

SELECTED WORKS OF VICTOR HUGO

LES MISÉRABLES

VOLUME I — FANTINE

PREFACE

So long as there shall exist, by virtue of law and custom, decrees of damnation pronounced by society, artificially creating hells amid the civilization of earth, and adding the element of human fate to divine destiny; so long as the three great problems of the century — the degradation of man through pauperism, the corruption of woman through hunger, the crippling of children through lack of light — are unsolved; so long as social asphyxia is possible in any part of the world;—in other words, and with a still wider significance, so long as ignorance and poverty exist on earth, books of the nature of *Les Misérables* cannot fail to be of use.

HAUTEVILLE HOUSE, 1862.

BOOK FIRST — A JUST MAN

CHAPTER I — M. MYRIEL

In 1815, M. Charles-François-Bienvenu Myriel was Bishop of D— He was an old man of about seventy-five years of age; he had occupied the see of D— since 1806.

Although this detail has no connection whatever with the real substance of what we are about to relate, it will not be superfluous, if merely for the sake of exactness in all points, to mention here the various rumors and remarks which had been in circulation about him from the very moment when he arrived in the diocese. True or false, that which is said of men often occupies as important a place in their lives, and above all in their destinies, as that which they do. M. Myriel was the son of a councillor of the Parliament of Aix; hence he belonged to the nobility of the bar. It was said that his father, destining him to be the heir of his own post, had married him at a very early age, eighteen or twenty, in accordance with a custom which is rather widely prevalent in parliamentary families. In spite of this marriage, however, it was said that Charles Myriel created a great deal of talk. He was well formed, though rather short in stature, elegant, graceful, intelligent; the whole of the first portion of his life had been devoted to the world and to gallantry.

The Revolution came; events succeeded each other with precipitation; the parliamentary families, decimated, pursued, hunted down, were dispersed. M. Charles Myriel emigrated to Italy at the very beginning of the Revolution. There his wife died of a malady of the chest, from which she had long suffered. He had no children. What took place next in the fate of M. Myriel? The ruin of the French society of the olden days, the fall of his own family, the tragic spectacles of '93, which were, perhaps, even more alarming to the emigrants who viewed them from a distance, with the magnifying powers of terror, — did these cause the ideas of renunciation and solitude to germinate in him? Was he, in the midst of these distractions, these affections which absorbed his life, suddenly smitten with one of those mysterious and terrible blows which sometimes overwhelm, by striking to his heart, a man whom public catastrophes would not shake, by striking at his existence and his fortune? No one could have told: all that was known was, that when he returned from Italy he was a priest.

In 1804, M. Myriel was the Curé of B— [Brignolles]. He was already advanced in years, and lived in a very retired manner.

About the epoch of the coronation, some petty affair connected with his curacy — just what, is not precisely known — took him to Paris. Among other powerful persons to whom he went to solicit aid for his

parishioners was M. le Cardinal Fesch. One day, when the Emperor had come to visit his uncle, the worthy Curé, who was waiting in the anteroom, found himself present when His Majesty passed. Napoleon, on finding himself observed with a certain curiosity by this old man, turned round and said abruptly —

“Who is this good man who is staring at me?”

“Sire,” said M. Myriel, “you are looking at a good man, and I at a great man. Each of us can profit by it.”

That very evening, the Emperor asked the Cardinal the name of the Curé, and some time afterwards M. Myriel was utterly astonished to learn that he had been appointed Bishop of D—

What truth was there, after all, in the stories which were invented as to the early portion of M. Myriel's life? No one knew.

Very few families had been acquainted with the Myriel family before the Revolution.

M. Myriel had to undergo the fate of every newcomer in a little town, where there are many mouths which talk, and very few heads which think. He was obliged to undergo it although he was a bishop, and because he was a bishop. But after all, the rumors with which his name was connected were rumors only, — noise, sayings, words; less than words — palabres, as the energetic language of the South expresses it.

However that may be, after nine years of episcopal power and of residence in D—, all the stories and subjects of conversation which engross petty towns and petty people at the outset had fallen into profound oblivion. No one would have dared to mention them; no one would have dared to recall them.

M. Myriel had arrived at D— accompanied by an elderly spinster, Mademoiselle Baptistine, who was his sister, and ten years his junior.

Their only domestic was a female servant of the same age as Mademoiselle Baptistine, and named Madame Magloire, who, after having been the servant of M. le Curé, now assumed the double title of maid to Mademoiselle and housekeeper to Monseigneur.

Mademoiselle Baptistine was a long, pale, thin, gentle creature; she realized the ideal expressed by the word “respectable”; for it seems that a woman must needs be a mother in order to be venerable. She had never been pretty; her whole life, which had been nothing but a succession of holy deeds, had finally conferred upon her a sort of pallor and transparency; and as she advanced in years she had acquired what may be called the beauty of goodness. What had been leanness in her youth had become transparency in her maturity; and this diaphaneity allowed the angel to be seen. She was a soul rather than a virgin. Her person seemed made of a shadow; there was hardly sufficient body to provide for sex; a little matter enclosing a light;

large eyes forever drooping;—a mere pretext for a soul's remaining on the earth.

Madame Magloire was a little, fat, white old woman, corpulent and bustling; always out of breath, — in the first place, because of her activity, and in the next, because of her asthma.

On his arrival, M. Myriel was installed in the episcopal palace with the honors required by the Imperial decrees, which class a bishop immediately after a major-general. The mayor and the president paid the first call on him, and he, in turn, paid the first call on the general and the prefect.

The installation over, the town waited to see its bishop at work.

CHAPTER II — M. MYRIEL BECOMES M. WELCOME

The episcopal palace of D— adjoins the hospital.

The episcopal palace was a huge and beautiful house, built of stone at the beginning of the last century by M. Henri Puget, Doctor of Theology of the Faculty of Paris, Abbé of Simore, who had been Bishop of D— in 1712. This palace was a genuine seignorial residence. Everything about it had a grand air, — the apartments of the Bishop, the drawing-rooms, the chambers, the principal courtyard, which was very large, with walks encircling it under arcades in the old

Florentine fashion, and gardens planted with magnificent trees. In the dining-room, a long and superb gallery which was situated on the ground floor and opened on the gardens, M. Henri Puget had entertained in state, on July 29, 1714, My Lords Charles Brûlart de Genlis, archbishop; Prince d'Embrun; Antoine de Mesgrigny, the capuchin, Bishop of Grasse; Philippe de Vendôme, Grand Prior of France, Abbé of Saint Honoré de Lérins; François de Berton de Crillon, bishop, Baron de Vence; César de Sabran de Forcalquier, bishop, Seigneur of Glandève; and Jean Soanen, Priest of the Oratory, preacher in ordinary to the king, bishop, Seigneur of Senez. The portraits of these seven reverend personages decorated this apartment; and this memorable date, the 29th of July, 1714, was there engraved in letters of gold on a table of white marble.

The hospital was a low and narrow building of a single story, with a small garden.

Three days after his arrival, the Bishop visited the hospital. The visit ended, he had the director requested to be so good as to come to his house.

“Monsieur the director of the hospital,” said he to him, “how many sick people have you at the present moment?” “Twenty-six, Monseigneur.”

“That was the number which I counted,” said the Bishop.

“The beds,” pursued the director, “are very much

crowded against each other.” “That is what I observed.”

“The halls are nothing but rooms, and it is with difficulty that the air can be changed in them.” “So it seems to me.”

“And then, when there is a ray of sun, the garden is very small for the convalescents.” “That was what I said to myself.”

“In case of epidemics, — we have had the typhus fever this year; we had the sweating sickness two years ago, and a hundred patients at times, — we know not what to do.”

“That is the thought which occurred to me.”

“What would you have, Monseigneur?” said the director. “One must resign one's self.” This conversation took place in the gallery dining-room on the ground floor.

The Bishop remained silent for a moment; then he turned abruptly to the director of the hospital. “Monsieur,” said he, “how many beds do you think this hall alone would hold?”

“Monseigneur's dining-room?” exclaimed the stupefied director.

The Bishop cast a glance round the apartment, and seemed to be taking measures and calculations with his eyes. “It would hold full twenty beds,” said he, as though speaking to himself. Then, raising his voice —

“Hold, Monsieur the director of the hospital, I will tell you something. There is evidently a mistake

here. There are thirty-six of you, in five or six small rooms. There are three of us here, and we have room for sixty. There is some mistake, I tell you; you have my house, and I have yours. Give me back my house; you are at home here.”

On the following day the thirty-six patients were installed in the Bishop's palace, and the Bishop was settled in the hospital.

M. Myriel had no property, his family having been ruined by the Revolution. His sister was in receipt of a yearly income of five hundred francs, which sufficed for her personal wants at the vicarage. M. Myriel received from the State, in his quality of bishop, a salary of fifteen thousand francs. On the very day when he took up his abode in the hospital, M. Myriel settled on the disposition of this sum once for all, in the following manner. We transcribe here a note made by his own hand —

NOTE ON THE REGULATION OF MY HOUSEHOLD EXPENSES.

For the little seminary. 1,500 livres

Society of the mission. 100 ”

For the Lazarists of Montdidier. 100 ”

Seminary for foreign missions in
Paris. 200 ”

Congregation of the Holy Spirit. 150 ”

Religious establishments of the Holy Land. 100 ”
 Charitable maternity societies. 300 ”
 Extra, for that of Arles. 50 ”
 Work for the amelioration of prisons. 400 ”
 Work for the relief and delivery of prisoners. 500 ”
 To liberate fathers of families incarcerated for debt 1,000 ”
 Addition to the salary of the poor teachers of the diocese. 2,000 ”
 Public granary of the Hautes-Alpes. 100 ”
 ”
 Congregation of the ladies of D—, of Manosque, and of Sisteron, for the gratuitous instruction of poor girls. 1,500 ”
 ”
 For the poor. 6,000 ”
 My personal expenses. 1,000 ”
 —
 Total. 15,000 ”

M. Myriel made no change in this arrangement during the entire period that he occupied the see of D—. As has been seen, he called it regulating his household expenses.

This arrangement was accepted with absolute submission by Mademoiselle Baptistine. This holy woman regarded Monseigneur of D— as at one and the

same time her brother and her bishop, her friend according to the flesh and her superior according to the Church. She simply loved and venerated him. When he spoke, she bowed; when he acted, she yielded her adherence. Their only servant, Madame Magloire, grumbled a little. It will be observed that Monsieur the Bishop had reserved for himself only one thousand livres, which, added to the pension of Mademoiselle Baptistine, made fifteen hundred francs a year. On these fifteen hundred francs these two old women and the old man subsisted.

And when a village curate came to D—, the Bishop still found means to entertain him, thanks to the severe economy of Madame Magloire, and to the intelligent administration of Mademoiselle Baptistine.

One day, after he had been in D— about three months, the Bishop said — “And still I am quite cramped with it all!”

“I should think so!” exclaimed Madame Magloire. “Monseigneur has not even claimed the allowance which the department owes him for the expense of his carriage in town, and for his journeys about the diocese. It was customary for bishops in former days.”

“Hold!” cried the Bishop, “you are quite right, Madame Magloire.” And he made his demand.

Some time afterwards the General Council took this demand under consideration, and voted him an

annual sum of three thousand francs, under this heading: Allowance to M. the Bishop for expenses of carriage, expenses of posting, and expenses of pastoral visits.

This provoked a great outcry among the local burgesses; and a senator of the Empire, a former member of the Council of the Five Hundred which favored the 18 Brumaire, and who was provided with a magnificent senatorial office in the vicinity of the town of D—, wrote to M. Bigot de Prémeneu, the minister of public worship, a very angry and confidential note on the subject, from which we extract these authentic lines —

“Expenses of carriage? What can be done with it in a town of less than four thousand inhabitants? Expenses of journeys? What is the use of these trips, in the first place? Next, how can the posting be accomplished in these mountainous parts? There are no roads. No one travels otherwise than on horseback. Even the bridge between Durance and Château-Arnoux can barely support ox-teams. These priests are all thus, greedy and avaricious. This man played the good priest when he first came. Now he does like the rest; he must have a carriage and a posting-chaise, he must have luxuries, like the bishops of the olden days. Oh, all this priesthood! Things will not go well, M. le Comte, until the Emperor has freed us from these black-capped rascals. Down with the Pope! [Matters were getting

embroiled with Rome.] For my part, I am for Cæsar alone." Etc., etc.

On the other hand, this affair afforded great delight to Madame Magloire. "Good," said she to Mademoiselle Baptistine; "Monseigneur began with other people, but he has had to wind up with himself, after all. He has regulated all his charities. Now here are three thousand francs for us! At last!"

That same evening the Bishop wrote out and handed to his sister a memorandum conceived in the following terms — EXPENSES OF CARRIAGE AND CIRCUIT.

For furnishing meat soup to the patients in the hospital.	1,500 livres
For the maternity charitable society of Aix.	250 "
For the maternity charitable society of Draguignan.	250 "
For foundlings.	500 "
For orphans.	500 "
—	
Total.	3,000 "

Such was M. Myriel's budget.

As for the chance episcopal perquisites, the fees for marriage bans, dispensations, private baptisms, sermons, benedictions, of churches or chapels, marriages, etc., the Bishop levied them on the wealthy

with all the more asperity, since he bestowed them on the needy.

After a time, offerings of money flowed in. Those who had and those who lacked knocked at M. Myriel's door, — the latter in search of the alms which the former came to deposit. In less than a year the Bishop had become the treasurer of all benevolence and the cashier of all those in distress. Considerable sums of money passed through his hands, but nothing could induce him to make any change whatever in his mode of life, or add anything superfluous to his bare necessities.

Far from it. As there is always more wretchedness below than there is brotherhood above, all was given away, so to speak, before it was received. It was like water on dry soil; no matter how much money he received, he never had any. Then he stripped himself.

The usage being that bishops shall announce their baptismal names at the head of their charges and their pastoral letters, the poor people of the country-side had selected, with a sort of affectionate instinct, among the names and prenomens of their bishop, that which had a meaning for them; and they never called him anything except Monseigneur Bienvenu [Welcome]. We will follow their example, and will also call him thus when we have occasion to name him. Moreover, this appellation pleased him.

“I like that name,” said he. “Bienvenu makes up

for the Monseigneur.”

We do not claim that the portrait herewith presented is probable; we confine ourselves to stating that it resembles the original.

CHAPTER III — A HARD BISHOPRIC FOR A GOOD BISHOP

The Bishop did not omit his pastoral visits because he had converted his carriage into alms. The diocese of D— is a fatiguing one. There are very few plains and a great many mountains; hardly any roads, as we have just seen; thirty-two curacies, forty-one vicarships, and two hundred and eighty-five auxiliary chapels. To visit all these is quite a task.

The Bishop managed to do it. He went on foot when it was in the neighborhood, in a tilted spring-cart when it was on the plain, and on a donkey in the mountains. The two old women accompanied him. When the trip was too hard for them, he went alone.

One day he arrived at Senez, which is an ancient episcopal city. He was mounted on an ass. His purse, which was very dry at that moment, did not permit him any other equipage. The mayor of the town came to receive him at the gate of the town, and watched him dismount from his ass, with scandalized eyes. Some of the citizens were laughing around him. “Monsieur the Mayor,” said the Bishop, “and Messieurs Citizens, I

perceive that I shock you. You think it very arrogant in a poor priest to ride an animal which was used by Jesus Christ. I have done so from necessity, I assure you, and not from vanity.”

In the course of these trips he was kind and indulgent, and talked rather than preached. He never went far in search of his arguments and his examples. He quoted to the inhabitants of one district the example of a neighboring district. In the cantons where they were harsh to the poor, he said: “Look at the people of Briançon! They have conferred on the poor, on widows and orphans, the right to have their meadows mown three days in advance of every one else. They rebuild their houses for them gratuitously when they are ruined. Therefore it is a country which is blessed by God. For a whole century, there has not been a single murderer among them.”

In villages which were greedy for profit and harvest, he said: “Look at the people of Embrun! If, at the harvest season, the father of a family has his son away on service in the army, and his daughters at service in the town, and if he is ill and incapacitated, the curé recommends him to the prayers of the congregation; and on Sunday, after the mass, all the inhabitants of the village — men, women, and children — go to the poor man's field and do his harvesting for him, and carry his straw and his grain to his granary.” To families divided by questions of money and

inheritance he said: "Look at the mountaineers of Devolny, a country so wild that the nightingale is not heard there once in fifty years. Well, when the father of a family dies, the boys go off to seek their fortunes, leaving the property to the girls, so that they may find husbands." To the cantons which had a taste for lawsuits, and where the farmers ruined themselves in stamped paper, he said: "Look at those good peasants in the valley of Queyras! There are three thousand souls of them. Mon Dieu! it is like a little republic. Neither judge nor bailiff is known there. The mayor does everything. He allots the imposts, taxes each person conscientiously, judges quarrels for nothing, divides inheritances without charge, pronounces sentences gratuitously; and he is obeyed, because he is a just man among simple men." To villages where he found no schoolmaster, he quoted once more the people of Queyras: "Do you know how they manage?" he said. "Since a little country of a dozen or fifteen hearths cannot always support a teacher, they have schoolmasters who are paid by the whole valley, who make the round of the villages, spending a week in this one, ten days in that, and instruct them. These teachers go to the fairs. I have seen them there. They are to be recognized by the quill pens which they wear in the cord of their hat. Those who teach reading only have one pen; those who teach reading and reckoning have two pens; those who teach reading, reckoning, and

Latin have three pens. But what a disgrace to be ignorant! Do like the people of Queyras!”

Thus he discoursed gravely and paternally; in default of examples, he invented parables, going directly to the point, with few phrases and many images, which characteristic formed the real eloquence of Jesus Christ. And being convinced himself, he was persuasive.

CHAPTER IV — WORKS CORRESPONDING TO WORDS

His conversation was gay and affable. He put himself on a level with the two old women who had passed their lives beside him. When he laughed, it was the laugh of a schoolboy. Madame Magloire liked to call him Your Grace [Votre Grandeur]. One day he rose from his armchair, and went to his library in search of a book. This book was on one of the upper shelves. As the bishop was rather short of stature, he could not reach it. “Madame Magloire,” said he, “fetch me a chair. My greatness [grandeur] does not reach as far as that shelf.”

One of his distant relatives, Madame la Comtesse de Lô, rarely allowed an opportunity to escape of enumerating, in his presence, what she designated as “the expectations” of her three sons. She had numerous relatives, who were very old and near to death, and of

whom her sons were the natural heirs. The youngest of the three was to receive from a grandaunt a good hundred thousand livres of income; the second was the heir by entail to the title of the Duke, his uncle; the eldest was to succeed to the peerage of his grandfather. The Bishop was accustomed to listen in silence to these innocent and pardonable maternal boasts. On one occasion, however, he appeared to be more thoughtful than usual, while Madame de L^ô was relating once again the details of all these inheritances and all these "expectations." She interrupted herself impatiently: "Mon Dieu, cousin! What are you thinking about?" "I am thinking," replied the Bishop, "of a singular remark, which is to be found, I believe, in St. Augustine, — 'Place your hopes in the man from whom you do not inherit.'"

At another time, on receiving a notification of the decease of a gentleman of the country-side, wherein not only the dignities of the dead man, but also the feudal and noble qualifications of all his relatives, spread over an entire page: "What a stout back Death has!" he exclaimed. "What a strange burden of titles is cheerfully imposed on him, and how much wit must men have, in order thus to press the tomb into the service of vanity!"

He was gifted, on occasion, with a gentle raillery, which almost always concealed a serious meaning. In the course of one Lent, a youthful vicar came to D—,

and preached in the cathedral. He was tolerably eloquent. The subject of his sermon was charity. He urged the rich to give to the poor, in order to avoid hell, which he depicted in the most frightful manner of which he was capable, and to win paradise, which he represented as charming and desirable. Among the audience there was a wealthy retired merchant, who was somewhat of a usurer, named M. Géborand, who had amassed two millions in the manufacture of coarse cloth, serges, and woollen galloons. Never in his whole life had M. Géborand bestowed alms on any poor wretch. After the delivery of that sermon, it was observed that he gave a sou every Sunday to the poor old beggar-women at the door of the cathedral. There were six of them to share it. One day the Bishop caught sight of him in the act of bestowing this charity, and said to his sister, with a smile, "There is M. Géborand purchasing paradise for a sou."

When it was a question of charity, he was not to be rebuffed even by a refusal, and on such occasions he gave utterance to remarks which induced reflection. Once he was begging for the poor in a drawing-room of the town; there was present the Marquis de Champtercier, a wealthy and avaricious old man, who contrived to be, at one and the same time, an ultra-royalist and an ultra-Voltairian. This variety of man has actually existed. When the Bishop came to him, he touched his arm, "You must give me

something, M. le Marquis.” The Marquis turned round and answered dryly, “I have poor people of my own, Monseigneur.” “Give them to me,” replied the Bishop.

One day he preached the following sermon in the cathedral —

“My very dear brethren, my good friends, there are thirteen hundred and twenty thousand peasants' dwellings in France which have but three openings; eighteen hundred and seventeen thousand hovels which have but two openings, the door and one window; and three hundred and forty-six thousand cabins besides which have but one opening, the door. And this arises from a thing which is called the tax on doors and windows. Just put poor families, old women and little children, in those buildings, and behold the fevers and maladies which result! Alas! God gives air to men; the law sells it to them. I do not blame the law, but I bless God. In the department of the Isère, in the Var, in the two departments of the Alpes, the Hautes, and the Basses, the peasants have not even wheelbarrows; they transport their manure on the backs of men; they have no candles, and they burn resinous sticks, and bits of rope dipped in pitch. That is the state of affairs throughout the whole of the hilly country of Dauphiné. They make bread for six months at one time; they bake it with dried cow-dung. In the winter they break this bread up with an axe, and they soak it for twenty-four hours, in order to render it eatable. My brethren, have

pity! behold the suffering on all sides of you!”

Born a Provençal, he easily familiarized himself with the dialect of the south. He said, “En bé! moussu, sés sagé?” as in lower Languedoc; “Onté anaras passa?” as in the Basses-Alpes; “Puerte un bouen moutu embe un bouen fromage grase,” as in upper Dauphiné. This pleased the people extremely, and contributed not a little to win him access to all spirits. He was perfectly at home in the thatched cottage and in the mountains. He understood how to say the grandest things in the most vulgar of idioms. As he spoke all tongues, he entered into all hearts.

Moreover, he was the same towards people of the world and towards the lower classes. He condemned nothing in haste and without taking circumstances into account. He said, “Examine the road over which the fault has passed.”

Being, as he described himself with a smile, an ex-sinner, he had none of the asperities of austerity, and he professed, with a good deal of distinctness, and without the frown of the ferociously virtuous, a doctrine which may be summed up as follows —

“Man has upon him his flesh, which is at once his burden and his temptation. He drags it with him and yields to it. He must watch it, check it, repress it, and obey it only at the last extremity. There may be some fault even in this obedience; but the fault thus committed is venial; it is a fall, but a fall on the knees

which may terminate in prayer.

“To be a saint is the exception; to be an upright man is the rule. Err, fall, sin if you will, but be upright.

“The least possible sin is the law of man. No sin at all is the dream of the angel. All which is terrestrial is subject to sin. Sin is a gravitation.”

When he saw everyone exclaiming very loudly, and growing angry very quickly, “Oh! oh!” he said, with a smile; “to all appearance, this is a great crime which all the world commits. These are hypocrisies which have taken fright, and are in haste to make protest and to put themselves under shelter.”

He was indulgent towards women and poor people, on whom the burden of human society rest. He said, “The faults of women, of children, of the feeble, the indigent, and the ignorant, are the fault of the husbands, the fathers, the masters, the strong, the rich, and the wise.”

He said, moreover, “Teach those who are ignorant as many things as possible; society is culpable, in that it does not afford instruction gratis; it is responsible for the night which it produces. This soul is full of shadow; sin is therein committed. The guilty one is not the person who has committed the sin, but the person who has created the shadow.”

It will be perceived that he had a peculiar manner of his own of judging things: I suspect that he obtained it from the Gospel.

One day he heard a criminal case, which was in preparation and on the point of trial, discussed in a drawing-room. A wretched man, being at the end of his resources, had coined counterfeit money, out of love for a woman, and for the child which he had had by her. Counterfeiting was still punishable with death at that epoch. The woman had been arrested in the act of passing the first false piece made by the man. She was held, but there were no proofs except against her. She alone could accuse her lover, and destroy him by her confession. She denied; they insisted. She persisted in her denial. Thereupon an idea occurred to the attorney for the crown. He invented an infidelity on the part of the lover, and succeeded, by means of fragments of letters cunningly presented, in persuading the unfortunate woman that she had a rival, and that the man was deceiving her. Thereupon, exasperated by jealousy, she denounced her lover, confessed all, proved all.

The man was ruined. He was shortly to be tried at Aix with his accomplice. They were relating the matter, and each one was expressing enthusiasm over the cleverness of the magistrate. By bringing jealousy into play, he had caused the truth to burst forth in wrath, he had educed the justice of revenge. The Bishop listened to all this in silence. When they had finished, he inquired,—

“Where are this man and woman to be tried?” “At

the Court of Assizes.”

He went on, “And where will the advocate of the crown be tried?”

A tragic event occurred at D— A man was condemned to death for murder. He was a wretched fellow, not exactly educated, not exactly ignorant, who had been a mountebank at fairs, and a writer for the public. The town took a great interest in the trial. On the eve of the day fixed for the execution of the condemned man, the chaplain of the prison fell ill. A priest was needed to attend the criminal in his last moments. They sent for the curé. It seems that he refused to come, saying, “That is no affair of mine. I have nothing to do with that unpleasant task, and with that mountebank: I, too, am ill; and besides, it is not my place.” This reply was reported to the Bishop, who said, “Monsieur le Curé is right: it is not his place; it is mine.”

He went instantly to the prison, descended to the cell of the “mountebank,” called him by name, took him by the hand, and spoke to him. He passed the entire day with him, forgetful of food and sleep, praying to God for the soul of the condemned man, and praying the condemned man for his own. He told him the best truths, which are also the most simple. He was father, brother, friend; he was bishop only to bless. He taught him everything, encouraged and consoled him. The man was on the point of dying in despair. Death was an

abyss to him. As he stood trembling on its mournful brink, he recoiled with horror. He was not sufficiently ignorant to be absolutely indifferent. His condemnation, which had been a profound shock, had, in a manner, broken through, here and there, that wall which separates us from the mystery of things, and which we call life. He gazed incessantly beyond this world through these fatal breaches, and beheld only darkness. The Bishop made him see light.

On the following day, when they came to fetch the unhappy wretch, the Bishop was still there. He followed him, and exhibited himself to the eyes of the crowd in his purple camail and with his episcopal cross upon his neck, side by side with the criminal bound with cords.

He mounted the tumbril with him, he mounted the scaffold with him. The sufferer, who had been so gloomy and cast down on the preceding day, was radiant. He felt that his soul was reconciled, and he hoped in God. The Bishop embraced him, and at the moment when the knife was about to fall, he said to him: "God raises from the dead him whom man slays; he whom his brothers have rejected finds his Father once more. Pray, believe, enter into life: the Father is there." When he descended from the scaffold, there was something in his look which made the people draw aside to let him pass. They did not know which was most worthy of admiration, his pallor or his serenity.

On his return to the humble dwelling, which he designated, with a smile, as his palace, he said to his sister, "I have just officiated pontifically."

Since the most sublime things are often those which are the least understood, there were people in the town who said, when commenting on this conduct of the Bishop, "It is affectation."

This, however, was a remark which was confined to the drawing-rooms. The populace, which perceives no jest in holy deeds, was touched, and admired him.

As for the Bishop, it was a shock to him to have beheld the guillotine, and it was a long time before he recovered from it.

In fact, when the scaffold is there, all erected and prepared, it has something about it which produces hallucination. One may feel a certain indifference to the death penalty, one may refrain from pronouncing upon it, from saying yes or no, so long as one has not seen a guillotine with one's own eyes: but if one encounters one of them, the shock is violent; one is forced to decide, and to take part for or against. Some admire it, like de Maistre; others execrate it, like Beccaria. The guillotine is the concretion of the law; it is called vindicate; it is not neutral, and it does not permit you to remain neutral. He who sees it shivers with the most mysterious of shivers. All social problems erect their interrogation point around this chopping-knife. The scaffold is a vision. The scaffold is not a piece of

carpentry; the scaffold is not a machine; the scaffold is not an inert bit of mechanism constructed of wood, iron and cords.

It seems as though it were a being, possessed of I know not what sombre initiative; one would say that this piece of carpenter's work saw, that this machine heard, that this mechanism understood, that this wood, this iron, and these cords were possessed of will. In the frightful meditation into which its presence casts the soul the scaffold appears in terrible guise, and as though taking part in what is going on. The scaffold is the accomplice of the executioner; it devours, it eats flesh, it drinks blood; the scaffold is a sort of monster fabricated by the judge and the carpenter, a spectre which seems to live with a horrible vitality composed of all the death which it has inflicted.

Therefore, the impression was terrible and profound; on the day following the execution, and on many succeeding days, the Bishop appeared to be crushed. The almost violent serenity of the funereal moment had disappeared; the phantom of social justice tormented him. He, who generally returned from all his deeds with a radiant satisfaction, seemed to be reproaching himself. At times he talked to himself, and stammered lugubrious monologues in a low voice. This is one which his sister overheard one evening and preserved: "I did not think that it was so monstrous. It is wrong to become absorbed in the divine law to such

a degree as not to perceive human law. Death belongs to God alone. By what right do men touch that unknown thing?"

In course of time these impressions weakened and probably vanished. Nevertheless, it was observed that the Bishop thenceforth avoided passing the place of execution.

M. Myriel could be summoned at any hour to the bedside of the sick and dying. He did not ignore the fact that therein lay his greatest duty and his greatest labor. Widowed and orphaned families had no need to summon him; he came of his own accord. He understood how to sit down and hold his peace for long hours beside the man who had lost the wife of his love, of the mother who had lost her child. As he knew the moment for silence he knew also the moment for speech. Oh, admirable consoler! He sought not to efface sorrow by forgetfulness, but to magnify and dignify it by hope. He said —

“Have a care of the manner in which you turn towards the dead. Think not of that which perishes. Gaze steadily. You will perceive the living light of your well-beloved dead in the depths of heaven.” He knew that faith is wholesome. He sought to counsel and calm the despairing man, by pointing out to him the resigned man, and to transform the grief which gazes upon a grave by showing him the grief which fixes its gaze upon a star.

CHAPTER V — MONSEIGNEUR BIENVENU MADE HIS CASSOCKS LAST TOO LONG

The private life of M. Myriel was filled with the same thoughts as his public life. The voluntary poverty in which the Bishop of D— lived, would have been a solemn and charming sight for any one who could have viewed it close at hand.

Like all old men, and like the majority of thinkers, he slept little. This brief slumber was profound. In the morning he meditated for an hour, then he said his mass, either at the cathedral or in his own house. His mass said, he broke his fast on rye bread dipped in the milk of his own cows. Then he set to work.

A Bishop is a very busy man: he must every day receive the secretary of the bishopric, who is generally a canon, and nearly every day his vicars-general. He has congregations to reprove, privileges to grant, a whole ecclesiastical library to examine, — prayer-books, diocesan catechisms, books of hours, etc., — charges to write, sermons to authorize, curés and mayors to reconcile, a clerical correspondence, an administrative correspondence; on one side the State, on the other the Holy See; and a thousand matters of business.

What time was left to him, after these thousand

details of business, and his offices and his breviary, he bestowed first on the necessitous, the sick, and the afflicted; the time which was left to him from the afflicted, the sick, and the necessitous, he devoted to work. Sometimes he dug in his garden; again, he read or wrote. He had but one word for both these kinds of toil; he called them gardening. "The mind is a garden," said he.

Towards midday, when the weather was fine, he went forth and took a stroll in the country or in town, often entering lowly dwellings. He was seen walking alone, buried in his own thoughts, his eyes cast down, supporting himself on his long cane, clad in his wadded purple garment of silk, which was very warm, wearing purple stockings inside his coarse shoes, and surmounted by a flat hat which allowed three golden tassels of large bullion to droop from its three points.

It was a perfect festival wherever he appeared. One would have said that his presence had something warming and luminous about it. The children and the old people came out to the doorsteps for the Bishop as for the sun. He bestowed his blessing, and they blessed him. They pointed out his house to any one who was in need of anything.

Here and there he halted, accosted the little boys and girls, and smiled upon the mothers. He visited the poor so long as he had any money; when he no longer had any, he visited the rich.

As he made his cassocks last a long while, and did not wish to have it noticed, he never went out in the town without his wadded purple cloak. This inconvenienced him somewhat in summer.

On his return, he dined. The dinner resembled his breakfast.

At half-past eight in the evening he supped with his sister, Madame Magloire standing behind them and serving them at table. Nothing could be more frugal than this repast. If, however, the Bishop had one of his curés to supper, Madame Magloire took advantage of the opportunity to serve Monseigneur with some excellent fish from the lake, or with some fine game from the mountains. Every curé furnished the pretext for a good meal: the Bishop did not interfere. With that exception, his ordinary diet consisted only of vegetables boiled in water, and oil soup. Thus it was said in the town, when the Bishop does not indulge in the cheer of a curé, he indulges in the cheer of a trappist.

After supper he conversed for half an hour with Mademoiselle Baptistine and Madame Magloire; then he retired to his own room and set to writing, sometimes on loose sheets, and again on the margin of some folio. He was a man of letters and rather learned. He left behind him five or six very curious manuscripts; among others, a dissertation on this verse in Genesis, In the beginning, the spirit of God floated upon the waters.

With this verse he compares three texts: the Arabic verse which says, The winds of God blew; Flavius Josephus who says, A wind from above was precipitated upon the earth; and finally, the Chaldaic paraphrase of Onkelos, which renders it, A wind coming from God blew upon the face of the waters. In another dissertation, he examines the theological works of Hugo, Bishop of Ptolemaïs, great-grand-uncle to the writer of this book, and establishes the fact, that to this bishop must be attributed the divers little works published during the last century, under the pseudonym of Barleycourt.

Sometimes, in the midst of his reading, no matter what the book might be which he had in his hand, he would suddenly fall into a profound meditation, whence he only emerged to write a few lines on the pages of the volume itself. These lines have often no connection whatever with the book which contains them. We now have under our eyes a note written by him on the margin of a quarto entitled Correspondence of Lord Germain with Generals Clinton, Cornwallis, and the Admirals on the American station. Versailles, Poinçot, book-seller; and Paris, Pissot, bookseller, Quai des Augustins.

Here is the note — “Oh, you who are!

“Ecclesiastes calls you the All-powerful; the Maccabees call you the Creator; the Epistle to the Ephesians calls you liberty; Baruch calls you

Immensity; the Psalms call you Wisdom and Truth; John calls you Light; the Books of Kings call you Lord; Exodus calls you Providence; Leviticus, Sanctity; Esdras, Justice; the creation calls you God; man calls you Father; but Solomon calls you Compassion, and that is the most beautiful of all your names.”

Toward nine o'clock in the evening the two women retired and betook themselves to their chambers on the first floor, leaving him alone until morning on the ground floor.

It is necessary that we should, in this place, give an exact idea of the dwelling of the Bishop of D—

CHAPTER VI — WHO GUARDED HIS HOUSE FOR HIM

The house in which he lived consisted, as we have said, of a ground floor, and one story above; three rooms on the ground floor, three chambers on the first, and an attic above. Behind the house was a garden, a quarter of an acre in extent. The two women occupied the first floor; the Bishop was lodged below. The first room, opening on the street, served him as dining-room, the second was his bedroom, and the third his oratory. There was no exit possible from this oratory, except by passing through the bedroom, nor from the bedroom, without passing through the dining-room. At the end of the suite, in the oratory,

there was a detached alcove with a bed, for use in cases of hospitality. The Bishop offered this bed to country curates whom business or the requirements of their parishes brought to D—

The pharmacy of the hospital, a small building which had been added to the house, and abutted on the garden, had been transformed into a kitchen and cellar. In addition to this, there was in the garden a stable, which had formerly been the kitchen of the hospital, and in which the Bishop kept two cows. No matter what the quantity of milk they gave, he invariably sent half of it every morning to the sick people in the hospital.

“I am paying my tithes,” he said.

His bedroom was tolerably large, and rather difficult to warm in bad weather. As wood is extremely dear at D—, he hit upon the idea of having a compartment of boards constructed in the cow-shed. Here he passed his evenings during seasons of severe cold: he called it his winter salon.

In this winter salon, as in the dining-room, there was no other furniture than a square table in white wood, and four straw-seated chairs. In addition to this the dining-room was ornamented with an antique sideboard, painted pink, in water colors. Out of a similar sideboard, properly draped with white napery and imitation lace, the Bishop had constructed the altar which decorated his oratory.

His wealthy penitents and the sainted women of D— had more than once assessed themselves to raise the money for a new altar for Monseigneur's oratory; on each occasion he had taken the money and had given it to the poor. "The most beautiful of altars," he said, "is the soul of an unhappy creature consoled and thanking God."

In his oratory there were two straw prie-Dieu, and there was an armchair, also in straw, in his bedroom. When, by chance, he received seven or eight persons at one time, the prefect, or the general, or the staff of the regiment in garrison, or several pupils from the little seminary, the chairs had to be fetched from the winter salon in the stable, the prie-Dieu from the oratory, and the armchair from the bedroom: in this way as many as eleven chairs could be collected for the visitors. A room was dismantled for each new guest.

It sometimes happened that there were twelve in the party; the Bishop then relieved the embarrassment of the situation by standing in front of the chimney if it was winter, or by strolling in the garden if it was summer.

There was still another chair in the detached alcove, but the straw was half gone from it, and it had but three legs, so that it was of service only when propped against the wall. Mademoiselle Baptistine had also in her own room a very large easy-chair of wood, which had formerly been gilded, and which was

covered with flowered pekin; but they had been obliged to hoist this bergère up to the first story through the window, as the staircase was too narrow; it could not, therefore, be reckoned among the possibilities in the way of furniture.

Mademoiselle Baptistine's ambition had been to be able to purchase a set of drawing-room furniture in yellow Utrecht velvet, stamped with a rose pattern, and with mahogany in swan's neck style, with a sofa. But this would have cost five hundred francs at least, and in view of the fact that she had only been able to lay by forty-two francs and ten sous for this purpose in the course of five years, she had ended by renouncing the idea. However, who is there who has attained his ideal?

Nothing is more easy to present to the imagination than the Bishop's bedchamber. A glazed door opened on the garden; opposite this was the bed, — a hospital bed of iron, with a canopy of green serge; in the shadow of the bed, behind a curtain, were the utensils of the toilet, which still betrayed the elegant habits of the man of the world: there were two doors, one near the chimney, opening into the oratory; the other near the bookcase, opening into the dining-room. The bookcase was a large cupboard with glass doors filled with books; the chimney was of wood painted to represent marble, and habitually without fire. In the chimney stood a pair of firedogs of iron, ornamented above with two garlanded vases, and flutings which had

formerly been silvered with silver leaf, which was a sort of episcopal luxury; above the chimney-piece hung a crucifix of copper, with the silver worn off, fixed on a background of threadbare velvet in a wooden frame from which the gilding had fallen; near the glass door a large table with an inkstand, loaded with a confusion of papers and with huge volumes; before the table an armchair of straw; in front of the bed a prie-Dieu, borrowed from the oratory.

Two portraits in oval frames were fastened to the wall on each side of the bed. Small gilt inscriptions on the plain surface of the cloth at the side of these figures indicated that the portraits represented, one the Abbé of Chaliot, bishop of Saint Claude; the other, the Abbé Tourteau, vicar-general of Agde, abbé of Grand-Champ, order of Cîteaux, diocese of Chartres. When the Bishop succeeded to this apartment, after the hospital patients, he had found these portraits there, and had left them. They were priests, and probably donors — two reasons for respecting them. All that he knew about these two persons was, that they had been appointed by the king, the one to his bishopric, the other to his benefice, on the same day, the 27th of April, 1785. Madame Magloire having taken the pictures down to dust, the Bishop had discovered these particulars written in whitish ink on a little square of paper, yellowed by time, and attached to the back of the portrait of the Abbé of Grand-Champ with four wafers.

At his window he had an antique curtain of a coarse woollen stuff, which finally became so old, that, in order to avoid the expense of a new one, Madame Magloire was forced to take a large seam in the very middle of it. This seam took the form of a cross. The Bishop often called attention to it: "How delightful that is!" he said.

All the rooms in the house, without exception, those on the ground floor as well as those on the first floor, were white-washed, which is a fashion in barracks and hospitals.

However, in their latter years, Madame Magloire discovered beneath the paper which had been washed over, paintings, ornamenting the apartment of Mademoiselle Baptistine, as we shall see further on. Before becoming a hospital, this house had been the ancient parliament house of the Bourgeois. Hence this decoration. The chambers were paved in red bricks, which were washed every week, with straw mats in front of all the beds. Altogether, this dwelling, which was attended to by the two women, was exquisitely clean from top to bottom. This was the sole luxury which the Bishop permitted. He said, "That takes nothing from the poor."

It must be confessed, however, that he still retained from his former possessions six silver knives and forks and a soup-ladle, which Madame Magloire contemplated every day with delight, as they glistened

splendidly upon the coarse linen cloth. And since we are now painting the Bishop of D— as he was in reality, we must add that he had said more than once, “I find it difficult to renounce eating from silver dishes.”

To this silverware must be added two large candlesticks of massive silver, which he had inherited from a great-aunt. These candlesticks held two wax candles, and usually figured on the Bishop's chimney-piece. When he had any one to dinner, Madame Magloire lighted the two candles and set the candlesticks on the table.

In the Bishop's own chamber, at the head of his bed, there was a small cupboard, in which Madame Magloire locked up the six silver knives and forks and the big spoon every night. But it is necessary to add, that the key was never removed.

The garden, which had been rather spoiled by the ugly buildings which we have mentioned, was composed of four alleys in cross-form, radiating from a tank. Another walk made the circuit of the garden, and skirted the white wall which enclosed it. These alleys left behind them four square plots rimmed with box. In three of these, Madame Magloire cultivated vegetables; in the fourth, the Bishop had planted some flowers; here and there stood a few fruit-trees. Madame Magloire had once remarked, with a sort of gentle malice: “Monseigneur, you who turn everything to account, have, nevertheless, one useless plot. It would

be better to grow salads there than bouquets.” “Madame Magloire,” retorted the Bishop, “you are mistaken. The beautiful is as useful as the useful.” He added after a pause, “More so, perhaps.”

This plot, consisting of three or four beds, occupied the Bishop almost as much as did his books. He liked to pass an hour or two there, trimming, hoeing, and making holes here and there in the earth, into which he dropped seeds. He was not as hostile to insects as a gardener could have wished to see him. Moreover, he made no pretensions to botany; he ignored groups and consistency; he made not the slightest effort to decide between Tournefort and the natural method; he took part neither with the buds against the cotyledons, nor with Jussieu against Linnæus. He did not study plants; he loved flowers. He respected learned men greatly; he respected the ignorant still more; and, without ever failing in these two respects, he watered his flower-beds every summer evening with a tin watering-pot painted green.

The house had not a single door which could be locked. The door of the dining-room, which, as we have said, opened directly on the cathedral square, had formerly been ornamented with locks and bolts like the door of a prison. The Bishop had had all this ironwork removed, and this door was never fastened, either by night or by day, with anything except the latch. All that the first passer-by had to do at any hour, was to give it a

push. At first, the two women had been very much tried by this door, which was never fastened, but Monsieur de D— had said to them, “Have bolts put on your rooms, if that will please you.” They had ended by sharing his confidence, or by at least acting as though they shared it. Madame Magloire alone had frights from time to time. As for the Bishop, his thought can be found explained, or at least indicated, in the three lines which he wrote on the margin of a Bible, “This is the shade of difference: the door of the physician should never be shut, the door of the priest should always be open.”

On another book, entitled *Philosophy of the Medical Science*, he had written this other note: “Am not I a physician like them?”

I also have my patients, and then, too, I have some whom I call my unfortunates.”

Again he wrote: “Do not inquire the name of him who asks a shelter of you. The very man who is embarrassed by his name is the one who needs shelter.”

It chanced that a worthy curé, I know not whether it was the curé of Couloubroux or the curé of Pompierry, took it into his head to ask him one day, probably at the instigation of Madame Magloire, whether Monsieur was sure that he was not committing an indiscretion, to a certain extent, in leaving his door unfastened day and night, at the mercy of any one who should choose to enter, and whether, in short, he did not

fear lest some misfortune might occur in a house so little guarded. The Bishop touched his shoulder, with gentle gravity, and said to him, "Nisi Dominus custodierit domum, in vanum vigilant qui custodiunt eam," Unless the Lord guard the house, in vain do they watch who guard it.

Then he spoke of something else.

He was fond of saying, "There is a bravery of the priest as well as the bravery of a colonel of dragoons, — only," he added, "ours must be tranquil."

CHAPTER VII—CRAVATTE

It is here that a fact falls naturally into place, which we must not omit, because it is one of the sort which show us best what sort of a man the Bishop of D— was.

After the destruction of the band of Gaspard Bès, who had infested the gorges of Ollioules, one of his lieutenants, Cravatte, took refuge in the mountains. He concealed himself for some time with his bandits, the remnant of Gaspard Bès's troop, in the county of Nice; then he made his way to Piédmont, and suddenly reappeared in France, in the vicinity of Barcelonette. He was first seen at Jauziers, then at Tuiles. He hid himself in the caverns of the Joug-de-l'Aigle, and thence he descended towards the hamlets and villages through the ravines of Ubaye and Ubayette.

He even pushed as far as Embrun, entered the cathedral one night, and despoiled the sacristy. His highway robberies laid waste the country-side. The gendarmes were set on his track, but in vain. He always escaped; sometimes he resisted by main force. He was a bold wretch. In the midst of all this terror the Bishop arrived. He was making his circuit to Chastelar. The mayor came to meet him, and urged him to retrace his steps. Cravatte was in possession of the mountains as far as Arche, and beyond; there was danger even with an escort; it merely exposed three or four unfortunate gendarmes to no purpose.

“Therefore,” said the Bishop, “I intend to go without escort.”

“You do not really mean that, Monseigneur!” exclaimed the mayor.

“I do mean it so thoroughly that I absolutely refuse any gendarmes, and shall set out in an hour.”

“Set out?”

“Set out.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

“Monseigneur, you will not do that!”

“There exists yonder in the mountains,” said the Bishop, “a tiny community no bigger than that, which I have not seen for three years. They are my good friends, those gentle and honest shepherds. They own one goat out of every thirty that they tend. They make

very pretty woollen cords of various colors, and they play the mountain airs on little flutes with six holes. They need to be told of the good God now and then. What would they say to a bishop who was afraid? What would they say if I did not go?"

"But the brigands, Monseigneur?"

"Hold," said the Bishop, "I must think of that. You are right. I may meet them. They, too, need to be told of the good God." "But, Monseigneur, there is a band of them! A flock of wolves!"

"Monsieur le maire, it may be that it is of this very flock of wolves that Jesus has constituted me the shepherd. Who knows the ways of Providence?"

"They will rob you, Monseigneur." "I have nothing."

"They will kill you."

"An old goodman of a priest, who passes along mumbling his prayers? Bah! To what purpose?" "Oh, mon Dieu! what if you should meet them!"

"I should beg alms of them for my poor."

"Do not go, Monseigneur. In the name of Heaven! You are risking your life!"

"Monsieur le maire," said the Bishop, "is that really all? I am not in the world to guard my own life, but to guard souls."

They had to allow him to do as he pleased. He set out, accompanied only by a child who offered to serve as a guide. His obstinacy was bruited about the

country-side, and caused great consternation.

He would take neither his sister nor Madame Magloire. He traversed the mountain on mule-back, encountered no one, and arrived safe and sound at the residence of his "good friends," the shepherds. He remained there for a fortnight, preaching, administering the sacrament, teaching, exhorting. When the time of his departure approached, he resolved to chant a *Te Deum* pontifically. He mentioned it to the curé. But what was to be done? There were no episcopal ornaments. They could only place at his disposal a wretched village sacristy, with a few ancient chasubles of threadbare damask adorned with imitation lace.

"Bah!" said the Bishop. "Let us announce our *Te Deum* from the pulpit, nevertheless, Monsieur le Curé. Things will arrange themselves."

They instituted a search in the churches of the neighborhood. All the magnificence of these humble parishes combined would not have sufficed to clothe the chorister of a cathedral properly.

While they were thus embarrassed, a large chest was brought and deposited in the presbytery for the Bishop, by two unknown horsemen, who departed on the instant. The chest was opened; it contained a cope of cloth of gold, a mitre ornamented with diamonds, an archbishop's cross, a magnificent crosier, — all the pontifical vestments which had been stolen a month previously from the treasury of Notre Dame d'Embrun.

In the chest was a paper, on which these words were written, "From Cravatte to Monseigneur Bienvenu."

"Did not I say that things would come right of themselves?" said the Bishop. Then he added, with a smile, "To him who contents himself with the surplice of a curate, God sends the cope of an archbishop."

"Monseigneur," murmured the curé, throwing back his head with a smile. "God — or the Devil." The Bishop looked steadily at the curé, and repeated with authority, "God!"

When he returned to Chastelar, the people came out to stare at him as at a curiosity, all along the road. At the priest's house in Chastelar he rejoined Mademoiselle Baptistine and Madame Magloire, who were waiting for him, and he said to his sister: "Well! was I in the right? The poor priest went to his poor mountaineers with empty hands, and he returns from them with his hands full. I set out bearing only my faith in God; I have brought back the treasure of a cathedral."

That evening, before he went to bed, he said again: "Let us never fear robbers nor murderers. Those are dangers from without, petty dangers. Let us fear ourselves. Prejudices are the real robbers; vices are the real murderers. The great dangers lie within ourselves. What matters it what threatens our head or our purse! Let us think only of that which threatens our soul."

Then, turning to his sister: "Sister, never a

precaution on the part of the priest, against his fellow-man. That which his fellow does, God permits. Let us confine ourselves to prayer, when we think that a danger is approaching us. Let us pray, not for ourselves, but that our brother may not fall into sin on our account.”

However, such incidents were rare in his life. We relate those of which we know; but generally he passed his life in doing the same things at the same moment. One month of his year resembled one hour of his day.

As to what became of “the treasure” of the cathedral of Embrun, we should be embarrassed by any inquiry in that direction. It consisted of very handsome things, very tempting things, and things which were very well adapted to be stolen for the benefit of the unfortunate. Stolen they had already been elsewhere. Half of the adventure was completed; it only remained to impart a new direction to the theft, and to cause it to take a short trip in the direction of the poor. However, we make no assertions on this point. Only, a rather obscure note was found among the Bishop's papers, which may bear some relation to this matter, and which is couched in these terms, “The question is, to decide whether this should be turned over to the cathedral or to the hospital.”

CHAPTER VIII — PHILOSOPHY AFTER DRINKING

The senator above mentioned was a clever man, who had made his own way, heedless of those things which present obstacles, and which are called conscience, sworn faith, justice, duty: he had marched straight to his goal, without once flinching in the line of his advancement and his interest. He was an old attorney, softened by success; not a bad man by any means, who rendered all the small services in his power to his sons, his sons-in-law, his relations, and even to his friends, having wisely seized upon, in life, good sides, good opportunities, good windfalls. Everything else seemed to him very stupid. He was intelligent, and just sufficiently educated to think himself a disciple of Epicurus; while he was, in reality, only a product of Pigault-Lebrun. He laughed willingly and pleasantly over infinite and eternal things, and at the “crotchets of that good old fellow the Bishop.” He even sometimes laughed at him with an amiable authority in the presence of M. Myriel himself, who listened to him.

On some semi-official occasion or other, I do not recollect what, Count*** [this senator] and M. Myriel were to dine with the prefect. At dessert, the senator, who was slightly exhilarated, though still perfectly dignified, exclaimed —

“Egad, Bishop, let's have a discussion. It is hard for a senator and a bishop to look at each other without winking. We are two augurs. I am going to make a

confession to you. I have a philosophy of my own.”

“And you are right,” replied the Bishop. “As one makes one's philosophy, so one lies on it. You are on the bed of purple, senator.”

The senator was encouraged, and went on — “Let us be good fellows.”

“Good devils even,” said the Bishop.

“I declare to you,” continued the senator, “that the Marquis d'Argens, Pyrrhon, Hobbes, and M. Naigeon are no rascals. I have all the philosophers in my library gilded on the edges.”

“Like yourself, Count,” interposed the Bishop. The senator resumed —

“I hate Diderot; he is an ideologist, a declaimer, and a revolutionist, a believer in God at bottom, and more bigoted than Voltaire. Voltaire made sport of Needham, and he was wrong, for Needham's eels prove that God is useless. A drop of vinegar in a spoonful of flour paste supplies the fiat lux. Suppose the drop to be larger and the spoonful bigger; you have the world. Man is the eel. Then what is the good of the Eternal Father? The Jehovah hypothesis tires me, Bishop. It is good for nothing but to produce shallow people, whose reasoning is hollow. Down with that great All, which torments me! Hurrah for Zero which leaves me in peace! Between you and me, and in order to empty my sack, and make confession to my pastor, as it behooves me to do, I will admit to you that I have good sense. I