

They placed the public functionaries under the inspection of the clubs, and formed a revolutionary committee in each section; on every side they presented a bold front, both to their enemies abroad and the insurgents at home.

Those of the Calvados were easily subdued; at the first onset at Vernon the insurgent troops took to flight. Wimphen attempted to rally them, but without success. The moderate class, who had joined in the defence of the Gironde, exhibited little ardour, and rendered no effectual aid. When the constitution was generally adopted by the departments, this class availed itself of that opportunity to acknowledge its error in having supposed that it was rising against a factious minority. This retraction occurred at Caen, which had been the centre of the revolt. The commissioners of the Mountain did not stain their first victory by executions. On the other side, general Carteaux, at the head of some troops, marched against the army of the southern sections: he remained master of the field in two engagements, pursued it to Marseilles, and entered the town at its heels. Provence would have been subdued like the Calvados, if the royalists, who had sought refuge in Toulon after their defeat, had not called the English to their assistance, and placed in their hands this key of France. Admiral Hood took possession of the town in the name of Louis XVII., whom he proclaimed king, disarmed the fleet, transported thither eight thousand Spaniards by sea, occupied the surrounding forts, and compelled Carteaux, who was advancing against Toulon, to fall back upon Marseilles.

Notwithstanding this reverse, the constitutionalists had contrived to isolate the insurrection, and thus effected an important object. The commissioners of the Mountain had made their entrance into the revolted capitals: Robert Lindet into Caen, Tallien into Bourdeaux, Barras and Fréron into Marseilles. There were only two towns to take, Toulon and Lyons. They ceased to fear a concerted attack from the south, the west, and the centre; and in the interior all their enemies were upon the defensive. Lyons was besieged by Kellermann, the general of the army of the Alps; three corps pressed the town on all sides. The old soldiers of the Alps, the revolutionary battalions, and the newly-levied troops, poured in every day to the assistance of the assailants; but the Lyonese defended themselves with a courage derived from despair. At first they relied upon the aid of the southern insurgents; but the latter having been driven back by Carteaux, the Lyonese turned their last hopes to the side of the Piedmontese army, who attempted a diversion in their favour; but they were beaten by Kellermann. Being more warmly pressed, their first positions were carried. Famine made its appearance among them, and their courage fell. The royalist leaders, convinced of the uselessness of longer resistance, quitted the town; and the republican army entered its walls, where they awaited the orders of the convention. Some months afterward, Toulon itself, defended by seasoned troops and formidable fortifications, fell into the hands of the republicans. The battalions of the army of Italy, reinforced by those whom the defeat of the Lyonese rendered disposable, attacked the town with great ardour. After repeated attacks, and prodigies of valour and skill, they made themselves masters of it: the capture of Toulon completed what that of Lyons had begun.

The convention was every where victorious. The Vendéans had failed in their enterprise against Nantes, after having experienced the loss of many men, and of their commander Cathelineau. This was the last of their aggressive operations; and from that period the fortune of the Vendéan insurrection declined. The royalists repassed the Loire, abandoned Saumur, and resumed their old cantonments: they were, however, still very formidable; and the republicans who pursued them were once more defeated on Vendéan ground.

General Biron, who had succeeded Berruyer, continued the war by small bodies of troops with great disadvantage. His moderation and his bad system of attack occasioned his being superseded by Canclaux and Rossignol, who were not, however, more successful. There were two chiefs, two armies,

and two centres of operation; one at Nantes and the other at Saumur, places under the influence of different parties. General Canclaux could not agree with general Rossignol, nor the commissary of the moderate party of the Mountain, Philipeaux, with Bourbotte, the commissary of the committee of public safety; and this attempt at invasion failed, like the former ones, from want of concert in their measures and union in their operations. The committee of public safety soon supplied a remedy in appointing Léchelle commander-in-chief, and in introducing war on a larger scale into La Vendée. This new method, seconded by the garrison of Mayence, consisting of seventeen thousand veterans, who, being no longer able to serve against the coalition after their capitulation, were employed in the interior, changed the face of the war. The royalists experienced four successive defeats; two at Châtillon, and two at Cholet. Lescure, Bonchamps, and d'Elbée were mortally wounded; and the insurgents, totally defeated in Upper Vendée, fearing, if they took refuge in the Lower, that they should be exterminated, decided upon quitting their country, to the number of eighty thousand. This emigration across Brittany, in which they hoped to effect an insurrection, proved fatal to them. Repulsed before Granville, completely routed at Mons, they were destroyed at Savenay; and of the wreck of this vast emigration, a few thousand men, with difficulty, re-entered La Vendée. These irreparable disasters of the royalist cause, the capture of the island of Noirmoutiers from Charette, the dispersion of the troops of this chief, and the death of La Rochejaquelin, rendered the republicans masters of the country. The committee of public safety, thinking, not without cause, that its enemies, although subdued, were not disposed to submission, adopted a terrible system of extermination, to prevent their recovering themselves. General Thurreau surrounded the reduced La Vendée with sixteen intrenched camps; twelve columns, known by the name of the *infernal columns*, scoured the country with fire and sword, explored the woods, carried off those who were collected together, and spread terror throughout this unfortunate country.

The foreign armies had also been driven from the frontiers which they had invaded. After having taken Valenciennes and Condé, blockaded Maubeuge and Le Quesnoy, the enemy had marched upon Cassel, Hondscote, and Furnes, under the command of the duke of York. The committee of public safety, dissatisfied with Custines, who was also suspected to be a Girondist, replaced him by general Houchard. The enemy, until that period victorious, was defeated at Hondscote, and forced to retreat. A military reaction commenced with the decisive measures of the committee of public safety. Houchard himself was dismissed. Jourdan took the command of the army of the north, gained the important victory of Watignies against the prince of Cobourg, forced the enemy to raise the siege of Maubeuge, and reassumed the offensive on this frontier. The same was effected upon all the other frontiers. The memorable campaign of 1793 and 1794 was opened: what Jourdan did with the army of the north, Hoche and Pichegru did with the army of the Moselle, and Kellermann with that of the Alps. The enemy was every where repulsed and every where held in. The same thing which occurred after the 10th of August, took place after the 31st of May. The harmony which had been interrupted between the generals and the leaders of the assembly was re-established; the revolutionary action, which had abated, again increased; and victory, suspended during this long period, returned to them.

During the continuance of this war, the committee of public safety abandoned itself to the most terrible executions. Armies destroy only on the field of battle: it is a different thing with parties who, in violent situations, fearing that the struggle may be renewed even after victory, fortify themselves against new attempts by the most inexorable rigour. "The name of Lyons," said Barrère, "ought no longer to exist. You will call it *Ville Affranchie* (freed town); and upon the ruins of this infamous city a monument shall be raised which will attest the crime and the punishment of the enemies

of liberty. A single word will speak the whole: *Lyons made war against Liberty—Lyons is no more.* In order to realize this frightful denunciation, the committee sent Collot d'Herbois, Fouché, and Couthon into this devoted town, who demolished its buildings and butchered the inhabitants with cannon. The insurgents of Toulon experienced from their representatives, Barras and Fréron, almost a similar fate. At Caen, Marseilles, and Bourdeaux the executions were less general and less violent; for they were proportioned to the importance of the insurrection, which was interior and not connected with foreign enemies.

In the centre, the dictatorial government aimed a blow at the highest and most distinguished in all the parties with which they were engaged. The condemnation of the queen, Maria Antoinette, was directed against Europe; that of the *twenty-two*, against the Gironde; that of the enlightened Bailly, against the old constitutionalists; lastly, that of the duke of Orleans, against certain members of the Mountain who were supposed to have entered into a combination to effect his elevation. The unfortunate widow of Louis XVI. was the first who was sent to the scaffold by the sanguinary tribunal of the revolution. Those who were proscribed on the 2d of June very soon followed: she perished on the 16th of October, and the Girondist deputies on the 31st. There were among the *twenty-two*, Brissot, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Fonfrède, Ducos, Valazé, Lasource, Sillery, Gardien, Carra, Duprat, Beauvais, Duchâtel, Mainvielle, Lacaze, Boileau, Lehardy, Antiboul, and Vigée. Seventy-three of their colleagues, who had protested against their arrest, were also imprisoned; but they durst not inflict upon them the same punishment. During the debates, these illustrious accused displayed the most calm and sustained courage. The eloquent voice of Vergniaud was heard for an instant, but in vain. Valazé, on hearing his sentence, despatched himself with a poniard; and Lasource exclaimed to the judges—"I die at a moment when the people have lost their reason; you will die the day they shall recover it." The prisoners went to their punishment with all the stoicism of that time.

Almost all the chiefs of the Girondist party experienced an unhappy fate. Salles, Guadet, and Barbaroux were discovered in the caves of Saint Emilion near Bourdeaux, and they perished upon the popular scaffold. Pétion and Buzot, after having wandered about for some time, put an end to their own existence: they were found dead in the field, half devoured by wolves. Rabaud St. Etienne was betrayed by an old friend. Madame Roland was also condemned, and displayed the courage of a Roman matron. Her husband, on hearing of her death, quitted his place of concealment, and killed himself upon the highway. Condorcet, who was outlawed, some time after the 2d of June, was discovered as he was flying from the executioner, and he only escaped the scaffold by the aid of poison. Louvet, Kervelegan, Lanjuinais, Henri La Rivière, Le Sage, Le Revilliere Lepeaux, were the only persons who awaited in secure retreat the end of this furious tempest.

## LETTER XXV.

*Dreadful State of France after the Fall of the Girondists—Complete Reign of Terror—Change of the Calendar.—Impious Proceedings of the Convention, in the Abolition of Public Worship—Projects of Robespierre, who is at length opposed, defeated, and put to Death. A. D. 1794.*

ON the fall of the party of the Gironde, the revolutionary government was formed. Before the 31st of May, the supreme power was neither in the ministry, in the commune, nor in the convention. The committee of public safety, which had been some time created in order to provide for the defence of the revolution by urgent and extraordinary measures, was an institution already in existence. Having received its appointment during the struggles between the two powerful parties, the Gironde and the Mountain, it had been

composed of neutral conventionalists until the 31st of May; but at this time it became composed of ultra-members of the Mountain. Barrère remained, but Robespierre was chosen a member, and his party governed it by St. Just, Couthon, Collot d'Herbois, and Billaud Varennes. The tyrant now took upon himself that department which related to public opinion and the police. His associates distributed the remaining departments among themselves. St. Just took that of the *surveillance*, and denunciation of parties. Couthon that of violent propositions which required being mitigated in form:—the other two directed the proconsulships in the departments. Carnot filled the office of minister at war, while Cambon had the charge of the finances. Barrère was the daily orator and perpetual eulogist of the dictatorial committee. Below was placed, as an auxiliary in the details of the revolutionary administration, and in measures of minor importance, the committee of general safety, composed in the same spirit as the great committee, having also twelve members re-eligible every three months, and perpetual in their functions. In the hands of these men, the whole revolutionary force was placed. Thus was created that terrible power which first destroyed the enemies of the Mountain, afterward the Mountain and the commune, and which only ended in destroying itself.

One of the first measures of this new order of things was to establish an entirely new era; to change the divisions of the year, the names of the months, and of the days. In place of the Christian calendar, they substituted that of the republican, for the week, the decade, making every tenth day instead of Sunday, the day of rest. The new era was dated from the 22d of September, 1792, the epoch of the foundation of the republic. They had twelve equal months, consisting of thirty days each, which commenced on the 22d of September, in the following order: Vendémiaire, Brumaire, Frimaire, for the autumn; Nivose, Pluviose, Ventose, for the winter; Germinal, Floréal, Prairial, for the spring; Messidor, Thermidor, Fructidor, for the summer. The five supernumerary days were thrown to the end of the year, to complete the whole, and they were called the *sans-culotteides*. The constitution of 1793 led to the republican calendar, and the republican calendar to the abolition of public worship, of which we shall presently speak. It will, however, be previously necessary to give you some account of a new contest which arose between the authors themselves of the catastrophe of the 31st of May.

The commune and the Mountain had effected the existing revolution in despite of the Girondists, and the committee alone had profited by it. During the five months of which we have been speaking, from June to November, the committee, having taken every measure of defence, had naturally become the first power in the republic. The contest having in some degree terminated, the commune aspired to rule the committee, and the Mountain determined not to be ruled by it.

The three distinguished champions who assumed the front in the jacobin ranks, were Marat, Danton, and Robespierre. The first was poniarded by Charlotte Corday, an enthusiastic young person, who had nourished, in a feeling between lunacy and heroism, the ambition of ridding the world of a tyrant. Danton and Robespierre, reduced to a duumvirate, might have divided the power between them. But Danton, far the more able and powerful-minded man, could not resist temptations to plunder and to revel; and Robespierre, who took care to preserve proof of his rival's peculations, a crime of a peculiarly unpopular character, and from which he seemed to keep his own hands pure, possessed thereby the power of ruining him whenever he should find it convenient. Danton married a beautiful woman, became a candidate for domestic happiness, withdrew himself for some time from state affairs, and quitted the stern and menacing attitude which he had presented to the public during the earlier stages of the revolution. Still his ascendancy, especially in the club of Cordeliers, was formidable enough to command Robespierre's constant attention, and keep awake his envy, which was like the worm that dieth not, though it did not draw down any indication of