loga, together with the numbers of the British, German, and Canadian troops who were killed, wounded, or taken, and who had deserted in the preceding part of the expedition, were reckoned to be 4,689.

The British sick and wounded who had fallen into the hands of the Amerians after the battle of the seventh were treated with exemplary humanity; and when the Convention was executed, General Gates showed a noble delicacy of feeling, which deserves the highest degree of honor. Every circumstance was avoided which could give the appearance of triumph. The American troops remained within their lines until the British had piled their arms; and when this was done, the vanquished officers and soldiers were received with freindly kindness by their victors, and their immediate wants were promptly and liberally supplied. Discussions and disputes afterward arose as to some of the terms of the Convention, and the American Congress refused for a long time to carry into effect the article which provided for the return of Burgoyne's men to Europe; but no blame was imputed to General Gates or his army, who showed themselves to be generous as they had proved themselves to be brave.

Gates, after the victory, immediately dispatched to Colonel Wilkinson to carry the happy tidings to Congress. On being introduced into the hall, he said, "The whole British army has laid its arms at Saratoga; our own, full of vigor and courage, expect your orders. It is for your wisdom to decide where the country may still have need of their services." Honors and rewards were liberally voted by the Congress to their conquering general and his men; and it would be difficult (says the Italian historian) to describe the transports of joy which the news of this event excited among the Americans. They began to flatter themselves with a still more happy future. No one any longer felt any doubt about their achieving their independence. All hoped, and with good reason, that a success of this importance would at length determine France, and the other European powers that waited for her example, to declare themselves in favor of America. "*There could no longer be any question respecting the future, since there was no longer the risk of espousing the cause of a people too feeble to defend themselves.*"*

The truth of this was soon displayed in the conduct of France. When the news arrived at Paris of the capture of Ticonderoga, and of the victorious march of Burgoyne toward Albany, events which seemed decisive in favor of the English, instructions had been immediately dispatched to Nantz, and the other ports of the kingdom, that no American privateers should be suffered to enter them, except from indispensable necessity, as to repair their vessels, to obtain provisions, or to escape the perils of the sea. The Amer-

* Botta, book ix.

ican commissioners at Paris, in their disgust and despair, had almost broken off all negotiations with the French government; and they even endeavored to open communications with the British ministry. But the British government, elated with the first success of Burgoyne, refused to listen to any overtures for accommodation. But when the news of Saratoga reached Paris, the whole scene was changed. Franklin and his brother commissioners found all their difficulties with the French government vanish. The time seemed to have arrived for the house of Bourbon to take full revenge for all its humiliations and losses in previous wars. In December a treaty was arranged and formally signed in the February following, by which France acknowledged *the Independent United States of America*. This was, of course, tantamount to a declaration of war with England. Spain soon followed France; and before long, Holland took the same course. Largely aided by French fleets and troops, the Americans vigorously maintained the war against the armies which England, in spite of her European foes, continued to send across the Atlantic. But the struggle was too unequal to be maintained by this country for many years; and when the treaties of 1783 restored peace to the world, the independence of the United States was reluctantly recognized by their ancient parent and recent enemy, England.

SYNOPSIS OF EVENTS BETWEEN THE DEFEAT OF BURGOYNE AT SARATOGA, A.D. 1777, AND THE BATTLE OF VALMY, A.D. 1792.

1781. Surrender of Lord Cornwallis and the British army to Washington.

1782. Rodney's victory over the Spanish fleet. Unsuccessful siege of Gibraltar by the Spaniards and French.

1783. End of the American war.

1788. The States-General are convened in France; beginning of the Revolution.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BATTLE OF VALMY, A.D. 1792.

Purpurei metuunt tyranni
Injurioso ne pede proruas
Stantem columnan: neu populus frequens
Ad arma cessantes ad arma
Concitet, imperiumque frangat.
HORAT., *Od.* I., 35.

A little fire is quickly trodden out,
Which, being suffered, rivers cannot quench.
SHAKESPEARE.

A FEW miles distant from the little town of St. Menehould, in the northeast of France, are the village and hill of Valmy; and near the crest of that hill a simple monument points out the burial-place of the heart of a general of the French republic and a marshal of the French empire.

The elder Kellerman (father of the distinguished officer of that name, whose cavalry charge decided the battle of Marengo) held high commands in the French armies throughout the wars of the Convention, the Directory, the Consulate, and the Empire. He survived those wars, and the empire itself, dying in extreme old age in 1820. The last wish of the veteran on his death-bed was that his heart should be deposited in the battle-field of Valmy, there to repose among the remains of his old companions in arms, who had fallen at his side on that spot twenty-eight years before, on the memorable day when they won the primal victory of Revolutionary France, and prevented the armies of Brunswick and the emigrant bands of Conde from marching on defenseless Paris, and destroying the immature democracy in its cradle.

The Duke of Valmy (for Kellerman, when made one of Napoleon's military peers in 1802, took his title from this same battle-field) had participated, during his long and active career, in the gaining of many a victory far more immediately dazzling than the one, the remembrance of which he thus cherished. He had been present at many a scene of carnage, where blood flowed in deluges, compared with which the libations of slaughter poured out at Valmy would have seemed scant and insignificant. But he rightly estimated the paramount importance of the battle with which he thus wished his appellation while living, and his memory after his death, to be identified. The successful resistance which the raw Carmagnole levies and the disorganized relics of the old monarchy's army then opposed to the combined hosts and chosen leaders of Prussia, Austria, and the French refugee noblesse, determined at once and forever the belligerent character of the revolution. The raw artisans and tradesmen, the clumsy burghers, the base mechanics, and low peasant-churls, as it had been the fashion to term the middle and lower classes in France, found that they could face cannon balls, pull triggers, and cross bayonets without having been drilled into military machines, and without being officered by scions of noble houses. They awoke to the consciousness of their own instinctive soldiership. They at once acquired confidence in themselves and in each other; and that confidence soon grew into a spirit of unbounded audacity and ambition. "From the cannonade of Valmy may be dated the commencement of that career of victory which carried their armies to Vienna and the Kremlin."*

One of the gravest reflections that aries from the contemplation

* Alison.

of the civil restlessness and military enthusiasm which the close of the last century saw nationalized in France, is the consideration that these disturbing influences have become perpetual. No settled system of government, that shall endure from generation to generation, that shall be proof against corruption and popular violence seems capable of taking root among the French. And every revolutionary movement in Paris thrills throughout the rest of the world. Even the successes which the powers allied against France gained in 1814 and 1815, important as they were, could not annul the affects of the preceding twenty-three years of general convulsion and war.

In 1830, the dynasty which foreign bayonets had imposed on France was shaken off, and men trembled at the expected outbreak of French anarchy and the dreaded inroads of French ambition. They "looked forward with harassing anxiety to a period of destruction similar to that which the Roman world experienced about the middle of the third century of our era."* Louis Philippe cajoled Revolution, and then strove with seeming success to stifle it. But, in spite of Fieschi laws, in spite of the dazzle of Algerian razzias and Pyrenee-effacing marriages, in spite of hundreds of armed forts, and hundreds of thousands of coercing troops, Revolution lived, and struggled to get free. The old Titan spirit heaved restlessly beneath "the monarchy based on republican institutions." At last, three years ago, the whole fabric of kingcraft was at once rent and scattered to the winds by the uprising of the Parisian democracy; and insurrections, barricades and dethronements, the downfalls of coronets and crowns, the armed collisions of parties, systems, and populations, became the commonplaces of recent European history.

France now calls herself a republic. She first assumed that title on the 20th of September, 1792, on the very day on which the battle of Valmy was fought and won. To that battle the democratic spirit which in 1848, as well as in 1792, proclaimed the Republic in Paris, owed its preservation, and it is thence that the imperishable activity of its principles may be dated.

Far different seemed the prospects of democracy in Europe on the eve of that battle, and far different would have been the present position and influence of the French nation, if Brunswick's columns had charged with more boldness, or the lines of Dumouriez resisted with less firmness. When France, in 1792, declared war with the great powers of Europe, she was far from possessing that splendid military organization which the experience of a few revolutionary campaigns taught her to assume, and which she has never abandoned. The army of the old monarchy had, during the latter part of the reign of Louis XV., sunk into gradual

* See Niebuhr's Preface to the second volume of the History of Rome written in October, 1830.

decay, both in numerical force, and in efficiency of equipment and spirit. The laurels gained by the auxiliary regiments which Louis XVI. sent to the American war, did but little to restore the general tone of the army. The insubordination and license which the revolt of the French guards, and the participation of other troops in many of the first excesses of the Revolution, introduced among the soldiery, were soon rapily disseminated through all the ranks. Under the Legislative Assembly, every complaint of the soldier against his officer, however frivolous or ill founded, was listened to with eagerness, and investigated with partiality, on the principles of liberty and equality. Discipline accordingly became more and more relaxed; and the dissolution of several of the old corps, under the pretext of their being tainted with an aristocratic feeling, aggravated the confusion and inefficiency of the war department. Many of the most effective regiments during the last period of the monarchy had consisted of foreigners. These had either been slaughtered in defense of the throne against insurrections, like the Swiss, or had been disbanded, and had crossed the frontier to recruit the forces which were assembling for the invasion of France. Above all, the emigration of the *noblesse* had stripped the French army of nearly all its officers of high rank, and of the greatest portion of its subalterns. Above twelve thousand of the high-born youth of France, who had been trained to regard military command as their exclusive patrimony, and to whom the nation had been accustomed to look up as its natural guides and champions in the storm of war, were now marshaled beneath the banner of Conde and the other emigrant princes for the overthrow of the French armies and the reduction of the French capital. Their successors in the French regiments and brigades had as yet acquired neither skill nor experience; they possessed neither self-reliance, nor the respect of the men who were under them.

Such was the state of the wrecks of the old army; but the bulk of the forces with which France began the war consisted of raw insurrectionary levies, which were even less to be depended on. The Carmagnoles, as the revolutionary volunteers were called, flocked, indeed, readily to the frontier from every department when the war was proclaimed, and the fierce leaders of the Jacobins shouted that the country was in danger. They were full of zeal and courage, "heated and excited by the scenes of the Revolution, and inflamed by the florid eloquence, the songs, dances, and signal-words with which it had been celebrated."* But they were utterly undisciplined, and turbulently impatient of superior authority or systematic control. Many ruffians, also, who were sullied with participation in the most sanguinary horrors of Paris, joined the camps, and were pre-eminent alike for misconduct be-

* Scott, "Life of Napoleon" vol. i., c. viii.

fore the enemy and for savage insubordination against their own officers. On one occasion during the campaign of Valmy, eight battalions of federates, intoxicated with massacre and sedition joined the forces under Dumouriez, and soon threatened to uproot all discipline, saying openly that the ancient officers were traitors, and that it was necessary to purge the army, as they had Paris, of its aristocrats. Dumouriez posted these battalions apart from the others, placed a strong force of cavalry behind them, and two pieces of cannon on their flank. Then, affecting to review them, he halted at the head of the line, surrounded by all his staff, and an escort of a hundred hussars. "Fellows," said he, "for I will not call you either citizens or soldiers, you see before you this artillery, behind you this cavalry; you are stained with crimes, and I do not tolerate here assassins or executioners. I know that there are scoundrels among you charged to excite you to crime. Drive them from among you, or denounce them to me, for I shall hold you responsible for their conduct."*

One of our recent historians of the Revolution, who narrates this incident,† thus apostrophizes the French general:

"Patience, O Dumouriez! this uncertain heap of shriekers, mutineers, were they once drilled and inured, will become a phalanxed mass of fighters; and wheel and whirl to order swiftly, like the wind or the whirlwind, tanned mustachio-figures, often barefoot, even barebacked, with sinews of iron, who require only bread and gunpowder; very sons of fire, the adrcitest, hastiest, hottest ever seen, perhaps, since Attila's time."

Such phalanxed masses of fighters did the Carmagnoles ultimately become; but France ran a fearful risk in being obliged to rely on them, when the process of their transmutation had barely commenced.

The first events, indeed, of the war were disastrous and disgraceful to France, even beyond what might have been expected from the chaotic state in which it found her armies as well as her government. In the hopes of profiting by the unprepared state of Austria, then the mistress of the Netherlands, the French opened the campaign of 1792, by an invasion of Flanders, with forces whose muster-rolls showed a numerical overwhelming superiority to the enemy, and seemed to promise a speedy conquest of that old battle-field of Europe. But the first flash of an Austrian sabre or the first sound of an Austrian gun, was enough to discomfit the French. Their first corps, four thousand strong, that advanced from Lille across the frontier, came suddenly upon a far inferior detachment of the Austrian garrison of Tournay. Not a shot was fired, nor a bayonet leveled. With one simultaneous cry of Panic, the French broke and ran headlong back to Lille, where they completed the specimen of insubordination which

* Lamartine. † Carlyle.

they had given in the field by murdering their general and several of their chief officers. On the same day, another division under Biron, mustering ten thousand sabres and bayonets, saw a few Austrian skirmishers reconnoitering their position. The French advanced posts had scarcely given and received a volley, and only a few balls from the enemy's field-pieces had fallen among the lines, when two regiments of French dragoons raised the cry "We are betrayed," galloped off, and were followed in disgraceful rout by the rest of the whole army. Similar panics, or repulses almost equally discreditable, occurred whenever Rochambeau, or Luckner, or La Fayette, the earliest French generals in the war, brought their troops into the presence of the enemy.

Meanwhile the allied sovereigns had gradually collected on the Rhine a veteran and finely-disciplined army for the invasion of France, which for numbers, equipment, and martial renown, both of generals and men, was equal to any that Germany had ever sent forth to conquer. Their design was to strike boldly and decisively at the heart of France, and, penetrating the country through the Ardennes, to proceed by Chalons upon Paris. The obstacles that lay in their way seemed insignificant. The disorder and imbecility of the French armies had been even augmented by the forced flight of La Fayette and a sudden change of generals. The only troops posted on or near the track by which the allies were about to advance were the 23,000 men at Sedan, whom La Fayette had commanded, and a corps of 20,000 near Metz, the command of which had just been transferred from Luckner to Kellerman. There were only three fortresses which it was necessary for the allies to capture or mask—Sedan, Longwy, and Verdun. The defenses and stores of all these three were known to be wretchedly dismantled and insufficient; and when once these feeble barriers were overcome and Chalons reached, a fertile and unprotected country seemed to invite the invaders to that "military promenade to Paris" which they gayly talked of accomplishing.

At the end of July, the allied army, having fully completed all preparations for the campaign, broke up from its cantonments, and, marching from Luxembourg upon Longwy, crossed the French frontier. Sixty thousand Prussians, trained in the schools, and many of them under the eye of the Great Frederic, heirs of the glories of the Seven Years' War, and universally esteemed the best troops in Europe, marched in one column against the central point of attack. Forty-five thousand Austrians, the greater part of whom were picked troops, and had served in the recent Turkish war, supplied two formidable corps that supported the flanks of the Prussians. There was also a powerful body of Hessians; and leagued with the Germans against the Parisian democracy came 15,000 of the noblest and the bravest among the sons of France. In these corps of emigrants, many of the highest born of the French

nobility, scions of houses whose chivalric trophies had for centuries filled Europe with renown, served as rank and file. They looked on the road to Paris as the path which they were to carve out by their swords to victory, to honor, to the rescue of their king, to reunion with their families, to the recovery of their patrimony, and to the restoration of their order.*

Over this imposing army the allied sovereigns placed as generalissimo the Duke of Brunswick, one of the minor reigning princes of Germany, a statesman of no mean capacity, and who had acquired in the Seven Years' War a military reputation second only to that of the Great Frederic himself. He had been deputed a few years before to quell the popular movements which then took place in Holland, and he had put down the attempted revolution in that country with a promptitude which appeared to augur equal success to the army that now marched under his orders on a similar mission into France.

Moving majestically forward, with leisurely deliberation, that seemed to show the consciousness of superior strength, and a steady purpose of doing their work thoroughly, the allies appeared before Longwy on the 20th of August, and the dispirited and despondent garrison opened the gates of that fortress to them after the first shower of bombs. On the 2d of September, the still more important stronghold of Verdun capitulated after scarcely the shadow of resistance.

Brunswick's superior force was now interposed between Kellerman's troops on the left and the other French army near Sedan, which La Fayette's flight had, for a time, left destitute of a commander. It was in the power of the German general, by striking with an overwhelming mass to the right and left, to crush in succession each of these weak armies, and the allies might then have marched irrisistibly and unresisted upon Paris. But at this crisis Dumouriez, the new commander-in-chief of the French, arrived at the camp near Sedan, and commenced a series of movements by which he reunited the dispersed and disorganized forces of his country, checked the Prussian columns at the very moment when the last obstacle to their triumph seemed to have given way, and finally rolled back the tide of invasion far across the enemy's frontier.

The French fortresses had fallen; but nature herself still offered to brave and vigorous defenders of the land the means of opposing a barrier to the progress of the allies. A ridge of broken ground, called the Argonne, extends from the vicinity of Sedan toward the southwest for about fifteen or sixteen leagues. The country of L'Argonne has now been cleared and drained; but in 1792 it was thickly wooded, and the lower portions of its unequal surface were filled with rivulets and marshes. It thus presented a natural barrier

* See Scott, "Life of Napoleon," vol. I., c. xi.

of from four or five leagues broad, which was absolutely impenetrable to an army, except by a few defiles, such as an inferior force might easily fortify and defend. Dumouriez succeeded in marching his army from Sedan behind the Argonne, and in occupying its passes, while the Prussians still lingered on the northeastern side of the forest line. Ordering Kellerman to wheel round from Metz to St. Menehould, and the re-enforcements from the interior and extreme north also to concentrate at that spot, Dumouriez trusted to assemble a powerful force in the rear of the southwest extremity of the Argonne, while with the twenty-five thousand men under his immediate command he held the enemy at bay before the passes, or forced him to a long circumvolution round one extremity of the forest ridge during which, favorable opportunities of assailing his flank were almost certain to occur. Dumouriez fortified the principal defiles, and boasted of the Thermopylæ which he had found for the invaders; but the simile was nearly rendered fatally complete for the defending force. A pass, which was thought of inferior importance, had been but slightly manned, and an Austrian corps, under Clairfayt, forced it after some sharp fighting. Dumouriez with great difficulty saved himself from being enveloped and destroyed by the hostile columns that now pushed through the forest. But instead of despairing at the failure of his plans, and falling back into the interior, to be completely severed from Kellerman's army, to be hunted as a fugitive under the walls of Paris by the victorious Germans, and to lose all chance of ever rallying his dispirited troops, he resolved to cling to the difficult country in which the armies still were grouped, to force a junction with Kellerman and so to place himself at the head of a force which the invaders would not dare to disregard, and by which he might drag them back from the advance on Paris, which he had not been able to bar. Accordingly, by a rapid movement to the south, during which, in his own words, "France was within a hair's breath of destruction," and after with difficulty checking several panics of his troops, in which they ran by thousands at the sight of a few Prussian hussars, Dumouriez succeeded in establishing head-quarters in a strong position at St. Menehould, protected by the marshes and shallows of the rivers Aisne and Aube, beyond which, to the northwest, rose a firm and elevated plateau, called Dampiere's camp, admirably situated for commanding the road by Chalons to Paris, and where he intended to post Kellerman's army so soon as it came up.*

The news of the retreat of Dumouriez from the Argonne passes, and of the panic flight of some divisions of his troops, spread rapidly throughout the country, and Kellerman, who believed that his

* Some late writers represent that Brunswick did not wish to crush Dumouriez. There is no sufficient authority for this insinuation, which seems to have been first prompted by a desire to soothe the wounded military pride of the Prussians.

comrade's army had been annihilated, and feared to fall among the victorious masses of the Prussians, had halted on his march from Metz when almost close to St. Menehould. He had actually commenced a retrogade movement, when couriers from his commander-in-chief checked him from the fatal course: and then continuing to wheel round the rear and left flank of the troops at St. Menehould, Kellerman, with twenty thousand of the army of Metz, and some thousands of volunteers, who had joined him in the march, made his appearance to the west of Dumouriez on the very evening when Westerman and Thouvenot, two of the staff officers of Dumouriez, galloped in with the tidings that Brunswick's army had come through the upper passes of the Argonne in full force and was deploying on the heights of La Lune, a chain of eminences that stretched obliquely from southwest to northeast, opposite the high ground which Dumouriez held, also opposite, but at a shorter distance from the position which Kellerman was designed to occupy.

The allies were now, in fact, nearer to Paris than were the French troops themselves; but, as Dumouriez had foreseen, Brunswick deemed it unsafe to march upon the capital with so large a hostile force left in his rear, between his advancing columns and his base of operations. The young king of Prussia, who was in the allied camp, and the emigrant princes, eagerly advocated an instant attack upon the nearest French general. Kellerman had laid himself unnecessarily open, by advancing beyond Dampierre's camp, which Dumouriez had designed for him, and moving forward across the Aube to the plateau of Valmy, a post inferior in strength and space to that which he had left, and which brought him close upon the Prussian lines, leaving him separated by a dangerous interval from the troops under Dumouriez himself. It seemed easy for the Prussian army to overwhelm him while thus isolated, and then they might surround and crush Dumouriez at their leisure.

Accordingly, the right wing of the allied army moved forward in the gray of the morning of the 20th of September, to gain Kellerman's left flank and rear, and cut him off from retreat upon Chalons, while the rest of the army, moving from the heights of La Lune, which here converge semicircularly round the plateau of Valmy, were to assail his position in front, and interpose between him and Dumouriez. An unexpected collision between some of the advanced cavalry on each side in the low ground warned Kellerman of the enemy's approach. Dumouriez had not been unobservant of the danger of his comrade, thus isolated and involved, and he had ordered up troops to support Kellerman on either flank in the event of his being attacked. These troops, however, moved forward slowly; and Kellerman's arm ranged on the plateau of Valmy, "projected like a cape into the midst of the lines of Prussian bayonets."* A thick autumnal mist floated in waves of vapor

* See Lamartine, Hist. Girond., livre xvii. I have drawn much of the ensuing description from him.

over the plains and ravines that lay between the two armies, leaving only the crests and peaks of the hills glittering in the early light. About ten o'clock the fog began to clear off, and then the French from their promontory saw emerging from the white wreaths of mist, and glittering in the sunshine, the countless Prussian cavalry, which were to envelop them as in a net if once driven from their position, the solid columns of the infantry, that moved forward as if animated by a single will, the bristling batteries of the artillery, and the glancing clouds of the Austrian light troops, fresh from their contests with the Spahis of the east.

The best and bravest of the French must have beheld this spectacle with secret apprehension and awe. However bold and resolute a man may be in the discharge of duty, it is an anxious and fearful thing to be called on to encounter danger among comrades of whose steadiness you can feel no certainty. Each soldier of Kellerman's army must have remembered the series of panic routs which had hitherto invariably taken place on the French side during the war, and must have cast restless glances to the right and left to see if any symptoms of wavering began to show themselves, and to calculate how long it was likely to be before a general rush of his comrades to the rear would either hurry him off with involuntary disgrace, or leave him alone and helpless to be cut down by assailing multitudes.

On that very morning, and at the self-same hour in which the allied forces and the emigrants began to descend from La Lune to the attack of Valmy, and while the cannonade was opening between the Prussian and the Revolutionary batteries, the debate in the National Convention at Paris commenced on the proposal to proclaim France a republic.

The old monarchy had little chance of support in the hall of the Convention; but if its more effective advocates at Valmy had triumphed, there were yet the elements existing in France for an effective revival of the better part of the ancient institutions, and for substituting Reform for Revolution. Only a few weeks before, numerously-signed addresses from the middle classes in Paris, Rouen, and other large cities, had been presented to the king, expressive of their horror of the anarchists, and their readiness to uphold the rights of the crown, together with the liberties of the subject. And an armed resistance to the authority of the Convention, and in favor of the king, was in reality at this time being actively organized in La Vendee and Brittany, the importance of which may be estimated from the formidable opposition which the Royalists of these provinces made to the Republican party at a later period, and under much more disadvantageous circumstances. It is a fact peculiarly illustrative of the importance of the battle of Valmy, that "during the summer of 1792, the gentlemen of Brittany entered into an extensive association for the purpose of rescuing the country from the oppressive yoke which had been imposed by

the Parisian demagogues. At the head of the whole was the Marquis de la Rouarie, one of those remarkable men who rise into eminence during the stormy days of a revolution, from conscious ability to direct its current. Ardent, impetuous and enthusiastic, he was first distinguished in the American war, when the intrepidity of his conduct attracted the admiration of the Republican troops, and the same qualities rendered him at first an ardent supporter of the Revolution in France; but when the atrocities of the people began, he espoused with equal warmth the opposite side, and used the utmost efforts to rouse the noblesse of Brittany against the plebeian yoke which had been imposed upon them by the National Assembly. He submitted his plan to the Count d'Artois, and had organized one so extensive as would have proved extremely formidable to the Convention, if the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, in September, 1792, had not damped the ardor of the whole of the west of France, then ready to break out into insurrection."*

And it was not only among the zealots of the old monarchy that the cause of the king would then have found friends. The ineffable atrocities of the September massacres had just occurred, and the reaction produced by them among thousands who had previously been active on the ultra-democratic side was fresh and powerful. The nobility had not yet been made utter aliens in the eyes of the nation by long expatriation and civil war. There was not yet a generation of youth educated in revolutionary principles, and knowing no worship save that of military glory. Louis XVI. was just and humane, and deeply sensible of the necessity of a gradual extension of political rights among all classes of his subjects. The Bourbon throne, if rescued in 1792, would have had the chances of stability such as did not exist for it in 1814, and seem never likely to be found again in France.

Serving under Kellerman on that day was one who experienced, perhaps the most deeply of all men, the changes for good and for evil which the French Revolution has produced. He who, in his second exile, bore the name of the Count de Neuilly in this country, and who lately was Louis Philippe, king of the French, figured in the French lines at Valmy as a young and gallant officer, cool and sagacious beyond his years, and trusted accordingly by Kellerman and Dumouriez with an important station in the national army. The Duc de Chartres (the title he then bore) commanded the French right, General Valence was on the left, and Kellerman himself took his post in the center, which was the strength and key of his position.

Besides these celebrated men who were in the French army, and besides the King of Prussia, the Duke of Brunswick, and other men of rank and power who were in the lines of the allies, there was an individual present at the battle of Valmy, of little political

* Alison, vol. iii., p. 323.

note, but who has exercised, and exercises a greater influence over the human mind, and whose fame is more widely spread than that of either duke, or general, or king. This was the German poet Gothe, then in early youth, and who had, out of curiosity, accompanied the allied army on its march into France as a mere spectator. He has given us a curious record of the sensations which he experienced during the cannonade. It must be remembered that many thousands in the French ranks then, like Gothe, felt the "cannon fever" for the first time. The German poet says,*

"I had heard so much of the cannon fever, that I wanted to know what kind of a thing it was. *Ennui*, and a spirit which every kind of danger excites to daring, nay, even to rashness, induced me to ride up coolly to the outwork of La Lune. This was again occupied by our people; but it presented the wildest aspect. The roofs were shot to pieces, the corn-shocks scattered about, the bodies of men mortally wounded stretched upon them here and there, and occasionally a spent cannon ball fell and rattled among the ruins of the tile roofs.

"Quite alone, and left to myself, I rode away on the heights to the left, and could plainly survey the favorable position of the French; they were standing in the form of a semicircle, in the greatest quiet and security, Kellerman, then on the left wing, being the easiest to reach.

"I fell in with good company on the way, officers of my acquaintance, belonging to the general staff and the regiment, greatly surprised to find me here. They wanted to take me back again with them; but I spoke to them of particular objects I had in view, and they left me, without farther dissuasion, to my well-known singular caprice.

"I had now arrived quite in the region where the balls were playing across me: the sound of them is curious enough, as if it were composed of the humming of tops, the gurgling of water, and the whistling of birds. They were less dangerous by reason of the wetness of the ground; wherever one fell, it stuck fast. And thus my foolish experimental ride was secured against the danger at least of the balls rebounding.

"In the midst of these circumstances, I was soon able to remark that something unusual was taking place within me. I paid close attention to it, and still the sensation can be described only by similitude. It appeared as if you were in some extremely hot place, and, at the same time, quite penetrated by the heat of it, so that you feel yourself, as it were, quite one with the element in which you are. The eyes lose nothing of their strength or clearness; but it is as if the world had a kind of brown-red tint, which makes the situation, as well as the surrounding objects, more impressive. I was unable to perceive any agitation of the

* Gothe's "Campaign in France in 1792," Farie's translation, p. 77.

blood; but every thing seemed rather to be swallowed up in the glow of which I speak. From this, then, it is clear in what sense this condition can be called a fever. It is remarkable, however, that the horrible uneasy feeling arising from it is produced in us solely through the ears. For the cannon thunder, the howling and crashing of the balls through the air, is the real cause of these sensations.

"After I had ridden back and was in perfect security, I remarked, with surprise, that the glow was completely extinguished, and not the slightest feverish agitation was left behind. On the whole, this condition is one of the least desirable; as, indeed, among my dear and noble comrades, I found scarcely one who expressed a really passionate desire to try it."

Contrary to the expectations of both friends and foes, the French infantry held their ground steadily under the fire of the Prussian guns, which thundered on them from La Lune, and their own artillery replied with equal spirit and greater effect on the denser masses of the allied army. Thinking that the Prussians were slackening in their fire, Kellerman formed a column in charging order, and dashed down into the valley in the hopes of capturing some of the nearest guns of the enemy. A masked battery opened its fire on the French column, and drove it back in disorder, Kellerman having his horse shot under him, and being with difficulty carried off by his men. The Prussian columns now advanced in turn. The French artillery-men began to waver and desert their posts, but were rallied by the efforts and example of their officers, and Kellerman, reorganizing the line of his infantry, took his station in the ranks on foot, and called out to his men to let the enemy come close up, and then to charge them with the bayonet. The troops caught the enthusiasm of their general, and a cheerful shout of *Vive la nation*, taken up by one battalion from another pealed across the valley to the assailants. The Prussians hesitated from a charge up hill against a force that seemed so resolute and formidable; they halted for a while in the hollow, and then slowly retreated up their own side of the valley.

Indignant at being thus repulsed by such a foe, the King of Prussia formed the flower of his men in person, and, riding along the column, bitterly reproached them with letting their standard be thus humiliated. Then he led them on again to the attack, marching in the front line, and seeing his staff mowed down around him by the deadly fire which the French artillery reopened. But the troops sent by Dumouriez were now co-operating effectually with Kellerman, and that general's own men, flushed by success, presented a firmer front than ever. Again the Prussians retreated, leaving eight hundred dead behind, and at nightfall the French remained victors on the heights of Valmy.

All hopes of crushing the Revolutionary armies, and of the promenade to Paris, had now vanished, though Brunswick lin-

gered long in the Argonne, till distress and sickness wasted away his once splendid force, and finally but a mere wreck of it re-crossed the frontier. France, meanwhile, felt that she possessed a giant's strength, and like a giant did she use it. Before the close of that year all Belgium obeyed the National Convention at Paris, and the kings of Europe, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, trembled once more before a conquering military republic.

Gothe's description of the cannonade has been quoted. His observation to his comrades, and the camp of the allies at the end of the battle, deserves quotation also. It shows that the poet felt (and probably he alone, of the thousands there assembled, felt) the full importance of that day. He describes the consternation and the change of demeanor which he observed among his Prussian friends that evening. He tells us that "most of them were silent; and, in fact, the power of reflection and judgment was wanting to all. At last I was called upon to say what I thought of the engagement, for I had been in the habit of enlivening and amusing the troop with short sayings. This time I said, '*From this place and from this day forth commences a new era in the world's history, and you can all say that you were present at its birth.*'"

Synopsis of Events between the Battle of Valmy, A.D. 1792, and the Battle of Waterloo, A.D. 1815.

A.D. 1793. Trial and execution of Louis XVI. at Paris. England and Spain declare war against France. Royalist war in La Vendee. Second invasion of France by the allies.

1794. Lord Howe's victory over the French fleet. Final partition of Poland by Russia, Prussia, and Austria.

1795. The French armies, under Pichegru, conquer Holland. Cessation of the war in La Vendee.

1796. Bonaparte commands the French army of Italy, and gains repeated victories over the Austrians.

1797. Victory of Jervis off Cape St. Vincent. Peace of Campo Formio between France and Austria. Defeat of the Dutch off Camperdown by Admiral Duncan.

1798. Rebellion in Ireland. Expedition of the French under Bonaparte to Egypt. Lord Nelson destroys the French fleet at the battle of the Nile.

1799. Renewal of the war between Austria and France. The Russian emperor sends an army in aid of Austria under Suwarrow. The French are repeatedly defeated in Italy. Bonaparte returns from Egypt and makes himself First Consul of France. Massena wins the battle of Zurich. The Russian emperor makes peace with France.

1800. Bonaparte passes the Alps, and defeats the Austrians at Marengo. Moreau wins the battle of Hohenlinden.

1801. Treaty of Luneville between France and Austria. The battle of Copenhagen.

1802. Peace of Amiens.

1803. War between England and France renewed.

1804. Napoleon Bonaparte is made Emperor of France.

1805. Great preparations of Napoleon to invade England. Austria, supported by Russia, renews war with France. Napoleon marches into Germany, takes Vienna, and gains the battle of Austerlitz. Lord Nelson destroys the combined French and Spanish fleets, and is killed at the battle of Trafalgar.

1806. War between Prussia and France. Napoleon conquers Prussia at the battle of Jena.

1807. Obstinate warfare between the French and Prussian armies in East Prussia and Poland. Peace of Tilsit.

1808. Napoleon endeavors to make his brother King of Spain. Rising of the Spanish nation against him. England sends troops to aid the Spaniards. Battle of Vimiera and Corunna.

1809. War renewed between France and Austria. Battles of Asperne and Wagram. Peace granted to Austria. Lord Wellington's victory of Talavera, in Spain.

1810. Marriage of Napoleon and the Archduchess Maria Louisa. Holland annexed to France.

1812. War between England and the United States. Napoleon invades Russia. Battle of Borodino. The French occupy Moscow, which is burned. Disastrous retreat and almost total destruction of the great army of France.

1813. Prussia and Austria take up arms again against France. Battles of Lutzen, Bautzen, Dresden, Culm, and Leipsic. The French are driven out of Germany. Lord Wellington gains the great battle of Vittoria, which completes the rescue of Spain from France.

1814. The allies invade France on the eastern, and Lord Wellington invades it on the southern frontier. Battles of Laon, Montmirail, Arcis-sur Aube, and others in the northeast of France; and of Toulouse in the south. Paris surrenders to the allies, and Napoleon abdicates. First restoration of the Bourbons. Napoleon goes to the Isle of Elba, which is assigned to him by the allies. Treaty of Ghent between the United States and England.