays de Vaud and chaplain at the Hotel de Hollande, who sometimes came to see me, and took upon himself to send the packet to Rey, with whom he was connected. The manuscript, written in a small letter, was but very trifling, and did not fill his pocket. Yet, in passing the barriere, the packet fell, I know not by what means, into the hands of the Commis, who opened and examined it, and afterwards returned it to him, when he had reclaimed it in the name of the ambassador. This gave him an opportunity of reading it himself, which he ingeniously wrote me he had done, speaking highly of the work, without suffering a word of criticism or censure to escape him; undoubtedly reserving to himself to become the avenger of Christianity as soon as the work should appear. He resealed the packet and sent it to Rey. Such is the substance of his narrative in the letter in which he gave an account of the affair, and is all I ever knew of the matter.

Besides these two books and my dictionary of music, at which I still did something as opportunity offered, I had other works of less importance ready to make their appearance, and which I proposed to publish either separately or in my general collection, should I ever undertake it. The principal of these works, most of which are still in manuscript in the hands of De Peyrou, was an essay on the origin of Languages, which I had read to M. de Malesherbes and the Chevalier de Lorenzy, who spoke favorably of it. I expected all the productions together would produce me a net capital of from eight to ten thousand livres (three to four hundred pounds), which I intended to sink in annuities for my life and that of Theresa; after which, our design, as I have already mentioned, was to go and live together in the midst of some province, without further troubling the public about me, or myself with any other project than that of peacefully ending my days and still continuing to do in my neighborhood all the good in my power, and to write at leisure the memoirs which I intended.



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Such was my intention, and the execution of it was facilitated by an act of generosity in Rey, upon which I cannot be silent. This bookseller, of whom so many unfavorable things were told me in Paris, is, notwithstanding, the only one with whom I have always had reason to be satisfied. It is true, we frequently disagreed as to the execution of my works. He was heedless and I was choleric; but in matters of interest which related to them, although I never made with him an agreement in form, I always found in him great exactness and probity. He is also the only person of his profession who frankly confessed to me he gained largely by my means; and he frequently, when he offered me a part of his fortune, told me I was the author of it all. Not finding the means of exercising his gratitude immediately upon myself, he wished at least to give me proofs of it in the person of my governante, upon whom he settled an annuity of three hundred livres (twelve pounds), expressing in the deed that it was an acknowledgment for the advantages I had procured him. This he did between himself and me, without ostentation, pretension, or noise, and had not I spoken of it to anybody, not a single person would ever have known anything of the matter. I was so pleased with this action that I became attached to Rey, and conceived for him a real friendship. Sometime afterwards he desired I would become godfather to one of his children; I consented, and a part of my regret in the situation to which I am reduced, is my being deprived of the means of rendering in future my attachment of my goddaughter useful to her and her parents. Why am I, who am so sensible of the modest generosity of this bookseller, so little so of the noisy eagerness of many persons of the highest rank, who pompously fill the world with accounts of the services they say they wished to render me, but the good effects of which I never felt? Is it their fault or mine? Are they nothing more than vain; is my insensibility purely ingratitude? Intelligent reader weigh and determine; for my part I say no more.

This pension was a great resource to Theresa and considerable alleviation to me, although I was far from receiving from it a direct advantage, any more than from the presents that were made her.

She herself has always disposed of everything. When I kept her money I gave her a faithful account of it, without ever applying any part of the deposit to our common expenses, not even when she was richer than myself. "What is mine is ours," said I to her; "and what is thine is thine." I never departed from this maxim. They who have had the baseness to accuse me of receiving by her hands that which I refused to take with mine, undoubtedly judged of my heart by their own, and knew but little of me. I would willingly eat with her the bread she should have earned, but not that she should have had given her. For a proof of this I appeal to herself, both now and hereafter, when, according

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to the course of nature, she shall have survived me. Unfortunately, she understands but little of economy in any respect, and is, besides, careless and extravagant, not from vanity nor gluttony, but solely from negligence. No creature is perfect here below, and since the excellent qualities must be accompanied with some defects; I prefer these to vices; although her defects are more prejudicial to us both. The efforts I have made, as formerly I did for mamma, to accumulate something in advance which might some day be to her a never-failing resource, are not to be conceived; but my cares were always ineffectual.

Neither of these women ever called themselves to an account, and, notwithstanding all my efforts, everything I acquired was dissipated as fast as it came. Notwithstanding the great simplicity of Theresa's dress, the pension from Rey has never been sufficient to buy her clothes, and I have every year been under the necessity of adding something to it for that purpose. We are neither of us born to be rich, and this I certainly do not reckon amongst our misfortunes.

The 'Social Contract' was soon printed. This was not the case with 'Emilius', for the publication of which I waited to go into the retirement I meditated. Duchesne, from time to time, sent me specimens of impression to choose from; when I had made my choice, instead of beginning he sent me others. When, at length, we were fully determined on the size and letter, and several sheets were already printed off, on some trifling alteration I made in a proof, he began the whole again; and at the end of six months we were in less forwardness than on the first day. During all these experiments I clearly perceived the work was printing in France as well as in Holland, and that two editions of it were preparing at the same time. What could I do? The manuscript was no longer mine. Far from having anything to do with the edition in France, I was always against it; but since, at length, this was preparing in spite of all opposition, and was to serve as a model to the other, it was necessary I should cast my eyes over it and examine the proofs, that my work might not be mutilated. It was, besides, printed so much by the consent of the magistrate, that it was he who, in some measure, directed the undertaking; he likewise wrote to me frequently, and once came to see me and converse on the subject upon an occasion of which I am going to speak.

Whilst Duchesne crept like a snail, Neaulme, whom he withheld, scarcely moved at all. The sheets were not regularly sent him as they were printed. He thought there was some trick in the manoeuvre of Duchesne, that is, of Guy who acted for him; and perceiving the terms of the agreement to be departed from, he wrote me letter after letter full of complaints, and it was less possible for me to remove the subject of them than that of those I myself had to make. His friend Guerin, who at that time came frequently



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to see my house, never ceased speaking to me about the work, but always with the greatest reserve. He knew and he did not know that it was printing in France, and that the magistrate had a hand in it. In expressing his concern for my embarrassment, he seemed to accuse me of imprudence without ever saying in what this consisted; he incessantly equivocated, and seemed to speak for no other purpose than to hear what I had to say. I thought myself so secure that I laughed at his mystery and circumspection as at a habit he had contracted with ministers and magistrates whose offices he much frequented. Certain of having conformed to every rule with the work, and strongly persuaded that I had not only the consent and protection of the magistrate, but that the book merited and had obtained the favor of the minister, I congratulated myself upon my courage in doing good, and laughed at my pusillanimous friends who seemed uneasy on my account. Duclos was one of these, and I confess my confidence in his understanding and uprightness might have alarmed me, had I had less in the utility of the work and in the probity of those by whom it was patronized. He came from the house of M. Baille to see me whilst 'Emilius' was in the press; he spoke to me concerning it; I read to him the 'Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar', to which he listened attentively and, as it seemed to me with pleasure. When I had finished he said: "What! citizen, this is a part of a work now printing in Paris?"—"Yes," answered I, and it ought to be printed at the Louvre by order of the king."—"I confess it," replied he; "but pray do not mention to anybody your having read to me this fragment."

This striking manner of expressing himself surprised without alarming me. I knew Duclos was intimate with M. de Malesherbes, and I could not conceive how it was possible he should think so differently from him upon the same subject.

I had lived at Montmorency for the last four years without ever having had there one day of good health. Although the air is excellent, the water is bad, and this may possibly be one of the causes which contributed to increase my habitual complaints. Towards the end of the autumn of 1767, I fell quite ill, and passed the whole winter in suffering almost without intermission. The physical ill, augmented by a thousand inquietudes, rendered these terrible. For some time past my mind had been disturbed by melancholy forebodings without my knowing to what these directly tended. I received anonymous letters of an extraordinary nature, and others, that were signed, much of the same import. I received one from a counsellor of the parliament of Paris, who, dissatisfied with the present constitution of things, and foreseeing nothing but disagreeable events, consulted me upon the choice of an asylum at Geneva or in Switzerland, to retire to with his family. An other was brought me from M. de ----, 'president a mortier' of the parliament of ----, who proposed to me to draw up for this Parliament, which was then at variance with the court, memoirs and remonstrances, and offering to furnish me with all the documents and materials necessary for that purpose.

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When I suffer I am subject to ill humor. This was the case when I received these letters, and my answers to them, in which I flatly refused everything that was asked of me, bore strong marks of the effect they had had upon my mind. I do not however reproach myself with this refusal, as the letters might be so many snares laid by my enemies,

[I knew, for instance, the President de----- to be connected with the Encyclopedists and the Holbachiens]

and what was required of me was contrary to the principles from which I was less willing than ever to swerve. But having it within my power to refuse with politeness I did it with rudeness, and in this consists my error.

The two letters of which I have just spoken will be found amongst my papers. The letter from the chancellor did not absolutely surprise me, because I agreed with him in opinion, and with many others, that the declining constitution of France threatened an approaching destruction. The disasters of an unsuccessful war, all of which proceeded from a fault in the government; the incredible confusion in the finances; the perpetual drawings upon the treasury by the administration, which was then divided between two or three ministers, amongst whom reigned nothing but discord, and who, to counteract the operations of each other, let the kingdom go to ruin; the discontent of the people, and of every other rank of subjects; the obstinacy of a woman who, constantly sacrificing her judgment, if she indeed possessed any, to her inclinations, kept from public employment persons capable of discharging the duties of them, to place in them such as pleased her best; everything occurred in justifying the foresight of the counsellor, that of the public, and my own. This, made me several times consider whether or not I myself should seek an asylum out of the kingdom before it was torn by the dissensions by which it seemed to be threatened; but relieved from my fears by my insignificance, and the peacefulness of my disposition, I thought that in the state of solitude in which I was determined to live, no public commotion could reach me. I was sorry only that, in this state of things, M. de Luxembourg should accept commissions which tended to injure him in the opinion of the persons of the place of which he was governor. I could have wished he had prepared himself a retreat there, in case the great machine had fallen in pieces, which seemed much to be apprehended; and still appears to me beyond a doubt, that if the reins of government had not fallen into a single hand, the French monarchy would now be at the last gasp.



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Whilst my situation became worse the printing of 'Emilius' went on more slowly, and was at length suspended without my being able to learn the reason why; Guy did not deign to answer my letter of inquiry, and I could obtain no information from any person of what was going forward. M. de Malesherbes being then in the country. A misfortune never makes me uneasy provided I know in what it consists; but it is my nature to be afraid of darkness, I tremble at the appearance of it; mystery always gives me inquietude, it is too opposite to my natural disposition, in which there is an openness bordering on imprudence. The sight of the most hideous monster would, I am of opinion, alarm me but little; but if by night I were to see a figure in a white sheet I should be afraid of it. My imagination, wrought upon by this long silence, was now employed in creating phantoms. I tormented myself the more in endeavoring to discover the impediment to the printing of my last and best production, as I had the publication of it much at heart; and as I always carried everything to an extreme, I imagined that I perceived in the suspension the suppression of the work. Yet, being unable to discover either the cause or manner of it, I remained in the most cruel state of suspense. I wrote letter after letter to Guy, to M. de Malesherbes and to Madam de Luxembourg, and not receiving answers, at least when I expected them, my head became so affected that I was not far from a delirium. I unfortunately heard that Father Griffet, a Jesuit, had spoken of 'Emilius' and repeated from it some passages. My imagination instantly unveiled to me the mystery of iniquity; I saw the whole progress of it as clearly as if it had been revealed to me. I figured to myself that the Jesuits, furious on account of the contemptuous manner in which I had spoken of colleges, were in possession of my work; that it was they who had delayed the publication; that, informed by their friend Guerin of my situation, and foreseeing my approaching dissolution, of which I myself had no manner of doubt, they wished to delay the appearance of the work until after that event, with an intention to curtail and mutilate it, and in favor of their own views, to attribute to me sentiments not my own. The number of facts and circumstances which occurred to my mind, in confirmation of this silly proposition, and gave it an appearance of truth supported by evidence and demonstration, is astonishing. I knew Guerin to be entirely in the interest of the Jesuits. I attributed to them all the friendly advances he had made me; I was persuaded he had, by their entreaties, pressed me to engage with Neaulme, who had given them the first sheets of my work; that they had afterwards found means to stop the printing of it by Duchesne, and perhaps to get possession of the manuscript to make such alterations in it as they should think proper, that after my death they might publish it disguised in their own manner. I had always perceived,

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notwithstanding the wheedling of Father Berthier, that the Jesuits did not like me, not only as an Encyclopedist, but because all my principles were more in opposition to their maxims and influence than the incredulity of my colleagues, since atheistical and devout fanaticism, approaching each other by their common enmity to toleration, may become united; a proof of which is seen in China, and in the cabal against myself; whereas religion, both reasonable and moral, taking away all power over the conscience, deprives those who assume that power of every resource. I knew the chancellor was a great friend to the Jesuits, and I had my fears less the son, intimidated by the father, should find himself under the necessity of abandoning the work he had protected. I besides imagined that I perceived this to be the case in the chicanery employed against me relative to the first two volumes, in which alterations were required for reasons of which I could not feel the force; whilst the other two volumes were known to contain things of such a nature as, had the censor objected to them in the manner he did to the passages he thought exceptionable in the others, would have required their being entirely written over again. I also understood, and M. de Malesherbes himself told me of it, that the Abbe de Grave, whom he had charged with the inspection of this edition, was another partisan of the Jesuits. I saw nothing but Jesuits, without considering that, upon the point of being suppressed, and wholly taken up in making their defence, they had something which interested them much more than the cavillings relative to a work in which they were not in question. I am wrong, however, in saying this did not occur to me; for I really thought of it, and M. de Malesherbes took care to make the observation to me the moment he heard of my extravagant suspicions. But by another of those absurdities of a man, who, from the bosom of obscurity, will absolutely judge of the secret of great affairs, with which he is totally unacquainted. I never could bring myself to believe the Jesuits were in danger, and I considered the rumor of their suppression as an artful manoeuvre of their own to deceive their adversaries. Their past successes, which had been uninterrupted, gave me so terrible an idea of the power, that I already was grieved at the overthrow of the parliament. I knew M. de Choiseul had prosecuted his studies under the Jesuits, that Madam de Pompadour was not upon bad terms with them, and that their league with favorites and ministers had constantly appeared advantageous to their order against their common enemies. The court seemed to remain neuter, and persuaded as I was that should the society receive a severe check it would not come from the parliament, I saw in the inaction of government the ground of their confidence and the omen of their triumph.



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In fine, perceiving in the rumors of the day nothing more than art and dissimulation on their part, and thinking they, in their state of security, had time to watch over all their interests, I had had not the least doubt of their shortly crushing Jansenism, the parliament and the Encyclopedists, with every other association which should not submit to their yoke; and that if they ever suffered my work to appear, this would not happen until it should be so transformed as to favor their pretensions, and thus make use of my name the better to deceive my readers.

I felt my health and strength decline; and such was the horror with which my mind was filled, at the idea of dishonor to my memory in the work most worthy of myself, that I am surprised so many extravagant ideas did not occasion a speedy end to my existence. I never was so much afraid of death as at this time, and had I died with the apprehensions I then had upon my mind, I should have died in despair. At present, although I perceived no obstacle to the execution of the blackest and most dreadful conspiracy ever formed against the memory of a man, I shall die much more in peace, certain of leaving in my writings a testimony in my favor, and one which, sooner or later, will triumph over the calumnies of mankind.

M. de Malesherbes, who discovered the agitation of my mind, and to whom I acknowledged it, used such endeavors to restore me to tranquility as proved his excessive goodness of heart. Madam de Luxembourg aided him in his good work, and several times went to Duchesne to know in what state the edition was. At length the impression was again begun, and the progress of it became more rapid than ever, without my knowing for what reason it had been suspended. M. de Malesherbes took the trouble to come to Montmorency to calm my mind; in this he succeeded, and the full confidence I had in his uprightness having overcome the derangement of my poor head, gave efficacy to the endeavors he made to restore it. After what he had seen of my anguish and delirium, it was natural he should think I was to be pitied; and he really commiserated my situation. The expressions, incessantly repeated, of the philosophical cabal by which he was surrounded, occurred to his memory. When I went to live at the Hermitage, they, as I have already remarked, said I should not remain there long. When they saw I persevered, they charged me with obstinacy and pride, proceeding from a want of courage to retract, and insisted that my life was there a burden to me; in short, that I was very wretched. M. de Malesherbes believed this really to be the case, and wrote to me upon the subject. This error in a man for whom I had so much esteem gave me some pain, and I wrote to him four letters successively, in which I stated the real motives of my conduct, and made him fully acquainted with my taste, inclination and character, and with the most interior sentiments of my heart. These letters, written hastily,

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almost without taking pen from paper, and which I neither copied, corrected, nor even read, are perhaps the only things I ever wrote with facility, which, in the midst of my sufferings, was, I think, astonishing. I sighed, as I felt myself declining, at the thought of leaving in the midst of honest men an opinion of me so far from truth; and by the sketch hastily given in my four letters, I endeavored, in some measure, to substitute them to the memoirs I had proposed to write. They are expressive of my grief to M. de Malesherbes, who showed them in Paris, and are, besides, a kind of summary of what I here give in detail, and, on this account, merit preservation. The copy I begged of them some years afterwards will be found amongst my papers.

The only thing which continued to give me pain, in the idea of my approaching dissolution, was my not having a man of letters for a friend, to whom I could confide my papers, that after my death he might take a proper choice of such as were worthy of publication.

After my journey to Geneva, I conceived a friendship for Moulton; this young man pleased me, and I could have wished him to receive my last breath. I expressed to him this desire, and am of opinion he would readily have complied with it, had not his affairs prevented him from so doing. Deprived of this consolation, I still wished to give him a mark of my confidence by sending him the 'Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar' before it was published. He was pleased with the work, but did not in his answer seem so fully to expect from it the effect of which I had but little doubt. He wished to receive from me some fragment which I had not given to anybody else. I sent him the funeral oration of the late Duke of Orleans; this I had written for the Abbe Darty, who had not pronounced it, because, contrary to his expectation, another person was appointed to perform that ceremony.

The printing of Emilius, after having been again taken in hand, was continued and completed without much difficulty; and I remarked this singularity, that after the curtailings so much insisted upon in the first two volumes, the last two were passed over without an objection, and their contents did not delay the publication for a moment. I had, however, some uneasiness which I must not pass over in silence. After having been afraid of the Jesuits, I begun to fear the Jansenists and philosophers. An enemy to party, faction and cabal, I never heard the least good of parties concerned in them. The gossips had quitted their old abode and taken up their residence by the side of me, so that in their chamber, everything said in mine, and upon the terrace, was distinctly heard; and from their garden it would have been easy to scale the low wall by which it was separated from my alcove. This was become my study; my table was covered with proofsheets of Emilius and the Social Contract and stitching these sheets as they were sent to me, I had all my volumes a long time

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before they were published. My negligence and the confidence I had in M. Mathas, in whose garden I was shut up, frequently made me forget to lock the door at night, and in the morning I several times found it wide open; this, however, would not have given me the least inquietude had I not thought my papers seemed to have been deranged. After having several times made the same remark, I became more careful, and locked the door. The lock was a bad one, and the key turned in it no more than half round. As I became more attentive, I found my papers in a much greater confusion than they were when I left everything open. At length I missed one of my volumes without knowing what was become of it until the morning of the third day, when I again found it upon the table. I never suspected either M. Mathas or his nephew M. du Moulin, knowing myself to be beloved by both, and my confidence in them was unbounded. That I had in the gossips began to diminish. Although they were Jansenists, I knew them to have some connection with D' Alembert, and moreover they all three lodged in the same house. This gave me some uneasiness, and put me more upon my guard. I removed my papers from the alcove to my chamber, and dropped my acquaintance with these people, having learned they had shown in several houses the first volume of 'Emilius', which I had been imprudent enough to lend them. Although they continued until my departure to be my neighbors I never, after my first suspicions, had the least communication with them. The 'Social Contract' appeared a month or two before 'Emilius'. Rey, whom I had desired never secretly to introduce into France any of my books, applied to the magistrate for leave to send this book by Rouen, to which place he sent his package by sea. He received no answer, and his bales, after remaining at Rouen several months, were returned to him, but not until an attempt had been made to confiscate them; this, probably, would have been done had not he made a great clamor. Several persons, whose curiosity the work had excited, sent to Amsterdam for copies, which were circulated without being much noticed. Maulion, who had heard of this, and had, I believe, seen the work, spoke to me on the subject with an air of mystery which surprised me, and would likewise have made me uneasy if, certain of having conformed to every rule, I had not by virtue of my grand maxim, kept my mind calm. I moreover had no doubt but M. de Choiseul, already well disposed towards me, and sensible of the eulogium of his administration, which my esteem for him had induced me to make in the work, would support me against the malevolence of Madam de Pompadour.

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I certainly had then as much reason as ever to hope for the goodness of M. de Luxembourg, and even for his assistance in case of need; for he never at any time had given me more frequent and more pointed marks of his friendship. At the journey of Easter, my melancholy state no longer permitting me to go to the castle, he never suffered a day to pass without coming to see me, and at length, perceiving my sufferings to be incessant, he prevailed upon me to determine to see Friar Come. He immediately sent for him, came with him, and had the courage, uncommon to a man of his rank, to remain with me during the operation which was cruel and tedious. Upon the first examination, Come thought he found a great stone, and told me so; at the second, he could not find it again. After having made a third attempt with so much care and circumspection that I thought the time long, he declared there was no stone, but that the prostate gland was schirrous and considerably thickened. He besides added, that I had a great deal to suffer, and should live a long time. Should the second prediction be as fully accomplished as the first, my sufferings are far from being at an end.

It was thus I learned after having been so many years treated for disorders which I never had, that my incurable disease, without being mortal, would last as long as myself. My imagination, repressed by this information, no longer presented to me in prospective a cruel death in the agonies of the stone.

Delivered from imaginary evils, more cruel to me than those which were real, I more patiently suffered the latter. It is certain I have since suffered less from my disorder than I had done before, and every time I recollect that I owe this alleviation to M. de Luxembourg, his memory becomes more dear to me.

Restored, as I may say, to life, and more than ever occupied with the plan according to which I was determined to pass the rest of my days, all the obstacle to the immediate execution of my design was the publication of 'Emilius'. I thought of Touraine where I had already been and which pleased me much, as well on account of the mildness of the climate, as on that of the character of the inhabitants.

'La terra molle lieta a diletta
Simile a se l'habitor produce.'

I had already spoken of my project to M. de Luxembourg, who endeavored to dissuade me from it; I mentioned it to him a second time as a thing resolved upon. He then offered me the castle of Merlon, fifteen leagues from Paris, as an asylum which might be agreeable to me, and where he and Madam de Luxembourg would have a real pleasure in seeing me settled. The proposition made a pleasing impression on my mind. But the first thing necessary was to see the place, and we agreed upon a day when the marechal was to send his valet de chambre with a carriage to take me to it. On the day appointed, I was much indisposed; the journey was postponed, and different circumstances prevented me from ever making it. I have since learned the estate of

Merlou did not belong to the marechal but to his lady, on which account I was the less sorry I had not gone to live there.

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'Emilius' was at length given to the public, without my having heard further of retrenchments or difficulties. Previous to the publication, the marechal asked me for all the letters M. de Malesherbes had written to me on the subject of the work. My great confidence in both, and the perfect security in which I felt myself, prevented me from reflecting upon this extraordinary and even alarming request. I returned all the letters excepting one or two which, from inattention, were left between the leaves of a book. A little time before this, M. de Malesherbes told me he should withdraw the letters I had written to Duchesne during my alarm relative to the Jesuits, and, it must be confessed, these letters did no great honor to my reason. But in my answer I assured him I would not in anything pass for being better than I was, and that he might leave the letters where they were. I know not what he resolved upon.

The publication of this work was not succeeded by the applause which had followed that of all my other writings. No work was ever more highly spoken of in private, nor had any literary production ever had less public approbation. What was said and written to me upon the subject by persons most capable of judging, confirmed me in my opinion that it was the best, as well as the most important of all the works I had produced. But everything favorable was said with an air of the most extraordinary mystery, as if there had been a necessity of keeping it a secret. Madam de Boufflers, who wrote to me that the author of the work merited a statue, and the homage of mankind, at the end of her letter desired it might be returned to her. D'Alembert, who in his note said the work gave me a decided superiority, and ought to place me at the head of men of letters, did not sign what he wrote, although he had signed every note I had before received from him. Duclos, a sure friend, a man of veracity, but circumspect, although he had a good opinion of the work, avoided mentioning it in his letters to me. La Condomine fell upon the Confession of Faith, and wandered from the subject. Clairaut confined himself to the same part; but he was not afraid of expressing to me the emotion which the reading of it had caused in him, and in the most direct terms wrote to me that it had warmed his old imagination: of all those to whom I had sent my book, he was the only person who spoke freely what he thought of it.

Mathas, to whom I also had given a copy before the publication, lent it to M. de Blaire, counsellor in the parliament of Strasbourg. M. de Blaire had a country-house at St. Gratien, and Mathas, his old acquaintance, sometimes went to see him there. He made him read Emilius before it was published. When he returned it to him, M. de Blaire expressed himself in the following terms, which were repeated to me the same day: "M. Mathas, this is a very fine work, but it will in a short time be spoken of more than, for the author might be wished."



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I laughed at the prediction, and saw in it nothing more than the importance of a man of the robe, who treats everything with an air of mystery. All the alarming observations repeated to me made no impression upon my mind, and, far from foreseeing the catastrophe so near at hand, certain of the utility and excellence of my work, and that I had in every respect conformed to established rules; convinced, as I thought I was that I should be supported by all the credit of M. de Luxembourg and the favor of the ministry, I was satisfied with myself for the resolution I had taken to retire in the midst of my triumphs, and at my return to crush those by whom I was envied.

One thing in the publication of the work alarmed me, less on account of my safety than for the unburdening of my mind. At the Hermitage and at Montmorency I had seen with indignation the vexations which the jealous care of the pleasures of princes causes to be exercised on wretched peasants, forced to suffer the havoc made by game in their fields, without daring to take any other measure to prevent this devastation than that of making a noise, passing the night amongst the beans and peas, with drums, kettles and bells, to keep off the wild boars. As I had been a witness to the barbarous cruelty with which the Comte de Charolois treated these poor people, I had toward the end of Emilius exclaimed against it. This was another infraction of my maxims, which has not remained unpunished. I was informed that the people of the Prince of Conti were but little less severe upon his, estates; I trembled less that prince, for whom I was penetrated with respect and gratitude, should take to his own account what shocked humanity had made me say on that of others, and feel himself offended. Yet, as my conscience fully acquitted me upon this article, I made myself easy, and by so doing acted wisely: at least, I have not heard that this great prince took notice of the passage, which, besides, was written long before I had the honor of being known to him.

A few days either before or after the publication of my work, for I do not exactly recollect the time, there appeared another work upon the same subject, taken verbatim from my first volume, except a few stupid things which were joined to the extract. The book bore the name of a Genevese, one Balexsert, and, according to the title-page, had gained the premium in the Academy of Harlem. I easily imagined the academy and the premium to be newly founded, the better to conceal the plagiarism from the eyes of the public; but I further perceived there was some prior intrigue which I could not unravel; either by the lending of my manuscript, without which the theft could not have been committed, or for the purpose of forging the story of the pretended premium, to which it was necessary to give some foundation. It was not until several years afterwards, that by a word which escaped D'Ivernois, I penetrated the mystery and discovered those by whom Balexsert had been brought forward.

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The low murmurings which precede a storm began to be heard, and men of penetration clearly saw there was something gathering, relative to me and my book, which would shortly break over my head. For my part my stupidity was such, that, far from foreseeing my misfortune, I did not suspect even the cause of it after I had felt its effect. It was artfully given out that while the Jesuits were treated with severity, no indulgence could be shown to books nor the authors of them in which religion was attacked. I was reproached with having put my name to Emilius, as if I had not put it to all my other works of which nothing was said. Government seemed to fear it should be obliged to take some steps which circumstances rendered necessary on account of my imprudence. Rumors to this effect reached my ears, but gave me not much uneasiness: it never even came into my head, that there could be the least thing in the whole affair which related to me personally, so perfectly irreproachable and well supported did I think myself; having besides conformed to every ministerial regulation, I did not apprehend Madam de Luxembourg would leave me in difficulties for an error, which, if it existed, proceeded entirely from herself. But knowing the manner of proceeding in like cases, and that it was customary to punish booksellers while authors were favored; I had some uneasiness on account of poor Duchesne, whom I saw exposed to danger, should M. de Malesherbes abandon him.

My tranquility still continued. Rumors increased and soon changed their nature. The public, and especially the parliament, seemed irritated by my composure. In a few days the fermentation became terrible, and the object of the menaces being changed, these were immediately addressed to me. The parliamentarians were heard to declare that burning books was of no effect, the authors also should be burned with them; not a word was said of the booksellers. The first time these expressions, more worthy of an inquisitor of Goa than a senator, were related to me, I had no doubt of their coming from the Holbachiques with an intention to alarm me and drive me from France. I laughed at their puerile manoeuvre, and said they would, had they known the real state of things, have thought of some other means of inspiring me with fear; but the rumor at length became such that I perceived the matter was serious. M. and Madam de Luxembourg had this year come to Montmorency in the month of June, which, for their second journey, was more early than common. I heard but little there of my new books, notwithstanding the noise they made in Paris; neither the marechal nor his lady said a single word to me on the subject. However, one morning, when M. de Luxembourg and I were together, he asked me if, in the 'Social Contract', I had spoken ill of M. de Choiseul. "I?" said I, retreating a few steps with surprise; "no, I swear to you I have not; but on the contrary, I have made on him, and with a pen not given to praise,

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the finest eulogium a minister ever received.” I then showed him the passage. “And in Emilius?” replied he. “Not a word,” said I; “there is not in it a single word which relates to him.”—“Ah!” said he, with more vivacity than was common to him, “you should have taken the same care in the other book, or have expressed yourself more clearly!” “I thought,” replied I, “what I wrote could not be misconstrued; my esteem for him was such as to make me extremely cautious not to be equivocal.”

He was again going to speak; I perceived him ready to open his mind: he stopped short and held his tongue. Wretched policy of a courtier, which in the best of hearts, subjugates friendship itself!

This conversation although short, explained to me my situation, at least in certain respects, and gave me to understand that it was against myself the anger of administration was raised. The unheard of fatality, which turned to my prejudice all the good I did and wrote, afflicted my heart. Yet, feeling myself shielded in this affair by Madam de Luxembourg and M. de Malesherbes, I did not perceive in what my persecutors could deprive me of their protection. However, I, from that moment was convinced equity and judgment were no longer in question, and that no pains would be spared in examining whether or not I was culpable. The storm became still more menacing. Neaulme himself expressed to me, in the excess of his babbling, how much he repented having had anything to do in the business, and his certainty of the fate with which the book and the author were threatened. One thing, however, alleviated my fears: Madam de Luxembourg was so calm, satisfied and cheerful, that I concluded she must necessarily be certain of the sufficiency of her credit, especially if she did not seem to have the least apprehension on my account; moreover, she said not to me a word either of consolation or apology, and saw the turn the affair took with as much unconcern as if she had nothing to do with it or anything else that related to me. What surprised me most was her silence. I thought she should have said something on the subject. Madam de Boufflers seemed rather uneasy. She appeared agitated, strained herself a good deal, assured me the Prince of Conti was taking great pains to ward off the blow about to be directed against my person, and which she attributed to the nature of present circumstances, in which it was of importance to the parliament not to leave the Jesuits an opening whereby they might bring an accusation against it as being indifferent with respect to religion. She did not, however, seem to depend much either upon the success of her own efforts or even those of the prince. Her conversations, more alarming than consolatory, all tended to persuade me to leave the kingdom and go to England, where she offered me an introduction to many of her friends, amongst others one to the celebrated Hume, with whom she had long been upon



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a footing of intimate friendship. Seeing me still unshaken, she had recourse to other arguments more capable of disturbing my tranquillity. She intimated that, in case I was arrested and interrogated, I should be under the necessity of naming Madam de Luxembourg, and that her friendship for me required, on my part, such precautions as were necessary to prevent her being exposed. My answer was, that should what she seemed to apprehend come to pass, she need not be alarmed; that I should do nothing by which the lady she mentioned might become a sufferer. She said such a resolution was more easily taken than adhered to, and in this she was right, especially with respect to me, determined as I always have been neither to prejudice myself nor lie before judges, whatever danger there might be in speaking the truth.

Perceiving this observation had made some impression upon my mind, without however inducing me to resolve upon evasion, she spoke of the Bastille for a few weeks, as a means of placing me beyond the reach of the jurisdiction of the parliament, which has nothing to do with prisoners of state. I had no objection to this singular favor, provided it were not solicited in my name. As she never spoke of it a second time, I afterwards thought her proposition was made to sound me, and that the party did not think proper to have recourse to an expedient which would have put an end to everything.

A few days afterwards the marechal received from the Cure de Dueil, the friend of Grimm and Madam d'Epinau, a letter informing him, as from good authority, that the parliament was to proceed against me with the greatest severity, and that, on a day which he mentioned, an order was to be given to arrest me. I imagined this was fabricated by the Holbachiques; I knew the parliament to be very attentive to forms, and that on this occasion, beginning by arresting me before it was juridically known I avowed myself the author of the book was violating them all. I observed to Madam de Boufflers that none but persons accused of crimes which tend to endanger the public safety were, on a simple information ordered to be arrested lest they should escape punishment. But when government wish to punish a crime like mine, which merits honor and recompense, the proceedings are directed against the book, and the author is as much as possible left out of the question.

Upon this she made some subtle distinction, which I have forgotten, to prove that ordering me to be arrested instead of summoning me to be heard was a matter of favor. The next day I received a letter from Guy, who informed me that having in the morning been with the attorney-general, he had seen in his office a rough draft of a requisition against Emilius and the author. Guy, it is to be remembered, was the partner of Duchesne, who had printed the work, and without apprehensions on his own account, charitably gave this information to the author. The credit I gave to him maybe judged of.



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It was, no doubt, a very probable story, that a bookseller, admitted to an audience by the attorney-general, should read at ease scattered rough drafts in the office of that magistrate! Madam de Boufflers and others confirmed what he had said. By the absurdities which were incessantly rung in my ears, I was almost tempted to believe that everybody I heard speak had lost their senses.

Clearly perceiving that there was some mystery, which no one thought proper to explain to me, I patiently awaited the event, depending upon my integrity and innocence, and thinking myself happy, let the persecution which awaited me be what it would, to be called to the honor of suffering in the cause of truth. Far from being afraid and concealing myself, I went every day to the castle, and in the afternoon took my usual walk. On the eighth of June, the evening before the order was concluded on, I walked in company with two professors of the oratory, Father Alamanni and Father Mandard. We carried to Champeaux a little collation, which we ate with a keen appetite. We had forgotten to bring glasses, and supplied the want of them by stalks of rye, through which we sucked up the wine from the bottle, piquing ourselves upon the choice of large tubes to vie with each other in pumping up what we drank. I never was more cheerful in my life.

I have related in what manner I lost my sleep during my youth. I had since that time contracted a habit of reading every night in my bed, until I found my eyes begin to grow heavy. I then extinguished my wax taper, and endeavored to slumber for a few moments, which were in general very short. The book I commonly read at night was the Bible, which, in this manner I read five or six times from the beginning to the end. This evening, finding myself less disposed to sleep than ordinary, I continued my reading beyond the usual hour, and read the whole book which finishes at the Levite of Ephraim, the Book of judges, if I mistake not, for since that time I have never once seen it. This history affected me exceedingly, and, in a kind of a dream, my imagination still ran on it, when suddenly I was roused from my stupor by a noise and light. Theresa carrying a candle, lighted M. la Roche, who perceiving me hastily raise myself up, said: "Do not be alarmed; I come from Madam de Luxembourg, who, in her letter incloses you another from the Prince of Conti." In fact, in the letter of Madam de Luxembourg I found another, which an express from the prince had brought her, stating that, notwithstanding all his efforts, it was determined to proceed against me with the utmost rigor. "The fermentation," said he, "is extreme; nothing can ward off the blow; the court requires it, and the parliament will absolutely proceed; at seven o'clock in the morning an order will be made to arrest him, and persons will immediately be sent to execute it. I have obtained a promise that he shall not be pursued if he makes his escape; but if he persists in exposing himself to be taken this will immediately happen." La Roche conjured me in behalf of Madam de Luxembourg to rise and go and speak to her. It was two o'clock and she had just retired to bed. "She expects you," added he, "and will not go to sleep without speaking to you." I dressed myself in haste and ran to her.



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She appeared to be agitated; this was for the first time. Her distress affected me. In this moment of surprise and in the night, I myself was not free from emotion; but on seeing her I forgot my own situation, and thought of nothing but the melancholy part she would have to act should I suffer myself to be arrested; for feeling I had sufficient courage strictly to adhere to truth, although I might be certain of its being prejudicial or even destructive to me, I was convinced I had not presence of mind, address, nor perhaps firmness enough, not to expose her should I be closely pressed. This determined me to sacrifice my reputation to her tranquillity, and to do for her that which nothing could have prevailed upon me to do for myself. The moment I had come to this resolution, I declared it, wishing not to diminish the magnitude of the sacrifice by giving her the least trouble to obtain it. I am sure she could not mistake my motive, although she said not a word, which proved to me she was sensible of it. I was so much shocked at her indifference that I, for a moment, thought of retracting; but the marechal came in, and Madam de Bouffiers arrived from Paris a few moments afterwards. They did what Madam de Luxembourg ought to have done. I suffered myself to be flattered; I was ashamed to retract; and the only thing that remained to be determined upon was the place of my retreat and the time of my departure. M. de Luxembourg proposed to me to remain incognito a few days at the castle, that we might deliberate at leisure, and take such measures as should seem most proper; to this I would not consent, no more than to go secretly to the temple. I was determined to set off the same day rather than remain concealed in any place whatever.

Knowing I had secret and powerful enemies in the kingdom, I thought, notwithstanding my attachment to France, I ought to quit it, the better to insure my future tranquillity. My first intention was to retire to Geneva, but a moment of reflection was sufficient to dissuade me from committing that act of folly; I knew the ministry of France, more powerful at Geneva than at Paris, would not leave me more at peace in one of these cities than in the other, were a resolution taken to torment me. I was also convinced the 'Discourse upon Inequality' had excited against me in the council a hatred the more dangerous as the council dared not make it manifest. I had also learned, that when the New Eloisa appeared, the same council had immediately forbidden the sale of that work, upon the solicitation of Doctor Tronchin; but perceiving the example not to be imitated, even in Paris, the members were ashamed of what they had done, and withdrew the prohibition.



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I had no doubt that, finding in the present case a more favorable opportunity, they would be very careful to take advantage of it. Notwithstanding exterior appearances, I knew there reigned against me in the heart of every Genevese a secret jealousy, which, in the first favorable moment, would publicly show itself. Nevertheless, the love of my country called me to it, and could I have flattered myself I should there have lived in peace, I should not have hesitated; but neither honor nor reason permitting me to take refuge as a fugitive in a place of which I was a citizen, I resolved to approach it only, and to wait in Switzerland until something relative to me should be determined upon in Geneva. This state of uncertainty did not, as it will soon appear, continue long.

Madam de Boufflers highly disapproved this resolution, and renewed her efforts to induce me to go to England, but all she could say was of no effect; I had never loved England nor the English, and the eloquence of Madam de Boufflers, far from conquering my repugnancy, seemed to increase it without my knowing why. Determined to set off the same day, I was from the morning inaccessible to everybody, and La Roche, whom I sent to fetch my papers, would not tell Theresa whether or not I was gone. Since I had determined to write my own memoirs, I had collected a great number of letters and other papers, so that he was obliged to return several times. A part of these papers, already selected, were laid aside, and I employed the morning in sorting the rest, that I might take with me such only as were necessary and destroy what remained.

M. de Luxembourg, was kind enough to assist me in this business, which we could not finish before it was necessary I should set off, and I had not time to burn a single paper. The marechal offered to take upon himself to sort what I should leave behind me, and throw into the fire every sheet that he found useless, without trusting to any person whomsoever, and to send me those of which he should make choice. I accepted his offer, very glad to be delivered from that care, that I might pass the few hours I had to remain with persons so dear to me, from whom I was going to separate forever. He took the key of the chamber in which I had left these papers; and, at my earnest solicitation, sent for my poor aunt, who, not knowing what had become of me, or what was to become of herself, and in momentary expectation of the arrival of the officers of justice, without knowing how to act or what to answer them, was miserable to an extreme. La Roche accompanied her to the castle in silence; she thought I was already far from Montmorency; on perceiving me, she made the place resound with her cries, and threw herself into my arms. Oh, friendship, affinity of sentiment, habit and intimacy.

In this pleasing yet cruel moment, the remembrance of so many days of happiness, tenderness and peace, passed together augmented the grief of a first separation after an union of seventeen years during which we had scarcely lost sight of each other for a single day.



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The marechal who saw this embrace, could not suppress his tears. He withdrew. Theresa determined never more to leave me out of her sight. I made her feel the inconvenience of accompanying me at that moment, and the necessity of her remaining to take care of my effects and collect my money. When an order is made to arrest a man, it is customary to seize his papers and put a seal upon his effects, or to make an inventory of them and appoint a guardian to whose care they are intrusted. It was necessary Theresa should remain to observe what passed, and get everything settled in the most advantageous manner possible. I promised her she should shortly come to me; the marechal confirmed my promise; but I did not choose to tell her to what place I was going, that, in case of being interrogated by the persons who came to take me into custody, she might with truth plead ignorance upon that head. In embracing her the moment before we separated I felt within me a most extraordinary emotion, and I said to her with an agitation which, alas! was but too prophetic: "My dear girl, you must arm yourself with courage. You have partaken of my prosperity; it now remains to you, since you have chosen it, to partake of my misery. Expect nothing in future but insult and calamity in following me. The destiny begun for me by this melancholy day will pursue me until my latest hour."

I had now nothing to think of but my departure. The officers were to arrive at ten o'clock. It was four in the afternoon when I set off, and they were not yet come. It was determined I should take post. I had no carriage, The marechal made me a present of a cabriolet, and lent me horses and a postillion the first stage, where, in consequence of the measures he had taken, I had no difficulty in procuring others.

As I had not dined at table, nor made my appearance in the castle, the ladies came to bid me adieu in the entresol where I had passed the day. Madam de Luxembourg embraced me several times with a melancholy air; but I did not in these embraces feel the pressing I had done in those she had lavished upon me two or three years before. Madam de Boufflers also embraced me, and said to me many civil things. An embrace which surprised me more than all the rest had done was one from Madam de Mirepoix, for she also was at the castle. Madam la Marechale de Mirepoix is a person extremely cold, decent, and reserved, and did not, at least as she appeared to me, seem quite exempt from the natural haughtiness of the house of Lorraine. She had never shown me much attention. Whether, flattered by an honor I had not expected, I endeavored to enhance the value of it; or that there really was in the embrace a little of that commiseration natural to generous hearts, I found in her manner and look something energetical which penetrated me. I have since that time frequently thought that, acquainted with my destiny, she could not refrain from a momentary concern for my fate.



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The marechal did not open his mouth; he was as pale as death. He would absolutely accompany me to the carriage which waited at the watering place. We crossed the garden without uttering a single word. I had a key of the park with which I opened the gate, and instead of putting it again into my pocket, I held it out to the marechal without saying a word. He took it with a vivacity which surprised me, and which has since frequently intruded itself upon my thoughts.

I have not in my whole life had a more bitter moment than that of this separation. Our embrace was long and silent: we both felt that this was our last adieu.

Between Barre and Montmorency I met, in a hired carriage, four men in black, who saluted me smilingly. According to what Theresa has since told me of the officers of justice, the hour of their arrival and their manner of behavior, I have no doubt, that they were the persons I met, especially as the order to arrest me, instead of being made out at seven o'clock, as I had been told it would, had not been given till noon. I had to go through Paris. A person in a cabriolet is not much concealed. I saw several persons in the streets who saluted me with an air of familiarity but I did not know one of them. The same evening I changed my route to pass Villeroy. At Lyons the couriers were conducted to the commandant. This might have been embarrassing to a man unwilling either to lie or change his name. I went with a letter from Madam de Luxembourg to beg M. de Villeroy would spare me this disagreeable ceremony. M. de Villeroy gave me a letter of which I made no use, because I did not go through Lyons. This letter still remains sealed up amongst my papers. The duke pressed me to sleep at Villeroy, but I preferred returning to the great road, which I did, and travelled two more stages the same evening.

My carriage was inconvenient and uncomfortable, and I was too much indisposed to go far in a day. My appearance besides was not sufficiently distinguished for me to be well served, and in France post-horses feel the whip in proportion to the favorable opinion the postillion has of his temporary master. By paying the guides generously thought I should make up for my shabby appearance: this was still worse. They took me for a worthless fellow who was carrying orders, and, for the first time in my life, travelling post. From that moment I had nothing but worn-out hacks, and I became the sport of the postillions. I ended as I should have begun by being patient, holding my tongue, and suffering myself to be driven as my conductors thought proper.



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I had sufficient matter of reflection to prevent me from being weary on the road, employing myself in the recollection of that which had just happened; but this was neither my turn of mind nor the inclination of my heart. The facility with which I forget past evils, however recent they may be, is astonishing. The remembrance of them becomes feeble, and, sooner or later, effaced, in the inverse proportion to the greater degree of fear with which the approach of them inspires me. My cruel imagination, incessantly tormented by the apprehension of evils still at a distance, diverts my attention, and prevents me from recollecting those which are past. Caution is needless after the evil has happened, and it is time lost to give it a thought. I, in some measure, put a period to my misfortunes before they happen: the more I have suffered at their approach the greater is the facility with which I forget them; whilst, on the contrary, incessantly recollecting my past happiness, I, if I may so speak, enjoy it a second time at pleasure. It is to this happy disposition I am indebted for an exemption from that ill humor which ferments in a vindictive mind, by the continual remembrance of injuries received, and torments it with all the evil it wishes to do its enemy. Naturally choleric, I have felt all the force of anger, which in the first moments has sometimes been carried to fury, but a desire of vengeance never took root within me. I think too little of the offence to give myself much trouble about the offender. I think of the injury I have received from him on account of that he may do me a second time, but were I certain he would never do me another the first would be instantly forgotten. Pardon of offences is continually preached to us. I knew not whether or not my heart would be capable of overcoming its hatred, for it never yet felt that passion, and I give myself too little concern about my enemies to have the merit of pardoning them. I will not say to what a degree, in order to torment me, they torment themselves. I am at their mercy, they have unbounded power, and make of it what use they please. There is but one thing in which I set them at defiance: which is in tormenting themselves about me, to force me to give myself the least trouble about them.

The day after my departure I had so perfectly forgotten what had passed, the parliament, Madam de Pompadour, M. de Choiseul, Grimm, and D'Alembert, with their conspiracies, that had not it been for the necessary precautions during the journey I should have thought no more of them. The remembrance of one thing which supplied the place of all these was what I had read the evening before my departure. I recollect, also, the pastorals of Gessner, which his translator Hubert had sent me a little time before. These two ideas occurred to me so strongly, and were connected in such a manner in my mind, that I was determined to endeavor to unite them by treating after the manner



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of Gessner, the subject of the Levite of Ephraim. His pastoral and simple style appeared to me but little fitted to so horrid a subject, and it was not to be presumed the situation I was then in would furnish me with such ideas as would enliven it. However, I attempted the thing, solely to amuse myself in my cabriolet, and without the least hope of success. I had no sooner begun than I was astonished at the liveliness of my ideas, and the facility with which I expressed them. In three days I composed the first three cantos of the little poem I finished at Motiers, and I am certain of not having done anything in my life in which there is a more interesting mildness of manners, a greater brilliancy of coloring, more simple delineations, greater exactness of proportion, or more antique simplicity in general, notwithstanding the horror of the subject which in itself is abominable, so that besides every other merit I had still that of a difficulty conquered. If the Levite of Ephraim be not the best of my works, it will ever be that most esteemed. I have never read, nor shall I ever read it again without feeling interiorly the applause of a heart without acrimony, which, far from being embittered by misfortunes, is susceptible of consolation in the midst of them, and finds within itself a resource by which they are counterbalanced. Assemble the great philosophers, so superior in their books to adversity which they do not suffer, place them in a situation similar to mine, and, in the first moments of the indignation of their injured honor, give them a like work to compose, and it will be seen in what manner they will acquit themselves of the task.

When I set off from Montmorency to go into Switzerland, I had resolved to stop at Yverdon, at the house of my old friend Roguin, who had several years before retired to that place, and had invited me to go and see him. I was told Lyons was not the direct road, for which reason I avoided going through it. But I was obliged to pass through Besancon, a fortified town, and consequently subject to the same inconvenience. I took it into my head to turn about and to go to Salins, under the pretense of going to see M. de Marian, the nephew of M. Dupin, who had an employment at the salt-works, and formerly had given me many invitations to his house. The expedition succeeded: M. de Marian was not in the way, and, happily, not being obliged to stop, I continued my journey without being spoken to by anybody.

The moment I was within the territory of Berne, I ordered the postillion to stop; I got out of my carriage, prostrated myself, kissed the ground, and exclaimed in a transport of joy: "Heaven, the protector of virtue be praised, I touch a land of liberty!" Thus blind and unsuspecting in my hopes, have I ever been passionately attached to that which was to make me unhappy. The man thought me mad. I got into the carriage, and a few hours afterwards I had the pure and lively satisfaction of feeling myself



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pressed within the arms of the respectable Rougin. Ah! let me breathe for a moment with this worthy host! It is necessary I should gain strength and courage before I proceed further. I shall soon find that in my way which will give employment to them both. It is not without reason that I have been diffuse in the recital of all the circumstances I have been able to recollect. Although they may seem uninteresting, yet, when once the thread of the conspiracy is got hold of, they may throw some light upon the progress of it; and, for instance, without giving the first idea of the problem I am going to propose, afford some aid in solving it.

Suppose that, for the execution of the conspiracy of which I was the object, my absence was absolutely necessary, everything tending to that effect could not have happened otherwise than it did; but if without suffering myself to be alarmed by the nocturnal embassy of Madam de Luxembourg, I had continued to hold out, and, instead of remaining at the castle, had returned to my bed and quietly slept until morning, should I have equally had an order of arrest made out against me? This is a great question upon which the solution of many others depends, and for the examination of it, the hour of the comminatory decree of arrest, and that of the real decree may be remarked to advantage. A rude but sensible example of the importance of the least detail in the exposition of facts, of which the secret causes are sought for to discover them by induction.