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BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIRS OF LA FAYETTE.

The following biographical notice of General La Fayette, is an abridgement made for a Boston paper, of an article in the new French biographical dictionary, which is said to be one not remarkable for its partiality to men of liberal principles. The article is, however, kind on the whole and contains particulars of the general's life which are not familiar to American readers.—*Nat. Gaz.*

from the Paris Biographie des Hommes Vivants.

Marie-Paul-Joseph-Roch-Yves-Gilbert-Moliers De La Fayette, was born in Auvergne in the year 1757, of one of the most ancient families of that province. He married in 1774 Mademoiselle de Noailles, daughter of the Duke d'Ayen, Captain of the Body Guard. At that time he was in possession of a considerable fortune. Before the intention which had been formed by Louis XVI. to assist the Americans was known, La Fayette privately equipped a vessel, which was filled with arms, and escaping the vigilance which watched him, sailed to America. There he served, first merely as a volunteer in the revolutionary army, without any design except that of distinguishing himself as a soldier. He was despatched to that country in the name of a body of French volunteers, who joining themselves to the inhabitants, contributed to the success of the American Revolution.

During this struggle the young man signaled himself in so brilliant a manner that he became the friend of the illustrious Washington. Independence being established, he returned to Paris with the office of Field-Marshal, with testimonials of gratitude from the Americans, and filled with sentiments of republicanism which the success of that people's republican deliberations had raised to in his mind. He was recalled to Paris with a sort of enthusiasm, and was talked of but La Fayette, his name was every where sounded, and his presence was every where to be seen. At the vocation of the States General he was sent deputy to that assembly, without opposition, by the nobility of Auvergne, and there supported by the public opinion. At that time a constitution was called for on all sides. M. de La Fayette, who afterwards placed himself in the first rank in constitutional enterprises, did not speak on this occasion. He continued to sit with the majority of the nobility in their own chamber, until the 27th of June, when the king, alarmed by the boldness of the revolutionists, commanded that order to unite to the two others. La Fayette protested, with the majority of his order, July 3d, 1789, against every thing which was done contrary to the principles of the monarchy, and the individual rights of the orders—and he even demanded that an act should be passed by the chamber as well as his colleagues of the Auvergne nobility, declaring that they had done all in their power to support the system of voting by orders. It is certain that it was not until all these efforts had proved fruitless, that he determined to join the *National Assembly*.

As its mandates were imperative, he would not take part in its deliberations until he had obtained from his constituents new powers in which this clause was not stipulated. He demanded leave of absence in order to solicit this, and it was not until his return that he began his revolutionary career. July 11, 1789, he proposed a declaration of rights, which was much applauded. It was in moving this declaration that he made the remark, "that when tyranny is at its height, insurrection becomes the most holy of duties." The sitting of July 11, drew the public attention still more upon La Fayette, and from this day may be dated the immense power which he acquired. At this period the court was making military preparations, which seemed to announce the intention of dissolving the assembly by force. The evening of July 12, a violent insurrection broke out in the capital, which had for pretence, the dismissal of M. Necker. The 13th, Lafayette, Toulendat, and Desmoulin passed a decree that the public debt was put under the guardianship of the honor and loyalty of the French. La Fayette obtained an addition to this decision, that the ministers who were to be appointed by the king were, as well as all civil and military agents, responsible for any undertaking contrary to the rights of the nation, and the decrees of the national assembly. After this deliberation, which was had very late, the assembly continued to sit all night, M. La Fayette presiding over it, in the place of M. Le Franc-de-Pampignan, Archbishop of Vienne, who on account of his extreme old age could not fill an office so fatiguing. July 15th he was chosen by the commune at Paris, commander of the Parisian militia, which was almost immediately after called the *National Guard*. The young general accepted this nomination, and drawing his sword, made a vow to sacrifice his life to the preservation of that precious liberty the defence of which they had entrusted to him. Every thing was then in trouble and confusion; not only those who had nothing to lose, but those who had much, helped to keep up the state of disorder. Notwithstanding his extreme popularity, he was not able to save Foulon, whom he had taken under his protection. October 5, a new insurrection having broken out, the French Guards appeared again in the front of it, and summoned their general to lead them to Versailles, not to ask for bread, like the women by whom they were surrounded, but to revenge themselves, as they said, for the insults which had been offered to the cockade and to the national colors. M. La Fayette endeavored in vain to turn them from their project. He repaired to the square, mounted his horse, placed himself at their head and harangued them, but without success. Cries of *à Versailles*, to Versailles, interrupted him. He could not make himself heard. As last he told them, that being only head of the armed force, he could not act without orders from the representatives of the commune. The latter immediately sent an order for him to go to Versailles. The populace no sooner learnt this decision than they set forward and began the disorders at Versailles before the National Guard could be assembled. This body arrived about eleven in the evening, commanded by La Fayette, who ordered all the posts to be occupied. Thinking there was nothing to fear, he went to take some repose, having assured the king and queen that tranquillity was restored. But at six in the morning the castle was attacked by the mob who had introduced themselves through the gardens. Three body guards were murdered, and the queen, forced to fly half dressed, was near being assassinated in her bed. La Fayette, awoke by the general noise and the cries of the multitude, arrived at last, placed himself at the head of the grenadiers, and expelled from the castle the ruffians who had introduced themselves into it. Fifteen of the body guard whom they were about to murder, were saved.

But this was the day when Louis XVI. yielding to the cries of the populace, went to Paris with his family—and from that time his power ceased. A few days after, La Fayette, in a very animated conference which he had with the Duke of Orleans, gave him to understand that his name formed the pretext for all the disorder, and that it was necessary he should leave the kingdom for some time. A pretended mission was given to this prince, and he went to England. From this period to the departure of the king, no great crimes were committed in Paris, although the agitation was extreme. One individual had been seized by the mob, and they had already seized him to a lamp post, when the commandant general hastened to the spot and himself cut the cord, and saved the unhappy man. But M. La Fayette's greatest triumph is the period of the federation, July 14, 1790. It was on that day that he received the general command of the national guard of France. All these national guards and the troops of the line met by deputation in the Camp de Mars, and swore in presence of the king and the assembly to maintain a constitution, which did not yet exist. The eyes of all France were turned on the commandant general of the national guard. Surrounded with the homage of the whole army, he was really the master of the kingdom, and his power was immense. The minds of the people were then in the greatest agitation; every where insurrections were ready to break out, which caused the apprehension that a general overturn would take place. M. La Fayette succeeded for a long time in restraining them. The active service in which he was engaged prevented his sharing in many of the deliberations, but he voted for all the important innovations, such as trial by jury, the civil and political rights of people of color, although not for the immediate abolition of slavery, as some biographers have asserted. He wished, with Mirabeau, whose life he saved, that the introduction of this law should be left to the king.

In the holy week of 1791, the king wished to go to St. Cloud. As soon as this reached the ears of the jacobin party, they reported that the monarch was about to leave the kingdom. This was believed by the national guard, and instead of favoring this little expedition, they prevented it, notwithstanding the orders of their general to the contrary, whom, until that time, they had obeyed with the greatest enthusiasm. La Fayette, vexed with this disobedience, resigned the command, but the national guard displayed so much regret, that he resumed it again. On the departure of the king in June of the same year, he was accused by the jacobins of having favored it. The truth is, that whatever suspicions he might have of the monarch's projects, he knew nothing positive with respect to them. When he heard the news of it, before leaving his bed in the morning, he would not believe it. He repaired to the mayor, and when he was seen in the streets, they shouted *Vive La Fayette*, and a *bas La Fayette*. Mobs were formed, and they began to clamor for his head. The deputy Rewbell endeavored to infuse into the assembly, which was hardly formed, suspicions of his fidelity—but Barnave repulsed these insinuations with much energy, and it was to this deputy that M. La Fayette owed his safety. The king having been arrested at Varennes, by the measures which he had taken, he recovered for some time his popularity; but he became more than ever the object of hatred to the loyalists. As to the jacobins, M. La Fayette had already provoked all their fury by his conduct toward the Duke of Orleans, and from his causing the companies of the insurgent regiments at Nancy, who were coming to Paris to raise the populace, to be arrested. From this moment the jacobins kept no more measures with him. Then Corypheus Marat, author of the *Friend of the People*, constantly denounced him as the traitor La Fayette. The affair of the Camp de Mars brought this rage to its height. The republican party, which then began to manifest itself, already wished to bring the king to trial. This party united with the jacobins, and this union formed the insurrection. La Fayette dispersed it. Firing commenced without, or rather contrary to his orders. Fournier fired a pistol almost at his breast. He was arrested—but La Fayette caused him to be set at liberty. Notwithstanding this he was accused of having *assassinated the patriots*.

After this event, the national guard, especially the old French guard, grew furious, they imprecated the jacobins, wished to destroy by a cannonade the club, which they called a cavern, and disperse the people who frequented it. La Fayette opposed them. When the constitution was accepted in 1791, he voted for the amnesty demanded by the king, and resigned the command of the national guard, since, as he derived his powers from the revolution, these powers ought to cease with it. The municipality, then constitutional, caused to be struck off a medal of gold, in honor of La Fayette, and gave him a bust of Washington. He had sacrificed a great part of his fortune for the revolution, never being willing to accept the remuneration which the city of Paris offered him from time to time. When war was on the point of being declared by the National Assembly against Austria and Prussia, the king gave him the command of the army of the centre, destined to cover the frontier of Ardennes. This army took the field in the beginning of May, 1792, but remained inactive. At the time of the outrages of June 20, he addressed to his army an order of the day, which excited in it a universal indignation against the jacobins. Addresses, in which the punishment of this crime was called for, were signed by all the corps, and the general was desired to communicate them to the king and the National Assembly. The republicans, who till then, had kept terms with La Fayette, hoping to draw him over to their party, came out against him with the greatest violence. The General himself went to Paris, appeared at the bar of the assembly, and called for vengeance on the insult to the king and the constitution. He could obtain nothing, the business was referred to the committees, and instead of succeeding in his demand, the republicans, in concert with the jacobins, had the boldness to demand that he himself should be indicted. He was well received, however, by the national guard. A deputation of Grenadiers from the different battalions, came to present him the homage of his former companions in arms, planted before the door of his hotel an enormous tree of liberty, hung with tri-colored ribbons, and begged him to place himself at their head, and destroy before his departure the infernal club, where all the disorder was fomented. He refused, saying, he majority of the assembly being constitutional, there was no cause for alarm. Events soon taught him, how small was the power of this nominal majority

to resist their audacious adversaries.—Before his departure he invited the king to place himself in the midst of his army, to escape the swords of the factious party, and he offered to ensure his safety. But the indecision of the king, and the prejudices of the queen, prevented the king from availing himself of the last means of safety. The republicans introduced into the assembly their project of indicting the general. It was rejected by two thirds of the voices, but this deliberation was itself the signal for the revolution of August 10th. La Fayette was just on the point of fighting the Prussians, when he heard of this revolution. He wished at first to face the storm, ordered the commissioners who were sent to depose him to be arrested, and addressed his troops in a proclamation, in which after having placed the affair in the most odious colours, he told them to choose between *Petion*, and the king and constitution. No one hesitated, all the army cried *Vive le Roi*, *Vive la Constitution*. But the next day he left the army, depending but little, and with some reason, on the first ebullition of enthusiasm. He was accompanied by some of his officers.

It was then that La Fayette terminated his revolutionary career, a striking example of the rewards which the people reserve for their favorites. When his departure was made known, the Capuchin Chabot immediately put a price on his head—he was declared an emigrant, and the commune of Paris, among other outrages, had the die of the medal, which had been struck in honor of him the year before, broken by the executioner. He had hardly passed the frontiers, when he was arrested at Luxembourg, where some emigrants, who regarded him as the principal author of the revolution, loaded him with insults. The Duke of Saxe Teschen, even told him he was reserved for the scaffold. He was afterwards delivered to the king of Prussia, who had him conducted to Wessel, and then to Magdeburgh, where he remained a year in prison.

The king of Prussia, upon making peace with France, in 1795, gave up his prisoner to the Austrians, who transferred him to Olmutz, where he was still most severely treated, and suffered severely from sickness. His physicians requested that his situation might be ameliorated; and it was at this time, that Doctor Bollman, and a young man of the name of Huger, (now living in South-Carolina) whose father had entertained La Fayette at his house in America, executed the daring project of carrying him off, at the time he went out to take the air; but he was retaken eight leagues from Olmutz, and kept in still closer confinement. His illness became more serious; he was left without any assistance, even without light or linen. At the end of the year 1796, his virtuous wife and daughter obtained the permission to share his confinement, thereby making the best eulogy of his virtues as a husband and father. At last the events of the war brought about his deliverance. General Bonaparte pursuing his success against Austria, in his campaign of 1797, forced that power to set him at liberty. M. La Fayette did not return to France immediately. He stopped at Hamburg, and did not enter his country till after the 18th Brumaire. Bonaparte offered him at that time, a place in his senate, but he excused himself, and retired to one of his estates which had not been sold, and where he has lived for a long time a stranger to politics. Bonaparte, irritated by his refusal, swore to La Fayette a hatred, which descended even to his son. Whatever zeal was shown by this young man in his service, he would never promote him in his rank, nor ever bestow on him the cross of the Legion of Honor; whenever he found the name of La Fayette in a report, he angrily struck it out.

After the 20th of March, 1815, La Fayette was chosen deputy in the chamber of representatives, by the electors of the department of Seine and Marne, and he obtained fifty votes for the presidency. He did not speak in this assembly until the moment when Bonaparte, conquered at Waterloo, was considered as irretrievably lost. La Fayette voted then, neither for Napoleon, nor for his son, but for what he called *national independence*. This is the speech which he pronounced June 21, 1815: "When, for the first time, after a silence of many years, I raise a voice that the friends of liberty may still remember, I feel myself urged to speak to you of the dangers of the country which you alone have the power of saving. Dark reports were spread, they are unfortunately confirmed. This is the moment for us to rally about the old tri-colored standard, that of '89, that of liberty, of equality, and of public order; it is that alone which we have to defend ourselves against foreign pretensions and domestic treachery. Permit, gentlemen, a veteran in this sacred cause, who has always been a stranger to the spirit of

faction, to lay before you some preliminary resolutions of which I hope you will appreciate the necessity.—Art. 1. The chamber of the representatives declares that the independence of the nation is threatened. 2d. The chamber declares itself permanent—any attempt to dissolve it, is an act of high treason; whoever is guilty of such an attempt shall be declared a traitor to his country, and shall be tried immediately as such.—3d. The army of the line and the National Guard, who have fought and are still fighting to defend the liberty, the independence and the territory of France, have deserved well of their country. 4. The minister of the interior is invited to assemble the general staff, the commanders and majors of legions of the Parisian national guard, in order to advise respecting the means of giving arms and bringing to the greatest perfection this citizen guard, whose zeal and patriotism, tried for twenty-six years, offers a sure guarantee to liberty, property, the tranquillity of the capital and the inviolability of the representatives of the nation. 5. The ministers of war, of foreign relations, of the police and of the interior are invited immediately to meet this assembly." This project was adopted with slight modifications. M. La Fayette was afterwards appointed one of the commissioners, chosen by the commission of government, to enter into a negotiation with the chiefs of the allied powers who were approaching Paris. It is known that this mission had no success. After the chamber was dissolved, M. La Fayette returned to his home—he reappeared on the political scenes, at the elections in 1817, and he obtained a number of votes for the Paris deputation.

[SELECTED.]

PLANETARY SYSTEM OF THE HEART.

BY AUGUSTUS VON KOTZBUE.

A studious astronomer was taking great pains to instruct a lady in the system of Descartes, according to which, the group of heavenly bodies consist only of vortices. "My head turns round already," said the fair scholar. "Whether this system is adapted to the heavens, I have not the least desire to know, but I am pleased with it, because in the same manner you may explain the system of the human heart, and that is my world." The astronomer looked at her with astonishment. He had studied the heavens a great deal, but he knew nothing at all concerning the human heart.

"Hear," continued the lady, "how I represent the matter to myself. Every person is such a Cartesian vortex. We constantly require an aether to float in; this aether is *Vanity*, as the fundamental principle of all our motions; the *Heart*, the centre of the vortex, is the sun around which the *Passions* revolve as planets. Each planet has its moons; round *Love*, for instance, revolves *Jealousy*. They mutually illumine each other by reflexion; but all their light is borrowed from the heart, whose second planet, *Ambition*, is not so near to it as love, and therefore receives from it a less degree of warmth. Ambition has likewise its moons, many of which shine extremely bright; for instance, *Bravery*, *Magnanimity*; while others reflect but a dismal light, as *Haughtiness*, *Arrogance*, *Flattery*. The largest planet in this system, the Jupiter of the human heart, is *Self-interest*, which has numberless satellites. Reason has also a little corner; she is our Saturn, who steals away thirty years before we can perceive that she has made one revolution. The comets in my system are no other than, *Meditations*, *Reflections*, which, after many aberrations, get, in a short time, into the vortex of the passions. Experience has taught us, that they have neither a pernicious nor a beneficial influence; they excite in us a little fear, and that is all: the vortex continues its course as before."

The astronomer smiled with open mouth, like one who does not comprehend a thing, but out of politeness, raises no objections to it. "I perceive a little farther still," continued the lady. "That involuntary sentiment termed *Sympathy*, I compare to the power by which the magnet attracts iron. Both are inexplicable. The solar spots may probably be the effects of age, when the warmth of the heart gradually decreases; for who can answer for it that our sun will not be by degrees extinguished? Then will the universe be as dark and cold as the heart of an old man or a conqueror. The thought is enough to chill one. Farewell!"

The lady skipped away to forge, in the vortex of a sprightly dance, the whole system of Descartes. The astronomer looked after her, shaking his head, and compared her to a shooting star.