

[INTERESTING NARRATIVE.]

GENERAL LA FAYETTE.

OLLMUTZ, —, 1796.

*A letter from an Austrian officer to his brother.*  
 "I am at last relieved, my dear brother, from the painful duties imposed upon me; the duties of a charge so little conformable to the feelings of my heart, and to the noble calling of my profession. From the station of a tubaltem jailor, I am now called to the field of battle against the invaders of my country. Would to God that I may shed the last drop of my blood in fighting with my fellow-soldiers, rather than to be debased again by refusing the ignominious functions I have so long and so reluctantly discharged at Ollmutz.

"When I was first appointed to the guard of the dungeon where General La Fayette, La Tour Maubourg, and Bureau de Pufy, are confined at Ollmutz, I gave you a description of their prison, their sufferings, and their persons. I must retrace here again a part of that lamentable picture, and supply what I have omitted.

"The state prison of Ollmutz was formerly an ancient convent belonging to the Jesuits, now converted into a military barracks. The aspect of the dungeons, vaulted above and below, is towards the south; in front is a very high terrace or rampart. They are on a level with a corridor, which itself is level with a great square court, surrounded by very high buildings, from which there is no other issue, except through a great arch way, the door of which is shut, after beating the retreat; and under which there is, day and night, a guard of thirty men, whose chief employment is to prevent any one passing or repassing, without making him undergo the most severe examination. There are also two other corps de guard, within view of the dungeons, which supply centinels ordered to watch, not only over the prisoners, but also over the two centinels on the terrace. These two last centinels are to lend an attentive ear to, and give immediate notice of all that passes, and not to answer any question. One of the prisoner's servants, having attempted to speak from his window to a fellow sufferer, was confined three months with his window shut, upon bread and water. There are besides three other centinels in the corridor.

"Besides many other inconveniences, the situation of the dungeon is rendered more unwholesome by the vicinity of barracks on one side, and the common necessary houses on the other, the damp of which is so great as to cause the walls of the cells, where the prisoners are confined, to be covered with salt petre. The stagnated waters of the Morawa, close to them, not only breed innumerable swarms of insects, and thick vapours; but that branch which passes along the walls, under their windows, being by its depth favourable to carrying off the filth, &c. of the city, has become its common sewer; to which circumstance is attributed the repeated insalubrity of the town. Add to this, that the nearest buildings are, on one side, the military; on the other, the city hospital.

"The outward walls are six feet thick; the partitions between each cell, four. M. and Madame La Fayette are confined in two of them; their two daughters (who are not allowed to spend more than six or seven hours a day with their parents) occupy a narrow slip, separated from theirs, which contains only a miserable mattress. La Tour Maubourg, & Bureau de Pufy, are shut up in two other separate dungeons. They receive the air by an opening four feet square, which still is obstructed by double iron bars, placed cross-ways, at some distance from each other, so as to make it impossible to distinguish the prisoners from the outside. The doors are double, both locked; the outward one, fastened at top and bottom, besides the lock, by two enormous padlocks.

"The chief command of the dungeons belongs to the major of the place, under whom is a lieutenant of the garrison, who when once in this office, cannot be changed, but in case of sickness, or to join the army. Immediately under these is a corporal and a soldier, whose principal employment is to bring the prisoners their food.

"The cells of the dungeons are never opened but one at a time, in the presence of an officer, while the guard is under arms, in battle array, within the corridor, the door of which is shut; a centinel places his firelock cross the opening of the door, while another, his drawn sabre in his right hand, holds the door with his left. The door is in this manner opened four times a day, the prisoner takes his repast in presence of the officer and the provost, who never forget to examine if the double bars of the window, the door, and every thing is safe. After the last meals of the prisoners, at nine o'clock, the lamps are extinguished, and they have been deprived of the tinder boxes, allowed them at their arrival, in case of sudden sickness. Their food is rendered disgusting, by the dirty manner in which it is prepared by the common cook of the barracks; they are only allowed a pewter spoon, knives and forks not being permitted. At first their drink was brought to them in bottles, and they drank out of a glass; but at present, by a refinement of precaution, they are only allowed wooden or earthen vessels to drink it out of; which afterwards are placed on the windows of the corridor, where they are

exposed to dust, insects, &c. serving the soldiers besides for whatever purposes they choose.

"Having been stripped before of their watches, razors, plate, and every little article of convenience or cleanliness; they were still deprived of pen, ink, paper, even of the letters from their friends and families; and it was signified to them that they were sequestrated from the whole world; that they would not hear any more of each other; that they were to forget even their own names, to remember only the particular numbers of their cells.

"The most strict examination was made of their books, and every thing published since 1789, without exception, proscribed. Among books of an anterior date, the commandant having cast his eyes on the first page of an history of Greece, and finding the words *Liberty and Republic*, immediately condemned it. The Imperial Minister went still farther—he ordered the novel of the *Liaisons Dangereuses*, and the observations on the history of France by Mably, to be taken from them.

"The three prisoners are dressed in rags, like beggars, their clothing not having been replaced during more than four years in which they have been confined in these dungeons. When Madame La Fayette and her daughters arrived, it was necessary, for the sake of decency, that La Fayette should have some clothing; a waistcoat and pantaloons of coarse serge were therefore granted; cloth (he was informed) was too costly for him. Being unprovided with shoes, one of his daughters contrived to make him a pair of the cloth of an old coat. La Tour Maubourg is dressed in a waistcoat and pantaloons of nankeen, which are quite in tatters, having lasted him the whole time of his confinement.

"Such have been, my dear brother, for upwards of four years past, the sufferings of these unfortunate men! And all the horrors of such a captivity have not been able to deter three heroic females, hardly escaped out of the dungeons of Robespierre, from plunging again in the more frightful dungeons of Ollmutz, to alleviate the miseries of a father and a husband! In observing the calm fortitude of the three prisoners, it is impossible not to conclude them innocent; or were it otherwise, what crime can be adequate to such punishment? Much as these lamentable scenes have distressed me, my dear brother, I still feel some comfort in the reflection that the dishonour of this unparalleled persecution neither falls principally on my country, nor my sovereign, who in the words he addressed to Madame La Fayette, that the liberation of her husband did not depend on himself alone, and that his hands were bound, confirms what I heard many times from the prisoners, that their most implacable enemies were to be found in the British cabinet."

From the New-York MINERVA.

The subject of national gratitude, after being distorted and exaggerated like every other business of party, will be placed after some time at rest with the public, and on its right footing. Truth, we hope, will prove stronger at last than all the power of artifice and faction.

France certainly rendered us very seasonable and essential services, which it became us to acknowledge with warmth, and to return with friendship and sincerity.—Candid partymen (if such beings are not imaginary) will own that we felt as a nation the warmest wishes for the happiness and liberty of the French; and that our government has taken some very decided steps in favour of the republic, such as paying off the French debt faster than it became due—which has proved indeed an unfortunate measure, as we have no hope of an outlet for the piracies of their armed vessels. Again, our government was the first in the world to acknowledge the republic; and this was done with a better grace and in better season, than the French acknowledged our independence. It is a known fact, that our zeal for them has gone to great lengths, even to fanaticism. We have seen their cockade worn by popular leaders, their flag displayed at elections, &c. and their Republic toasted in preference to our own. These are stains upon the character, as professing and proclaiming a fair neutrality. There was even something cowardly and mean to offer insults, while we chose to keep out of the way of blows. It is true, all these warm feelings have greatly cooled, and the national sentiment towards France is changed and changing. Yet it will be allowed, the French ministers, and their employers too, have been somewhat indelicate in their incessant, and sometimes gross claims upon our gratitude. Favours are worse than injuries, when they are thus reproachfully flung in one's teeth. Not only Genet's and Adet's, but the prevailing French style has been indiscreet and ungenerous. Reproaches and insults, of this sort, never fail to abate the ardour of gratitude and friendship. It

is an effect that no man can prevent, upon his mind, and if the change is unpleasing to the French, it is in a considerable degree the fruit of their own planting. It is not the less bitter to their taste on that account.

But the injuries we are daily suffering on the seas, are of a nature and to an amount to quench the popular passion for the French.—They lent us six millions, and have already despoiled us of ten millions of dollars. Such wrongs, in breach of their treaty cancel their claim of gratitude, for having originally agreed to that treaty. For if the debt cannot be paid, it may be cancelled—Spoliation is a defiance.

Thus it appears that good men may be rid of their qualms in respect to France.—Whatever may be their opinion of the value and nature of the French assistance, they will perceive that France herself, and not America, has wiped off with the privateering sponge, part, or the whole of the account.—Violent party-men will not much regard these observations. Calm and reflecting persons, it is hoped, will give them their due weight. INDEPENDENCE.

PATRIOTIC BARBER.

A London Barber resigned his business when the hair powder tax first made its appearance. He examined his books, and formed an estimate of the labours of his life. The following is his calculation:

"1. I have shaved in thirty years about 1000 acres of chin.

"2. I have covered the naked craniums of 8000 people.

"3. I have, like a Samsonian hero, slain my tens of thousands, with my comb, my nails, and precipitate.

"That block, which stands on yon neglected corner, I venerate and adore, because of the intellectual similitude it bears to some of my intelligent customers. It is my household god—Like the gilded mace in the House of Lords, my business was at a stand in its absence. When I die it belongs to Parliament: It is a legacy to them in my will.—The mace is nearly worn out: This, I am persuaded, is an excellent substitute.

"My razors I leave to William Pitt, to cut the throats of Frenchmen. He knows their worth:—Often have they moved over the minister's chin.—Burke—aye Edmund Burke—and the confederacy of exterminators, may make considerable head-way, against the long bearded army of France, with these favourite tools. My God! what a troop of cavalry!—How formidable!—How irresistible!—Brandishing 500 chosen razors, and moving on, conquering, and to conquer.

"My combs, my fine teeth combs, I bequeath to the people of England.—In poverty, and in rags.—Hard driven nation! wretched people! use what I give you, lest you be devoured alive."

WILMINGTON, March 12.

On Wednesday last arrived here, 20 days from St. Bartholomews, brig Sally, capt. Adams.

The day before the Sally left the island, (15th Feb) the ship Hope of Philadelphia, arrived from Bourdeaux, which place she left the 7th of January last; the master informed, that the French Directory would no longer listen to Lord Malmesbury's unequivocal mission, and that he had taken his departure without effecting a single point in the negotiation. The American ambassador, Gen. Pinckney, had arrived; he was not received as minister of the United States; and after he had presented his credentials to the Directory he was informed that he could not immediately be accepted, but that he might remain in Paris by subjecting himself to the same regulations that other foreigners were under.—The general did not think the dignity or the honour of the United States in the least compromised, by being compelled to receive the kind, domestic, searching visits of an armed body; and whether he consulted his own or not, he thought it prudent to take his departure in company with Lord Malmesbury.

CHARLESTON, March 8.

Letters were received by yesterday's post from Gen. Pinckney, dated at Bourdeaux, on the 24th of November last, which came by the brig *Sutannah*, Capt. Fitzpatrick, arrived at Philadelphia. The general mentions that he had experienced a very disagreeable passage; repeated gales of wind rendered their situation at several times very dangerous. He landed on the 15th. He speaks in the most handsome terms of the polite and friendly reception he met with from the citizens of Bourdeaux.

COMMITTED to the jail of this town a few weeks ago, a negro man by the name of CÆSAR—he says he belongs to William Sinclair, living near Monk's Corner, South-Carolina, and has been absent upwards of a year—the owner is requested to apply to the jailor, and by proving his property, and paying the necessary expenses, he may take him away. JESSE LEE, jailor. Fayetteville, March 2. 51