

THE
BLOODY HAND,
OR, THE
FATAL CUP.

A TALE OF HORROR!

In the Course of which is described the

TERRIBLE DUNGEONS AND CELLS

IN THE

Prisons of Buonaparte.

“Your old Men murdered, your Mothers outraged, your Wives defiled, your Children danced, to the Yell of a brutal Soldiery, on the Point of the Spear, all Hell let loose, would scarce make up my History.”

“If you have Tears, prepare to shed them now.”

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THE BLOODY HAND,

OR,

FATAL CUP.

IN taking upon myself to narrate the incredible circumstances, attending my unhappy course through life, there is but little doubt that many will be inclined to believe that I am merely endeavoring to gain a pecuniary aid, at the expence of both truth and reason. However horrible the greater part of my narrative may appear, there are persons, now in existence, who can vouch for its perfect veracity, and who have suffered much the same torments as myself, from the unprincipled severity of a detestable tyrant, whose negotiations and intrigues have set all Europe in a blaze, and threatens to annihilate all that's great and good. Englishmen, whose proudest boast is liberty, and whose national character presents so strong a barrier to tyranny and oppression, will feel too much interested in my fate, to permit a system like that of which I have been so long, and am now a victim, to grow up and flourish among them.

Although I am not myself of this country, yet my forefathers were originally of the kingdom of Ireland, and descended from their ancient race of warlike monarchs of the north of that country. I shall veil their's and my own name under that of O'Mara— my great grandfather, Reginald, after the battle of the Boyne, so fatal to the interest of King James II. and which firmly established King William III. on the English throne, thought it prudent to emigrate to France, where his consummate skill and masterly address soon procured him employment in the French court—his income was ample and he lived to a very advanced age; even 'till a few months after I was born, altho' my grandfather was no more, (who also had been engaged in a situation in the court, to which my own father had succeeded). It was in the year 1766 that I was born, and the most remarkable circumstance worthy of record, is the dying words of the patriarch, (I may say) of our family; "Reginald," said he, as he hung pensively over me, while yet in the arms of my mother, "thou wilt survive the country that has fostered your family; France is near her period, and dreadful I think will be her dissolution—full surely thou'lt live to see it, for your face is marked with trouble and sorrow—may heaven guide and direct you, for thou art the last of O'Mara's."

The knowledge the old gentleman had of the intrigues and corruptions of the French court, no doubt, led him thus to foresee the late dreadful revolution, for his dying words were surely prophetic of no other event.

Having said thus much of my father's family, some account of my maternal parent is essentially necessary to elucidate my life.—My mother, Antoinette Beaufois, was the daughter of the Marquis de Beaufois, whose youthful adventures was the chief cause of my sufferings—so strangely are events linked together by fate. The marquis in course was *professedly* a catholic; but owing to his acquaintance, with a young Sicilian of the most enticing, and at the same time mysterious manners, he was secretly a deist, and had been made a member of the society well

known as the *Illuminati* in Germany—his disregard of the sacred prejudices of the members of the catholic church was the chief cause of this history.

One day, being at Aix la Chapelle, he saw a young woman, of extreme neat appearance, apparently following him, with an anxiety, as if she had something important to communicate, at the same time carefully concealing a full view of her countenance by a thick veil. His natural gallantry led him to ask if he could render any essential service to Mademoiselle. “Alas, Sir,” she said, and fainted in his arms, he drew up her veil to give her air, and discovered one of the most beautiful faces that he had ever seen—every tender sentiment was awakened—and he felt, for the first time, what it is to love; with all the additional ardor, agitation, and tenderness of first sight. The Marquis immediately conveyed her to his hotel, and soon, by the aid of his hostess, the lady opened her angelic eyes, which completed the conquest of Beaufois’ heart. The Marquis's curiosity led him to enquire her history, and the cause of her mean appearance, when her person and manners bespoke her of infinitely better family. “Indeed, Sir,” she said, “I fear you will, when you have heard my story, blame my imprudence, and restore me to my prosecutors”—raising her large blue eyes, as she spoke, to the face of the Marquis—this was too much—and the Marquis swore he would defend her with his sword at the expence of his life—she seized his hand and raised it to her lips, kissed it, and thus began her narration:

“My Lord, I shall make the most unreserved confidence; I am of a noble family, my name is Maria, youngest daughter of Count Navonne, whose ancestors, you cannot but know, having been much attached to the Hugonots, had reduced their patrimony. My father's property is but small, but he has a proud and unsubdued desire of attaining all the appearances of his ancient splendor in the eldest son of his family, who also possesses all the haughty sentiments of his father—my younger brother has already been sacrificed to their ambition, and is now in the West Floridas, seeking his fortune by his industry—my eldest sister was, against her inclination, with the ruin of her hopes of an alliance with the Chevalier St. Foix, wedded to the old and loathsome Duke de Spenati, and carried by him into a foreign country, and is now leading the most unhappy life that jealousy and impotent old age can inflict—for myself, I was to have been placed in a convent, in a few weeks, and being of a gay and free disposition, would rather run any risk, than be shut up the whole of my life in a gloomy convent among its disconsolate inhabitants. But mark me, Marquis,” said she, raising her voice, “the same resolution that has led to the adoption of this mode to free myself from one tyranny, will protect me from any attempt on my character, and stain upon my honor.”—“Will it,” said a stern voice at this moment, and about a dozen ferocious fellows rushed into the room, and seized the trembling girl, before the Marquis could recover from his surprize.

It is hardly necessary to say, that the intruders were the Count Navonne and the Gens d’Armes of the province, who had thus torn Maria from the arms of her protector. The Marquis, the moment he had recovered from the stupor that had seized his senses, determined to follow the Count. They passed hastily along the street, while a thousand projects agitated the mind of Beaufois—at one time, prudence told him to forbear the pursuit, while courage and love inspired him to persevere—but what most astonished him, was, that Maria should have chosen him, out, a

perfect stranger, as he conceived himself to her, as her protector. The Count and his party shortly reached a coach, in which he placed his daughter, and followed himself, with his son, the proud and haughty Edmund. He followed them 'till he was breathless past the barrier, and saw them on the road to Paris—he immediately returned to his hotel, arranged his baggage, and set out for that city in his cabriolet. Nearly the whole road he kept them in view, and, at length, they entered the metropolis. The Count's carriage stopped: the Marquis alighted, and perceived them conduct Maria into a convent of Carmelite nuns—a few moments had scarcely elapsed, before the Count and his son once more ascended the carriage, without the lady, and retraced the road they had come.

The Marquis thus having some clue to guide his course, went to his town house, where, naturally his servants were surprized at his very sudden arrival; they eagerly asked if any misfortune had happened, as he really was an excellent master; he made some trifling excuse of being tired of the country, and then asked for Mons. Bernand, the Swiss before alluded to; he was informed, that he had that moment entered the house, and was in the library, having been absent about a week. "What," exclaimed the Marquis, "Bernand been out of town, when he declined accompanying me;" and went instantly to seek the Swiss—the Marquis found Bernand drawing off his boots, which were covered with mud, and his whole appearance bore marks of hard riding—Bernand rose to receive the Marquis, with some confusion, but not surprize, and warmly saluted him and enquired the cause of his hasty return? "First," said Beaufois, "how came it you have been in the country, when you declined bearing me company—is Bernand already tired of my friendship?" "How can Beaufois," said he, "one moment entertain a jealousy of the kind?—I have been to Versailles, where I expected to have been advantageously placed at court, through the interest of Mad. Maintenon, but have been disappointed—I am sure our friendship is too deeply rooted, not to incline me to spend every moment of my life with Beaufois, did not circumstances and duty prevent it—but," he continued, "you appear agitated, can I be of any service to you, or offer you any advice?" The Marquis seated himself, and related the whole of the foregoing adventures, and declared he was determined to rescue Maria, or perish in the attempt. "You would hardly think," said Bernard, "of tearing her from the convent, you know the danger you would run, and how much the hungry priests would be your enemies; they would certainly hunt you down like a wild beast." "These," replied the Marquis, "shall be but inferior considerations, and this night she shall be free; and if you have not spirit enough to accompany me, remain here in safety." "No never," exclaimed he, "if you are resolute, I will never forsake you—but a scheme has struck me which may perhaps further your views; I will enquire if there is any nun indisposed, (which probably there may be in such a large establishment) in the disguise of a Benedictine; I will offer to confess her, and produce a bull from his holiness, which will be a sufficient passport of admission, and leave the rest to me; you wait from twelve o'clock at the east turret, and we'll try for once if nature and love, are not superior to religion and chastity." "Well said," replied Beaufois, "thou art still the same friend as ever—none but the brave deserve the fair." They then parted, with mutual satisfaction, to their posts.

The hours quickly flew, though the Marquis thought they seemed to have slackened their usual pace. At twelve o'clock, he was in attendance at the appointed rendezvous, with a single domestic, and waited with the utmost anxiety the result of Bernard's scheme. The night was dark and gloomy—the convent was in an unfrequented part of the Fauxbourg St. Antoine—the air returned a sullen sound as it was broke, in its course, by abutting angles of the wall—the blue lightning flashed, at intervals, in the hemisphere—the thunder just murmured on the ear, and every appearance announced an approaching storm. The convent clock tolled two, and no sound broke on the universal stillness of the night—a gentle whisper, in a few minutes assailed his ear, which appeared to come from some person near him, his heart beat high with expectation, and Beaufois cast his eager eyes on the turret; still no Maria, nor yet his friend. At this moment he perceived, turning the winding of the building, a man muffled in a long cloak, the Marquis immediately challenged him with “who go's there.” “Why do you ask,” demanded the stranger. “Your name,” said the Marquis, “we must wave politeness now, for if you are a foe, one of us shall fall before we quit this spot.” “I know you not,” replied the incognito, “therefore am I not your foe, my business is important here, my name is St. Foix.” “St. Foix,” rejoined he, “sure Maria Navonne mentioned him as the lover of his sister, the Marchioness Spenati.”—“the same, and it is now my business to consider of the rescue of the unfortunate girl, from the tyranny of the count, her father.” An explanation now took place, when it appeared St. Foix hearing of Maria's flight, had sought her to offer her his protection, and that he had been accidentally witness of her reception at the convent, where he had been to visit a relation. They had scarcely made each other acquainted with their views, when some one appearing on the turret, St. Foix hastened to prepare a carriage, while the Marquis waited to receive the fugitive.

The rain began to pour in torrents, and the whole elements were in one universal war; a female appeared, with a lighted taper in one hand, and a SILVER CUP in the other—the light was momentarily extinguished, The Marquis prepared his rope ladder, and received Maria once more into his arms. “Haste,” said she, “my flight is discovered, and nothing but a miracle can save us.” “Never fear,” he replied, “hell nor earth combined, shall tear you from me, while life glows in my veins.” They hastened to meet St. Foix, who was in waiting, and reached the carriage in safety. He was about to place his fair charge in the vehicle, when a band of the Gens d'Arms appeared, attended with some friars, and a vast concourse of people. “That's him,” exclaimed the foremost holy father, “seize the sacrilegious wretch, and the harlot that accompanies him,” at the same time, advancing to seize Maria, who stood trembling by the side of the carriage. The gentlemen drew their swords, and exclaimed, “stand off, the first that stirs dies.” “What?” said the friar, “you would not attack the sacred minister of your religion—officers seize him.” “Stand, I say,” again repeated the Marquis, “or your holy blood shall be one common flood with these plebians.” So sacred then was the character of priest, that, in spite of this threat, he advanced, and placed his hand on the garment of Maria—the Marquis was infuriated, and discretion was asleep—he cut at the priest, and, with one blow, severed his HAND short at the wrist, which fell BLEEDING on the earth. The priest writhed with agony, but his indignation overcome his pain, and in a moment he seized his dislocated member, and solemnly said, “By this BLOODY

HAND, I appeal to the vengeance of heaven and earth, on you and all your posterity; and I here swear, ever to pursue you ‘till retribution has satiated my revenge—and you, woman, who have sacrilegiously robbed our holy church, the law will soon reward your impiety and licentiousness—I am eternally your bitter foe.” The Marquis was panic-struck, St. Foix dropped his sword, and Maria fainted. The officers of justice, secured their persons, and conveyed them into custody.

It would be useless to enumerate their examinations, but suffice it to say, that the Marquis and St. Foix, were sent to *solitary* confinement in the bastille, and that Maria was immured in the house for female correction.

They endured an imprisonment, which as my own sufferings (and comparatively without any criminality so much surpassed) it would be useless to recount the particulars of. For two years, without social intercourse with family or friends, they lingered away their unhappy lives, but, at length, an ecclesiastical tribunal was erected, and, without any formal preparation, or previous notice, they were dragged to trial. The meeting between the Marquis and Maria was affecting in the extreme; their mutual sufferings had endeared them to each other, and the enquiries which involuntarily burst from their lips, even affected their stern judges, divested, as they pretended to be of all human passions. Their guilt was clearly proved—against the Marquis and St. Foix, there were a concourse of witnesses; and as to Maria, it appeared that some *holy father* who had been admitted to confess a sick nun, had pretended he had discovered a fire in her room, and gave the alarm, at which time, Maria was receiving the eucharist in her cell, as *she said*, she was too ill to attend the ceremony in the chapel. The unusual cry called away the fathers who were about her, who, in their hurry, rushing hastily by the *friar* who had given the alarm, they turned aside his gown and discovered a sword; this led to suspicion, they turned the key on him, and hastened back to Maria, whom they discovered had fled to the turrets; she heard them pursuing her, and she just cleared the wall before their arrival; they instantly returned, but found their prisoner had unaccountably escaped, they then summoned the Gens d'Armes, which led to the circumstances already mentioned; while Maria, in her eager haste had taken the cup which she was raising to her lips, which gave colour to the accusation of robbery; they were remanded back to their former prisons.

The moment the friends of the Marquis were acquainted of his fate, which, ‘till his trial, remained a mystery, they used all their influence in his favor to save him from the impending judgment, as well as the lady of his choice; they petitioned the king; they offered a pecuniary fine, or any thing short of life, to expiate the offence. The solicitations were so numerous from many of the nobility, that the king was induced to hold a bed of justice on the subject, and after the crimes had been committed four years, the petitioners were referred to what accommodation they could make with the court of Rome, and the holy father who had lost his hand. The haughty friar, St. Pierre, was inflexible to persuasion, till they offered him a million of livres for his acceptance. The covetousness of the friar induced him to bend, and he consented to petition the conclave of cardinals, as he had, in *pure christian charity*, pardoned the offender, who had dared to raise his hand against such an august pillar of the church. Another year elapsed, and the pope’s

bull arrived; it extolled the charity of St. Pierre; condemned the sacrilege of Beaufois and St. Foix; and as to Maria, they considered her conduct almost past expiation—but concluded with saying, as the church was ever indulgently inclined to receive repentant sinners, they gave as their decision, first, that as Maria, daughter of Count Navonne, could not, with decency, be received into any religious congregation, from her glaring outrage, she should be united to the Marquis, under condition of his eldest son, or in default of a son, the first male in the family in a direct line from Maria, should be devoted to the church, that the Marquis should forfeit half his property to erect a new Carmelite society of nuns, and that St. Foix, (who, by the by, had not so many friends as Beaufois) should be banished from France and the ecclesiastical states. The same bull offered a reward of ten thousand crowns for the discovery of the man who had assumed the habit of a friar, and raised such a confusion in the convent.

This decision, hard as it might appear, was gladly complied with; and the union of Maria with the Marquis was immediately solemnised. St. Foix crossed the Alps, and settled, it was then supposed, in some of the maritime parts of Italy. Father St. Pierre, although his avarice was so handsomely plied, still, when he saw the Marquis, did not fail of reminding him of his dreadful and vindictive oath, and added, “I will always preserve that HAND, which you so daringly severed from my body, to instigate me, while I live, to cause your promises and engagements with the church to be fulfilled.

Their union was replete with happiness, and an only daughter blessed their chaste embraces, the beautiful Antoinette; who was wedded to my father, with the consent of both families, and an engagement was entered into, on his part, that if he had a son, he should be devoted to the church, and of which father St. Pierre did not fail to remind him.

To that union I owe my unhappy being. I was devoted to become a sacrifice to the bigotted superstition of the church. Father St. Pierre had eagerly watched my mother’s approaching confinement, and it is impossible to describe the pleasure with which he heard that her offspring was a boy; he immediately gave notice to the proper tribunal of the event, and every thing bore the appearance of my being initiated in the priesthood. Maria (the Marchioness Beaufois) never ceased to lament the fate that was assigned to me; indeed, in a few months, she fell into a desponding state, which brought her to an early grave. The grief of the Marquis was unbounded, and nothing seemed to give him any consolation but his constant attendance on me. His attachment, in course, ripened with my years, and, ‘till his death, which happened when I was ten years of age, we were inseparable. In the course of this correspondence he had instilled into my mind the most liberal and enlightened ideas; he had taught me to despise the flummery and deceit of the Catholic church, and to have an unbounded love of liberty—his themes of continual praise were the English constitution; the noble defence of their liberty which the Swiss had maintained; and the glorious examples of the low countries, in resisting the encroachments of Austria and France. The authors that were put in my hand, were Rapin’s History of England, the works of Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu, and other free writers—the

translations of Locke, Swift, Addison, and Shakespeare—consequently, my mind formed on this model, I was not much fitted for a priest.

At the age of eighteen, I was demanded of my parents, for whose happiness I was induced readily to comply ; indeed the seclusion of a monastery had no horrors to me, as I thought, in its silent cells, I might more advantageously explore my favorite authors, and pursue my studies. From the perusal of Addison's Evidences of Christianity, I had become a rational Christian, and although I continued to detest the absurdities of mode, to which I was devoted, I was no longer a deist or an infidel.

I continued the monotony of a moral secluded life, till the famous æra of calling together the States General, owing to the embarrassments of the finances of France. The fervor that this event excited in the minds of the people, awakened all the latent energies of my soul; I wrote several Essays on the Rights of the People to have a share in all government. This soon brought me into notice, and, for some peculiar expressions, I was arrested by Lettres de Cachet, and sent to the Bastille—my body was imprisoned, but my mind was free, and my most fervent prayers were that the people might be emancipated from the slavery under which they had long laboured.

I remained in this prison secluded some time, when, one morning, an universal uproar broke on the silence of the prison; the cannons were drawn out; and the prisoners were locked up in their respective apartments. The suspense under which I laboured was dreadful. The cannons roared around me—continual shouts and cries assailed my ears, but still I could not perceive or understand the confusion—at length, a silence ensued—and again the noise was renewed—it approached my cell. “Liberty,” “Liberty,” resounded around, and I was set free; yes, the castles of despotism were devoted to ruin, and an insulted people restored the unhappy prisoners of the Bastille (many of whom had languished twenty years in that prison) to day-light and liberty.

I was conveyed, amidst shouts of triumph, to the gardens of the Palais Royale, and here, for the first time, I addressed a large assembly in favor of liberty and the rights of man. The applause with which I was hailed; the imprisonment I had suffered; and my dislike of my religion and the sacerdotal office, could not fail of arousing my ambition, and, from that moment, I was devoted to the rising cause of freedom.

The death of a member of the Chamber of the Clergy, made way for my becoming one of that body; which I solicited and obtained, at the critical time of the dispute of voting by chambers was in agitation. The Abbé Lally Tolendal was one of the first who took his seat and verified his powers, I was with him, and the people hailed us as the saviours of our country. The title of the “National Convention” was applied to the assembly, and I was become a patriot and a staunch opposer of every encroachment on what, I conceived, to be the dues of the people.

It would be both useless and uninteresting to enter into a detail of the various surprising events, with which France was agitated for above three years. Amidst all the commotions, I remained attached to the king, though I was desirous of his power being limited. At length his trial came on, and the votes were collected for his death—some new members but a few days had joined us, and what was my surprize to find among them a harsh and stern looking old man, who I soon recognised as Father St. Pierre; yes, it was him, but no longer the priest and churchman,

but a stern republican. Among the most clamorous for the decapitation of Louis was St. Pierre; I, perhaps, as violently opposed him. I thought I perceived the remains of his sworn hatred to my family in his reply, and even felt awed and terrified by his presence. The convention now grew tumultuous, and I withdrew from any further interference with that body, and retired to Chalons, to spend my life in peace and quietness.

Although I had been brought up as a priest, I had never taken orders, and when the law passed to permit the clergy to marry, I felt that both in conscience and right that I was free to choose. On so important a point, I could not fail to consult my parents, whom I had somewhat offended, by the public part I had taken. Before I left Paris, I sought them out with some difficulty, for they had carefully concealed themselves, as their lives were in danger, from their attendance on the king—the interview was affecting in the extreme, but where such attachment existed, reconciliation could not be difficult. I had fixed my ideas on a sweet little girl, whom I had seen in the Rue St. Martin, and consulted my parents on my marriage; they made but little opposition, and soon the little Marion was my own. She was of a genteel family—her father and mother had fell a sacrifice to the fury of the times, and she was an unprotected and unportioned orphan; these were irresistible claims on the tenderness of my mother, and no family could be more affectionately united and more happy, than we were at our retirement at Chalons—Oh! happy days of peace and content, O that the ambition of my heart had let me have remained for ever in that calm retirement.

I remained a silent observer of all the factions that agitated my country, till the time of the famous Council of Elders; some of my friends at Paris, wrote to me and pressed me to become one of that assembly; many letters passed between us, and, at length, I fatally consented, once more, to leave my peaceful and happy home, to engage in the tumultuous scenes of the world.

My parents, my lovely Marion, and my three very infant children removed to the capital, and I took my seat in the great council. At this time Buonaparte, who had immortalized his name by his campaigns in Italy, and his memorable passing over the Glaciers, began to shew the rising ambition of his soul; the directory, consequently, were desirous of employing him at a distance, and the general was dispatched on the expedition to Egypt, which ended so successfully to the arms of England.

I was in my place in the Council, an important question being agitated, when suddenly the doors were burst open, and the hall was filled with soldiers; I immediately rose (for I had some suspicion of this outrage) and protested against such open violation of all privilege attached to the assembly; but it was in vain, the grenadiers enforced obedience at the point of the bayonet, and soon cleared the hall, while Buonaparte stood a trembling spectator of the numerous daggers raised against his breast, and only defended by a few devoted followers.

My folly in leaving Chalons was now apparent, I flew to my family, who were already acquainted with the disaster, and trembling for my fate, “My Reginald,” said Marion, “are you safe.” “Yes, thank God,” I exclaimed, “but Paris is no longer a place of safety for honest men, we must away to Chalons, come, my father, do not grieve, it is enough for me whose ambition has been the cause of all this fresh trouble.” “My son! my son,” he replied, “thou art doubly dear

to me, you cannot cause me sorrow, but this fresh calamity, added to the loss of every friend of my youth, is too much! Unhappy France for what fate are ye reserved.”

We hastily left Paris, and were on the road to that cottage, where I had spent the sweetest years of my life; already the invigorating air of the country had given us fresh spirits, and we again smiled in comparative security; yes, it was indeed a calm that foreboded a coming storm.

We had scarcely been at our new residence a few months, when, early one morning, a party of the officers of the police arrived and demanded the person of Regina d O’Mara, as suspected of holding treasonable and seditious conversation on the present government: the only color of accusation was a little society, of which I was a member, in the village, at which I spent one evening in the week, and discoursed on public affairs. “Who is my accuser?” said I. “We are not bound to inform you,” replied one of them, “but as for the matter of that—it is Le Loup, the surgeon, and supported by Citizen St. Pierre.” “St. Pierre!” we exclaimed in one voice, “then added I, “my fate is ascertained—farewell, my wife;—farewell, my friends—consider me as dead; the sin of my grandfather is fallen on his children; the vindictive priest has not forgotten his oath.” I hastened from my afflicted family, and surrendered to the officers.

Relays of horses were ready on the road, and we never once alighted; my guards observed a profound silence, except occasionally when they took refreshments, which they had with them, and which they never offered me the slightest quantity. In a most exhausted state, I arrived at an old convent, which had been modernized, seemingly near to Paris—it was surrounded by rising ground, though it was itself situated in a valley, which appeared a complete swamp—Here I was received by the jailors, several of whom seemed well suited for deeds of death. After passing through two large iron gates, I was had to a counting house, where my name, age, and other particulars were carefully registered; this being done, a hoarse voice said, “follow me.” I had no power but that of obedience—we crossed a stone yard, and my keeper led me to a dark passage, the end of which could not be perceived; I recoiled back, and almost refused to enter it—“This is the way,” said the jailor, “and I have no time for delay.” We went some hundred of yards till we came to some stone stairs, which passed under ground—and he opened a heavy door, “Here” said he, “you must remain; for the present you will find the prison allowance.” In a state of almost inanimation, I entered the dungeon and the door closed on me, and I found myself in almost total darkness—the only light admitted, being from a small chink purposely left in the wall, which, with the welcome ray of day, at the same time admitted a piercing cold air.

I threw myself on some straw, in one corner of the cell and gave way to the most bitter complaints—my parents, my wife, my children, gave double poignancy to my reflections; and I probably should have remained some hours in that situation, had I not felt an universal coldness seize my whole frame. The want of refreshment would have been forgotten by me, but for this circumstance, and, in moving, I discovered a small loaf and some water. I eagerly eat the bread, as nothing had passed my lips for two days, and again gave myself up to my reflections.

It was November, and night soon set in, and left me in total darkness and petrified with cold—I threw myself on the straw, and covered myself, as well as I could with the scanty rug;

for hours I laid in the most dismal situation of mind and body, 'till fatigue threw me into a perturbed sleep.

The next morning when I awoke, I found the rug and my clothes completely wet through, and my limbs in such a stiff state as scarcely to be able to perform their office.

I remained some hours in this dangerous situation, when my gaoler unlocked the door, and desired me to follow him. I was then taken before a man and stripped of all clothes, which in that drenched state was far from unwelcome, but judge my surprize, when, instead of my own clothes or any similar being returned, I was given yellow trowsers, a blue jacket, and a red woollen cap—It was in vain I begged to be admitted to wear my own clothes, I was told it was the rules of the prison, which could not be departed from. I was then conveyed, leaning on the arm of one of the men (for my knees were nearly stiff by this time) to a small stone room, where there was a mattrass, a chair, and several other trifling conveniences.

In the mean time a thousand fears agitated my family, whose applications, for several weeks, proved unavailing, and which, before they accomplished, I was reduced to such a dreadful state as to be necessitated to be sent to the infirmary. I remained there with many comforts, to which I had long been a stranger to, 'till my strength was recruited—I was then removed back to my former cell, and, in addition to my former allowance of bread and water, I was allowed a pint of the weak wines of France a day, which is about equivalent to a pint of English porter.

One morning I was summoned below, for the first time, since my incarceration, and was told I was visited by friends—yes, I saw my wife—I saw my children, through a double grating—the surprize was too much, and I fell on the cold stones; how long I remained in that situation, I cannot judge, but when I recovered I found myself in my cell, with the goaler—I eagerly enquired for my family, and was told they were gone. I was near raving in despair, 'till the man had humanity enough to say, that they were permitted to repeat their visit twice a week, under the same regulations as had been observed that day—nothing but this assurance composed my mind.

It would be useless to recount the privations I suffered in this prison, in which I remained some time *in close and solitary confinement, without being guilty of a single crime*, nor yet offence to any one, save and except joining in a little political conversation at the village inn.

France was now about to suffer another change, and I was visited by a man, whose face seemed familiar to me: he addressed me thus, “Probably you may not remember me—but, Reginald O’Mara, see this arm without its hand.” “I do indeed,” I replied, “it is St. Pierre.” “You are right,” he continued, “and though I am yet your implacable enemy, am come to set you free; I am now minister of the police of the district P***. Buonaparte believes you are his foe—he has imprisoned you—but his mandate will give you liberty; acknowledge the worthy general, whose victories have surprized Europe, as First Consul for life, and you will once more regain your family and friends.” “Good God!” said I, “is France then so changed, as already to own a sovereign?”—“a Sovereign, Citizen?” said St. Pierre, “beware! your words will stand recorded, and remember, my oath still remains in my eternal remembrance.” “St. Pierre,” I exclaimed, “are

you a christian and a friend to liberty?" "Pshaw," replied the wretch, "will you comply with the conditions?" At this moment my wife and children, my father and mother entered the room and I once more clasped them to my arms; the interview was so affecting that St. Pierre, himself, shed tears—yes, I consented, and I once more returned to Chalons.

This imprisonment convinced me that though horrors innumerable were existing in the bastille, yet that the new government, was built equally on fraud and terror.

We had scarcely been settled a few months, when two gentlemen, who appeared to be Italians, enquired for us; they seemed of a declining age, and viewed us with peculiar affection. One of them pulled out a picture, and attentively observing it, thus addressed my mother:—"You will no doubt be surprized at our mysterious visit; you may probably recollect hearing the Marquis de Beaufois mention Bernand." "I have," she said, "and my mother always seemed anxious to know his fate." "Then," said he, "I am him; but not only Bernand, but Theodore Navonne, the brother of your mother, who was generally thought to have died in the Floridas; I have been three months in France, and have only discovered you by reading the speeches of your son-in-law, Reginald, in which he alluded to his relationship to the late Marquis." We were glad, though Theodore was a stranger, to receive him, for he appeared a most accomplished and perfect character; he told us that, instead of proceeding to the West Floridas, as was generally supposed, when he parted from his father, he went to Paris, and as a Swiss, became acquainted with Beaufois, whose numerous good qualities induced him to desire an union with his sister—he therefore contrived the plan with which Maria accosted the Marquis in the streets of Aix la Chapelle, having previously related to her the assumed name he went by, and making her swear, under all circumstances, that she would, to every one, *for ever* deny that he was her brother, or that she knew him; in consequence of which, the secret went down with her to the grave. It will be recollected, by the reader, in the early part of this narrative the Marquis found Bernand just arrived off a journey, which he said he had been to Versailles, while, in fact, he had been aiding his sister—he told us that when the alarm was given in the convent, although he was locked up, he escaped by no supernatural means, but merely by the aid of a master key—and that he immediately crossed the Alps, and settled at Genoa, and became a merchant, trading with the Turkish islands in the Mediterranean, he had realized a large fortune, and having no family or friends, he had sought out his own kindred to share it with them. Our thanks for his generosity was boundless; indeed we were at this time reduced to very low circumstances, owing to the persecutions I had suffered.

He then introduced us to his friend, and presented him as another uncle—we were surprized—"It is," said Theodore, "the Chevalier St. Foix." Our enquiries immediately followed after the Marchioness Spenati. "That lady," said the Chevalier, dropping a tear, "has been dead about five years—the Marquis has paid his debt to nature, about as many years as I have been absent from France, having left his large possessions to your aunt; I sought her—and our early loves were renewed, and she became my wife—and accident, since her lamented death, have thrown Theodore in my way, I determined to accompany him in search of our mutual friends.

Our whole family welcomed our maternal uncles, and we lived in the utmost ease and content and we began to think our misfortunes were over.

The state of France induced our uncles to propose our settling in England, and which we were anxious immediately to do, as a renewal of hostilities were expected. St. Pierre was still magistrate of the police of P***, and we feared him too much not to be cautious in our movements. My family arrived in England, and wrote to me of their having settled at D*****.

But I seemed born for misfortune, as my great grandfather had almost predicted—I had settled every thing, and was on board the G—— cutter, at Dieppe, for England, when the police, with St. Pierre at their head, seized me under pretence of having improper papers conveying to England; and I was once more thrown into one of the dungeons of Buonaparte.

It was my intention to give my readers a detail of my sufferings and treatment, but my bookseller says that the printer must be paid, and paper is very dear, and that I have filled the limits he has prescribed; therefore I shall reserve an account of those cruelties to another opportunity, which, if this narrative is favourably received shall not be a very distant day.

My readers must, in course, be interested in the fate of St. Pierre.—The hoary-headed villain had been inspecting some cruelties, which were practised, namely the forcing an unhappy prisoner to swallow a poisonous mercurial preparation, which has the effect of causing derangement—the prisoner was obstinate in closing his teeth, and his myrmidons, by his order, knocked the teeth out of the left side of his mouth and forced him to take it, as I have seen done to horses. The man in his struggles emitted some of the liquid from his mouth into St. Pierre's eye, which brought on a speedy mortification, of which he died, uttering blasphemy and cursing all around him.

On his death, I petitioned for trial, and was enlarged on my parole, and finding means to escape on board an American vessel, arrived in the United States, and from thence came to England, under whose free and happy government, where there are *no prisons like bastilles, no prison abuses, no persecution for opinion, no secret incarcerations, no tortures inflicted on the body, and where all enjoy freely the fruits of their labour*, I live happy in my family, and in peace with the world.

FINIS.

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