

The Story of Lafayette

FREEDOM SERIES

ELBRIDGE S. BROOKS

The Story of Lafayette

The True Story of Lafayette
by Elbridge S. Brooks

Letters from Lafayette to His Wife
from Memoirs, Correspondence and Manuscripts of General Lafayette

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The Story of Lafayette

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PREFACE

In a series devoted to telling the true stories of great Americans or of those whose lives had a direct bearing upon the splendid story of the United States of America, no man has better right to a place than the Marquis de Lafayette, the young and gallant Frenchman whose love for liberty led to a love for America that outlasted even the romantic story of the way in which he fought for her independence. For the whole life of Lafayette was a long struggle for constitutional liberty, the freedom he had seen America secure and which he so ardently desired for France.

Had it not been for Lafayette, American independence would not have been so speedily secured; had it not been for America, the liberation of France from her long bondage in tyranny would scarcely have come so soon. Thus Lafayette and America are inseparably connected, and it is most fitting that, in a series devoted to the makers and defenders of America, Lafayette, as the Friend of America, should have an honored place.

But this book aims to do more. At a time when interest in Lafayette has been revived by the erection of a monument to his memory in the Paris he loved so well, by the boys and girls of the America he helped to make great, it seeks to show how his entire life was devoted to the cause of freedom and the glory of France, and to tell, in the whole story of his eventful life, what one man has done for the progress of humanity and the bettering of the world. If, from these pages, young Americans may learn not only to revere the memory of the noble, Frenchman, but to learn lessons of persistence, fidelity, unshaken loyalty to conviction, to truth, to honor, and to manly endeavor, then the story of Lafayette will not have been retold in vain, and Americans may learn anew to honor, respect, and remember him, as not only the friend of America, but the benefactor of his race.

E. S. B.

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Chapter 1
How the Little Marquis Began Life

All boys and girls like stories of adventure. Let me tell you a true story, as crammed with adventure as "Robinson Crusoe," as crowded with fighting as "Ivanhoe," as full of noble deeds as "Westward Ho!"

It is not the story of an American; and yet few names have been more honored by America; it is not the story of a great man, as Washington and Lincoln, Franklin and Grant were great; and yet the service he rendered to America has placed his name among the great ones of the earth.

It is the story of a brave, romantic, generous, noble-hearted and devoted man, who reverenced liberty although born an aristocrat; fought for it through nearly sixty years, although he detested war, and, through those sixty years, labored for his country's good even against his country's will; who risked his life for the liberties of America, and narrowly escaped death in establishing the liberties of his native land.

He began life as an historic boy; he closed it an historic man, revered by all lovers of liberty the world

over, disliked only by those who hated liberty and feared the people. No man suffered more at the hands of those he wished to benefit; no man was more beloved by those who spurned his benefits. Idolized one day, imprisoned the next, but always a patriot, and always cheerful and brave, he builded even better than he knew, and wrought his name and his deeds into the destinies and progress of two nations, and died the friend and deliverer of both.

Listen, then, to the story of Lafayette.

Upon one of the green hill-slopes of the mountains of Auvergne, in what is now known as the department or county of Upper Loire (Haute-Loire it is, in French) but what was long called the province of Auvergne, in Southern France, there stands today, as there has stood for nearly six hundred years, a great fortified country mansion or manor-house, known as the Chateau of Chavaniac. Grim and gray this old country mansion, half castle and half farmhouse, with its odd little towers, mossy walls, and loop-holed terraces, looks off upon the valley of the Allier and the rugged Auvergne mountains, an old time home among the hills, in the healthiest and most independent portion of old France.

In this ancient castle there was born on the sixth of September, in the year 1757, a small baby boy, not particularly attractive in face, or especially promising in form. But he was born a marquis of France; and in the

parish register of the little church of Chavaniac, where he was baptized, you may read the name they gave this little French baby boy, – a name almost as long as himself. For it stands recorded on the parish register, that, in that little church, was baptized on the seventh day of September, 1757, "the very noble and very powerful gentleman Monseigneur Marie-Joseph-Paul-Yves-Roch-Gilbert Dumotier de Lafayette, the lawful son of the very noble and very powerful gentleman Monseigneur Michel - Louis - Christophle - Roch -Gilbert Dumotier, Marquis de Lafayette, Baron de Vissac, Seigneur de Saint-Romain and other places, and of the very noble and very powerful lady Madame Marie- Louise-Julie Delareviere."

Those were a good many names and a good many titles for a small baby to stagger under, were they not? But in France, as in all nations where old families and old estates become jumbled together under the workings of what is called the law of succession, the representative of several old and noble lines, as was Lafayette, often mingled his connections in his name. But the real name of this very small boy, stripped of all its additions, was simply Gilbert Motier.

This old family name of Motier ran away back to before the year 1000. But when, about that time, one of the Motiers became possessed of a little farm called Villa Faya, or Fayetteville, he tacked this estate on his name and became Motier of La Fayette; then as other

lines of the family sprang up, possessed property, died out, and left their lands and titles to the remaining branch, these names were added to the main one, until the baby boy and heir of the estates, born in 1757, had to bear them all, Gilbert and Roch and Christophle and all the rest with his mother's name of Marie, and his father's titles of marquis and baron and seigneur (or lord). For, though only a baby, he was, by law, born a marquis of France.

The reason for this was that six weeks before this little French boy was born in the gray old castle among the Auvergne mountains, his father, Colonel the Marquis de La Fayette, fell dead at the head of his regiment of the Grenadiers of France, while charging an English battery in the battle of Hastenbeck, one of the engagements in what is known in history as the Seven Years' War; in America we are familiar with the same conflict as it was waged in this country under the general title of the French and Indian War, the war that made George Washington a successful soldier, and made all America English by the conquest of Canada.

Without any father when he was born, this little French baby, by the law of the land, succeeded to his father's titles and estates. He was Marquis of Lafayette, Baron of Vissac, and Lord of Saint-Romain, old castles, now in ruins, and perched higher up among the Auvergne mountains than is the manor-house of Chavaniac.

But though marquis, baron, and lord, this little Lafayette baby was not born to great wealth. He was, in fact, what we call "land poor." His mountain farms were extensive but not very productive; it had cost a large sum to send and keep his grandfather and father at the never-ending wars that, for generations, had swept over Europe, and as there was now no one in the family to hold high positions and draw good salaries at the king's court, the Lafayettes of Chavaniac were, in 1757, what would be called "high-born but poor."

Still they were strong and sturdy people, those mountain folks of Auvergne; and the baby marquis, the last and only remaining boy to represent the dignities and titles of the old and noble family whose name he bore, was brought up by his mother, his grandmother, and his aunts in the healthy, inspiring, frugal, and liberty-loving atmosphere of the Auvergne hills.

Country life and ways do not always develop the graces, and a boy who is brought up entirely by and among women is apt to be diffident and shy. So the Lafayette boy of the Chavaniac forests was by no means the model of beauty and grace we have been accustomed to consider him. He was a long-limbed, lean, lanky little chap with a hook-nose, red hair, and a retreating forehead, while he was so shy as to be almost ungainly and so quiet as to be almost awkward. But his eye was bright and sharp, his look, when interested, was firm and high, and beneath his unattractive exterior lay an intelligence that was making the boy a

thinker, and a heart that was stirring up high ideals of right and justice, there among the fields and forests, the birds and beasts of his mountain estates.

The birds and the beasts seemed for a time his only playmates. His mother had scarcely money enough to go to Paris and keep up a grand city house, as was then the custom with most of the lordly families of France; so the lad grew up in the country, learning the habits of the farm and forest animals rather than of the court; ignorant of the fine, though often false manners of the gay society of Paris and Versailles, save as his good mother instructed him in politeness, good breeding, gentle and chivalrous ways, while his sturdy grandmother saw that he was alike manly and brave, strong-limbed and stout-hearted, valiant and vigorous, as became the small son and last scion of a great race, whose men had been knights and warriors from the far-off days of the Crusades.

Indeed, the desire to do some "high emprise and deed of derring-do," learned from the old tales his grandmother told him, burned in the heart of this boy of eight when, sword in hand and eye alert, he went roaming the forests about Chavaniac in search of the great gray wolf which, so "his people" reported, had been breaking into sheep folds and destroying the peace of mind of the farmers and cottagers around the manor-house. We do not read that he really killed that wolf, or even found the monster, but, in a way, it was a prophetic sign; for, later, he was to go forth sword in

hand and eye alert, to hunt out and attack a greater and more ravaging wolf, far across the vast western sea that this home-staying boy had never seen.

He could not be a home-staying boy many years, however. As the last representative of a noble house, it was his duty as a Frenchman of high estate to prepare himself to meet the obligations of his rank. Although the family was short of cash, they had rich and influential relations, and so, when he was eleven years old, it was decided by the family that he should leave his quiet castle home at Chavaniac, and go up to Paris to begin his education as a gentleman.

He was sent to a sort of private school for young gentlemen, the boys of the French "four hundred." It was called the College du Plessis, and there the boy was taught to express himself elegantly, handle his sword gracefully, dance delightfully, and offer his arm to a lady as gallantly as he could pick up her fan. It was hardly the school familiar to the boys and girls of today, who probably know more of real things and how to study about them than did even the school teachers at the College du Plessis in young Lafayette's day.

But there was that in young Lafayette that helped him to educate and develop himself, in spite of the false instruction of his time; while the devotion of his lady mother aided and strengthened him; for, at much sacrifice, she gave up her quiet home in the country, and, with the aid of her rich relations, obtained

recognition at court and a place in society, so that she might help her son to enter the most aristocratic circles of France.

The boy had a rich uncle, too, or, rather, it was his mother's uncle, – who, because all the Lafayettes had been soldiers, put himself out to get the name of his grandnephew entered, early in life, on the "waiting list" of one of the "crack regiments" of France. This regiment was called "The Black Musketeers," and many a day did young Lafayette get "excused" from school to run off and see a review of "my regiment," as he would call it; for, of course, he felt very proud to be on its roll of cadets.

Under these influences and opportunities the awkward country boy became easier in his manners and more graceful in his motions; but he was still shy and silent; he disliked dancing and society ways; he thought a good deal about things; he was old for his years both in his talk and ways, and he was so practical that even when he undertook the task that all boys attempt, – a school composition on the horse, – he dwelt especially on the fact that if you try to make a horse do too many things perfectly the horse will grow restless and throw you, – a lesson of which Lafayette himself had practical experience, later, when in the days of the restless French Revolution he tried to train the people to be guided by his rein rather than their will and was "thrown" again and again.

Just as he had got into his "teens," in the year 1770, a sad thing happened. Both his good mother, who was so watchful of his future, and his rich grand-uncle, who had taken so great an interest in the young Lafayette because he was the son of this old noble's favorite niece, and a promising boy as well, died in Paris.

The boy felt sad and lonely enough. He was now quite alone in the world; his nearest relative was his grandmother in the old castle at home; alike his dearest friend and his strongest protector had been taken from him.

Even in his death, however, this high-placed protector of his youth had remembered him. For the count, the uncle of Lafayette, left by his will all his fortune and estate to this small boy of thirteen. Thus from being a poor and proud young nobleman, Lafayette now became a very rich and powerful young nobleman. At once every match-making mother and father in France who wished to "arrange" a fine marriage for their daughter laid siege to the young Marquis de Lafayette, – much to the disgust of this quiet, society-hating boy, who, like many boys just in their "teens," had a supreme contempt for all girls.

Matters were conducted differently in the France of Lafayette's day than in our America of today. Very early in their children's lives fathers and mothers were preparing to "marry off" their sons and daughters to the best financial and social advantage. Even when they

were babies, boys and girls were sometimes "betrothed," – engaged, as we would say today, – although the poor babies themselves had nothing to say in the matter, and had no especial interest in the plans arranged for them.

So the relatives and guardians of the young marquis a rich young marquis, now – began to look about for some suitable match for the boy, lest he should be made the prey of fortune-hunters, little knowing the boy's ability to look out for himself, and to think for himself as well.

They selected one of the five daughters of the Duke d'Ayen, a noble and wealthy peer of the realm, marshal of the camp of the armies of the king, and a very persistent and determined gentleman, when once he made up his mind to have his own way.

In this case the proposal of the guardians of the young Marquis de Lafayette to make the boy his son-in-law was precisely in the duke's way; and at once he communicated the proposal to his wife, and declared that the one selected to be the Marchioness de Lafayette was their second daughter, Mademoiselle Marie-Adrienne-Francoise de Noailles, a girl of twelve, good, pretty, amiable, and in every way a delightful character.

But Adrienne's mother, the Duchess d'Ayen, was quite as strong a character, in her way, as was her husband the duke. When she learned who was this

son-in-law that her husband had selected for their second daughter, she objected at once.

"It is too great a risk to run for Adrienne," she declared. "The Marquis de Lafayette is very young, very rich, and very wilful. He seems to be a good boy, so far as his standing at school and his conduct in society are concerned; but with no one to guide him, no one to look after his fortune and hold him back from extravagance and foolishness, without a near relative, and with his character as yet unformed and uncertain, our daughter's marriage to him is out of the question, and I will not agree to it."

Her husband declared that she must, and she repeated that she would not; the discussion, of which, by the way, neither the boy nor the girl most interested had the slightest idea, continued until this husband and wife, who had always loved each other dearly, actually quarreled and almost separated because of it. But the duke thought it over and at last gave in so far as to suggest as a compromise that the marriage should not take place for two years, that Adrienne should not leave her mother for at least three years, and that, meantime, he, the duke, would himself look after the education and advancement of the young marquis, so as to make him in every way a proper and suitable husband for their daughter.

The duchess thought it over also, and at last she, too, agreed to the compromise.

"If the boy is brought up in our home where I can see and study him," she declared, "I will agree. Then, having taken all precautions, and having no negligence wherewith to reproach ourselves, we need do nothing but peacefully submit to the will of God, who knows best what is fitting for us."

So it was decided, and so it was arranged. The boy and girl were allowed to meet without knowing what were the family intentions in regard to them, and, very fortunately, they liked one another at once, and so much that when at last their future was disclosed to them by their guardians, they were both delighted, and began to build bright air-castles, in true boy and girl style, of what they would do for the happiness of the world when they were old enough to use their own money and estate.

Lafayette was fourteen and Adrienne was twelve when their engagement was made public; rather young, we should say, according to our American standards; but customs vary as much as do tongues and times, and all France declared it was an excellent match.

Even the duchess, who objected, said so too, in time. For when Adrienne's mother came really to know this quiet and rather awkward young marquis, she loved him as dearly and cared for him as tenderly as if he were her own son; and then she and the duke "made it all up again."

The duke kept his promise. He took the boy in hand, had him live in his own home, the stately, old-time Noailles mansion in the heart of Paris, and sent him in time to the Academy of Versailles where young noblemen were educated in military duties, until at last the boy marquis secured his commission and became an officer in the king's own regiment of the Black Musketeers, upon whose very exclusive roll of cadets his good grand-uncle had entered his name.

While this military education was going on, Lafayette and Adrienne d'Ayen were married. Their wedding day was the eleventh of April, 1774; the young bridegroom was but sixteen, the bride was fourteen; it was a boy and girl marriage, and, indeed, for a year or more the young people were both kept at the Noailles mansion, under the guardianship of the duke and duchess. But it was one of the happiest of marriages, and for thirty-four years they lived together as husband and wife. "Thirty-four years of union," so wrote Lafayette after Adrienne's death in 1807, "in which the love and the elevation, the delicacy and the generosity of her soul, charmed, adorned, and honored my days, and in which I was so much accustomed to all that she was to me that I did not distinguish her from my own existence."

That was a beautiful tribute to his girl-wife, was it not? Madame Adrienne de Lafayette seems to have been as rare and beautiful and noble a woman as he was excellent, pure-hearted, and noble a man.

In 1775 the young couple set up housekeeping for themselves. They had a house in Paris, and their country estate was the old castle at Chavaniac; they had gay surroundings, and were of the "inner circle," with princes and princesses and all the young lords and ladies of that bright and careless court at Versailles as their associates.

But Lafayette did not take kindly to all this show and glitter. "The awkwardness of my manners," he says, "never could properly adjust themselves to the required graces of the court." The balls and theatrical shows, the dances and suppers, and all the extravagant entertainments of the young queen Marie Antoinette, were not to his liking, although you would naturally expect them to be most attractive to a boy of seventeen.

It was the fashion just then among the younger courtiers and aristocrats of France, to talk much of liberty and the rights of man. It came from the teaching of certain "up-to-date" philosophers and students of society, who, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, influenced the aristocratic classes of France and made them liberty lovers, although they were the ruling spirits in a nation where there was very little liberty, and where any man not a noble had scarcely any rights. It was, after all, mostly talk, however; but to the young Lafayette, brought up in sturdy independence, in the free air of the rugged Auvergne hills, it proved something more than talk. He learned

to believe in and desire liberty and freedom for the people; he thought it would be a fine thing if there were less of suffering and wrong among the poor, and more of helpfulness and generosity among the rich. He and his young wife, as I have told you, had beautiful dreams of what they would do to make the world better; they were only dreams, to be sure, but, because of them and of his retiring disposition, the young marquis did not take kindly to the stiff ceremonials and foolish fripperies of the court, where so much was show without sense and affectation without affection.

He even joined some of the young nobles in making sport of the older ones and in poking fun at all their stiff and starched ways; one day he, with the princes and young lords of the court, got up a mock parliament which they played before the gay young queen, Marie Antoinette, just to make fun of the real parliament then in session at Versailles. It came very near getting Lafayette and the young nobles in trouble; for though even the young king, Louis XVI., had to laugh over it, he was forced also, out of respect to his "grave and revered seigneurs" to "call down" and reprimand those who had taken part in the "take-off." And in the midst of all the fuss and fume over the affair, Lafayette, who was heartily sick of it all, was glad enough to be ordered, as a sort of punishment, to join his regiment at Strasburg.

But under all this sport and caricature in which the young and thoughtless nobles joined there was with a

few, and especially with Lafayette, much serious and earnest thought over the condition of the world. He shared the growing desire that seemed "in the air" for real liberty and the end of sham and of the meaningless ceremonies that bolstered up royalty; so, although he could not tell precisely how liberty was to come to France or when it was to come, he still dreamed about it, and, like the clear-headed, pure-hearted, sensible, and manly boy he was, hoped for the dawning of the day that should bring men nearer together as brothers and fellow workers, and give to all, in some way and to some extent, the boon and blessing of freedom.

Chapter 2

Where the Young Aristocrat Heard of Independence

Lafayette's father-in-law, the Duke d'Ayen, always felt himself so responsible for the doing's of his daughter's husband that he was greatly displeased over this conduct of his son-in-law, in mimicking the manners of the high and ceremonious nobles of the court. The duke greatly liked Lafayette, although he could not understand him or fathom his thoughts. He was afraid the boy was growing indifferent, careless, and indolent, and he begged young Count Segur, Lafayette's especial friend and cousin, to rouse the young marquis, and stir him up to more enthusiasm.

"Indifferent! indolent!" cried the young count, with a laugh. "Faith! my dear marshal, you do not yet know our Lafayette. He has altogether too much enthusiasm. Why, only yesterday he almost insisted on my fighting a duel with him because I did not agree with him in a matter of which I knew nothing, and of which he thought I should know everything. He is anything but indifferent and indolent, I can assure you."

If that were the case, and he really had misunderstood his young son-in-law, the Duke d'Ayen decided that he must put the lad's talents to the highest use. To a noble of France, the "highest use" for a man of rank meant faithful and continued attendance at court; so the duke planned and worked to have Lafayette "attached" in some official capacity to the personal suite or following of one of the scapegrace young princes of France, the Count of Provence, brother of King Louis XVI.

But if you have read the story of Lafayette aright, even thus far, you have discovered that he was not the kind of a boy to curry favor with princes or follow like a lackey in a noble's train. Already, his vague search after liberty for man was making him detest anything like toadying and favoritism, and leading him to dislike titles and distinctions of rank. He listened eagerly to anything he heard concerning men who, in any land, were awaking to a desire for freedom."

"I was delighted with republican stories," he says of himself at that time,"and when my relatives secured a place for me at court I did not hesitate to give offence in order to maintain my independence."

Probably if the Count of Provence, in whose "train" the young marquis was to be provided with a place, had been an older man Lafayette would not have "given offence" in just the way he did; for Lafayette was always a gentleman, and had been brought up to respect his

elders. But this young prince, the brother of the king of France, was scarcely two years older than Lafayette, and felt his importance tremendously. Any boy of spirit and independence dislikes such airs, and the young marquis felt that he was just as much of a boy and had just as much of right and interest in the world as had this haughty young Count of Provence – king's brother though he were.

So, when the duke, his father-in-law, managed to get the young marquis to Paris and told him what he was trying to arrange, Lafayette, as he confesses, actually put himself out to give offence to the prince and to break up the proposed scheme for his objectionable "advancement."

At one of the gay masked balls given at the court, Lafayette took pains to hunt out the Count of Provence, who was to be his "patron." Then, actually cornering him, he reeled off the greatest lot of talk about liberty and equality and the rights of man that he could think up, – more of it, perhaps, and much more radical and emphatic in statement than Lafayette himself really believed. He was just "piling it on," you see, in order to make the young prince angry and disgusted with him.

He certainly succeeded. The king's brother tried to protest, but he could scarcely "get a word in edgewise;" the usually silent and reserved young marquis grew more and more eloquent and objectionable.

"Sir," said the boy prince, lifting his mask, "I shall remember this interview."

"Sir," replied the boy marquis, lifting his mask and bowing politely, but significantly; "memory is the wisdom of fools."

With an indignant gesture the prince turned hotly on his heel, and the young marquis was in disgrace. And you shall see, as you get deeper into the story of Lafayette, how the angry Count of Provence really did "remember" the interview.

The well-meaning father-in-law of the young marquis was again terribly scandalized. The thought that this young man had not only recklessly refused so fine an opportunity, but had gone out of his way to anger those to whom he should have toadied, was something the good, but old-fashioned Duke d'Ayen could not understand.

The Duke found fault with the boy openly and strongly. But Lafayette had accomplished what he desired, and he was so independent as regarded rank and riches that he could afford to do about as he pleased; so, though his family "complained," he said little or nothing in reply.

“His reluctance to talk," one of his youthful associates said, in later years, "and his chilly, serious manner, were always remarkable, but never as much so as in his youth, when they contrasted strangely with the petulant brilliance of his companions."

That sounds oddly to Americans, does it not? For we have always thought of Lafayette as bright, impetuous, talkative and fascinating, something entirely different from the silent, serious, "chilly" young man this picture seems to make him. We know, however, what high ideals were fighting the injustice of the world in this boy's thoughtful nature; and his companions and relations simply did not understand him. But Madame Adrienne, his bright young wife, did understand him better than the rest of her family; and, as she loved him, so, too, she sympathized with him, even though she did not really always agree with him.

But the Duke d'Ayen, in great distress, had the young marquis despatched to his regiment, sorrowfully giving up that brilliant plan for advancement at court. And, in August, 1775, Lafayette was transferred from the Black Musketeers, in which he held a commission, to another command. He was made an officer in the "regiment de Noailles," as it was called, one of the high-toned regiments of France, commanded by an equally high-toned young colonel, Monseigneur the Prince de Poix, a cousin of Lafayette's wife, and one of the lofty De Noailles family for whom the regiment was named, as has long been the custom in certain armies of certain European countries.

The "regiment de Noailles" was stationed at Metz, at that time a garrison city of France, and nearly two hundred miles east of Paris. The military governor or commander of Metz was the Count de Broglie,

marshal and prince of France and commander of the French armies in the Seven Years' War, in which, at that fatal battle of Hastenbeck, as I have told you, Lafayette's father, the colonel, had been killed by English guns.

The Count de Broglie had a high regard for the son of his old friend and companion in arms, and made much of Lafayette when his regiment was stationed at Metz. He invited the young marquis to his feasts and entertainments, of which there were many in the gay garrison towns of that showtime in France.

In those years France and England were, for a wonder, at peace, and so it came about that, on the eighth of August, 1775, when the Count de Broglie gave a garrison dinner-party to a young English prince, the Duke of Gloucester, the Marquis de Lafayette in his handsome dress uniform of blue and silver was one of the guests at the table. But even these "functions" were not to his taste, and he sat silent and thoughtful, while the other young officers were boisterous, laughing, and talkative, through the courses of this long "swell" banquet given by a prince of France to a prince of England.

Now this prince of England, William, Duke of Gloucester, was in temporary disgrace with his brother, George, the king of England, because he had the audacity to marry a wife to whom the king objected. So the duke and his wife had been sent out of England on

a sort of enforced vacation, and, as a result, the duke was not in a very loving mood toward his brother the king. Indeed the duke was so foolish as to criticize the king and even to make fun of him in the house of his hereditary foes. For France, although, as I have told you, at peace just then with England, had been her bitter foe ever since the days of Crecy and Poitiers, and, especially, from that disastrous September day in 1759 when, on the Heights of Abraham, Wolfe had defeated Montcalm and driven the French power from America.

In that very year of 1775 in which the Duke of Gloucester dined with the French Commandant at Metz, news had come to England of the breaking out of a rebellion in America, which had led to a fight between American "peasants" and British soldiers at a place called Lexington in the colony of Massachusetts Bay. The duke had received letters from England in which had been told the story of the determined stand of the American "peasants" at Lexington and Concord, – for to aristocratic Europe those Middlesex farmers and fishermen were simply "peasants," men of the lower orders who needed the strong hand to put them down. The duke had also been told of the long and disastrous retreat of Lord Percy and his troops through a now historic country, from Lexington back to Boston. This seemed such a good joke on his stubborn brother, the king, that he told it with great gusto. So, as, in the company of the French officers around the Duke

de Broglie's dinner-table, he told the story of the "uprising" in America and how also in that same Boston town, a year or so before, the "rebel townspeople" rather than pay the king's tax on tea had thrown the tea into the harbor, the company was highly entertained by the recital, and questioned the duke as to who these rebel "peasants" were and why they were in rebellion.

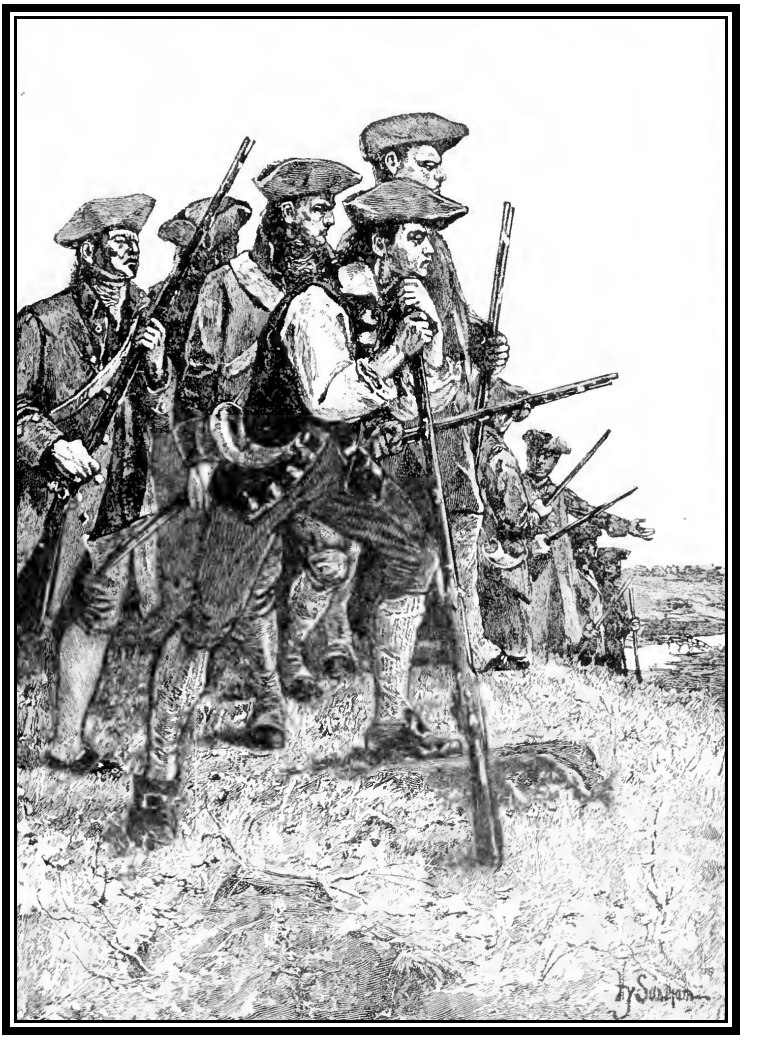
The Duke of Gloucester, as I have told you, was just then "out" with the king his brother; it has even been charged that he sided with the rebel Americans against King George III. and his councillors, as did many justice-loving Englishmen. So he explained to his French hosts the cause of the quarrel between king and colonists – that is, so far as he knew it; there were very, very few of the lords and gentlemen of England in that day who really did understand the American question; but the Duke of Gloucester did say that, though the "peasants" of America were a plucky lot, still, as all the "gentlemen" of the colonies seemed to be loyal to the king, the "peasants" had no chance of success unless, by some chance, leaders and officers of experience turned in and helped them.

"They are poor, they are ill led, they have no gentlemen soldiers to show them how to fight," the duke declared, "and the king my brother is determined to bring them into subjection by harsh and forcible methods, if need be. But my letters say that the Americans seem set upon opposing force with force,

and, as the country is large and the colonies scattered, it certainly looks as if the trouble would be long and serious. If but the Americans were well led, I should say the rebellion might really develop into a serious affair."

In a way, most of the French officers at that military banquet involuntarily sympathized with the American "peasants," of whose struggle for justice and independence they were, most of them, hearing for the first time. With some of them this sympathy was due to that interest in liberty which just then was the fancy, almost the "fad," among a certain class of French aristocrats; to all of them, however, it was especially due to the hatred for England that underlay French enthusiasm and action the desire to "get square with" the nation that had worsted and humbled France, alike in war and in politics.

But while at that table there were interested but indifferent listeners, there was one who, as he listened to the Duke of Gloucester, felt what the old Puritans used to call "an inward light." His sharp-featured, unattractive face fairly glowed with enthusiasm; his eyes sparkled with an intensity of interest and purpose; he leaned far forward, serious and silent, amid his talkative companions, as he strove to lose no word of the imperfect French of the English prince; then, as the company rose from the table, this red-haired, awkward boy of eighteen crossed over to the prince, and, repressing his real earnestness, inquired anxiously, "But



"THE AMERICAN PEASANTS" WHO STOOD AT LEXINGTON AND CONCORD.

could one help these peasants over there beyond the seas, monseigneur?"

"One could, my lord marquis, if he were there," the prince replied.

"Then tell me, I pray you, how one may do it, monseigneur," said the young man; "tell me how to set about it. For see, I will join these Americans; I will help them fight for freedom!"

The duke looked into the face of this calm, cool, apparently unenthusiastic young noble, now aroused to interest and ardor. He smiled at first in a sort of disbelief. But, as he caught the gleam of the boy's eye, and saw the conviction that lived in the earnest face, he said: "Why, I believe you would, my lord. It wouldn't take much to start you across the sea, if your people would let you."

If his people would let him? Who would try to stop him? Lafayette asked himself. He had been so accustomed to having his own way that such a thing as any one interfering with his plans seemed to him absurd. Besides, the high resolve that he had made allowed no question of interference. That purpose put from his mind every other thought except his instant decision. Quick and impulsive, for all his silent ways and seeming indifference, in that moment the Marquis de Lafayette had made up his mind. He would go to America; he would offer his services to a people who were struggling for freedom and independence. His

inborn love of liberty; his dislike for courts and their stupid ceremonials, for kingly tyrannies and the fetters they put upon the wills and ways of men; his dream of doing something that should make the world happier and better, dreams which, as you know, he had shared with his young wife Adrienne; above all, his desire for action, his wish to be somebody, to do something besides hanging about the court, or waiting upon the pleasure or caprices of a king,--these, all, combined to urge him to instant action. He questioned the Duke of Gloucester closely; he got all the "points" possible. The only question was how to get to America. For, as you can see, he was enlisted, heart and soul, in the cause of American independence. "Never," he said, in after years, recalling his boyish impulse and that sudden decision; "never had so noble a purpose offered itself to the judgment of men. This was the last struggle of liberty; the defeat in America would have left it without refuge and without hope."

Within a month the Duke of Gloucester had returned to England and to the favor of his kingly brother, probably giving no further thought to the earnest young Frenchman who had questioned him so closely at Metz. But before that month was out the Marquis de Lafayette had already gone still deeper into the plan which the careless words of the English prince had set in motion in his youthful mind.

"From that hour," he declared, "I could think of nothing but this enterprise, and I resolved to go to Paris at once to make further inquiries."

He hurried off to Paris, full of his plans. His determination grew with his desire, and as soon as he reached town, he rushed to find his cousin and close confidant, the young Count de Segur.

It was only seven o'clock in the morning, and the young count was not yet up. But Lafayette burst into his cousin's room. He was no longer listless, silent, or indifferent.

"Wake up! wake up!" he called out to the surprised count. "Wake up! I'm going to America to fight for freedom. Nobody knows it yet; but I love you too much not to tell you."

And the Count de Segur, fired by his cousin's earnestness, and thrilled with his inspiring news, sprang out of bed and caught Lafayette's outstretched hand.

"If that is so, I will go with you," he cried. "I will go to America, too. I will fight with you for freedom! How soon do you start?"

Chapter 3

Why the Marquis Ran Away to Sea

The two impulsive boys, who, fired by a generous purpose, thus pledged themselves to fight for the liberties of America at seven o'clock in the morning, straightway after breakfast hunted up another young friend whom they knew would be with them, heart and soul, in this enterprise.

This was the Viscount Louis Marie de Noailles, brother-in-law to Lafayette, one year older than the young marquis and his very dear friend. He, too, eagerly seconded Lafayette's plan; for though a great noble of France, he belonged to what we should call today a sort of Tolstoy family; for his father actually worked with the peasants at the plough and his mother and sister lived only "for God and their poor." Naturally, this plan to help a nation to freedom would appeal to such a liberal-minded young man, and the three boys none of them were over twenty, you know, pledged themselves to fight for America and to set about it at once.

This, however, proved to be no easy task. France hated England and was ready to go to any extent, secretly, to injure her at home and cripple her abroad. But there was no desire just at that time for an open rupture of peaceful relations, and the prime minister of King Louis of France while really wishing one thing said quite another.

When, therefore, the prime minister learned that there was a movement among the young nobles of France to sail across the sea and fight with the American "insurgents" against the power of England, he was afraid that England would think that the French government permitted and encouraged this hostile action. So, lest it might lead to undesirable complications, perhaps to actual war, he "sat down upon" all such schemes whenever he heard of them, and, especially, upon the three-cornered partnership in patriotism of Lafayette, Noailles, and Segur.

So the young fellows had to go to work cautiously and in secret council; and as Noailles and Segur had no money of their own to invest in this adventure, but must look to their fathers for funds, they had to think first of money. Even before making this necessary application, however, they waited until Lafayette could with the greatest caution see and talk with the agent of the rebellious American colonists.

This agent was Silas Deane of Connecticut, who had been sent across to France by the American

"Committee of Secret Correspondence," of which Doctor Benjamin Franklin was a member. Do you remember how, in the "True Story of Benjamin Franklin," I told you about the mysterious visit to this committee of a certain "little lame Frenchman," who hinted significantly to the surprised committee that, whenever they were ready, they could get all the help they wanted from France? I am inclined to think that this very mysterious and "little lame Frenchman" was a certain Monsieur Achard Bonvouloir, lieutenant in the army of the king of France, who had "made up" for this interview so that no one should recognize him, but who had really been sent to America by the prime minister of France, to see how things stood and to give the Americans secretly to understand that if they wished the aid of France there was a way in which they could have it. At any rate, it was soon after this secret interview that the committee sent Silas Deane to France, as the agent of the colonies in rebellion against the power of England, and it was to Silas Deane that the young Marquis de Lafayette applied for information as to how he could join the "insurgent army" in America. Before seeking an interview with Silas Deane and without saying anything to his wife or his wife's family, – for the latter, he knew, would put an immediate veto on his action, the young marquis told his secret to his superior officer, the Count de Broglie, commander of the garrison at Metz, his own and his father's friend.

"Throw your life away in that land of savages!" cried the count, when Lafayette had told him his desire. "Why, my dear marquis, it is a crazy scheme; and to what purpose?"

"For the noblest purpose, sir," responded the young enthusiast; "to help a devoted people attain their liberty. What can be nobler?"

"A dream, a dream, my friend, that can never be fulfilled," said the count, "I will not help you throw your life away. My boy," he added, feelingly, grasping the hand of the young marquis, "I saw your uncle die in the wars of Italy; I witnessed your brave father's death at Hastenbeck, and I cannot, I will not be a party to the ruin of the last of your name, the only remaining branch and scion of the Lafayettes."

This was like cold water on the young soldier's scheme, but even cold water could not drown or even dampen his enthusiasm. Indeed, so earnestly and so vigorously did he combat all the count's objections, and so strenuously did he advocate his own desires, that, at last, even the gallant commander of Metz was won over to his young lieutenant's side, and said he would help him to his desires, although it was a risky business.

"I will introduce you to De Kalb," he said. "He is in Paris now, and perhaps through him you can gain your point with this Monsieur Deane."

So it was only through a third, even through a fourth party, that Lafayette was able to bring about his interview with the agent of the colonies.

There was in Paris at that time, as the Count de Broglie had said, a veteran Bavarian soldier named John Kalb, better known as Baron de Kalb. The true story of his life is but slightly known; but it was full of mystery, action, and adventure, and in the American Revolution De Kalb proved himself a brave and efficient leader.

Long before the Revolution he had been in America. In 1768 he was sent by a far-seeing minister of France to investigate the trouble that even then was brewing between England and her American colonies, and which, so that wise minister foresaw, would one day lead to serious results, unless England changed her methods. But England, as you know, did not change her methods; the troubles of 1768 grew into the revolution of 1776, and England's necessity was France's opportunity.

So, just at the time when Lafayette had made up his mind to go to America, the Count de Broglie, his commander, whom Lafayette's earnestness had set to thinking, requested the Baron de Kalb to go again to America in his behalf, and see if he could not so "work things" that he, the Count de Broglie, could be invited by the American Congress to become commander in chief of the American armies.

This sounds oddly to us, today, who know that there was and could be but one Washington. But, at that time, France set down all Americans as "a herd of peasants" who, as the Duke of Gloucester had said, could never succeed in their struggle against England unless disciplined and marshaled by some European soldier of high name and warlike experience, – as, for instance, so reasoned the commander of Metz, the Count de Broglie! To accomplish his mission, it was necessary that De Kalb should go at once to America and secretly confer with the Congress; to do this, an appointment was desirable in the service of the United States, – it was really the United States of America now, you see, since the Declaration of Independence, – and to secure this appointment, the Baron de Kalb and the Count de Broglie waited upon "Monsieur Deane," the agent of the "insurgents."

Silas Deane was an enthusiastic but somewhat unwise patriot, who was so anxious to secure friends and assistance for America that he made rash promises to every one who showed any interest or asked for a commission in the American service; he was therefore unable to distinguish between scheming adventurers and honest friends of American liberty.

He was quite impressed by the visit of the Count de Broglie and the Baron de Kalb, you may be sure, and at once he promised Baron de Kalb the rank of major-general in the American army, and signed an agreement whereby De Kalb and fifteen French

officers should go to America on a vessel loaded with arms and military supplies for the fighting Americans.

This was Lafayette's opportunity. The Count de Broglie, as promised, introduced him to De Kalb, the baron introduced him to Silas Deane; and to the American agent the young marquis freely opened his heart, and stated his wish and his intention. This was on or about the fifth of December, 1776.

Lafayette was very boyish-looking at that time; he was smooth-faced and slight of figure, and, indeed, feared greatly that his "nineteen-year-old face," as he called it, would hurt his cause. But he was so full of zeal and enthusiasm, and, as he confesses, "made so much out of the small excitement that my going away was likely to cause," that Silas Deane was captivated by the young marquis at once, and forthwith, according to his helter-skelter custom, drew up a contract with Lafayette, by which the young Frenchman was to enter the service of the United States of America as major-general, – a major-general at nineteen!

"His high birth," so the agreement which was submitted to Congress read, "his alliances, the great dignities which his family holds at this court, his considerable estates in this realm, his personal merit, his reputation, his disinterestedness, and above all, his zeal for the liberty of our provinces, are such as have only been able to engage me to promise him the rank of major-general in the name of the United States. In

witness of which I have signed the present this seventh of December, 1776. Silas Deane, Agent for the United States of America."

From all this you may judge that the overzealous agent of the United States of America was as susceptible to the enthusiasm of this nineteen-year-old marquis as even the soldierly commandant of the king's garrison at Metz.

But other people were not so susceptible, especially when the young marquis was a son-in-law. When Lafayette declared his intention his own relatives and his wife's family were furious. Only his girl-wife Adrienne understood his motives and sympathized with his desires. It was quite in line, you see, with the high plans for making the world better that this young husband and wife had dreamed over together.

"God wills that you should go," she said. "I have prayed for guidance and strength. Whatever others think, you shall not be blamed."

But others not only thought; they acted. One of these, and the most important actor, was the Duke d'Ayen, the father of Adrienne.

The two young comrades of Lafayette, De Noailles and Segur, who had promised to go with him, could not get either the funds from their fathers nor permission from the king. So they had to give up their plans. Lafayette, however, was rich; his money was all his own; no one could control his action or his

expenditures. But he was a soldier of France; so father-in-law d'Ayen complained to the king; the British ambassador, who had somehow got hold of the facts, complained to the king; and the king of France, who was really little more than a boy, and a very unenthusiastic boy at that, said that, while it was a very fine thing to be zealous in behalf of liberty, he could not allow the officers of his army to serve in the army of the American "insurgents" against the soldiers of the king of England, with whom he was at peace. He therefore forbade any officer of his to go to the war in America.

"You had better return to your regiment at Metz, my dear son," the triumphant Duke d'Ayen advised. But he did not yet know the spirit of his son-in-law.

"No Lafayette was ever known to turn back," the young marquis declared. "I shall do as I have determined;" and thereupon he put upon his coat-of-arms the motto taken by a great soldier ancestor of his, *cur non* – "Why not?" in order, as he declared, that the device might serve him "both as an encouragement and a response." And then he went off very quietly to talk with Doctor Franklin.

For, by this time, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, the foremost and best-known American of that day, had been sent to France to assist and advise Silas Deane, and, in time, to replace him. You have read how Franklin went to the French court as envoy

from America, and all that he accomplished there. He, too, was at once attracted by Lafayette's earnestness, and appreciated the great influence that his name would have in behalf of America.

Just at that time terrible news came across the Atlantic. The Americans had been defeated and almost cut to pieces at the disastrous battle of Long Island, and a sudden chill fell upon French enthusiasm. It looked as if the "insurgents" in America were not strong enough to take care of themselves and that France had better leave them alone.

But Lafayette was only strengthened in his determination by this bad news.

He sought out Franklin. Mr. Deane was with the doctor.

"Gentlemen," said the young marquis, "heretofore I have been able to show you only my willingness to aid you in your struggle; the time has now come when that willingness may be put to effective use. I am going to buy a ship and take your officers and supplies to America in it. Let us not give up our hope yet. It is precisely in time of danger that I wish to share whatever fortune may have in store for you."

Do you wonder that Franklin was moved by the generosity and friendliness of this very determined young man? But Doctor Franklin was, as you know, the most practical of men; so, while accepting the offer of the young marquis with thanks and appreciation, he

suggested that the American agents were not popular people to know just then, and that Lafayette should work through third parties, and, if possible, get away from Paris.

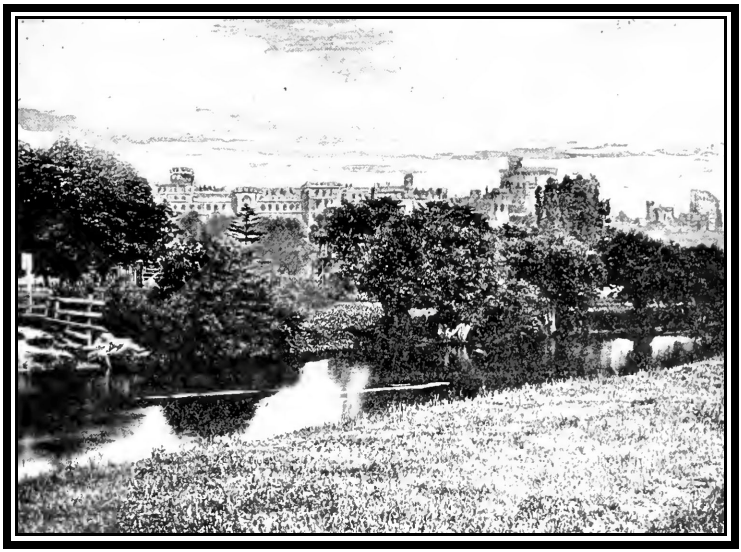
Lafayette took this advice. He selected as his agent an officer in one of the king's West Indian regiments, then home on a furlough; and while this Captain Dubois, for that was his name, with Lafayette's money behind him, went about to secretly purchase and secretly load a vessel, as if it were intended for the needs of his own regiment in the West Indies, the young marquis slipped over the channel to England to visit his uncle, the French ambassador, in company with the colonel of his regiment, his kinsman, the young Prince de Poix.

He had a fine time in England. All his relatives believed that "the crazy American scheme" was quite given up and forgotten; the marquis was received in London society as one of the leading young nobles of France; he went to Windsor and was presented to King George; he went to a ball at the house of the minister of the colonies, and "hobnobbed" with Sir Henry Clinton on the opera. He was to meet Sir Henry at quite a different performance not so very long after.

But, though he had every opportunity to do so, Lafayette would not play the spy. He kept away from the British shipyards and the British barracks, although he was invited to inspect them and see how thoroughly

the king was preparing to punish "his American rebels." Honor was ever one of the strongest points in Lafayette's noble character.

Suddenly he disappeared from London. For three days he was in hiding in Paris where he had a last word with the American envoys and then slipped away with Baron de Kalb to Bordeaux, the port at which was waiting the sloop "Victory," purchased by Captain Dubois with Lafayette's money to take the young marquis and his fellow filibusters to America.



WINDSOR PALACE.
Where Lafayette met the King of England.

But it was not as the Marquis de Lafayette that the runaway nobleman stepped as a passenger on board his

own vessel. That would never do. There were spies every where, and as, in France, it was necessary to have a permit or passport before leaving the country, Lafayette's name appeared on the permit, which is still preserved as a relic at Bordeaux, as "Gilbert du Mottie, Chevalier de, aged about twenty, rather tall, light-haired, embarking on the Victory, Captain Lebourcier commanding, for a voyage to the Cape onprivate business."

He did not disguise his name so very much, you see; for really he was Gilbert du Metier and he was the Chevalier de Chavaniac; but a careless entry clerk, who knew nothing about Lafayette's other names, and had no especial interest in his "private business," blunderingly misspelled them both and so the "Victory" cleared for the Cape.

It seemed a very easy escape. But the trouble had not yet even begun. While waiting at Bordeaux Lafayette heard that, somehow, his plans had been discovered; so the "Victory" sailed away without waiting for its necessary sailing papers, intending to run into a Spanish port and there complete arrangements.

But even this intention leaked out, and when, on the twenty-seventh of March, 1777, the "Victory" run into the little Spanish port of Las Pasajes on the Bay of Biscay and just across the French border, Lafayette found that he had sailed into trouble. Instead of the sailing papers that should let him clear for America the

young runaway marquis found letters from his family protesting, complaining, and threatening; he found letters from the king's ministers charging him with desertion from the army, breaking his oath of allegiance to the king and involving the government in serious trouble with England; worse than this, he found two officers from the court bearing letters under the king's own seal, commanding Lieutenant the Marquis de Lafayette of the regiment de Noailles to proceed at once to Marseilles and await orders.

This was serious enough. But, in all those letters, there was no word of complaint or censure from his young wife, even though, to escape detention, Lafayette had sailed away without telling her. She, however, as I have told you, knew his desires and approved of the enterprise. She would put no obstacle in his way. But his letters from home told sad stories about her health and her state of mind, and, though Lafayette would have braved all else, - even the wrath of the ministers and the king's order of arrest, – he could not stand having anything happen to his young wife on his account.

So he turned his back on his cherished plans, said good-bye to the "Victory" and his companions, and, crossing the border into France, galloped back to Bordeaux, much to the disgust of his comrade, the Baron de Kalb, who wrote to his wife, "This is the end of his expedition to America to join the army of the insurgents."

But the Baron de Kalb did not yet know the Marquis de Lafayette; neither did that young man's family, friends, or rulers. If he believed a thing was right he would do it in spite of all opposition. Upon his arrival at Bordeaux he learned that he had been recalled by a false alarm, and that it was all what boys now-a-days call a "put-up job," arranged by his father-in-law, the duke. For his wife, he heard, was well and happy, except at the thought of his long absence; the government was in no danger of complications with England because of his action, although the British ambassador at Paris made such a row over Lafayette's expedition that the court was compelled to appear to deal severely with the young marquis. In fact, as I have told you, he discovered that the trouble all came through the methods pursued by his father-in-law, the Duke d'Ayen, who felt that Lafayette was too important and too valuable a young man in France and in his family to be allowed to risk his life and estate among the savages and "insurgents" of North America. It was the duke, therefore, who had sent off all those "terrible letters," as Lafayette called them, which had recalled the young marquis from his cherished enterprise.

He determined at once to return to the "Victory." But the ship still lay at the Spanish port, and the young man had no permit to cross the border. He was also under the orders of the king to return, and if he should

be caught travelling the other way it would go hard with him.

His father-in-law, the duke, was waiting for him at Marseilles. And, toward Marseilles, Lafayette started, as soon as the letters sent him from Paris had led him to make up his mind. While waiting at Bordeaux, he had been joined by a young French officer, who also had secured from Silas Deane an appointment in the American army, and, together, the young men set off in a post-chaise to drive, apparently, to Marseilles.

But when they were well out of Bordeaux, they suddenly wheeled about and headed for Spain. In a quiet place, Lafayette slipped into the woods. There he hastily disguised himself as a post-boy, a sort of mounted carriage-servant, and rode on ahead, on horseback, as if he were the guide or attendant of the other young man in the post-chaise bound for Spain.

The young man in the post-chaise had a permit to leave France, and he hoped to get the marquis across the border in the disguise of his horseboy. But when they were almost over the border, driving hard because they were warned that officers from the French court were on their tracks, suspecting the trick, they came very near to disaster. For, at a little village where Lafayette had stopped once before, the daughter of the tavern-keeper recognized in the pretended post-boy, as he galloped into the stable yard demanding fresh

horses, the same fine young gentleman who had been there before, ordering things in great style at the inn.

"Oh, m'sieur-" she began. But Lafayette swiftly made a warning sign which the young girl was bright enough to understand.

“Yes, my child; m'sieur, my patron desires fresh horses at once," Lafayette said, quickly. "He is just behind. He rides post-haste into Spain at once."

The inn-keeper's daughter said never a word, and "Lafayette's luck" did not desert him. For when, soon after, he and his companion had posted across the border, up came their pursuers at a gallop, only to be assured by the inn-keeper's daughter that the young gentleman had gone on just the opposite road from that really taken into Spain.

So, once again, Lafayette came, on the seventeenth of April, to the little Spanish port of Las Pasajes, and while all France was ringing with applause over his pluck and persistence, and England growled so that France said she "didn't care anyhow" and growled back in return, Lafayette stood on the deck of the "Victory" with De Kalb and about twenty young Frenchmen, and on the twentieth of April he ordered Captain Leboucier to "up anchor" and put to sea at once.

The anchor came up; the "Victory" spread her sails; the coast line of Spain and of France faded gradually from sight. In spite of all, the expedition was off; in

spite of his father-in-law and in spite of the king of France the young marquis had run away to sea.

Chapter 4

How Lafayette Landed in America

It is not a surprising thing in these days for a rich young man to own a yacht. It is one of the things to which most boys who love blue water aspire; thousands and thousands of dollars are spent each year in the ownership and navigation of these pleasure crafts, from the natty knockabout to the luxurious and fast-sailing steamer.

But when Lafayette set sail from the little Spanish port, pleasure-sailing was an unknown sport; men went down to the sea in ships for profit or for fighting, but never for fun; and when a young fellow of twenty, rich, well-connected and high-toned, deliberately bought a vessel in which to run away to sea, and actually did run away to help a struggling people in an alien land, the other rich, well-connected and high-toned people of France simply held up their hands in surprise.

"What kind of folly is this, my dear child?" wrote the stately mother of a young chevalier who had sent her from Paris the story of this latest sensation. "What! the

madness of knight-errantry still exists? It has disciples? Go to help the insurgents? I am delighted that you reassure me about yourself, or I should tremble for you. But since you see that M. de Lafayette is a madman I am tranquil."

Meantime the "madman" was sailing westward in his "private yacht." It did not prove to be much of a yacht. The "Victory" was little better than a "tub" of a boat, and the marquis had been sadly swindled; she was a slow sailer; she was meagrely furnished and miserably armed, and her two old cannons and small supply of muskets would prove but a poor defence in case of attack by the pirates and privateers that in those days swarmed the seas and terrorized "the Atlantic ferry," or by the English cruisers that would gladly welcome such game as a shipload of French officers carrying arms, ammunition, and their own services to the American insurgents. It reads quite like a chapter out of the story of Cuba in 1897, does it not?

A young man who owns a yacht considers himself the head man on deck, you know. Lafayette certainly did; but the first thing he discovered was that the captain of the "Victory" considered himself a bigger man than the owner. No sooner had the "Victory" lost sight of the home coast line than Lafayette directed the captain to steer straight for a United States port and by the shortest route.

The clearance papers, without which no ship can leave port for a foreign land, were made out for the West Indies. But as this was always the case in those war days when a vessel sailed from Europe, America bound, Lafayette did not trouble himself about what "his papers" declared. He intended to get to the United States, and to get there as quickly as possible.

"Captain," he said, "you will please make your course as direct as possible for Charlestown in the Carolinas."

"The Carolinas, sir!" exclaimed the captain. "Why, that I cannot. This ship's papers are made out for a port in the West Indies and can only protect us on that course. I shall sail for the West Indies and you must get transportation across to the colonies from there."

The marquis was astonished. "Sir," he said to the captain, "this ship is mine. I direct you to sail to Charleston."

"Sir," replied the captain, "I am the master of this ship and am responsible for her safety. If we are caught by an English cruiser, and she finds us headed for North America with arms and supplies, we shall at once be made prisoners and lose our vessel, our cargo, and our lives. So I shall follow my papers and steer for the West Indies."

"Captain Leboucier," said the marquis, facing the stubborn captain, "you may be master of the 'Victory,' but I am her owner and my decision is final. You will

sail at once and direct for Charleston in the Carolinas or I shall deprive you this instant of your command and place the ship in charge of the mate. I have force enough here to meet any resistance on your part. So make your decision."

It was now Captain Leboucier's turn to be surprised. He had supposed that he could do just as he pleased with this green "land-lubber of a boy." But he found he had awakened the wrong passenger. He spluttered and blustered a bit, but he had too much at stake to risk losing his command; so at last he made a full breast of it and confessed to the boy owner of the "Victory" that it was not so much the ship's papers as the ship's cargo that troubled him. For it seems the captain had concluded to try a little venture of his own on this voyage and had smuggled aboard the "Victory" some eight or nine thousand dollars worth of goods and merchandise which he wished to sell in West Indian ports and make some outside money for himself. If this cargo were "held up" by an English cruiser he would be out of pocket, and, therefore, he didn't wish to run the risk.

"And why did you not say so at once, sir?" the marquis demanded. "I would have helped you out, of course. Sail for Charleston in the Carolinas, captain; and if we are captured, searched, robbed, or destroyed by English cruisers or by privateers, I will see that you do not lose a sou. I will promise to make your loss good."

Captain Leboucier came around at once. As long as he felt assured that his investment was safe he did not care for the danger, and at once he headed for the coast of Carolina. But Lafayette, with the thought of hostile war-ships in his mind, determined never to surrender, and he made a secret agreement with a certain Captain de Bedaulx, a deserting Dutch officer from the English army, that in case of attack and capture, he and this Captain de Bedaulx would blow up the "Victory" rather than surrender her. Which desperate affair being arranged, the young marquis went below, and for two weeks was dreadfully seasick, as even the greatest of heroes have often been, from Ulysses to Napoleon and General Grant.

But when, at last, the seasickness was passed, and the disgusted young Frenchman crawled out on deck again for the voyage across took seven weeks instead of the seven days in which the "ocean greyhounds" now make it – he found himself divided between two things, – homesickness and anxiety to see America. To relieve the first he wrote long letters to his wife, which he intended to send by different routes when he landed in America, so that some of his letters could be relied upon to escape capture and reach her. The letters he wrote his wife were long and loving; for, though he knew that both of them regretted the separation, and appreciated the sacrifice, he could not help wishing again and again to see his "dear Adrienne" and their little two-year-old daughter, and exclaimed: "Oh, if you

knew what I have suffered, what weary days I have passed thus flying from everything that I love best in the world! "

Then he tried to calm her fears, and to assure her that the higher the rank the less the danger to him in the war to which he was going.

"Do not allow yourself to feel anxious that I am running great danger in the occupation that is before me," he wrote. "The post of major-general" (you can imagine how big the boy felt when he wrote himself down as major-general) "the post of major-general has always been a warrant of long life. It is so different from the service I should have had in France, as colonel, for instance. With my present rank I shall only have to attend councils of war. ... As soon as I land I shall be in perfect safety."

You can see how little this young fellow appreciated what fighting in America meant, and how little he really knew his own rashness, if he thought for an instant that he would be content simply to attend councils of war!

In fact, in this very letter to his wife, he showed that action only would suit him. For, comparing his present enterprise with the social tour for which his angry but "foxy" father-in-law wished to lure him to Marseilles, he wrote: "Consider the difference between my occupation and my present life, and what they would have been if I had gone upon that useless journey. As

the defender of that liberty which I adore; free, myself, more than any one; coming, as a friend, to offer my services to this most interesting republic, I bring with me nothing but my own free heart and my own good-will, no ambition to fulfil and no selfish interest to serve. If I am striving for my own glory, I am at the same time laboring for the welfare of the American republic. I trust that, for my sake, you will become a good American. It is a sentiment made for virtuous hearts. The happiness of America is intimately connected with the happiness of all mankind; she is destined to become the safe and worthy asylum of virtue, integrity, tolerance, equality, and peaceful liberty."

A pretty good prophet for a young man of nineteen, was he not and for one who really did not know to what he was going, nor even the language of the people he was seeking to serve?

This last defect he was studiously trying to overcome during such of the fifty-four days of that long and tedious voyage as he was not seasick, planning, writing letters, or studying military science with the veteran fighter, De Kalb, and his companions.

"I am making progress with that language," he wrote to his wife; "it will soon become most necessary to me."

April passed; May passed; June came, and still the slow sailing "Victory" had not made the North Atlantic coast; for fifty days the little vessel, which had nothing

grand about it except its name and the desires of its passengers, pitched and flopped about, struggling against head winds and adverse currents.

"I am still out on this dreary plain," wrote Lafayette to his wife on the seventh day of June, "which is beyond comparison the most dismal place that one can be in. ... We have had small alarms from time to time, but with a little care, and reasonably good fortune, I hope to get through without serious accident, and I shall be all the more pleased, because I am learning every day to be extremely prudent."

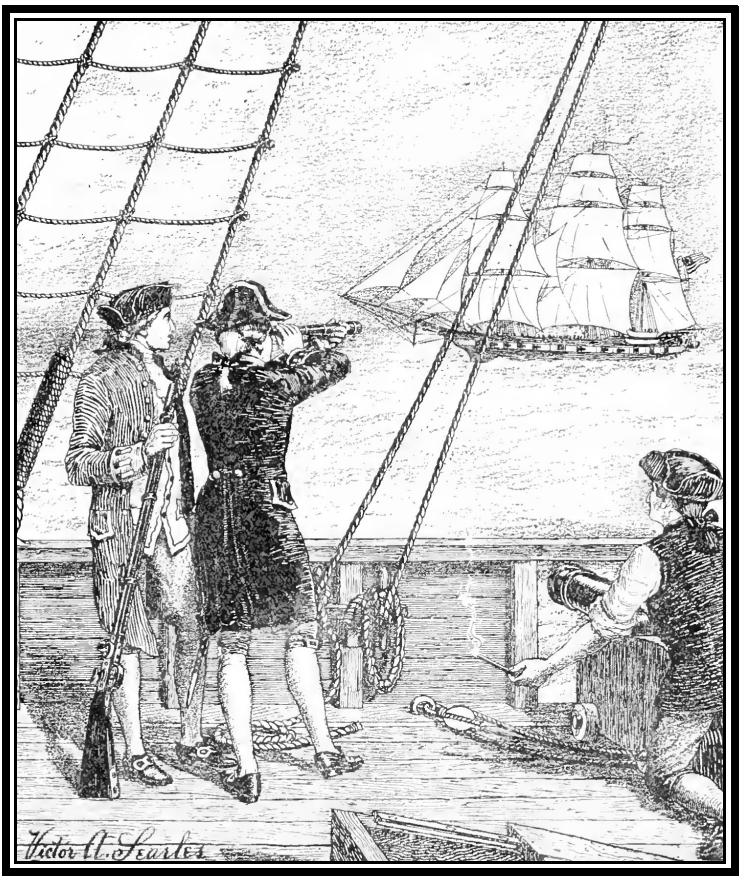
Very soon after writing these words, Lafayette and his comrades had need for all their acquired prudence. For, while yet out of sight of land, but slowly approaching the Carolina coast, the lookout one morning hailed the captain and reported a strange sail bearing down upon them.

At once all was excitement on board the "Victory," in the usual impressible French manner. The captain crowded on all sail and tried to get away; but to run the old "Victory" out of the reach of that fast sailing stranger was found to be impossible. Resistance or surrender seemed the only choice.

"She is an English man-of-war," was the word passed from man to man, and the marquis and his friends prepared for resistance, while the captain shook his head dubiously, and the two poor cannons were

made ready, the muskets distributed, and the crew sent to their stations.

Nearer and nearer came the stranger, rakish and determined, with a formidable threat in the very "cut of



LAFAYETTE OFF THE CAROLINA COAST.

"*She broke out the new colors of the American republic, – the Stars and Stripes.*"

her jib," and the water parting at her bows. Lafayette had just given a significant look to the Dutch deserter, De Bedaulx, and the Dutchman had replied with an equally significant nod; the old "Victory," laboring desperately to draw out of the path of her pursuer, only flopped and floundered the more, when suddenly the stranger came gracefully about, and as her broadside was presented to the "Victory" she broke out from her peak the new colors of the American republic, - - the stars and stripes! At once the "Victory" displayed French colors, and the "scare turned into jubilee."

But even as the lumbering "Victory" sought vainly to keep up with the American privateer, and make for Charleston harbor, off to the south, far against the coast line, two other strange sails appeared, and the privateer, displaying the danger signal for the information of the French vessel, announced them to be English cruisers looking for privateers, filibusters, and blockade runners.

Again all was excitement on board the "Victory." This time resistance was felt to be hopeless, for the "Victory's" two guns would be useless against an armed cruiser, and even the American privateer deemed desertion to be the better part of valor. At once she signaled: "good-bye, can't stop," and was soon hull down off the coast.

But again the "Victory" proved the luck of her name even if she could not show a quick pair of heels. For, as

the distance between her and the British cruisers lessened, suddenly the wind shifted, and blew strong from the north. This would, of course, drive the "yacht" nearer to Charleston and the enemy, but it would also be a head wind for the approaching foemen. At once Captain Leboucier decided to take advantage of this north wind and, instead of making Charleston, run before the wind into Georgetown Bay, which broke into the Carolina coast almost directly on his course.

At once he headed the "Victory" shoreward, and by great good fortune, for he knew nothing whatever of the coast thereabouts, he made the opening of the South Inlet of Georgetown Bay, – a shallow roadstead, but worth risking at a time when, as the sailors say, "any port in a storm."

The north wind held steady; the British cruisers labored against it in vain, and finally dropped out of sight, and on the afternoon of Friday, the thirteenth day of June, 1777, the "Victory" ran in through the inlet and came to off North Island, one of the long, low-lying sand-spits fringing the broken South Carolina coast.

Today, above the South Inlet, at the entrance to Georgetown Bay, the towering white walls and the protecting rays of Georgetown light show the way over the bar; but when the "Victory" felt its way in for shelter and security, like some hunted animal scudding for cover, there was no such thing as a lighthouse on

the sands, and it was only good luck and a favoring wind that carried the blockade runner into safe harbor. It was a fortunate combination; "but it was not the only time in my life," so Lafayette declared many years after, in referring to his adventure, "that the elements have conspired in my favor." Wind and rain, you see, are oftentimes as welcome in the hour of perilous adventure as are clear and sunny days.

Neither captain nor crew could tell just where they were. But of one thing Lafayette was certain; he was on the Carolina coast; the Carolinas were American and rebel; therefore, wherever he was, he should be among friends. So, acting on this course of reasoning, he proposed to Baron de Kalb that they should go ashore in one of the "Victory's" boats, find out where they were, and perhaps pick up a pilot to take the "Victory" into safe anchorage or guide her around to Charleston.

The baron thought the plan of the marquis wise. So the ship's yawl was ordered out; seven men were told off as a crew to row it ashore, and into it went Lafayette, De Kalb, and some other officers, a half dozen passengers in all.

The explorers dropped over the side, the oars fell into the water, and a little after two o'clock in the afternoon the yawl cast off from the "Victory" on its voyage of discovery and information.

Both discovery and information proved uncertain quantities, however. Georgetown Bay is broad and

broken with inlets, bars, and islands, and in those days there were, along the low shores, little signs of life or occupation. The rowers pulled this way and that until, finally, as night closed down, they found themselves rowing up the North Inlet, where, around North Island, the channel of Georgetown Bay connects with the sea at its northern entrance.

They rowed along the silent shores, wondering if America were really inhabited, when suddenly, ahead, they saw a burning flare and soon came up to some Negroes dragging for oysters.

Baron de Kalb was the only man in the yawl whose English could really be relied upon, so he hailed the Negroes and asked them who they were and where they were; whether there was safe anchorage for a ship thereabouts and where he and his friends could find a pilot to take them around to Charleston.

"Golly, massa! Don't know nuffin 'bout it," one of the Negroes replied, bewildered by the string of questions flung at him in broken English by the Bavarian soldier, and rather fearful of this boat-load of "Hessians," as he thought them to be. "We'm belongs to Major Huger, we do. He'm our massa."

"Major Huger. He is of ze American army?" demanded the baron.

"Ya'as, sah; he'm a Continentaler," the Negro replied. And he told the Frenchmen that there was a pilot to be found somewhere on the upper end of

North Island, that he could show the gentlemen where the pilot lived and take them also to the big house, – "Major Huger's house, sah – our massa; he'll be right glad to see you gen'l'men, sah; he'll be powerful glad," the black oysterman declared. And Lafayette decided to seek out Major Huger at once.

So you see that really Lafayette's first reception and welcome on American shores were at the hands of black Americans, – slaves in a land fighting for freedom; slaves after liberty was won, until a greater than revolutionary patriot or French hero was to enfranchise and deliver them and make America indeed the land of liberty.

But when the yawl attempted to follow its guide, the oyster-boat, it was discovered that the tide was falling fast and that it would be unsafe for strange rowers to keep to the channel and pull the big yawl up to a safe landing-place, if indeed they were not left high and dry on the flats.

There was nothing for it but to take to the oyster-boat. So, leaving the most of his party in the yawl, greatly to their disgust, no doubt, Lafayette, De Kalb, and a young French American named Price (who evidently could not speak his own language as well as the Bavarian Frenchman) stepped aboard the clumsy and dirty oyster-boat, and with an "adieu!" to their comrades in the yawl and a "bon voyage!" in return pulled into the night with their Negro boatmen.

Creeping along the shallowing reach they skirted the shore of North Island, and, finally, about midnight they saw a light, shining as if from a house on shore.

"Dat's it, sah; dat's Major Huger's, sah," said the oysterman. "We set you gen'l'men ashore heah, and you jes' follow de light, and Major Huger he be powerful glad to see you."

The oyster-boat ran alongside the landing and, with stiffened limbs and a goodly fee to his colored boatmen, the marquis and his two companions stepped on American soil. Lafayette, at last, had one ambition gratified. He was in America, the land for whose freedom he had come to fight, and which, all France supposed, was to fervently welcome him.

The fervor in the welcome was not just then apparent as the three bewildered Frenchmen stood on the rickety boat landing at North Island, alone and at midnight, with nothing to guide them but a distant and uncertain light.

But, as is wisest in all times of doubt and difficulty, they did as the negro boatman advised them, they followed the light.

Now it seems in those troublesome times, when English cruisers and privateers were coasting the American shores for prey or booty, the seaside dwellers lived in continual fear of raid and attack, and were ever on the watch for marauders.

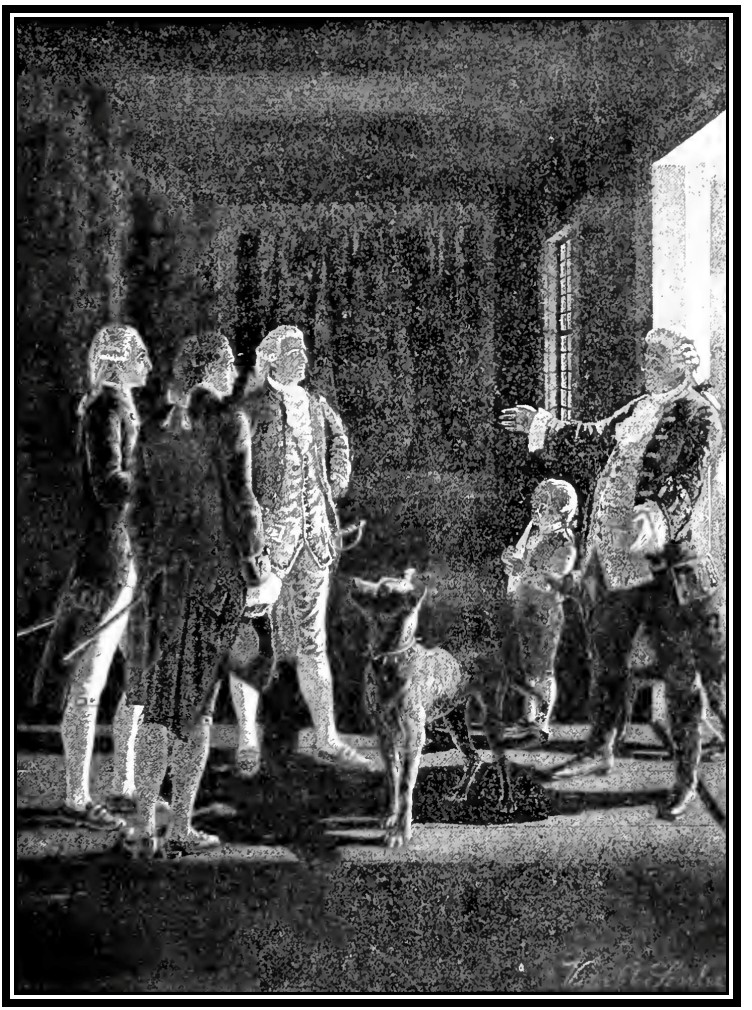
So, as Lafayette and his two companions went stumbling up from the shore heading for the light, their coming aroused the guardians of the house, and at once the sharp warning bark of a watch-dog broke the silence; the bark swelled to a chorus as all the other dogs in the pack took up the cry; the lights disappeared from the house; windows were flung up and men with guns stood at each darkened sash.

"Hollo! who goes there? Stand or we fire," came the threatening call. "Friends, sir; friends only," De Kalb in broken English hastened to reply to the challenge. "We are French officers, sir, just set ashore from our ship in your waters. We come to fight for America and we seek a pilot to bring our vessel to safe anchorage and shelter for ourselves."

Even before the explanation was half given, the house changed from hostility to hospitality; lights flashed out again; welcoming hands unbarred the door, and on its threshold, with black servants holding lights aloft and hurriedly dressed forms just outlined in the shadows, stood a smiling gentleman and a small boy, – for you can always depend upon a small boy to be on hand whenever anything exciting is about to happen.

"Gentlemen, I am proud to welcome you," cried the man in the doorway, extending his hands in greeting. "Down, Bruno! down, Vixen!" this to the vociferous dogs – "I am Major Huger, Major Benjamin Huger of the American army; this is my shore house where we

camp down in the summer. Come in, gentlemen, come in. This house and all it holds are at the service of brave Frenchmen who come to fight for our liberties."



LAFAYETTE'S WELCOME TO AMERICA.
"*Come in, gentlemen. This house and all its holds are yours.*"

He almost pulled the oldest man the Baron de Kalb into the house in the excessive cordiality of his welcome; while the small boy, catching at the hand of the young marquis, who looked little more than a boy in that light, dragged him into the spacious hall.

"Permit me, Major Huger," said the punctilious De Kalb, "to introduce ourselves to you who have so generously welcomed us. This, sir, is the leader and head of our expedition, the Seigneur Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette; this is Monsieur Price of Sauveterre, and I, sir, am Johann Kalb, at your service."

"The Baron de Kalb, monsieur the major," broke in Lafayette, "a brigadier in the army of the king of France and aid to the Marechal Duke de Broglie."

But Major Huger had ears but for one part of this introduction. Already the news of the young Frenchnobleman's determination to fight for American liberty had crossed the Atlantic.

"The Marquis de Lafayette!" he exclaimed, grasping the young man by both hands. "Sir, my house is honored by your presence; sir, we have heard of you – who has not? Sir, command me in anything and everything. I will see to your pilot, your vessel, your friends. Oblige me by resting here tonight and in the morning all things shall be arranged. Francis, escort the marquis to the dining-room; this is my son, gentlemen, Francis Kinloch Huger, and proud he is to welcome those who sacrifice time and ease to fight for the liberty

of his native land. Gentlemen, be seated. Here, Hector, Pompey, take these gentlemen's wraps; stir yourselves! Gentlemen, your healths!"

"And that of the Cause!" responded the Baron de Kalb. And so in the midst of generous hospitality, with a blessed night's sleep in a "Christian bed" for the first time in eight weeks, Lafayette passed his first night in America.

As for Francis Kinloch Huger, that small boy was captivated by the young Frenchman. He became a hero-worshipper, at once, and his dreams that night were full of the boy marquis. It was a hero-worship that was not to cease with that midnight reception on a Carolina sea island; for that boy's life was to be strongly and romantically mingled, in later years, with that of the noble Marquis de Lafayette, who on a June night in 1777 had taken this boy's house by storm and, after months of anxiety and adventure, had, at last, safely landed on the shores of America.

Chapter 5

How the Marquis Conquered Congress

A GOOD night's sleep greatly refreshed and strengthened the weary, ship-worn marquis, for, like any young fellow of nineteen, he recovered quickly from fatigue and privation; and, besides, he was in America. He had, as he expressed it, "retired to rest rejoiced that he had at last attained the haven of his wishes and was safely landed in America beyond the reach of his pursuers."

He had not yet attained the end of his mission, – the command of a major-general in the American army. That, however, he felt was only a matter of time. With his letters of introduction and the contract he had made with Mr. Deane he was confident he had only to present himself before the American Congress to be received as cordially and welcomed as enthusiastically as he had been greeted and "made at home" by Major Huger, in that comfortable Southern seashore mansion.

So he sank to sleep contentedly, and when he awoke in the morning he was in a blissful state of mind.

As, years after, he recalled that first morning in America, he still spoke with all the enthusiasm of the homesick, seasick boy who had been made to feel that he was a welcome and honored guest.

"The next morning," he said, "was beautiful. The novelty of everything around me, the room, the bed with its mosquito curtains, the black servants who came to ask my wishes, the beauty and strange appearance of the country as I could see it from my window clothed in luxuriant verdure, – all conspired to produce upon me an effect like magic and to impress me with indescribable sensations."

His comrades in the yawl had been hunted up and brought to the house; a pilot had been sent to the "Victory," and, in fact, everything hospitable and helpful was so cheerfully done by Major Huger and his family that, as Lafayette wrote his wife, "the manners of this people are simple, honest, and dignified. The wish to oblige, the love of country, and freedom reign here together in sweet equality. All citizens are brothers. They belong to a country where every cranny resounds with the lovely name of Liberty. My sympathy with them makes me feel as if I had been here for twenty years."

Everything, you see, was delightful at the start, and this enthusiastic French boy felt sure there would be

for him, everywhere in America, a repetition of the South Carolina welcome. So, in confidence and anticipation, in high hopes and higher spirits, he set out for the long journey to Philadelphia, where the American Congress was in session.



THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE
As he looked upon his first coming to America.

He was to go by land this time. He and his comrades had experienced quite enough of ship life and preferred to trust to the uncertainties of colonial country roads. Besides, the "Victory" was "in limbo," as the saying is. For when the pilot sent by Major Huger reported that there was not sufficient depth of water for the ship in Georgetown Bay, Lafayette sent the "Victory," in charge of the pilot, around to Charleston. But when he heard of the activity and watchfulness of the British cruisers he hurried a message to the captain, bidding him run the "Victory" ashore and burn her rather than let the British capture her. The captain, however,

remembered his cargo and his own little venture; he decided to run the risk, and, thanks to a favoring wind, the "Victory" escaped the cruisers and, as he reported, "sailed into Charles Town harbor in broad daylight without seeing either friends or enemies."

Thereupon Lafayette and De Kalb, mounted on the only horses Major Huger could spare or find in that uninhabited seaside section, set out for Charleston, while the other Frenchmen trudged along on foot. And when they had reached that famous and hospitable old Carolina town a cordial welcome was extended them. Lafayette, as one of his companions says, was received "with all the honors due to a Marshal of France."

Do you wonder that this young Frenchman felt very much "set up" and elated?

The Marquis de Lafayette was, however, a shrewd young man, even if he was an enthusiastic one. For, even in those days the interviewer was in the land; but Lafayette refused to be interviewed.

"I have every reason to feel highly gratified at my reception in Charleston," he wrote his wife, "but I have not yet explained my plans to any one. I judge it best to wait until I have presented myself to the Congress before making a statement as to the projects I have in view."

He wished to be off on this journey to Congress as speedily as possible. So he proceeded to dispose of the "Victory" and her cargo in order to obtain the

necessary money for his own and his comrades' expenses and support.

But when he attempted to do this he found the French merchants who had sold him the ship and the French captain who sailed her had so tied him up with agreements and provisos and commissions (all of which he had signed at Bordeaux without realizing what he was doing, because he was in such a hurry to be off) that, instead of having any money coming to him, he was actually in debt, and he had to go to work trying to borrow enough money in Charleston to get away from town. All of which goes to prove that even enthusiasm should not blind people to understand just what they are signing, and that it is always best, for young and old alike, to look before they leap. And yet, on the other hand, if Lafayette had not taken his leap, regardless of consequences, where would have been one of the most romantic and inspiring episodes in American history, which we of today never tire of reading and applauding?

Just at that time, however, it must be confessed that the American Congress and the American commander-in-chief were very, very tired of this particular kind of romance. The American colonies had risen in rebellion against the king of England; they had organized revolution and had declared themselves free and independent states; they welcomed every expression of friendliness and sympathy from European nations, and were working hard to secure

recognition and assistance at foreign courts. But the American people had raised and officered their own army. They had placed at the head of it a great and capable commander, and had associated with him, as leaders and officers, those of their own countrymen who seemed best fitted to the tasks of leadership as generals, colonels, and captains.

But as the war with England progressed, there came to America swarms of European soldiers – French, Spanish, German, Dutch, Polish, and Italian – who, because they were experienced soldiers, counted their services far ahead of those of the American "peasants," and demanded high offices in the American army, from commander-in-chief to colonel and captain. These foreign volunteers were so many and so persistent that the American Congress grew just a bit tired of the assumption and demands of these adventurers, who were out for money rather than to show their sympathy, and who, also, almost insisted upon telling the American Congress just what it should do.

A regiment of colonels and an army of major-generals can do very little real fighting, and, as none of these foreign officers would put up with anything less than the highest rank, Congress, preferring first to recognize able and earnest Americans, found itself simply flooded with requests it could not grant, while General Washington himself protested in vigorous language.

"Their ignorance of our language and their inability to recruit men," he wrote to the president of Congress in February, 1777, "are insurmountable obstacles to their being ingrafted into our continental battalions; for our officers, who have raised their men, and have served through the war upon pay that has hitherto not borne their expenses, would be disgusted if foreigners were put over their heads; and I assure you, few or none of these gentlemen look lower than field officers' commissions. To give them all brevets, by which they have rank, and draw pay without doing any service, is saddling the continent with vast expense; and to form them into corps would be only establishing corps of officers; for, as I have said before, they cannot possibly raise any men."

So, you see, with the Congress and the commander-in-chief set against this rush of overzealous and self-seeking foreigners (mostly from France) in a scramble for commanding positions in the American army, the outlook was not so bright nor so promising as Lafayette and De Kalb and their companions anticipated. Evidently, too, the aspiring Duke de Broglie was to get a "set-back."

But, equipping his expedition with the money he had borrowed in Charleston, Lafayette and his "caravan," as he called it, certain that recognition and position awaited them, started from Charleston on the twenty-fifth of June, 1777, headed for Philadelphia and Congress.

The "caravan," indeed, was quite like a procession. At the head rode one of Lafayette's men dressed in the uniform of a French hussar, and behind him rode the marquis and Baron de Kalb in a queer, old-fashioned open carriage with a front seat for the driver, while at Lafayette's wheel rode his body servant, valet, or "squire." Next came a one-horse chaise with two colonels, Lafayette's "chief counsellors" then followed another with more French officers, then the baggage, and bringing up the rear, a Negro on horseback.

From Charleston to Philadelphia in June is a hot ride even in a parlor-car: in open carriages it is still worse; while, over the dreadful clearings called "roads" in 1777, the journey was one long series of accidents and discomforts. Their guide proved no guide at all. In four days their carriages were jolted into splinters; their horses went lame or broke down altogether; much of their baggage had to be left behind, and what they took with them was mostly stolen before the journey ended. They spent all their money for fresh horses and other wagons, and the necessaries of life, and even then, because of the dreadful roads, most of the journey was made on foot, while the poor Frenchmen, sick, weary, and hungry, sleeping in the woods, and worn down by the hardships and hot weather, would have begun to doubt whether American liberty was really worth all it was costing them, had not Lafayette, hopeful and enthusiastic in spite of all privations and misadventures, kept up their spirits, cheerfully shared

all their trials, and held ever before them the reception and appreciation they were certain to find in Philadelphia.

"You have heard," he wrote to his wife, "how brilliantly I started out in a carriage. I have to inform you" (this was written from Petersburg in Virginia) "that we are now on horseback after having broken the wagons in my usual praiseworthy fashion, and I expect to write you before long that we have reached our destination on foot."

On the twenty-seventh of July, after a tedious and disastrous journey of nine hundred miles in thirty-two days, Lafayette and his travel-stained company entered Philadelphia – "in a pitiable condition," one of his comrades declared. But they supposed now that all their troubles were over; so, after "brushing themselves up," and making themselves presentable, they proceeded to wait upon the president of Congress with their letters of introduction and their contracts with Mr. Deane.

Now the president of the American Congress at that time was Mr. John Hancock, of Massachusetts, a patriot of prominence and integrity, with a very bold signature, and a very high opinion of the Honorable John Hancock, president of Congress. He felt himself to be the chief man in all America; he set up a great show of state and dignity, for all of which he uncomplainingly paid out of his own pocket, and he

demanded, as his right, the proper amount of recognition and respect.

Whether or not he had received and read Franklin's flattering introduction of Lafayette, it is certain that he did not fully appreciate the meaning or the extent of the young Frenchman's sacrifices in behalf of American liberty. He merely looked upon Lafayette and his companions as another "batch" of adventurous Frenchmen looking for a job, and at once, with scarcely a word of welcome, he referred them to Gouverneur Morris, the chairman of the committee "who," so he told Lafayette, "had such matters in charge."

To Mr. Morris, also a man with whom the later story of Lafayette's life was to be singularly connected, this travel-stained band of place-seeking Frenchmen seemed no different from any of the other appointment-hunting foreigners, whom no one wanted, and who simply hung about Congress as suppliants who soon "wore their welcome out."

So Mr. Morris told the marquis and the baron to call again.

"Meet me tomorrow, gentlemen, at the door of the Congress," he said. "Meantime I will examine your papers and see what we can do for you."

The next day the marquis and the baron were "at the door of the Congress," exactly on time. But Mr. Morris was not. Instead, he kept them waiting a long time, fretting at this unexpected coolness and delay.

At last he came out to them with another gentleman whom he introduced as Mr. Lovell, and who, he told them, was "intrusted with the matters that concern people of your nationality. Hereafter, please communicate with him." And then Mr. Morris left them still waiting in the street, at the door of the Congress.

Mr. Lovell was a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and evidently he counted the marquis and the baron and the gentlemen who accompanied them simply as "foreign affairs." But he spoke French well, and he at once "got down to business." "Gentlemen," he said, not inviting them into the building, but talking to them in the street, "like a set of adventurers," as one of the French officers indignantly declared, "you say you have authority from Mr. Deane?"

"Certainly, sir," replied De Kalb, "as our contracts show."

"This is most annoying," said Mr. Lovell. "We authorized Mr. Deane to send us four French engineers; instead, he sent us some engineers who are no engineers, and some artillerists who have never seen service. We instructed Mr. Franklin to send us four engineers, and he has now sent them. There seems to be nothing for you to do here, gentlemen. French officers seem to have taken a great fancy to enter our service without being invited. It is true we were in need

of a few experienced officers last year, but now we have plenty of experienced men, and can promise no more positions. Gentlemen, I wish you good morning."

Here was a sad ending to all their high hopes and anticipations. Mr. Lovell's curt announcement ("more like a dismissal than a welcome," so Lafayette declared) fell like a wet blanket on all their schemes and desires.

"But, sir," began the baron, recovering first from the shock of refusal, "Mr. Deane promised – "

"Oh, Mr. Deane, Mr. Deane!" petulantly exclaimed the member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. "Mr. Deane has exceeded his authority, sir. Mr. Deane has promised too much and we cannot recognize his authority. We have not even a colonel's commission to give away to any foreign officer; certainly, not a major-general's. The Congress is sorely tried by these demands, and General Washington declares that he is haunted and teased to death by the importunity of some and the dissatisfaction of others. Gentlemen, I am sorry to disappoint you, but I must. We can provide nothing and promise nothing. Again I bid you good morning." And then he, too, left them on the street.

The Frenchmen looked at one another in speechless astonishment and dismay. Then their indignation burst out in a torrent of French expressions.

"Ah! these Americans; these ingrates!" cried one. "What do they mean? After all we have suffered for

their cause, who could expect such a reception as this? Who would think it possible that the Marquis de Lafayette and the Baron de Kalb and the French officers, recommended as we have been, and secretly approved, if not openly avowed, by the government of France, could be so thrust aside as mere adventurers? Ah, it is brutal. These Americans indeed are peasants."

"He says some of our compatriots have proved worthless and that the Congress is besieged by adventurers," exclaimed another. "Can he not tell the difference between those low fellows and a gentleman like the Marquis de Lafayette and like us? Bah! the stupids!"

"Are my name, my person, or my services proper objects to be thus trifled with or laughed at?" demanded the angry baron, who felt himself to be really the most important personage in the party. "It is ridiculous, gentlemen, that officers like ourselves should leave our homes and families and affairs to cross the sea under a thousand different dangers, only to be received and looked upon with contempt by those from whom we expected but the warmest thanks. Oh, it is not to be borne. I will take action against Deane and his successors. I will have heavy damages for this indignity."

But the young marquis said, thoughtfully, "Let us not talk of damages, my friend; let us talk of doing. Surely, the Congress did not solicit us to leave our

homes and cross the seas to lead its army. But I for one will not go back. If the Congress will not accept me as a major general, behold! I will fight for American liberty as a volunteer."

And that, indeed, was precisely what the wilful but wise young Frenchman proceeded to do. While his comrades fretted and fumed and grew still more indignant over their "turn down," as you boys of today would call it, the Marquis de Lafayette went to his lodgings and wrote a letter to the president of the Congress.

In this letter, after explaining why he came over, under what conditions and in spite of what discouragements, Lafayette insisted that Silas Deane's promise, Benjamin Franklin's endorsement, and his own sacrifices and desires should lead the Congress to recognize his claims and grant his request. He was, he declared, mindful of the embarrassments and distresses of the Congress, and he had no desire to increase them, but in proof of his earnestness and determination to be of service to America, he begged, while insisting that his sacrifices already made for the cause should be acknowledged, to ask but two favors at the hands of Congress: "First, that I serve without pay and at my own expense; and, the other, that I be allowed to serve at first as a volunteer."

This proposition quite took away the breath of the Honorable John Hancock, president of the Congress,

and his associates. The main difficulty with which they had to wrestle was that of money; so, when a young French officer of high station, wealth, and refinement was so deeply in sympathy with their cause as to offer to serve in the American army as an unpaid volunteer, their opinion of him was changed at once.

They turned again to the letter from Doctor Franklin recommending him to their consideration.

"Those who censure him as imprudent," Franklin had written, "do nevertheless applaud his spirit, and we are satisfied that the civilities and respect that may be shown him will be serviceable to our affairs here, as pleasing not only to his powerful relations and to the court, but to the whole French nation."

The president of Congress was a man impressed by just such things, and he began to feel that he had been rather discourteous to this highly connected young Frenchman who now made so generous an offer of his services and his life. His request was certainly vastly different from that of the other foreign officers and gentlemen who sought service in the American army for their own selfish interests and advancement. So another member of Congress, neither so bluff nor so brusque as Mr. Morris or Mr. Lovell, was sent to Lafayette with a sort of apology, and, in a private interview, tested the sincerity of his offer, and courteously but shrewdly sounded the young fellow as

to the full extent of his desires, his influence, and his enthusiasm.

As a result of all this private conference and favorable report, the Congress of the United States on the thirty-first day of July, 1777, passed the following resolution: "Whereas, the Marquis de Lafayette, out of his great zeal to the cause of liberty, in which the United States are engaged, has left his family and connections, and, at his own expense, come over to offer his services to the United States, without pension or particular allowance, and is anxious to risk his life in our cause, therefore Resolved that his services be accepted, and that, in consideration of his zeal, illustrious family, and connections, he have the rank and commission of major general in the army of the United States."

Thus, after all, you see, this persistent French boy had his way. He had conquered the American Congress; he was a major-general at nineteen; he was to be permitted to realize one of his earliest dreams and controlling ambitions, – to help on the progress of the world, to fight for the liberty of a nation and the freedom of man.

Chapter 6

How He Won the Commander-In-Chief

Thoughtfulness and generosity are among the things that make people lovable and popular, and they were very prominent traits in the character of the young Marquis de Lafayette.

He had obtained his desires; but he did not say, as successful people too often do, "Well! I'm all right, anyhow," and go off and forget all about his companions.

Instead of this, he wrote to the president of the Congress a queer but careful letter in English, which you may see today in the State Department in Washington, in which, while thanking "the Honorable mr. Hancok," as he spelled it, and the Congress for accepting his services, he added this sentence – excellently expressed and capitally written (even though lacking in capitals) for one who had such brief experience in speaking and writing English: "it is now as an american that I'l mention every day to congress the officers who came over with me, whose interests

are for me as my own, and the consideration which they deserve by their merits, their ranks, their state and reputation in france."

He kept his promise with unfailing zeal.

"He did everything that was possible for our appointment," one of his French soldier companions said, "but in vain, for he had no influence. But if he had his way, De Kalb would have been major general and we should all have had places."

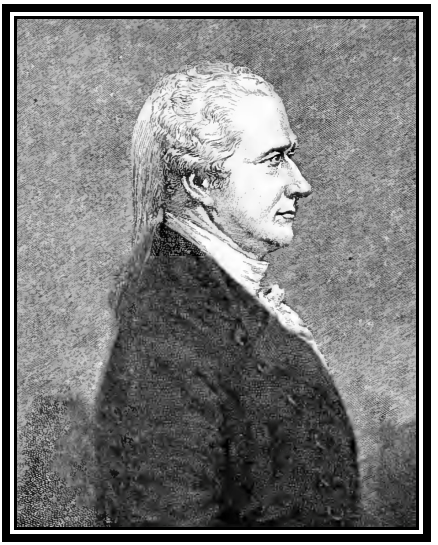
So, you see, it was not through any lack of Lafayette's interest that the French officers met final disappointment, as unfortunately they did. Congress was simply unable to give them commissions or places. But it paid their expenses back to France, where most of them bitterly complained of the "ingratitude" of the Americans. One of them, however, the Dutch deserter from the British army, Captain de Bedaulx, who was a veteran soldier, and who, you remember, was pledged with Lafayette to blow up the "Victory" rather than be captured, was made a captain in the American army; two others were retained by Lafayette as aides-decamp, and one was engaged by Congress as draughtsman and engineer. As for Baron de Kalb, who had come over, as you remember, with the secret intention of "working" Congress to make his patron, the Count de Broglie, "Generalissimo of the American armies,"he soon saw how impossible and ridiculous a scheme that was; indeed, he very nearly lost the opportunity of finding

service himself in the army. He had finally given up his endeavors, although Lafayette did not, and was actually on his way to take the first ship home when a messenger from Congress came galloping after him, caught up with him at Bethlehem in Pennsylvania, and there turned him back with the announcement that Congress, having to ballot for one more major general in the army of the United States, had elected the Baron de Kalb.

As for the Marquis de Lafayette, he had, in his letter of thanks to Hancock, expressed the wish to serve "near the person of General Washington till such time as he may think proper to entrust me with a division of the army."

George Washington, generalissimo and commander-in-chief of the American army, was very fond of bright young men. He was what is called an optimist, looking on the bright side of things even when they appeared to have no bright side, and he saw that young men were best for action and achievement. But they must be bright young men; he could stand no dullards or drones about him; neither could he put up with what you would call "fresh" and self-important young fellows who "knew it all." He demanded implicit obedience and willing service, and, while he was ready to listen to all suggestions from his subordinates, young and old alike, he desired no one to act upon any scheme or plan without his approval; for the hasty and unsupported act of one overzealous or hot-headed

youth might disarrange all the deeply studied and carefully matured plans of the commander-in-chief. He had far too many experiences of this sort during the trying times of the American Revolution.

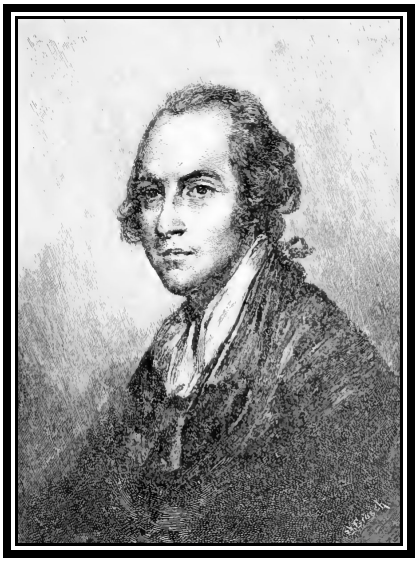


ALEXANDER HAMILTON.
A young man whom Washington liked.

With this attitude toward the young men who flocked to his service, Washington, who was a keen-eyed and perfect reader of character, saw through the shallowness or recognized the worth of the earnest, active young men about him. That is why he disliked Aaron Burr and why he liked Alexander Hamilton, both of whom served him as aids; and it was near to this man, already a hero to his hero-worshipping soul, that the young Marquis de Lafayette desired speedy service.

It was a serious time in the affairs of the struggling republic, fighting for existence, when Lafayette sought service in its army. Defeated at Long Island, driven across New Jersey, Washington had triumphed in his

brilliant Christmas dash on Trenton, and, though apparently defeated at Princeton, had held his army and secured the advantage of a stubbornly-won foothold from which he could annoy and menace the British commander.



AARON BURR.
A young man whom Washington distrusted.

And this, when Lafayette sought him out, he was doing, with a volunteer army, short of arms, short of supplies, insufficiently clothed and always hungry, an army wanting in all things save courage, lacking in everything but leadership, secure in nothing save the justice of their cause, the integrity of their commander, and their own persistent devotion to the cause of liberty.

It was at the moment when all things combined to darken the prospect of success, when Burgoyne was marching from Canada for the invasion of New York and the capture of the valley of the Hudson; when Howe was threatening Philadelphia and preparing to join Burgoyne and "stamp out" the rebellion, that

Lafayette was invited to a dinner in Philadelphia "to meet the commander-in-chief."

Washington, as you know, was not favorable to these foreign major-generals; he held that it was an injustice to those devoted and able American officers whom he had tried alike in success and in defeat, to push ahead of them foreigners who, he feared, joined the American army only for their own selfish aims and desires.

"These men," he said, "have no attachment nor ties to the country further than interest binds them; they have no influence, and are ignorant of the language they are to receive and give orders in; consequently, great trouble or much confusion must follow. But this is not the worst: they have not the smallest chance to recruit others, and our officers think it exceedingly hard, after they have toiled in this service and probably have sustained many losses, to have strangers put over them, whose merit perhaps is not equal to their own, but whose effrontery will take no denial." Feeling thus, you see, Washington was not especially anxious for the services of a young French nobleman who was scarcely more than a boy, who had run away from home to join the American army which he could neither benefit by his influence nor increase by recruiting men; who had been forced to borrow money to join the army, and had brought with him from France (for the cargo of the "Victory" had been seized and sold by the captain) only a number of undesired French officers who

clamored for rank and pay and had to be returned to their homes by the Congress at its own unnecessary expense.

Still, Washington did admire pluck and persistence; and when he learned how Lafayette had persisted in his plans, demanding finally to be allowed to serve as an unpaid volunteer, his interest in the young man was awakened. Perhaps when he learned of Lafayette's refusal to receive pay for his services, he saw in the young Frenchman's character the true gold of sincerity and principle; for, you know, Washington's one stipulation when he accepted the position of commander-in-chief was that he should be permitted to serve without salary; and his final account of expenses, presented at the close of the war, furnished, so says Irving, "many noble and impressive lessons taught by his character and example."

You can see, therefore, that, in spite of his objection to foreign officers, Washington recognized in Lafayette an exceptional and worthy young man, who was ready to back up his convictions by his actions; when, therefore, he learned that the young Frenchman was to be at the dinner in Philadelphia, he felt a curiosity to meet him.

As for Lafayette, his eyes were anxiously open for the first sight of the American commander; his desire was soon gratified, and the meeting proved to be, indeed, almost a case of "love at first sight."

"Although General Washington was surrounded by officers and private citizens," the marquis wrote afterwards in his memoirs, "the majesty of his countenance and of his figure made it impossible not to recognize him; he was especially distinguished also by the affability of his manners and the dignity with which he addressed those about him."

Lafayette was duly presented to the commander-in-chief by one of his new friends of the Congress, with a flattering introduction as "the young French nobleman who had given up everything to serve the American cause." The great man gave the French lad a cordial hand-clasp, and, looking straight into the young fellow's honest and expressive eyes, seems to have read the desire, sincerity, and integrity that lived in the young Frenchman's soul.

Washington must have studied him, too, in his quiet, searching way. For, after the dinner, he took Lafayette aside and in kind and appreciative words told the young man how highly he regarded his spirit and actions.

"You have made the greatest sacrifices for our cause, my dear marquis," he said; "your zeal and generosity interest me deeply, and I shall do my part toward making you one of us. I shall be greatly pleased to have you join my staff as a volunteer aid, and beg you to make my headquarters your home, until events place you elsewhere. I beg you to consider yourself at

all times as one of my military family, and I shall be pleased to welcome you at the camp as speedily as you think proper. Of course, you will understand, my dear marquis, that I cannot promise you the luxuries of a court," and Washington smiled as he thought of the meagerly supplied and poorly conditioned camp of the American army at Schuylkill Falls, – "but," he added, with another of his kindly smiles, "as you have now become an American soldier, you will doubtless accommodate yourself to the fare of an American army, and submit with a good grace to its customs, manners, and privations."

It needed not Lafayette's halting and broken English speech to put into words his happiness at this gracious reception and his immediate affection for the American commander. His eyes, his whole face, usually so quiet and unmoved, displayed his feeling, and told the story of his pleasure. And when, next day, Washington invited the young Frenchman to accompany him on a visit of inspection of the fortifications which were relied upon to defend Philadelphia against the anticipated approach of the British fleet, the regard on both sides became mutual. Washington had shown his most kindly and gracious side to the young stranger from France, and had entirely captivated him; while Lafayette, by his modesty, interest, enthusiasm, and sincerity, had quite won the affection of the commander-in-chief. Upon that last day of July, in the year 1777, was begun

another of the world's beautiful and historic friendships, which continued steadfast and unbroken until the death of the great American changed the noble Frenchman's friendship into reverence and devotion.

The American army, early in August, 1777, began its march from the vicinity of Philadelphia to the eastward to cut off any British move about New York; but on the news that the British fleet was hovering off the Delaware coast, Washington, alert but uncertain just what his opponent intended to do, suddenly halted in his march to the eastward and went into camp along one of the few highways of that day, known as the old York Road, near to the present village of Hartsville in Buck's County, Pennsylvania.

It was here that, on the twenty-first of August, 1777, Lafayette joined the American army. Washington expected his arrival, for the young marquis had sent on his servant and his horses in advance; but the commander-in-chief was not a little perplexed just how he was to arrange with this boy major general who was major general only in name, because of his appointment by Congress without occupation or command.

General Washington was a very particular man, and what is called "methodical" in all his plans and actions. He liked the young marquis personally and, as we have seen, was strongly attached to him; but, with the

commander-in-chief, "business was business," and just what Lafayette's "business "really was he did not know.

"As I understand the Marquis de Lafayette," he wrote to Benjamin Harrison, member of Congress, signer of the Declaration of Independence, father and great-grandfather of two future Presidents of the United States, "it is certain that he does not conceive that his commission is merely honorary, but is given with a view to command a division of this army. It is true he has said that he is young and inexperienced; but at the same time he has always accompanied it with a hint that, so soon as I shall think him fit for the command of a division, he shall be ready to enter upon his duties, and in the meantime has offered his services for a smaller command. What the designs of Congress respecting this gentleman were, and what line of conduct I am to pursue to comply with their design and his expectations, I know not and beg to be instructed. . . . Let me beseech you, my good sir, to give me the sentiments of Congress on this matter, that I may endeavor, as far as it is in my power, to comply with them."

To this query Mr. Harrison replied that Lafayette's appointment was merely an honorary one, and that General Washington was to act as he thought best.

Washington greeted the young man cordially and frankly, and, knowing the almost destitute condition in which the American army really was, he said to the

newcomer, as if apologizing for the unmilitary appearance of the soldiers of liberty, "It is somewhat embarrassing to us, sir, to show ourselves to an officer who has just come from the army of France."



WHERE LAFAYETTE JOINED THE ARMY.
On the banks of Neshaminy Creek, near Hartsville, Pennsylvania.

Others of the foreign soldiers who had come to America to seek service and command were very critical and superior in their attitude, and would have replied to such a remark in a patronizing or self-glorifying way. But Lafayette was not of this character.

"I am here, your Excellency, to learn and not to teach," he replied, modestly.

This wise young Frenchman could always be relied upon to say just the right thing. It was one of the traits of his whole career, and in this instance it won for him the admiration, respect, and appreciation of the American general. Washington felt that here was a young fellow whom it would pay to cultivate, and at once he invited him to attend, as a major general in the American service, a council of war at headquarters, to which the commander had just summoned his general officers. So, you see, part of what he had prophesied to his wife did really come true, at once.

The council decided that if the British were aiming to invade the Carolinas it was useless to follow them to the South, but that the army might better occupy the valley of the Hudson and perhaps recapture New York. But, just then, word came that the British fleet was in Chesapeake Bay and, at once, General Washington decided to move his army to the south of Philadelphia and make a stand for the defence of that threatened city.

The American army was indeed a vastly different body of men from the gorgeous grenadiers of France, and from those Musketeers of the King in which Lafayette had held a command. As the young French soldier first saw our patriot army it comprised, so he said, "about eleven thousand men, rather poorly armed and much worse clad, who presented a singular appearance. In the midst of a great variety of clothing, sometimes even of nakedness, the best garments were

a sort of hunting shirts, loose jackets made of linen. ... In spite of their disadvantages, however, they were fine soldiers, led by zealous officers. Bravery took the place with them of science, and every day improved their experience and discipline."

In the march through Philadelphia, for which the ragged army "spruced up" as much as possible, and, with sprigs of green in their hats, stepped off to the music of the fife and drum, they presented, so the marquis declared, "a creditable appearance." Lafayette rode by the side of Washington and really begun to feel that he was to see service at last.

His "service" came speedily. Landing at the head of eighteen thousand veteran British and Hessian troops near what is now Elkton in Maryland, General Howe, with Lord Cornwallis, and General Knyphausen the Hessian, advanced at once upon Philadelphia. To oppose his march, Washington with his illy prepared army took up a position on the ninth of September at Chadd's Ford on the Brandywine, a forked and shallow stream, hardly more than a creek, which winds in and out through sloping green fields, in a pleasant but then heavily wooded farming country hills on the right bank, meadows on the left.

Misled by confusing reports and by the approach of the British troops in two encircling columns, Washington was forced to divide his numbers, and therefore fought at great disadvantage. But though the

American advance was beaten back at the lower ford, and the right wing was only saved from panic by Washington's personal presence and will, the Battle of Brandywine was not the disastrous rout that Howe had planned it to be; for the Americans made a stubborn resistance, and at last, but only when darkness came, fell back in good order to Chester.

Two years ago I drove over that battlefield, now a peaceful and prosperous farming section, rich in Revolutionary memories. And there, on the ridge above the little village of Chadd's Ford, not far from the plain old Quaker church known as Birmingham meeting-house, I came upon a modest little monument of terra-cotta, erected, so the inscription told me, "by the citizens and school children of Chester County," because, "on the rising ground a short distance south of this spot, Lafayette was wounded at the Battle of Brandywine, September 11, 1777."

For there, even as the monument records, the young French marquis received his "baptism of fire." Riding into the action, upon his earnest solicitation, as a volunteer aid to General Sullivan he met the Hessian advance where, near the Birmingham meeting-house, it fell upon Sullivan's division, and, supported by Cornwallis's division, broke and shattered the American right. In the confusion and panic of this disaster, Lafayette threw himself from his horse, and, plunging into the panic, tried by sword and voice,

example and command, to change the American rout into a determined and victorious stand.

His valorous action checked the retreat for an instant; other troops came to his support, and the British advance was actually stayed for a moment. Then Cornwallis's brigades swept against the Americans in a resistless charge. Lafayette and his men could not withstand the shock of fresh troops and superior numbers; but the young Frenchman held his ground until the British were almost upon him, when he plunged into the woods to the south of the road, unconscious of the fact, in the excitement of the battle, that he had been wounded in the leg. They will show you that very spot in the woods at Chadd's Ford, today.

Even then he would not desert his column until night fell, and when, by Washington's supreme exertions, the outnumbered Americans had fallen back in good order to Chester. In that quaint old town on the Delaware, Lafayette had his wound dressed, and from there Washington, writing to Congress his account of the Battle of the Brandywine, took especial pleasure in mentioning the bravery and the ability of the Marquis de Lafayette.

The young Frenchman had indeed done gallant work in his first battle. He had well maintained the honor of the name of the Lafayettes as brave soldiers and daring fighters. His courage had sent him into the thick of the fight; his valor had stayed the rout, and

held the victorious foe in check; his discipline had brought some sort of order out of chaos and organized a systematic retirement toward Chester; and on Chester Bridge his waning strength had flamed out in a last determined union of wisdom and courage as he there stood against the retreat and held the fugitives in order until Washington came up with the rear-guard and saw the whole retreating army safe into Chester town. Then, at last, Lafayette thought of himself, and had his wound dressed.

In fact, like the noble young Prince Emilius of whom Miss Yonge has told us in her "Golden Deeds,"

"His valor shed victorious grace on all that dread retreat;" his daring and excellent leadership secured for him the affection of the rank and file of the American army; better still, his conduct and ability completely won the commander-in-chief, who, from that time, never questioned the sincerity, the courage, or the soldierly qualities of this valiant young French enthusiast who had crossed the seas to fight for the liberties of America.

"The honor to have mingled my blood with that of many other American soldiers on the heights of the Brandywine has been to me a source of pride and delight."

These are Lafayette's own words, engraved upon the modest monument erected to his memory on the field of his first battle, by the school-children to whom

he has ever been a young and dashing hero. And though that first battle was a defeat, it was, in reality, a victory; for while it simply strengthened determination in the defeated Americans, and made the British commander so overcautious that he became, finally, too cautious, and so lost his chance, it also, for Lafayette, gained the recognition of his associates and the affection of his followers, while, what was to him more than all, it won for him the respect and confidence of the great commander-in-chief.

Chapter 7

How He Fought for Liberty in America

The American defeat at the Battle of Brandywine meant the loss of Philadelphia. At once Congress fled from the threatened city and reassembled at York, one hundred miles to the west.

Lafayette, who had been taken with the wounded to Philadelphia, was sent up the Delaware River to Bristol, and from that town, Henry Laurens, that firm old patriot who, succeeding John Hancock, was at that time president of Congress, took the wounded marquis in his own travelling carriage, and rode away with him to the safe and healthful security of the Moravian community at Bethlehem, fifty miles north of Philadelphia.

This religious community of German and Austrian Puritans had, like the pilgrims of Plymouth, built, in 1741, on the banks of the Lehigh River, a refuge from persecution; and in this quiet community life, where all lived like one great family of brothers and sisters, Lafayette was nursed back to health and strength. The

only thing that delayed his speedy recovery was his anxiety to get back to the army. He reached the Old Sun Inn of Bethlehem on Sunday, the twenty-first of September; he left the community, healed, but with a wound which always affected his walk, on the eighteenth of October. But if his leg was disabled his mind was not; for he spent much of his time in planning what he would do when he was well, and dreaming of invasions and conquests which he would lead, with the help of France and for the benefit of America, into the East Indian and West Indian possessions of England.

Of course he wrote often to his wife, making light of "what I pompously call my wound," so he spoke of it to her.

"Be entirely free from anxiety as to my wound," one of his letters said, reassuringly; "for all the doctors in America are aroused in my behalf. I have a friend who has spoken for me in a way to ensure my being well taken care of; and that is General Washington. That estimable man, whose talents and whose virtues I admired before, whom I venerate the more now as I learn to know him, has been kind enough to me to become my intimate friend. His tender interest in me quickly won my heart. . . . When he sent his surgeon-in-chief to me, he directed him to care for me as I were his son, because he loved me so much; and having learned that I wanted to join the army too soon again,

he wrote me a letter full of tenderness in which he admonished me to wait until I should be entirely well."

The man who could display such a "tender interest" in a wounded young foreigner was just then having a hard time of it, what with the British, the foreign officers, and his own envious and critical countrymen. The British he could fight openly; and he did so, profiting by the defeats he suffered even as by the victories he won. But the grumblings and bickerings of the foreign officers, joined to the jealousies and plotting of envious and ambitious Americans, well-nigh ground that grand soul to despair, so wearing, so annoying, and so underhanded were they all.

"These people," wrote Baron de Kalb of the French officers in the army, "think of nothing but their incessant intrigues and backbitings. They hate each other like the bitterest enemies, and endeavor to injure each other whenever an opportunity offers. Lafayette is the sole exception. . . . Lafayette is much liked and is on the best of terms with Washington."

Lafayette himself, generous and kindly spirited though he was, made the same complaint. "All foreigners now employed here," he wrote, "are discontented and complaining. They are filled with hatred toward others and they are hated themselves. They cannot understand why I, of all the foreigners in America, should be well treated, whilst I do not understand why they should be disliked."

All this foreign place-hunting and jealousy annoyed Washington exceedingly and made him all the better satisfied with Lafayette, of whom he wrote to Congress, "his conduct stands in a favorable point of view. He is sensible, discreet in his manners, has made great proficiency in our language, and from the disposition he discovered at the Battle of Brandywine, possesses a large share of bravery and military ardor."

This bravery and military ardor the young Frenchman was to have renewed opportunities to display. In the last week of October, 1777, he rejoined Washington at headquarters at Methacton Hill, near the Schuylkill River. On the twenty-fifth of November, while accompanying General Greene as a volunteer to test the strength of the British advance from Philadelphia, he disclosed the British position near the town of Gloucester, and with a force of but three hundred and fifty men attacked and routed the Hessian advance with such spirit that Cornwallis supposed himself assailed by Greene's entire division, and with his five thousand men retreated in hot haste to the security of the main army.

This was really the first opportunity which Lafayette had to show his ability in leading men and in displaying what is called strategy and skill in attack. General Greene was so delighted with the success of his young volunteer aid that he wrote General Washington an account of the action, and added, "The marquis is charmed with the spirited behavior of the

militia and rifle corps. They drove the enemy above a mile and kept the ground until dark. . . , The marquis is determined to be in the way of danger."

This, you see, was quite a departure from the words the young Frenchman had written his wife, before he landed on American soil. A "major-general," indeed, could be in real danger, as he had again and again discovered.



GENERAL NATHANAEL GREENE, OF RHODE ISLAND.
The greatest soldier of the American Revolution next to Washington.

The affair at Gloucester was additional proof of the valor and wisdom of the young volunteer as a leader of American troops, and Washington was so strengthened and pleased by it that he at once wrote Congress asking that Lafayette be granted his desire. This was, as you know, an appointment to a regular command in the American army.

"There are now some vacant positions in the army," said Washington, "to one of which he may be appointed, if it should be the pleasure of Congress. I am convinced he possesses a large share of that military ardor that characterizes the nobility of his country."

Congress acted upon Washington's recommendation at once, voting that "the Marquis de Lafayette be appointed to the command of a division in the Continental Army," and on the fourth of December, 1777, Lafayette, to his great delight and to the satisfaction of all those who had learned to respect and love this ardent and active young Frenchman, was assigned to the command of the Virginia division, – a major general in actual and active command at twenty!

"At last," he wrote to his father-in-law, the Duke d'Ayen, who had tried so hard to keep him away from America, "I have what I have always wished for, – the command of a division. It is weak in point of numbers; it is almost naked, and I must make both clothes and recruits; but I read, I study, I examine, I listen, I reflect, and upon the result of all this I make an effort to form my opinion and to put it into as much common sense as I can, ... for I do not want to disappoint the confidence that the Americans have so kindly placed in me."

He did not. Amid the hardships and rigors of that woeful winter at Valley Forge, this wealthy and tenderly reared young nobleman set his own suffering

men the example of devotion, frugality, self-denial, and courage under privation; and when, in the midst of all this struggle for existence, that miserable combination of jealous officers, self-seeking foreigners, and fault-finding Congressmen, uniting in what is known in American history as the miserable and treacherous "Conway Cabal," sought to force Washington from the chief command and to use Lafayette as a catspaw, the wise and chivalrous young Frenchman divined their purpose and remained loyal and brave in support of his beloved commander.

Congress, at the instigation of these conspirators, determined upon an invasion of Canada, the command of which was to be given to Lafayette. This was deliberately planned to separate him from Washington's influence. But the marquis refused to lead except under the orders of Washington as commander-in-chief, and with De Kalb as his second in command. He so insisted upon these points that Congress yielded to his demands. The conspirators who hoped, by detaching Lafayette from Washington, to win him to their side and strengthen their plans, were dismayed and cornered, and the conspiracy, punctured by one quick, calm, significant stab from Washington, fell harmless to the ground, with the chief plotters almost falling over each other in their haste to ask Washington's pardon and cry "it wasn't my fault."

And almost the first blow given to the hateful conspiracy was when Lafayette was invited to York to

meet the generals and Congressmen interested in the Canadian invasion but, really, the leaders of the plot against Washington.

At that dinner, given in his honor, Lafayette, as I have told you, refused to lead except as a subordinate to Washington, and unless De Kalb, his own and Washington's friend, was made his right-hand man. This quite upset the "Cabal;" but when, rising in his place, Lafayette lifted his glass and proposed a toast which all, he said, would of course drink with enthusiasm and love: "The health of George Washington, our noble commander-in-chief!" the dismayed conspirators were altogether "rattled," as we say, and had no alternative except to drink the toast in silence and in shame. Thus they were convicted in their own assembly by this wise young Frenchman who had so skillfully turned the tables upon them.

But the invasion of Canada, being officially ordered by Congress, had to be attempted, even though the plots of the conspirators who planned it had all gone wrong. So, elated with the fact that one of his dreams was about to come true, and that the chief French-speaking possession of England was to be wrested from her under his direction and by his campaign, Lafayette set out for Albany in February, 1778, to take command of the army of invasion that was gathering there.

The army of invasion, however, proved to be no army at all. The plans were all in the air, and the Board of War appointed by Congress (really the chief men of the Conway Cabal), had done nothing at all. Lafayette was greatly disappointed. He tried to recruit some sort of an army. Twelve hundred ill-conditioned and unprepared men were all he could get together, and, at last, the loudly announced "invasion of Canada" fell through entirely, and Lafayette went back to Valley Forge, disappointed, disgusted, and more firmly convinced than ever that upon George Washington depended all the hopes of America.

"Take away for an instant," he wrote to Washington, "that modest diffidence of yourself (which, pardon my freedom, my dear general, is sometimes too great, and I wish you could know, as well as myself, what difference there is between you and any other man), and you would see very plainly that, if you were lost for America, there is no one who could keep the army and the revolution for six months. ... I am now fixed to your fate, and I shall follow it and sustain it as well by my sword as by all means in my power. You will pardon my importunity in favor of the sentiment which dictated it."

"However sensibly your ardor for glory may make you feel this disappointment," said Washington to him, after the Canadian failure, "you may be assured that your character stands as fair as it ever did, and that no

new enterprise is necessary to wipe off an imaginary stain."

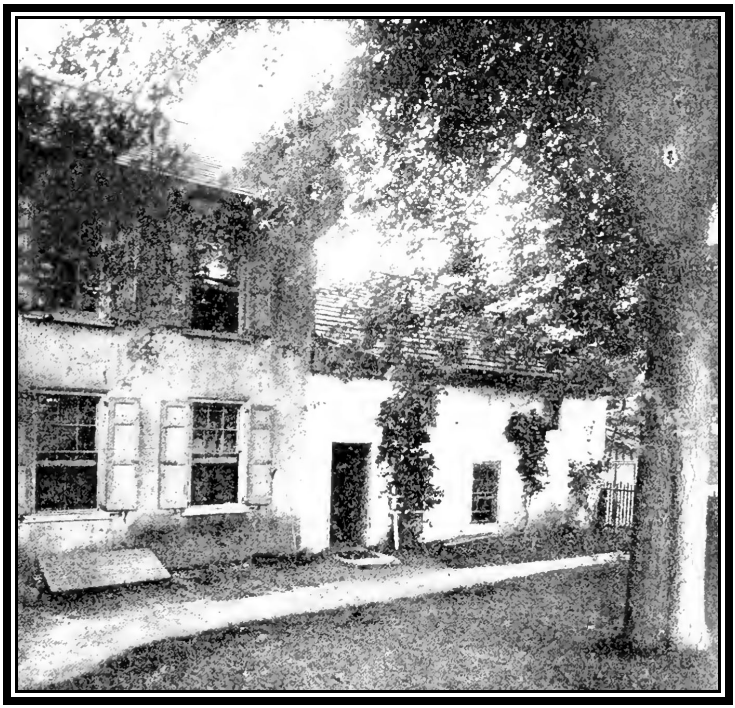
Congress was quick now to follow the lead of Washington. It voted that it entertained "a high sense of the prudence, activity, and zeal of the Marquis de Lafayette," and that it was "fully persuaded nothing has, or would have been, wanting on his part or on the part of the officers who accompanied him to give the expedition the utmost possible effect."

So Lafayette went back to Valley Forge, and there his own disappointment was soon turned to joy as the tidings came, early in May, 1778, that, thanks to Franklin's wise exertions and his own strong letters and appeals, the French nation had determined upon "armed interference" in the affairs of America, and that a "treaty of commerce and alliance" had been signed between the United States of America and the king of France.

Valley Forge went wild with rejoicing, and so did Lafayette. Washington announced a holiday and held a grand review; but, in the midst of it all, he had in contemplation a sudden and vigorous movement to delay or defeat the operations which he felt certain the British commander would put on foot.

He was quite correct in this. For the British, fearing French as well as American attack, speedily decided to give up Philadelphia and fall back upon New York,

which they would make the centre of their power in America.



LAFAYETTE'S HEADQUARTERS AT VALLEY FORGE.
From a recent photograph.

Washington was certain of this almost as soon as it was determined upon. So, to keep a check upon the movements of the British army, he sent a strong force under the command of Lafayette to get as near to the

British lines as possible in order to watch, disturb, and annoy the enemy.

Lafayette, proud of the confidence thus placed in him by Washington, led his command of two thousand picked men from the camp at Valley Forge to a dry ridge overlooking the Schuylkill. This was called Barren Hill. It was three miles to the east of the present town of Conshohocken and about nine miles from Philadelphia. It was a well-chosen point, for it overlooked both the river and the Philadelphia highway, and Lafayette proceeded to protect and fortify his camp.

But the British generals, when told of this encampment of Lafayette, felt sure that they now had this "hot-headed French boy" in their grasp; and, knowing that Lafayette's capture would have great weight in Europe, they prepared to first defeat and then capture him. Indeed, Generals Howe and Clinton were so certain of success that they issued invitations to their especial friends in Philadelphia to dine with them at headquarters next day "to meet Monsieur the Marquis de Lafayette."

So, on the morning of the twentieth of May, 1778, eight thousand British and Hessian troops with fifteen pieces of artillery marched out of Philadelphia by one road to take Lafayette in the rear; by another road, a column of grenadiers and cavalry marched to attack his right, while a third column, led by Generals Howe and

Clinton in person, with the British admiral, Lord Howe, as a volunteer "just to enjoy the sport," went by a third route to attack the marquis in front. The young Marquis de Lafayette was esteemed quite an important person, you see, when the flower of the British army, led by its commanding general, came stealing out to trap him.

Lafayette, it must be confessed, came very nearly being thus entrapped. For he was actually almost surrounded by the three divisions of the British army before he awoke to the real danger of his position. He expected attack along one line; he hardly counted upon the honor of making a three-cornered fight against an overwhelming force.

In fact, fighting was not to be thought of. This was a case for strategy. So, strategy he tried. Along the road over which the main British column was marching, Lafayette threw out what were called "false heads" of columns, – that is, a few men, marching from the woods at different points as if the whole army were advancing to battle. The British general saw these "false heads" and, supposing them to be real ones, halted to form his battle line, while Lafayette, who had placed the bulk of his troops upon the only piece of unoccupied road left, under the hill and quite out of the enemy's sight, hurried them off to Valley Forge in quick order, himself bringing up in the rear. He forded the Schuylkill and reached the camp without the loss of a man, while the three British columns marching up the

hill came face to face with their own red-coated brothers. So they marched down again in mortification and disgust. The "French boy" had shrewdly given them the slip, and the dinner engagement "to meet Monsieur the Marquis de Lafayette" was declared off!

Washington was delighted. He complimented Lafayette on his victory – for a well-conducted retreat is often a brilliant victory – and advised Congress of the young Frenchman's "timely and handsome retreat in great order."

Soon after this affair, on the eighteenth of June, 1778, the British evacuated Philadelphia, and, stringing across New Jersey, bag and baggage, retreated to New York. Washington determined to stop, annoy, or attack and defeat them at once. But certain of his generals objected to this as Clinton's army was so much larger than his own. One general especially vigorously opposed his commander's plan. This was General Charles Lee, the most persistent of all the foreign adventurers, who by his exertions and bravado and his record of European service had raised himself to the second in command, or next in rank to Washington.

There is now no doubt that Charles Lee, preyed upon by jealousy, ambition, and disappointment at the failure of the Conway Cabal, had determined to break his oath of allegiance to America and play into the hands of the British. He obstructed every move of Washington's; he objected to every suggestion and

plan of action, and did all in his power to restrain the American army from attacking the British on its way to New York.

In the Council of War at Hopewell, in New Jersey, Lafayette made a bold and stirring plea for immediate and aggressive action. But Lee's experience as a soldier and his cleverly constructed argument partly carried the council and it was decided, against Lafayette's protest and Washington's judgment, to strengthen the American line, but not to bring on a general engagement.

This was precisely the end for which Lee was working; so, when Clinton's advance threatened one of the American detachments, and Lee, as second in command, was ordered to check this with the American advance, he declined to do it as against the advice of the Council of War. But Washington knew that his own judgment was best, and, indeed, the most of his advisers had come to his views. As Lee declined the leadership, the appointment was given to Lafayette, who felt that the chance had come to prove his own ability and generalship.

Lafayette rode enthusiastically forward leading the advance. But when Lee saw that, in spite of his plans, the active movement was to be made and that the honors would fall to Lafayette, whom he disliked because Washington loved him, at once he changed his mind and appealed to Washington to replace him in

the command, as was his right as second in rank. His motive may have been to bring about an American defeat. At any rate he went at once to Lafayette and begged him to retire in his favor. "I place my fortune and my honor in your hands," he said to the young Frenchman; "you are too generous to destroy both the one and the other."

It was indeed an appeal to Lafayette's generosity which the chivalrous young marquis could not refuse. So, although it was a grievous disappointment to him, he gave back the command to Lee, while Washington arranged a compromise by which Lee should command and Lafayette lead the advance.

Washington ordered an immediate attack upon the British at Monmouth Court House, and at half-past five on the morning of the twenty-eighth of July, 1778, the battle of Monmouth began. Its result was a sorry ending to a skillfully conceived plan, and one which, had Washington been obeyed and had Lafayette kept the command, would have proved a brilliant victory. But Lee deliberately delayed; he held back his advance, snarled up his officers by contradictory orders, and at last ordered a disgraceful retreat that was only saved from utter rout by Washington's prompt and vigorous action, as, superb in his wrath, he met the treacherous Lee among the retreating troops. Straightway he expressed his opinion of the jealous adventurer in language as forcible as it was merited; then, assuming the command himself, he faced the retreating army to

the right about, checked the British advance and assault, plucked the day from disgrace, and manoeuvred his army out of disaster, and once again saved the American cause.

Lafayette, you may be sure, fretted and chafed under Lee's singular and criminal action. Unselfishly giving up his command, he was really but a volunteer in the fight; but again and again, whenever the opportunity offered, he dashed into action – now leading the cavalry in a desperate charge, now urging Lee to action, now stemming the tide of unnecessary and headlong retreat, and, finally, supporting Washington's rapid change of front by rallying the re-formed second line upon a hill-slope, facing the enemy where a charge and battery support effectually stopped and drove back the British advance.

Then night came on. Lafayette, wrapped in his cloak, slept beside Washington at the foot of a tree, and woke to find that the British army, like the Arabs, had "silently stolen away" in the night. The honors of war at Monmouth, after all, were with Washington, the masterly general, and with Lafayette, his loyal aid. Thanks to Lee's treachery, the British escaped to New York; but there they found fresh trouble. For, as the first fruits of the treaty of alliance with France, a French fleet of fourteen frigates and twelve battle-ships sailed into American waters, located the English fleet in New York harbor, and threatened to engage and destroy it.

But without sufficient or reliable pilotage the entrance to New York harbor was not safe for the French admiral's big battle-ships; so, after communicating with Washington, and Lafayette, the admiral sailed away to attack the British force stationed at Newport in Rhode Island, while Lafayette at the head of two thousand men marched overland from the Hudson to Providence to support the French naval attack.

The New England militia hastened to join the Continental troops, and a formidable force was thus collected for the assault; but, as was so often the case in the American Revolution, the rival claims of differing nationalities, the arrogance of the French allies, and the ever-existing Anglo-Saxon hostility to those of other speech and blood, upset all Washington's plans and overthrew all Lafayette's desires. The French officers were jealous of their own leader, the Count d'Estaing, a relative of Lafayette, because he, a land officer, had been made the chief of a naval expedition; a storm disabled and endangered the fleet, and, greatly to Lafayette's disappointment, the fleet sailed away to Boston for repairs without striking a blow, and the Americans found that they did not like their French allies as much as they thought they did.

Lafayette galloped to Boston, and tried hard to induce his kinsman to assist the American army. The Count d'Estaing at last promised to land his sailors and march them across to Newport; but before he could do

this the British were heavily reinforced, and Lafayette had to gallop back to protect his own rear guard, and lead the now imperilled American army out of danger. This he did in his customary vigorous and strategical manner.

Worn out by these misunderstandings; disappointed and distressed at the overthrow of his plans; homesick and sad over his home news of the death of his little girl; convinced by the knowledge that England had declared war against France that his duty to his king was even greater than his duty to the American Congress, and that affairs in France demanded his presence there, Lafayette at last decided to ask for a leave of absence and go home to France on a furlough.

His request was seconded by Washington, who, while he disliked to have the young man leave him, still felt that his presence in France might be of advantage. Congress granted the furlough, with its official thanks and the gift of "an elegant sword;"ordered its best war-ship, the frigate "Alliance," to convey the marquis to France, and in every way showed its appreciation of his services and his self-sacrifice.

So, in October, 1778, Lafayette bade good-bye to Washington and rode away from the camp, to go on board the "Alliance" at Boston, homeward bound at last.

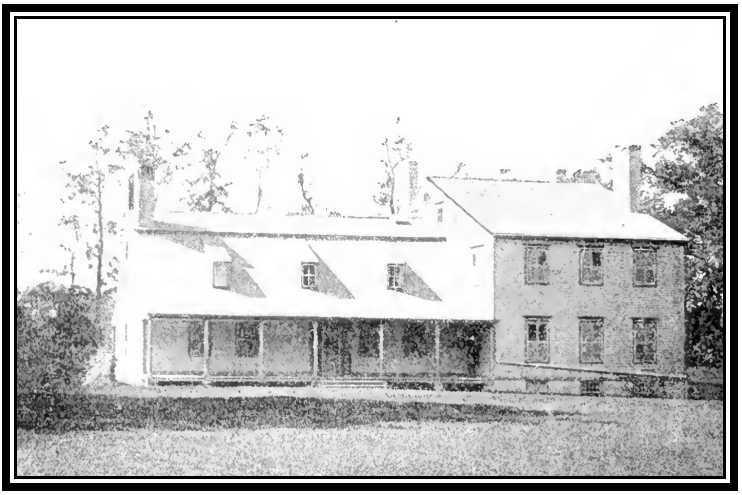
Chapter 8

How "That Boy" Served the Earl

As Lafayette, homeward bound, rode into the old town of Fishkill-on-the-Hudson on a chilly and rainy October day, the fever was in his bones. He was a French mountaineer, brought up in the rugged Auvergne country and seasoned by continued exposure and privation; but malaria unnerves even mountaineers, and "chills and fever" can conquer the stoutest campaigners.

The people had cheered him and made a hero of him all the way from Philadelphia to the camp on the Hudson, and he had kept up through all the receptions and festivities, as every hero must. But at Fishkill he gave up at last. The fever conquered the hero, and for days he lay so low that his death was expected and even reported.

Washington was deeply grieved. From his camp, eight miles away, he rode daily to Lafayette's door to inquire after his condition, fearing to ask to see his young friend lest his presence should excite the



WHERE LAFAYETTE FOUGHT DEATH.
The Old Man-house at Fishkill-on-the-Hudson.

weakened invalid. It is a touching instance of real friendship, and we can almost see the noble-hearted American leader, distressed over his friend's serious condition, riding away from the door at Fishkill with bowed head and sorrowing face, fearing that the marquis was indeed to sacrifice his bright and valuable young life for the land he had fought to free.

Lafayette, too, was certain he was going to die; and his only prayer was that he might live long enough to see or hear from his dear ones once more – or, for just three months more of life, if, in that time, he might hear of the success of America.

He was to live much longer than the coveted three months. Washington's own physician took him in charge and "pulled him through" all right. The fever spent itself; recovery came. Washington cared for him in his convalescence like a father, parted from him tenderly, sent him on to Boston in charge of his own physician, and wrote him as a good-bye word, "I am persuaded, my dear marquis, that there is no need of fresh proofs to convince you either of my affection for you personally or of the high opinion I entertain of your military talents and merit."

The warship was waiting for him at Boston, and, with a crew hastily gathered upon the young man's arrival by filling it out to the required number with British deserters and prisoners, it finally sailed away on the eleventh of January, 1779.

And the last thing Lafayette did was to add a third postscript to a final letter to Washington. "The sails are just going to be hoisted, my dear general," he wrote, "and I have but time to take my last leave of you. . . . Farewell. I hope your French friend will ever be dear to you; I hope I shall soon see you again, and tell you myself with what emotion I now leave the coast you inhabit and with what affection and respect I am forever, my dear general, your respectful and sincere friend, Lafayette."

The "Alliance" was just a month making its voyage to France. It came very near to not getting to France at

all; for the British deserters and prisoners who had filled out the crew conspired to seize the vessel, kill the officers and passengers, and, taking the "Alliance" into an English port, sell her as a rebel prize, and line their pockets with the proceeds.

The plot came dangerously near to success. Instead of carrying out their intentions on the morning of the day set for the meeting, the conspirators put it off until afternoon. During the day one of their number "told on" his associates. The French and American sailors, who had no part in the plot, backed up Lafayette and the ship's officers; the thirty-three mutineers were cornered, captured, and clapped into irons, and the "Alliance," saved from disaster, sailed, a week later, into the French harbor of Brest.

All France turned out to welcome this plucky young Frenchman who, braving the king's commands and the wrath of his own family, had run away to America with a shipload of supplies to fight for the cause of liberty, and had been returned to his native land in a warship of the new American republic.

They hailed him as hero and paragon; they overwhelmed him with attentions and swarmed about him at receptions and festivities. The queen stopped him in the palace gardens to talk with him; the king ordered him into arrest as a deserter – but his prison was his father-in-law's grand house at Paris, his jailer was his wife! – and then publicly forgave and

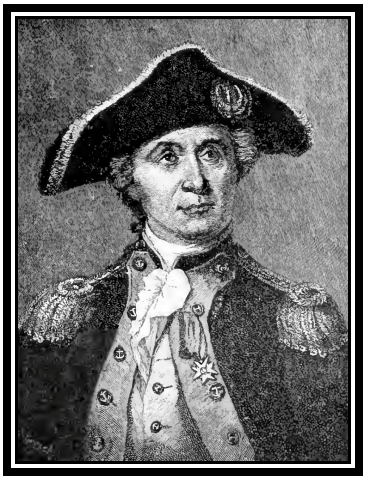
congratulated "the deserter;" ministers and nobles called upon him to consult him about America and the opportunities it afforded for revenge on England, and Lafayette, like all heroes, enjoyed and was perhaps a bit wearied by these attentions. "I had the honor," he says, "of being consulted by all the ministers and, what was a great deal better, of being kissed by all the women."The experiences of heroes are about the same, you see, in all ages, from Horatius at the "The queen stopped him in the palace gardens to talk – with him!" Bridge to Hobson from the "Merrimac" and Lafayette was no exception.

His father-in-law, the Duke d'Ayen, forgave and welcomed him; his wife, Adrienne, loyal to him in all his high plans and desires, was overjoyed to see him; the actors in the theatres put extra words in their parts to honor Lafayette and "bring down the house;" and this young man of twenty-one would surely have "had his head turned" if that head had not been such a very level one.

Instead, he steered all this hero-worship into one channel help for America. "In the midst of the whirl of excitement by which I was carried along," he said, "I never lost sight of the revolution, the success of which still seemed to me to be extremely uncertain; accustomed as I was to seeing great purposes accomplished with slender means, I used to say to myself that the cost of a single fete would have equipped the army of the United States, and in order to

provide clothes for them I would gladly have stripped the palace at Versailles."

He did something more than wish; he accomplished. He went to work practically. With the great Doctor Franklin and the famous American sea-captain, John Paul Jones, he planned an expedition in which he should lead the land forces and Paul Jones should command the war-ships; the expedition, under the American flag, was to attack and capture English ports and English cities. Then a still greater plan was considered; this was the union of France and Spain for an assault on England in behalf of the colonies. John Paul Jones sailed away in the "Bon Homme Richard"and had his famous sea-fight with the "Serapis," while this plan was maturing; but Spain was dilatory and behind hand, as she has always been, and the invasion of England fell through.



LAFAYETTE'S "NAVAL AID."

John Paul Jones, the famous captain with whom Lafayette arranged a joint attack on England.

So Lafayette joined the French army again and was made colonel of the King's Dragoons; but inaction did

not satisfy him when he had the cause of America so much at heart, and he set about urging the preparation of a big French expedition of soldiers and sailors for the immediate help of America.

King Louis XVI did not love America; Queen Marie Antoinette did not favor the cause of liberty. For Bourbon kings and Austrian princesses did not care to foster the spirit of independence. But they had been carried into the treaty of alliance by the French people, who hated England and loved the idea of liberty, and now, backed by the popularity and the persistence of Lafayette, the French people called upon their king to help the cause in which Lafayette had won so glorious a renown.

His persistency at last carried the day. The court of France decided to send an army to the assistance of America, and Count de Rochambeau, lieutenant general in the army of the king, was despatched with a fleet of war ships and transports and six thousand picked soldiers of France to the help of the Americans.

Lafayette was sent on in advance to carry the good news to Washington and to Congress, and especially to let Washington know that there could be no more of the jealousies and rivalries that had ruined the success of the first French expedition. For, at Lafayette's earnest request, it was ordered that the French troops, while in America, should be subject to the orders of General Washington; that they should always yield the

honors of advance and leadership to the American army in action, and that American officers should be recognized as having equal rank with French officers.

This arrangement really did much toward the final triumph of the American Revolution; for harmony is the surest road to success; and, thanks to Lafayette, harmony was established and maintained between the allied armies of France and America.

So Lafayette came to America the second time. Not now as a runaway and an unwelcomed recruit did he come; but as a major-general in the American army and as the official representative of the court of France, sent to prepare the way for the help which the court of his king, even against the royal will, had, at his solicitation, sent across the sea to aid the cause of American liberty.

The French frigate, "Hermione," with Lafayette on board, ran into Boston harbor on the twenty-eighth day of April, 1780. And when the people of Boston knew that the French frigate bore "the marquis," as Lafayette was commonly called in America, all the town turned out to welcome him, and he was escorted with shouts and cheers to the stately mansion of Governor John Hancock on Beacon Hill. And this time "Mr. Hancok" did not turn him over to some one else as a "foreign affair!"

Washington soon received news of the arrival of "his young soldier," as Lafayette loved to style himself,

and hastened to summon him to his side. On the tenth of May, 1780, Lafayette joined his beloved commander-in-chief at the headquarters in Morristown, and there informed Washington privately what no one in America yet knew, of the coming of the military and naval expedition from the king of France to the aid of America.

Washington was overjoyed at the news, especially when he learned that Lafayette had so arranged the alliance as to remove cause for jealousies and rivalries. But he knew that even this mighty help from France would be of no profit to America unless the American people prepared to do their share. So, while Lafayette hurried to Philadelphia to report to Congress, Washington set himself to the task of urging Congress and the country to respond, by renewed efforts and sacrifices, to the generous offers of France.

Energetic measures were at once set on foot, in which both the French and American troops were to bear part. Lafayette's pet scheme was renewed, – the invasion of Canada by French soldiers under the combined flags of France and the United States. But Benedict Arnold, the traitor, was already laying his dastardly plans for his great and hateful crime, and, being entrusted with the details of the Canadian invasion, he promptly reported them to Sir Henry Clinton, the British commander, and again Lafayette's cherished scheme was upset.

Half-clothed, half-fed, with but four thousand out of its six thousand soldiers fit for duty, the Continental army was in so desperate and deplorable a state that, as Lafayette declared to the president of Congress, "though I have been directed to furnish the French court and the French generals with early and minute intelligence, I confess that pride has stopped my pen and, notwithstanding past promises, I have avoided entering into any details till our army is put in a better and more decent situation."

But America's sure standby and security in this, as in all other critical times, was George Washington. His action and his energy aroused Congress and the land to courage, and by the time the French ships and soldiers arrived, the American army had been strengthened and improved.

On the tenth of July, 1780, the Count de Rochambeau, with the French army of assistance, arrived at Newport in Rhode Island, and the French commander, informing Washington of his arrival, announced, as the king had directed him, "We are now, sir, under your command."

But there was much to be done before this French alliance brought victory or even action; campaigns moved slowly in those days, and Americans who, today, can within three months organize and push to triumph a campaign of assistance and deliverance in behalf of a persecuted people, would have but little

patience with a campaign of such deliberation as was that of the French alliance of 1780, when America was in desperate state, and Lafayette fretted over the delays that wasted a year in preparation.

On the twentieth of September, at Hartford in Connecticut, Washington, with Lafayette and Knox, met the Count de Rochambeau and Admiral de Terney, commanding the French fleet, and a plan of operations was arranged, which, however, because of vexatious delays and disappointments, could not be put into effect until a new year had opened.

One of these causes for delay was the most dramatic and tragic occurrence of the American Revolution; and in this Lafayette, too, had part.

Upon the very day that Washington and the marquis met the French commander at Hartford, Benedict Arnold and Major John Andre were also perfecting their plan of arrangements which, if successful, would have been as disastrous to America as those of Washington and Rochambeau were to be helpful. Lafayette was with Washington, when, on reaching West Point, on his return from Hartford, Arnold's treason was discovered; he it was who tried to comfort and control Mrs. Arnold when the news of her husband's disgrace drove her, as Lafayette reported, "into such frightful convulsions that she completely lost her reason;" he it was who, with the other general officers, sat at a court-martial in the headquarters at

Tappan "up the Hudson," and, after a fair and honorable trial, convicted and sentenced John Andre, adjutant general of the British army, as a spy, and hung him, in righteous and merited punishment, upon the green hillside at Tappan, with which for a hundred and twenty years his sad story has been associated.

"I hope he will be hung," wrote Lafayette, upon the news of Andre's capture; "for he is a man of influence in the English army, and his distinguished social rank will act as a warning to spies of less degree."

"He was a very interesting man," wrote Lafayette, after Andre's death; "he conducted himself in a manner so frank, so noble, and so delicate, that I cannot help feeling for him an infinite pity."

And those two recorded judgments of the treason-hating, spy-detesting, courage-loving marquis have stood as the opinion of all thinking men since the days of Andre's sorry but righteous fate.

Lafayette was not yet through with Benedict Arnold. In 1780 the British invaded, overrun, and apparently conquered the Southern States. The Baron de Kalb, Lafayette's fellow runaway and fast friend, fell in battle at Camden, in South Carolina, where you may today (as you may also at Annapolis, in Maryland) see the monument erected to his memory, and Cornwallis, the British commander, prepared to hold the Carolinas in a relentless grasp.

To enlarge his opportunities for conquest Sir Henry Clinton, the British commander-in-chief, sent a British army to invade Virginia and connect with Cornwallis; the British detachment was placed under the command of Benedict Arnold, now, in payment for his treason, a general in the British army. To meet and drive out Arnold, Washington at once directed General Greene to send Lafayette with twelve hundred Continental troops to Virginia. The French fleet was to support him; but at the entrance to Chesapeake Bay it was met, defeated, and driven back by the British fleet, and Lafayette had to carry out his land operations unaided.

So well did he conduct these operations that both Arnold the traitor and Phillips (that British general, by the way, who was said to have killed Lafayette's father in the Battle of Hastenbeck), sent to support him, were outgeneralled and beaten back. Lafayette manoeuvred about Richmond so cleverly that the British gave it up after its capture and brief occupation, and he led them so uncertain and unprofitable a march up and down the James that Virginia was unconquered still, and Cornwallis, hot with anger at the lack of results, determined at once to march through the Carolinas, where Greene was making it most uncomfortable for him, and cage and capture "that boy Lafayette" among the hills that encircle and defend the fine old town of Richmond.

Major General Charles, the second Earl Cornwallis, afterward gover-nor-general of India and

conqueror of Tippoo Sahib, was forty-three years old and a soldier with a pretty good opinion of his own abilities. He believed that he had an easy task to "whip that boy Lafayette," as he announced it to be his intention, and he set out with the greatest confidence upon what proved the most disastrous venture of his long and venturesome life. Cornwallis joined his forces with those of Arnold at Petersburg and, on the twenty-fourth of May, 1781, he marched out with his whole force to attack Lafayette at Richmond.



LAFAYETTE'S ANTAGONIST.

"*Charles, Earl Cornwallis, Commander of the British forces at York and Gloucester.*"

At Byrd's Plantation (that fine old colonial mansion in whose noble rooms this English "gentleman" stabled his cavalry horses!) the earl wrote to his commander-in-chief, "The boy cannot escape me."

"Lord Cornwallis," said Lafayette, "marches with amazing celerity. But I have done everything I could,

without arms or men, at least to impede him by local embarrassments." These "embarrassments" were so skilfully arranged that, spite of the noble earl's assurance, the "boy" certainly did escape him, and led him so vigorous a dance up and down that fair land that lies along the James and the York, that Cornwallis, like Phillips and Arnold, was fairly outmaneuvred by Lafayette and, with one desperate cry to Clinton for relief, fell into the trap laid for him by Lafayette; for, cornered at Yorktown, he speedily found the door of his cage shut and barred by the unexpected arrival of the combined forces of Washington and Rochambeau.

In the old Livingston manor-house at Dobb's Ferry on the Hudson – as the granite shaft there erected informs every passer-by – Washington and Rochambeau, on the fourteenth of August, 1781, met and planned the campaign at Yorktown; and within and about the old capital of Williamsburg the allied armies, by rapid marches, sat down to besiege the British defences at Yorktown, that old Virginia town, now sadly gone to seed. On the twenty-sixth of September the siege began. It had been quick work for those days of no railroads and no facilities for army transportation, while at the entrance to the fair, broad river, below the "heights above York," the French fleet under Count de Grasse blocked the way for English relief by sea.

Lafayette had accomplished his desires. He had protected Virginia, forced Cornwallis into a corner,

held him there until the allied armies arrived, and permitted neither impatience, anxiety, rivalry, nor the demands of the French admiral that he and Lafayette go in and finish up the Earl Cornwallis, to change his own determination that Washington himself and no other man should command the combined French and American armies in the final strife at Yorktown. This noble trait of generous selfishness in the cause of "his dear general," is one of the brightest spots in this young Frenchman's character. He might have won all the honors and finished up the fight; but he loyally held back the fall of the curtain until the central figure and chief actor in the great drama came upon the stage.

The end of the play now came speedily. Steadily the opposing French and American entrenchments drew closer to the British parallels. They came, finally, within three hundred yards of each other; then, on the evening of the fourteenth of October, Lafayette's men, led by Alexander Hamilton, charged the British works on the left; while the French grenadiers stormed the British redoubt on the right, and all the outer works were won. It was the last battle of the American Revolution; and it was won by Lafayette's fighters and under his personal direction.

The next night Cornwallis endeavored to cut his way out, and escape across the York River to Gloucester; but American watchfulness and a Virginia storm drove him back, and on the seventeenth of October a British drummer boy appeared on the

ramparts and beat a parley. One French and one American officer met two British officers at Mr. Moore's farmhouse, still standing in Yorktown. Articles of capitulation were drawn up and accepted, and on the nineteenth of October, 1781, on the green plain beyond Yorktown, where today a modest little brown shaft of German cement marks the exact spot, the British troops laid down their arms in surrender, while their drums beat the suggestive air of "The world turned upside down."

And the French commissioner who prepared the articles of capitulation at Mr. Moore's house was the Vicomte de Noailles, brother-in-law to Lafayette and one of those two young men whom, three years before, Lafayette had roused from bed in Paris with the cry, "Wake up! wake up! I'm going to America to fight for liberty!"

Upon the most sightly point of the green "heights above York" there stands today a splendid marble monument encircled with stars, ringed by thirteen joyous female figures, and topped by a welcoming and victorious Liberty. A landmark for all that region, it overlooks alike the broad river and the green fields of York, a memorial erected by the American people to commemorate the final triumph at Yorktown.

On the southern tablet you may read these words: At York, on October 19, 1781, after a siege of nineteen days, by 5,500 American and 7,000 French Troops of

the Line, 3,500 Virginia Militia under command of General Thomas Nelson and 36 French ships of war, Earl Cornwallis, Commander of the British Forces at York and Gloucester, surrendered his army, 7,251 officers and men, 840 seamen, 244 cannons and 24 standards to His Excellency George Washington, Commander in Chief of the Combined Forces of America and France, to His Excellency the Comte de Rochambeau, commanding the auxiliary Troops of His Most Christian Majesty in America, and to His Excellency the Comte de Grasse, commanding in chief the Naval Army of France in Chesapeake."

Nothing of Lafayette in that grand and sonorous record of victory on the splendid surrender monument at Yorktown! And yet it was largely because of Lafayette that the splendid shaft stands where it does today. For "the boy" had fooled the earl! He had fairly outmaneuvred and outgeneralled him, and, with an inferior army, had kept him dodging and doubling all over the fair York peninsula, until, cooped up in his entrenchments at Yorktown, Washington and the end found Cornwallis at last. The "noble earl," who so confidently declared that "the boy cannot escape me," was forced to admit, as he frankly did, that the earl could not escape the boy and his backers; and, at last, in despair he yielded up his sword in surrender, and brought to a close that long struggle for liberty in America to which "the boy" had pledged, like the

signers of the immortal Declaration of Independence, "his life, his fortune, and his sacred honor."

Chapter 9

How He Came to America for the Third Time

"The play is over, Monsieur le Comte," wrote Lafayette to the French minister; "the fifth act has just come to an end. I was somewhat disturbed during the former acts, but my heart rejoices exceedingly at this last, and I have no less pleasure in congratulating you upon the happy ending of our campaign."

When the curtain fell at Yorktown the players began to disperse. It was fully two years before the lights were put out and the theatre was emptied, by the final departure of the British from New York on that famous Evacuation Day of November twenty-fifth, 1783. But among the earliest to depart was the Marquis de Lafayette.

It was felt, equally by Lafayette and by Congress, that the presence of the popular young marquis in France would lead to continued assistance in the way of men and money from the king of France in the next campaign in America. For, you see, although Yorktown really did end the Revolution, no one could tell at that

time whether King George would give up the fight or whether he would keep obstinately on until another British general had followed the disastrous examples of Gage and Howe and Clinton and Burgoyne and Cornwallis.

So, with Washington's consent and the approval of Congress, it was agreed that "Major-General the Marquis de Lafayette have permission to go to France and that he return at such time as shall be most convenient to him."

And, in the "resolve" that granted his furlough, Congress also voted that he "be informed that, on a review of his conduct throughout the past campaign and particularly during the period in which he had the chief command in Virginia, the many new proofs which present themselves of his zealous attachment to the cause he has espoused, and of his judgment, vigilance, gallantry, and address in its defence, have greatly added to the high opinion entertained by Congress of his merits and military talents."

Things had changed, you see, since he stood a suppliant at the door of Congress, looked upon simply as a young French adventurer whom it was risky to recognize and undesirable to employ. The plucky and determined young Frenchman had "proved his faith by his works" and Congress was grateful for his services, proud of his loyalty, and prompt to recognize and acknowledge his success.

"I owe it to your friendship and to my affectionate regard for you, my dear marquis," said Washington, "not to let you leave this country without carrying with you fresh marks of my attachment to you and new expressions of the high sense I entertain of your military conduct and other important services in the course of the last campaign, although the latter are too well known to need the testimony of my approbation, and the former, I persuade myself, you believe is too well riveted to undergo diminution or change."

What young man of twenty-four would not have been proud to receive such expressions of friendship and appreciation from George Washington? But Washington, as I have told you, was quick to see and prompt to acknowledge worth and merit in young men. He never said very much; with him, indeed, actions spoke louder than words; but, to the Marquis de Lafayette, he put his appreciation and affection into words, again and again.

The young Frenchman was not so reserved and reticent as the great American. He fairly bubbled over with love for "his dear general," and his last words to Washington read quite like a love letter.

"Adieu, my dear general," he said. "I know your heart so well that I am sure that no distance can alter your attachment to me. With the same candor I assure you that my love, my respect, my gratitude for you are above expression; that, at the moment of leaving you,

I feel more than ever the struggle of those friendly ties that forever bind me to you, and that I anticipate the pleasure, the most wished-for pleasure, to be again with you, and, by my zeal and services, to gratify the feelings of my respect and affection."

Then "the hero of two continents," as people began to call Lafayette, went back to his own people the second time. The same frigate "Alliance" which had been detailed by Congress to carry him back to France upon his first return – when a mutiny, as you remember, very nearly kept him from getting home at all – swung at its moorings in Boston harbor, under orders to bear the marquis back to France, and on the twenty-third of December, 1781, Lafayette sailed away from Boston-town, homeward bound.

Even before he sailed the rewards from France mingled with the words of appreciation from America. "Our joy is very great here and throughout the nation," wrote Vergennes, the great French Secretary of State, "and you may be assured that your name is held in veneration. ... I have been following you, M. le Marquis, step by step, throughout your campaign in Virginia; and I should frequently have been anxious for your welfare if I had not been confident of your wisdom. It required a great deal of skill to maintain yourself, as you did, for so long a time, in spite of the disparity of your forces, before Lord Cornwallis, whose military talents are well known. It was you who brought him to the fatal ending, where, instead of his

making you a prisoner of war, as he probably expected to do, you forced him to surrender."

This was quite a change in tone, was it not, from the expressions of impatience from the same high officer of state who, four years before, complained that Lafayette had "run off again," but declared slightingly that "his age may, perhaps, justify his escapade," thus echoing the equally slighting remark about "the boy adventurer" made by the French ambassador in London. "Fortunately for him, his youth may shield him from the responsibility of his thoughtless acts. This is the only consolation left to me in the chagrin I feel in view of his most inconsiderate behavior."

The "chagrin," you see, wore off very quickly in the light of Lafayette's record of achievement. The "inconsiderate behavior" became triumphant heroism. Nothing succeeds like success, it is said, and the story of Lafayette is further proof of the old adage.

The king of France, too, who had disapproved as strongly of Lafayette's course as he had of assisting America; who had ordered him home when he tried to get away; who had sent messengers and detectives to hunt him down and force him back on the very eve of departure; who had called him a deserter for leaving his regiment and a spendthrift because he had "squandered" money on America; who had ordered him into arrest upon his first homecoming and forbade him to show himself publicly at the court, because of

his "disobedience," now hastened to recognize and reward the services of "his young soldier" in America, and wrote through his minister of war: "The king, having been informed, sir, of the military skill of which you have given repeated proof in the command of the various army corps entrusted to you in America, of the wisdom and prudence which have marked the services that you have performed in the interest of the United States, and of the confidence which you have won from General Washington, his Majesty has charged me to announce to you that the commendations which you most fully deserve have attracted his notice, and that your conduct and your success have given him, sir, the most favorable opinion of you, such as you might wish him to have, and upon which you may rely for his future goodwill."

And thereupon the king of France announced that he had promoted Monsieur the Marquis de Lafayette to be "Mardchal de camp" (the same rank as major-general in the regular service with us), the appointment to date from the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. A marshal of France at twenty-four! That was a distinct advance for the boy who had run away from home under the ban of his king only four years before, was it not?

On the seventeenth of January, 1782, Lafayette landed in France. The tone of appreciation and glorification that appeared in the letters of the king and his ministers became enthusiasm and popularity with

the people, and the young Marquis de Lafayette was more of a hero than ever.

"Conqueror of Cornwallis!" "Savior of America with Washington!" These and other extravagant expressions were showered upon him. Hero-worship, you see, is about the same in every age, and the same spirit which in old Bible times cheered the young general David and cried, "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands," hailed Lafayette as "Savior of America," even as it sought to give precedence in our latest and shortest war to some one doer of valiant deeds as a hero beyond all others. But history rights all this in time.

Though a queen came to visit him and the people cheered themselves hoarse; though the marshals of France gave him, as their comrade, a banquet and a reception, and he was at once the lion of the day and hero of the hour, Lafayette seems to have been a calm and level-headed young man, and did not permit all this overpraise and hero-worship to turn his head. But it must be confessed that he did enjoy it all!

John Adams, to be sure, did go out of his way to declare, with somewhat vinegary tongue, that "Lafayette will think himself the one person necessary." But John Adams, American commissioner to France, though a very great man and a very noble American and one to whom the republic owes a deathless debt of honor, did have a way of saying unjust and

uncomfortable things about other men of prominence. Counting Lafayette as little more than a boy, he would occasionally try "to take him down" lest the young Frenchman should feel his importance too much. But Lafayette never had a word to say against fussy John Adams.

Good Doctor Franklin, however, also American commissioner to France, who always looked on the bright side of things and said the best of every one, wrote home, "The Marquis de Lafayette daily gains in the general esteem and affection, and promises to be a great man here. He is extremely attached to our cause; we are on the most friendly and confidential footing with each other, and he is very serviceable to me in my application for additional assistance."

So serviceable, indeed, did he prove to the American representatives who were seeking to strengthen the American cause in France, that, at their request, he remained in France longer than he intended. For Lafayette considered himself as at home only on a furlough, and he greatly desired to rejoin the army in America as soon as active operations against the British should again be commenced.

But these operations were never again to be active. Although negotiations moved slowly, and the road to peace was long, it came at last, and France was not again called upon to fight the English in America.

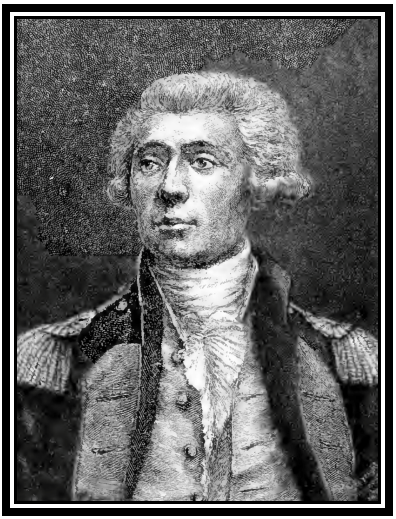
"As a discourager to hesitancy," however, as Mr. Stockton would call it, France and Spain, in the fall of 1782, agreed to make a joint expedition and attack against the British power in America. Forthwith, a strong fleet and army were gathered – sixty big battle-ships, and twenty-four thousand soldiers with the avowed purpose of sailing from the Spanish port of Cadiz to capture the English island of Jamaica, and attack New York and Canada.

Lafayette was made chief of staff of the joint expedition, which was to be under the command of his relative, the Count d'Estaing; and, wearing the uniform of an American general, he set out for Cadiz to join his command, anxious, as he wrote Washington, for the time to arrive when he might once more be united with him in a fight for "our dear old colors."

But Spain, with her customary slowness of action, change of plans, and general manana, dilly-dallied so long that the great expedition did not sail at all; for, before the close of 1782, the protocol was signed at Paris; peace was assured, and the final and definitive treaty of peace, as the most of you know, was signed on the third of September, 1783, and the American Revolution ended in acknowledgment and peace.

As soon as the promise of peace became fact, Lafayette borrowed a warship from the Count d'Estaing, – appropriately named the "Triumph," – and hurried it off to Philadelphia with the first news of the

protocol. And, by the same ship, he sent a joyful letter to Washington. "As for you, my dear general, who can truly say that all this is your work," he wrote, "what must be the feelings of your good and virtuous heart in this happy moment? The eternal honor in which my descendants will glory, will be to have had an ancestor among your soldiers, and to know that he had the good fortune of being a friend of your heart. To the eldest of them I bequeath, as long as my posterity shall endure, the favor that you have conferred upon my son George, by allowing him to bear your name," for the marquis had named his only son George Washington Lafayette.



LAFAYETTE IN 1784.
"*Wearing the uniform of an American general he set out for Cadis.*"

Having thus despatched the "Triumph" with the first tidings of good news, Lafayette hastened to Madrid, where the court of Spain was conducting itself in its customary "nasty" manner, as the English would say, and by his energy and personal influence straightened things out, and even threatened Spain

with the unfriendliness of France and the life-long enmity of America, if she did not at once properly and duly recover and recognize the American representative, and put matters on some reliable sort of footing. A good deal of a prophet as well as a diplomat was the Marquis de Lafayette.

Back in France again, he did all he could to hasten the affairs of America to a successful conclusion, putting meanwhile to practical account the lessons of liberty he had learned so well in America. For, besides working with his beloved and loyal wife to better the condition of the French people on his own farm lands and estates in Auvergne and other parts of France, he also set on foot a movement for the abolition of slavery in the colonies of France, buying a plantation in the South American colony of Cayenne, in order that he might try to show what he could do by making his slaves free men.

But before he undertook this last experiment in South America, he had once again set foot on the soil of North America.

That expressed desire for a "safe return in the spring to my dear marquis, your affectionate friend, George Washington," with which "his dear general's" good-bye letter had concluded, was not to be at once fulfilled; but at last, on the first of July, 1784, after months of anticipation, Lafayette sailed from the French port of

Havre, on a visit to his friends and comrades, the Americans.

This visit had been all the more wished for by him because of Washington's evident desire to see him. The two men kept up a continual correspondence, and rarely has a friendship between a man of fifty-two and one of twenty-five been more sincere or devoted.

Washington urged Lafayette to visit him, and begged Madame Lafayette, also, to accompany her husband. "Come then, let me entreat you," he wrote her. "Call my cottage your own; for your own doors do not open to you with more readiness than would mine. You will see the plain manner in which we live, and meet with rustic civility; and you will taste the simplicity of rural life. It will diversify the scene, and may give you a higher relish for the gayeties of the court when you return to Versailles."

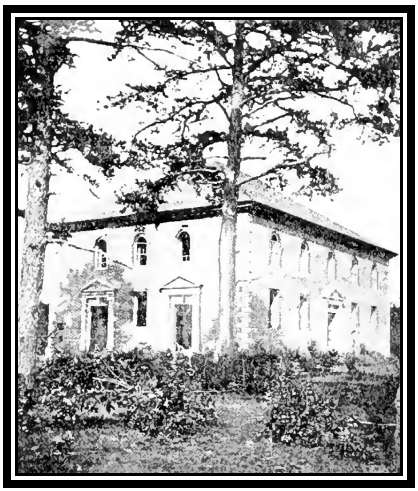
But Madame Lafayette was a great home-body, and as much of a home-lover as Washington himself. Versailles really had no attractions for her, and the most of her time was spent in the gray old castle or chateau of Chavaniac, where Lafayette had spent his boyhood, hunting for wolves and dreaming of liberty, and she did not dare or care to risk what, in those slow-going days, was, sometimes, the terrible voyage to America.

So Lafayette came alone. But he came to a land which welcomed him as a brother; to a chief who

greeted him as a son. From the day of his landing in New York, on the fourth of August, 1784, to the day of his departure from the same port, on the twenty-fifth of January, 1785, his American visit was one series of ovations, one continuous round of cheers. Lafayette was, as Washington declared, "crowned everywhere with wreaths of love and respect;" and not the least fragrant of these wreaths was the welcome which the great American himself gave to "his young soldier," and the happy days spent at Mount Vernon under what Washington called "the shadow of my own vine and my own fig tree."

More like a royal progress than a leisurely American tour was Lafayette's march across America. Multitudes welcomed him everywhere. From New York to Philadelphia, to Richmond (where Washington met him), to Williamsburg, Yorktown, and Mount Vernon, revisiting the scenes of his Virginia campaign; from there, northward again, to Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York he progressed; then, up the Hudson to Albany, where he went with the Indian commissioners to talk with the dissatisfied Indians of the free nations, and made so good a speech to his "red brothers" that the commissioners were actually jealous of him, he journeyed on. Then, across country he went to Boston, hailed with cheers, and there he was given a grand reception and banquet in Faneuil Hall, where, when a great portrait of Washington was unveiled behind him at table, the gallant marquis sprang to his feet and led

off the burst of cheers. He travelled through New England as far as Portsmouth, and then with a last trip south, for a farewell visit to Washington at Mount Vernon, he worked his way back to New York, and on Christmas day sailed home to France.



POHICK CHURCH, NEAR MOUNT VERNON.
Where Washington and Lafayette went to church together, in 1784.

Washington bade him good-bye at Annapolis, and then went home to Mount Vernon to write him a farewell letter. "In the moment of our separation," he said, "upon the road as I travelled and every hour since, I have felt all that love, respect, and attachment for you, with which length of years, close connection, and your merits have inspired me. ... It is unnecessary, I persuade myself, to repeat to you, my dear marquis, the sincerity of my regards and friendship, nor have I words which could express my affection for you, were I to attempt it. My fervent prayers are offered for your safe and pleasant passage,

a happy meeting with Madame de Lafayette and family, and the completion of every wish of your heart."

"Adieu, adieu, my dear general," wrote the marquis in reply. "It is with inexpressible pain that I feel I am going to be severed from you by the Atlantic. Everything that admiration, respect, gratitude, friendship, and filial love can inspire is combined in my affectionate heart to devote me most tenderly to you. In your friendship I find a delight which words cannot express. Adieu, my dear general. It is not without emotion that I write this word. Be attentive to your health. Let me hear from you every month. Adieu, adieu."

Then our loving young ally, the friend of America, the hero of two continents, sailed out of the broad and beautiful harbor of New York, homeward bound once more, but looking forward with his customary optimism to a return at no distant day. It was many a day and many a year, however, before the foot of Lafayette again trod the land he had helped deliver; much was to happen to himself and his own fatherland before he revisited the land of Washington.

Chapter 10

How He Tried to Make an America of France

The Marquis de Lafayette was a young man who always wished to be doing something. He could not bear to keep still and he liked especially to interest himself in the advancement and bettering of the human race.

This much his story must have told you from its very start. From the time when, as a small boy, he went boldly into the forests that encircled Chavaniac seeking to kill the wolves that annoyed his peasants, he seemed to be ever ready to go into the world, sword in hand, to slay the wolf of oppression. It was this noble desire that had sent him across the sea to America; that impelled him to work for the abolition of slavery, for the improvement of the conditions of the downtrodden peasants of France, and for the relief of the persecuted Protestants who, from the days of the terrible Massacre of St. Bartholomew and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (both of which you may read of in French

history), had no rights as citizens or as Frenchmen in their own home land.

"Whatever be the complexion of the enslaved," he said to John Adams in 1786, "it does not in my opinion alter the complexion of the crime the enslaver commits." To deprive any man, black or white, Catholic or Protestant, of his God given right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness was to the Marquis de Lafayette a wrong that must be righted, and he set himself to do the righting. He was one of the earliest exponents of what we call today "taking up the white man's burden."

It was this deep-rooted love for liberty that led him to take and to lead the popular side in the great and tragic events that were soon to happen in the stirring story of France and her fight for freedom.

Lafayette's experience in America, his knowledge of the American people and his share in their bold and triumphant stand for liberty, his admiration for Washington and his enthusiasm for the Declaration of Independence, and all that it had brought about, kept him deeply interested in America even after his return to his home, and led him to desire a similar happiness for France as a land where all men should be, what they never yet had been, free and equal.

Thomas Jefferson was American minister to France. Lafayette had known him well in America, for the minister had been Governor Jefferson when Lafayette

was getting the British in Virginia into a corner, and both the governor and the general had gone through many trying war experiences together. Then, too, Jefferson was the author of the Declaration of Independence; that, alone, would have made Lafayette his firm friend.

He certainly was a firm friend to the American minister and the young nation the minister represented in France.

"The Marquis de Lafayette is a most valuable auxiliary to me," Jefferson wrote to Washington in 1786. "His zeal is unbounded and his weight with those in power is great. . . . He has a great deal of sound genius, is well remarked by the king, and rising in popularity. He has nothing against him but the suspicion of republican principles. I think he will one day be of the ministry."

There were many questions regarding the new American republic, you see, coming up for arrangement and action in Europe, where France was as yet the only really friendly power, and the American minister to France had much hard work in conducting and settling these matters in the interest of his American countrymen. It was in these affairs that Lafayette's aid was valuable. He obtained concessions for Americans in regard to the importation and sale of oil and tobacco, and his efforts in behalf of the American whale fishery were so acceptable that the

citizens of Nantucket, in town-meeting assembled, voted that every man in Nantucket who owned a cow should give all of one day's milk toward making a monstrous cheese which should be "transmitted to the Marquis de Lafayette as a feeble but not less sincere testimonial of their affection and gratitude."

The cheese weighed five hundred pounds and was really as fully appreciated by Lafayette as were the busts of him made by order of the State of Virginia by the sculptor Houdon and placed, one in the State Capitol at Richmond and the other in the City Hall at Paris.

Lafayette's own desires and his close association, while they were in France, with such prominent American citizens and believers in the liberty of the people as Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and Governor Morris had developed in him something more than "the suspicion of republican principles," which Jefferson said were laid to his charge. He had the republican principles indeed very strongly developed; and in the growing thirst for liberty which America's success had given France, Lafayette began to see a realization of his boyish dreams, when, with his young wife, he planned great schemes for the happiness of the world in general, and for their own dear France in particular.

But France was not America. The English colonists across the sea had, from their very beginning, been very

nearly free and independent – in fact, if not in name. It was only when the obstinate George III., king of England, with his absurd notions that he was not a king if he could not have absolute control in all portions of his dominion, himself played the rebel and set himself against all the sworn and promised guarantees to the American colonists, that those colonists protested against his invasion of all their inherited rights, and announced their determination to struggle for those rights to the end, even if it led to absolute independence of English rule and authority. And this was what they won.

In France, things were vastly different. A few pure-minded men and enthusiastic philanthropists, like the Count de Segur and the Marquis de Lafayette, had dreams of liberty, or rather of equal rights in France, in which the king should be a sort of lawful head or perpetual president; but very few among the upper class, and none of the nobles who lived on the king as courtiers, had any faith in or desire for such a result as this. The people of France, downtrodden and neglected for centuries, used only as something to be drawn upon by the upper classes for labor or for money, had but one idea of freedom, – the liberty to do as they pleased, and to "get square with" the nobles who had ground them down through generations of toil and service and slavery.

So, when the dreamers about liberty – both those who really desired that France should have a

constitution and manhood freedom as in America, and those who liked to talk about liberty but did not really wish to see it set the people of France to thinking, to hoping, and at last to demanding, things went wrong in France, simply because they were not started right. Progress to be real progress must begin right; otherwise it will become brutality before it is really set going on the right track; for, remember this, the right track will surely be found at last; the world never goes backward. The people of France had wrongs ten thousand times heavier than those of the people of America. But the Americans were self-educated in liberty; the French plunged into it headlong.

It must be admitted that one of the men who helped toward this headlong plunge was the Marquis de Lafayette. He did not intend it to come as it did; but he was, as you know, impulsive, enthusiastic, and just a bit headstrong; he was an ardent believer in the liberty of the people, in "liberty, equality and fraternity," as the old watchwords used to run. But he only believed in liberty brought about and established through reason and order and law. He saw in what trouble and disorder the United States of America, were after the Revolution had secured the independence. They found it hard to maintain until a constitution and a president gave them union and order. So Lafayette desired for France first a constitution and a constitutional king, in order that the

liberty of the people and the real freedom of the nation might be both guarded and guided.

But to desire and to have are quite different things. France had no Washington as a guiding hand. Her king was weak and a Bourbon, – history will tell you what that means; her queen was frivolous and aristocratic; her ruling classes were haughty and arrogant; her people down-trodden and brutalized; and, between the highest and the lowest orders, stood the great middle class, swayed now this way and now that, as their desires changed, thinking only of Number One, and uncertain as to what they really did want. It was this conflicting, divided, envious, and hostile confusion of elements out of which young Lafayette hoped to bring his grand ideal of liberty. But even Lafayette was not Washington, as France was not America.

But Lafayette struggled nobly. In the Chief Council of the nation, styled the Assembly of Notables, he labored hard to bring the nobles and landowners of France to make France really free, and when the greater convention or congress of the people met, known as the National Assembly, in 1789, he brought before it a "declaration of rights" drawn up by him and founded upon, as it was copied after, Jefferson's Declaration of Independence. America, you see, was his idea of popular liberty.

But the king and the nobles, stupid in their obstinacy, and clinging foolishly to what they called

their inherited and "God-given" rights, would have none of Lafayette's Declaration of Independence; the people, just awakening to a knowledge of their own power, would go far beyond Lafayette's orderly independence. So the struggle, urged on by dissension, misunderstanding, selfishness, and greed, – to which was added that dawning knowledge of real power like that which can change a well-broken horse into a furious runaway, finally burst into that dreadful time of horror, crime, and death, known as the French Revolution the bloody Reign of Terror. It was a dreadful chapter in the world's story; but as, out of evil, good at last may come, so even the Reign of Terror served a glorious end, and helped secure, for all the world, that broader liberty, toward which for centuries the world had been struggling and which, in America, found its grandest success.

But, in France, liberty did not come in the right way, and though all France turned Benjamin Franklin's optimistic saying, "Go it! things will come 'round all right," into the popular song "Ca ira" (go it), Lafayette felt it was not "going" the right way, and nobly tried to stem the rising tide of lawless revolution.

He could not do it. The people rose against the king, against the court, against the nobility. First protected and then imprisoned by his own soldiers and his own subjects, the weak King Louis XVI gave in when he had to, ran off when he could, refused to die defending what he called his "rights" as he might have

done like a hero, and finally miserably ended his life on the scaffold, – the sad spectacle of a king who was no king murdered by subjects who refused to be subjects.

In the interest of law and order Lafayette strove in the Assembly as the protector of the liberties he pleaded for, and of the constitution he helped to make. He accepted the command of the National Guard, the volunteer army of France, numbering nearly three millions of men. But when the people, realizing their strength, broke over all bounds and swept away king, throne, law, and order, Lafayette strove valiantly to protect the weak and defend the defenseless, "the minister of humanity and order," so Mr. Bigelow describes him, "among a frenzied people who had come to regard order and humanity as phases of treason."

Again and again with his National Guardsmen he defended the king and the palace from assault and rescued the queen, "that Austrian," the people called her, from the infuriated mobs of Paris.

And yet, for all its terrors, this rising of the people had its grand side, and one that must have appealed strongly to such a liberty-lover as Lafayette. It had its picturesque side, too, as when, led by Lafayette, three hundred thousand Frenchmen before a monument to Liberty swore to defend the constitution – the king and queen of France last of all taking the oath of patriotism. It had its dramatic side, also, as when, on the

fourteenth of July, 1790, the people of Paris stormed and captured that hated stronghold of tyranny, the Bastille, or political prison of Paris, the key of which you may today see, as it hangs in the mansion at quiet Mount Vernon, the gift of Lafayette to Washington.

But the time came when even Lafayette could not hold back the storm. Gathering strength with their success, the people grew bolder and demanded more and more. The old monarchy was destroyed; the constitution was established, the king and queen were at the mercy of the people, ruled instead of ruling. In all of these things Lafayette believed. His American experience showed him the uselessness of aristocracy and the vanity of caste. When, in the National Assembly, a delegate demanded the abolition of titles of nobility, Lafayette at once agreed.

"Say not," he cried, "'Such a one has been made noble and count for having saved the state on such a day.' Say only, ' Such a one saved the state on such a day.' It seems to me that these words have something of an American character, precious fruit of the New World, which ought to aid much in rejuvenating the old one."

And, sincere in what he demanded, the Marquis de Lafayette dropped from his name both the "marquis" and the "de," titles that indicated so-called noble birth. He never used them again; and when, after the French Revolution was over, and emperors and kings ruled

again in France, all titles of nobility were restored, Lafayette, true to his convictions, never called himself nor suffered himself to be addressed as the Marquis de Lafayette. To the day of his death he knew himself only as General Lafayette.

Faster and heavier the billows of revolution and disorder broke against the throne of France. The throne itself tottered and fell; the king and queen were persecuted, imprisoned, and killed; from doing away with titles of nobility the people passed to doing away with the nobles themselves; fanatics and madmen took the place of republicans and patriots; the thirst for blood ran high in the unbridled people; murder and brutality came cruelly instead of law and order, and Lafayette, unable to stay the storm that he himself had helped to raise, resigned his position as commander of a guard he could not command, and, from the most powerful man in all France, became the most hated, by the nobles and royalists, because they held him responsible for all their troubles; by the people and their leaders, because he would not follow them across the borders of order and of law into anarchy and crime.

But when the nobles and royalists who could escape from France went about Europe stirring up trouble and urging the kings of other nations to take up arms against the French people, and war was actually declared, Lafayette rallied the soldiers of France to defend their home land from Austrian invasion and kingly assault. He took the field at the head of his army,

and, as he marched through Paris to the defence of the borders, the National Assembly bade him Godspeed, while its president solemnly declared that "the French people, which have sworn to conquer or die in the cause of liberty, will always confidently oppose to the



NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.
At the age of 22. From Geuse's pertrait.

world and to their enemies the Constitution and Lafayette!"

That was all "very French," as we say, of course; but you see, for the moment again, Lafayette had become the nation's hero and its chief reliance.

But where was the use of opposing "the Constitution and Lafayette" to enemies when those enemies were in force within the nation's councils, – when they were, in fact, the nation itself? The French people in the year 1789, like the runaway horse to which I have compared them, had taken the bit in their teeth; they broke free from all control, flung aside or trampled down those who would have restrained or guided them, and dashed away in a reckless and headlong gallop toward destruction, from which only a firm and masterful hand at last caught and saved them, the hand of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Among those thus flung aside was Lafayette. When Liberty became lawlessness and the rule of order became the reign of blood, Lafayette, distressed and disgusted, seeing that, because of the people themselves, he could not hope to make an America of France, turned upon the chief representatives of disorder, denounced them to their faces, and called upon the National Assembly, the direct representatives of the people, to suppress and punish them. But the chiefs of disorder the Jacobins as they were called – were the real rulers of France just then, and the

Assembly dared not and could not restrain them even had it wished. Instead, the hatred and anger of the Jacobins were turned upon the brave Lafayette who dared to withstand and denounce them; the hero of the nation, the friend of America, the valiant young general of France, became an exile and an outcast, denounced as a traitor by the Assembly he had helped to create, dismissed from his command of the army by the rulers he had dared to defy, and, with no choice except submission or death, turned his back on his country and fled for refuge into Belgium, there to remain, so he declared, "until he could some day be again of service to liberty to France."

His dreams of Americanizing France had come to a sad and sorry end. Once again he was a runaway from France, flying not to the aid of liberty, but from the curse of lawlessness.

Chapter 11

How He Fell from the Frying Pan into the Fire

With a few comrades, officers of the army who, like him, had been proclaimed traitors because they dared to criticize the overthrow of the constitution, the murder of the king, and the reign of lawlessness and blood, Lafayette rode sadly out of France, unable even to see or to counsel with the faithful wife and dear children among the Auvergne hills.

From Sedan, where he had been stationed and where the empire he labored to prevent came to a disastrous end, eighty years later, Lafayette and his companions crossed the border into Belgium at the little town of Bouillon. Lafayette had almost decided to make his way to England and there take ship to America; for he knew that, hated as much by the exiled nobility as by the fierce revolutionists of France, a home on either side of the French border was full of risk and danger. Even the path along which he and his companions rode was as dangerous as an ambush; for hidden foes lurked everywhere.

Austria was at war with France. Austrian troops and their Prussian allies threatened the borders of France and garrisoned the outposts of Belgium. At one of these outposts, the town of Rochefort in Belgium, Lafayette and his party were stopped because they had no papers or passports permitting them to proceed. So, one of Lafayette's friends rode to the nearest large town, Namur, to procure the proper passports. But when he told the authorities that these papers were desired for General Lafayette and his friends, at once there was trouble.

"Lafayette! the enemy of the monarchy and of established order? Never!" and fast on the heels of this refusal came orders from the Austrian headquarters to arrest and hold as prisoners Lafayette and his companions.

They were found at Liege; there they were arrested, and, in spite of Lafayette's indignant protest, and his claim that he was on neutral territory in Belgium, the party was held as prisoners; but Lafayette was made to understand by a secret message that if he would "recant," that is deny and give up his republican principles, and if he would give the enemies of France information by which they could push the war to success, he would be granted his liberty.

Of course you know the one indignant word that Lafayette would give as his answer to this hateful proposition. The man who had risked his life and given

so much of his fortune for liberty in America and freedom in France, who had stood beside Washington through the dark days of Arnold's treason, and had signed the death-warrant of Andre the spy, could make but one reply.

"Never!" he cried, indignantly, and then went willingly into the damp dungeon of the Prussian fortress at Wesel on the Rhine, where Charlemagne had battled for his homeland and German patriots had died for liberty. He who, had he been supported, would have saved France from ignominy and the king and queen from death; who had been hailed by his fellow countrymen as "Lafayette, for America and for Europe, the standard of liberty," was delivered into the hands of the enemies of liberty by the hatred of the friends of lawlessness.

Lafayette was thrust into a cold, damp cell and left there neglected and poorly fed until his health began to suffer, when he was again offered comforts and freedom if he would give up to the Austrians the public treasure which they charged him with taking from France, and would disclose to the enemy the military plans of the republican army. To the charge of embezzlement he replied with haughty contempt; to the bribe for treachery he again returned an indignant No.

The enemies of France felt that they had secured so important a French prisoner, – for to Lafayette, as the

chief apostle of liberty, the royalists of Europe charged all the upheaval in France, – that they removed him for greater security from the military prison at Wesel to the strong and famous fortress at Magdeburg on the Elbe, where Tilly wrought such horrors in the Thirty Years' War, and where Luther had sung in the streets for bread.

There for five months Lafayette lay in a damp and moldy cell, only eight feet by four in size, into which never came the light of the sun. But his honor and integrity were proof against persecution, threat, or bribe, and, as Prussia began to fear the strength of France, Lafayette was given into the keeping of France's bitterest foe, the emperor of Austria, and was by his Austrian captors secretly smuggled across the frontier. Then, with his name suppressed, identified only by a prison number, his very existence known to but a few trusted prison officials, the friend of America, the companion of Washington, the hero of two nations, was thrown into the secret, grave-like prison of the old convent at Olmutz, a fortress town of Moravia in Central Austria, hidden away from the reach of either friend or foe.

Both friends and foes of Lafayette existed in plenty. At first the foes seemed in the majority, for alike the embittered refugee royalists and the enraged republican fanatics of France threatened not only his own life but the lives of those he held most dear.

His devoted wife was arrested in the old chateau at Chavaniac, and but for her firm stand, her defiance of the madmen in power, and her stirring use of Lafayette's name and of the sacrifices he had made for liberty, both her own and her children's lives would have gone to swell the terrible lists of victims which have made the crimes of the Reign of Terror well-nigh



THE AUSTRIAN PRISON OF LAFAYETTE.
The Theresienthor gate of the Couvent-Castle of Olmutz.
Lafayette's dungeon was beneath this gate.
From a photograph taken in May, 1899.

blot out all the wonderful good that the uprising of the French people really accomplished for liberty, humanity, and progress. But France, let me again remind you, was not America; where one people was

sent to school to liberty, the other was thrust into it so suddenly that, naturally, as I have told you, they did the wrong thing first. And Madame Lafayette very nearly fell a victim to the unchecked rage of that wrong thing. The story of the wife of Lafayette should be known to every girl and boy, for it is one of heroism, devotion, and self-sacrifice sufficient to enroll her among the noble and historic women of the world.

She was imprisoned, persecuted, and threatened with death; but, though pressed hard by poverty when the state denounced Lafayette as an emigr'e, or runaway, and confiscated all his property and income, though she saw her friends and relatives die, one after another, beneath the knife of the murderous guillotine, as "enemies of France," Madame Lafayette still kept calm, determined, and high-spirited, working hard, first to discover the whereabouts of her captive husband, and next, to secure his release.

Through the American ministers resident in Europe she implored America to help her. She wrote to Washington, then President of the United States, begging him to intercede with the powers of Europe for Lafayette's release. And when, at last, she learned the place of her husband's secret imprisonment, through letters smuggled to her through the American minister, she begged of the republican tyrants of France and the imperial tyrant of Austria the privilege of sharing her husband's imprisonment.

You would have thought this example of devotion and self-sacrifice would have softened the hearts of her persecutors. But it did not. Chavaniac was put up for public sale. Madame Lafayette, as the wife of a "runaway," and as herself an "aristocrat," was torn from her children and flung into the overcrowded district prison, from which at last she was transferred to Paris, and imprisoned in that very Convent of de Plessis, where, you may remember, her husband as a boy had once gone to school; and there she was again and again brought face to face with death – for her nobility!



THE WIFE OF LAFAYETTE.
Madame Adrienne de Lafayette. From an etching by Rosenthal.

The condemnation, however, did not come. The American minister, Governor Morris, of New York, to whom, you may remember, Lafayette first applied for service in America, and who, from lending her money in her poverty to standing up bravely in her defence at the risk of his own life as well as of hers, had done all he could to lessen the sufferings and save the life of the wife of Lafayette, now boldly dared the Committee of Safety, who were the chief butchers of France, to lay a

hand on the wife of Lafayette. It was this last word of Morris, as he was sent back to America because he had too much sympathy with the victims of French "liberty," that saved Madame Lafayette's life.

"If you kill the wife of Lafayette," he said to the bloodthirsty "Committee of Safety," which was considering her case, "all the enemies of the Republic and of popular liberty will rejoice; you will make America hostile, and justify England in her slanders against you."

It was bold talk and, as I have told you, it cost the brave Morris his office; but it had its effect. On the day of her examination in court the Chief Commissioner was especially insolent.

"I have old scores against you," he said to the wife of Lafayette. "I detest you, your husband, and your name."

Madame Lafayette never faltered in her high spirit.

"I shall always defend my husband," she answered, fearlessly, "and as for a name – there is no wrong in that."

"You are insolent," shouted the angry commissioner; but he did not order to execution the wife of Lafayette!

Then, suddenly, came a revolt against the leaders, as one party in France rose against the other. On the twenty-second of January, 1795, the prison doors were opened and Madame Lafayette was set free.

She hurried at once to Chavaniac, which had been purchased for her by one of her friends, gathered her children together, sent her only son George flying to America to the care and guardianship of Washington, and then, as another Reign of Terror seemed approaching in the fierce war of party hatred, she obtained permission to leave France. At once she crossed into Germany, where she was helped with money and papers by the American consuls, and travelled under the name of "Mrs. Motier, of Hartford, in Connecticut," to the Austrian frontier, proceeding at once to Vienna, and demanding of the emperor one favor only, – permission to share her husband's captivity.

Meantime, that captivity had not been without its excitements. Imprisoned in a dark, damp fortress; never addressed by name, and known only by a number; separated from his comrades in misery, allowed neither knife nor fork for fear he might kill himself; deprived of his books, his liberty, and his name, Lafayette's naturally strong constitution weakened under the strain and he fell seriously ill, after a few months of this imprisonment.

But though his constitution weakened, his spirit and his faith did not diminish. With his only pen, a toothpick dipped in lime-juice, dirt-made ink, or even in blood, he wrote these words: "The cause of the people is, to me, as sacred as ever. For that I would give my blood, drop by drop; I should reproach myself at

every instant of my life that was not devoted to the cause." And, alone, in his dreary cell he remembered the birthday of American freedom, and kept the Fourth of July as a holiday and a holy day.

At last his health became so bad that the prison authorities, not wishing to lose so illustrious a prisoner, permitted him to take the air every day, walking or riding, but strongly guarded. Then it was that an escape was planned.

There was living at that time in Vienna a young fellow whose name you may recall, – Francis Kinlock Huger. He was the young American who, as a small boy, had stood beside his father in the open doorway of a South Carolina seashore mansion and, at midnight, amid his dogs and his torches, had welcomed Lafayette to America. His father had been a continental colonel attached to Lafayette's command in Virginia, and young Frank Huger had retained so deep an admiration for his hero that here he was in Vienna, trying to obtain tidings as to his whereabouts.

These came at last. For there met him in Vienna a certain German physician and admirer of Lafayette, Doctor Bollman by name, a stranger to young Huger, but holding a kindred sentiment, admiration for Lafayette.

"Lafayette is in Olmutz," the doctor told Frank Huger; and then he explained how he had ferreted out the hiding-place of their hero. He had misled and

shrewdly used, as a go-between, the physician who was visiting the sick man in prison, and by means of chemical paper and sympathetic ink he had actually communicated with Lafayette (whom, by the way, he had never seen) and arranged a plan of escape to be attempted on some day when the prisoner was taking his "constitutional."

Young Frank Huger entered heartily into Doctor Bollman's plot, and together the two conspirators made ready their signals, their horses, and their plan of attack and way for escape. By ink and candle Lafayette had read their secret writing; he had thus learned part of their plans in his behalf, and one day, in November, 1794, as he rode out, accompanied by an officer and two soldiers as his guard, Doctor Bollman and Frank Huger made their effort at rescue. Lafayette and the officer left the carriage for a walk along the road; the carriage, with the soldiers, drove on ahead; then, when it was far in advance, Bollman and Huger, watching from their saddles for just this opportunity, charged swiftly upon Lafayette's companion while the prisoner, turning upon him, snatched at his unsheathed sword and tried to disarm him. But the Austrian was plucky and fought his assailants savagely; for while Huger held the horses the doctor ran to the assistance of the marquis, whose strength had been sapped by his sickness and imprisonment.

The guards, alarmed at the attempt at rescue, made no effort to support their officer, but drove madly off for help; the officer fought so desperately that he bit and wounded Lafayette in the hand; but he was at last thrown to the ground and held there by the German doctor.

Frank Huger, still holding both the restless horses with one hand, helped to gag the overpowered Austrian with his handkerchief. Being thus single-handed he could not hold both the horses, and one of them, with a jerk, broke from the young man's grasp and dashed away. Bollman thrust a purse with money into Lafayette's hand and, still holding down the struggling Austrian, cried out to Lafayette in English, so that the officer might not understand his words: "Get to Hoff! Get to Hoff!"

Lafayette, excited and upset by what looked like a successful escape, was too intent on getting away to take special notice of the doctor's directions. He supposed him to be merely saying, "Get off; get off," and, with Frank Huger's help, springing to the saddle of the remaining horse, he galloped off a free man. But never thinking about Hoff, at which town his rescuers had arranged for fresh horses, Lafayette took the first and, of course, the wrong road. It led to Jagerndorf on the German frontier, and the relay of horses at Hoff was missed. But before he reached Jagerndorf his horse gave out and, while trying to get a fresh one in the

unfamiliar town, he was recognized, arrested, and taken back to his dreary prison cell at Olmutz.

Bollman and Huger, disappointed in their plans by this unfortunate mix-up of the German "Hoff" and the English "off," were also arrested while searching for the lost Lafayette. They were at once thrown into prison, chained, starved, and nearly tortured to death, while Lafayette in his solitary cell was persecuted with fresh punishment, forbidden to speak or be spoken to, and, neglected, ragged and in solitude, lost alike his health and his spirits, believing himself forgotten and forsaken by all the world.

The only words spoken to him were the lies of his guards as to the fate in store for his friends, the doctor and the young American, and the hints as to his own fate.

It is pleasant to know, however, that the two men who made so gallant an attack at rescue did not die in an Austrian prison. After eight months in their dungeons they were set free by the clemency of an Austrian magistrate and exiled from the country. They both went to America, where Doctor Bollman became a political adventurer and Aaron Burr's right-hand man in his unsuccessful conspiracy against the republic. He would have been seriously punished had not Lafayette remembered his attempted services at Olmutz and begged President Jefferson to set the doctor free. Young Frank Huger lived to welcome the hero he so

admired when, in 1824, Lafayette made his last visit to America.

But if Lafayette's rescuers were set free, the general was not. Closely and cruelly guarded, he dragged on a miserable existence in his Olmutz dungeon until the first day of October, 1795. Worn out, alike in mind and body, he was sitting, in the early morning, in the solitude of his cell when, with a rattle and a clank, the bolt of his cell door was pushed aside. It was not the hour either for guard or doctor.

"It is my summons to execution," Lafayette said to himself, – a summons he was always anticipating. So, calling up all his courage, he rose to face his fate like the hero that he was.

The door swung open, the guards lined the entrance, and there, beneath the crossed swords of the soldiers, Lafayette, as if in a dream, saw advancing to meet him, his wife and his two young daughters!

Can you imagine anything more dramatic or dumfounding? The poor man was simply speechless with surprise and joy; the reaction and the surprise quite overcame him, and it was hours before he could talk with his wife and children, and a whole day before he dared to ask of France and her condition.

Madame Lafayette had carried her point. She saw the emperor of Austria, won him over by her determined devotion, and secured from him

permission to share, with her daughters, her husband's captivity.

They drove at once to Olmutz, and, as the walls of the fortress came in sight, the devoted and noble woman, even though on her way to prison, broke out with the chant of thanksgiving she had learned as a girl in her convent school to sing in acknowledgment for mercies received from heaven: "Blessed be God that liveth forever, and blessed be his kingdom; I will extol my God and my soul shall praise the King of Heaven."

Lafayette's health and spirits returned in these new conditions and, with his wife and daughters, he made for a time a happy home, in spite of all the discomforts of that dreary prison of Olmutz. But the taint of prison-life soon touched them all. The girls fell ill of prison-fever, and their mother of blood poisoning. But when at last she felt that something must be done, and appealed to the emperor for permission to visit Vienna and consult a doctor, the heartless reply came, "Only on condition that you do not go back to Olmutz."

She would not desert her husband.

"I will never expose myself to the horrors of another separation from my husband," she declared; and so she and her daughters stayed on, enduring privation, sickness, and the risk of death rather than abandon the father who would not yield up his principles for his liberty.

"Swear to me," demanded Lafayette, of his friends, who urged the emperor to release him "not to plead for me on any occasion except in a way compatible with my principles."

The whole civilized world became interested in the Lafayette case. England and America joined hands in attempting to secure the patriot's release. The British general whom he had fought at Brandywine moved Parliament again and again to interfere in behalf of Lafayette; and Fox, the great English orator, added his eloquence to plead "in favor," so he said, "of a noble character, which will flourish in the annals of the world, and live in the veneration of posterity, when kings, and the crowns they wear, will be no more regarded than the dust to which they must return."

This, from the generous foe in England; and from America came appeal after appeal. Washington, setting aside his expressed determination never to mix in European politics, wrote to the courts of Prussia and Austria imploring and demanding the release of his friend. Jefferson and Jay, Morris and Marshall and Monroe, worked and labored for the same end; but America was not loved in the tyrannical courts of Europe, and neither English eloquence nor American petitions moved the jailers of Lafayette.

But a new star was rising in the skies of France while Lafayette lay in the dungeon of Olmutz. Napoleon Bonaparte was springing into fame and striding on to

power. In 1796 he crossed the Alps into Italy, overthrew and crushed the might of Austria, and, almost before the walls of Vienna, dictated terms to which the humbled emperor of Austria was obliged to submit. And the only condition upon which Napoleon would sign the treaty of peace was the instant liberation of Lafayette.

It was a bitter pill for the emperor of Austria to swallow. He hedged and dodged and hesitated. But he was forced to come to it at last; and on the seventeenth of September, 1797, after five years of imprisonment, Lafayette with his wife and children walked out of Olmutz prison a free man. But the emperor of Austria was an obstinate man; he would not acknowledge the murderers of Marie Antoinette, as he deemed the French. So Lafayette was formally delivered by the Austrian authorities to the charge of the American consul, with the assurance of the emperor that "Monsieur the Marquis de Lafayette was released from imprisonment simply because of the emperor's desire to favor and gratify America!"

But all the world knew that the real deliverer was not America, but Napoleon Bonaparte, the young Corsican conqueror, whom Austria feared but obeyed and hated.

Chapter 12

Why He Came to America for the Fourth Time

Napoleon Bonaparte had liberated Lafayette from an Austrian prison, not because he loved Lafayette, but because he was a shrewd man bent on strengthening his popularity at the expense of Austria and Germany, and in apparent concession to the wishes of France and America.

It was a splendid exhibition of the power possessed by this young general of the army of France, whose success had already surprised and startled the world. But the ban of exile and the sentence for treason passed upon Lafayette by the rulers of France was not at once removed, and, though freed from prison, he could not return to France.

He came from his Olmutz dungeon poor in health, in pocket, and in opportunity. Kings and nobles hated him "as the mainspring" of republicanism; the democrats of France were enraged against him because he boldly opposed their methods. He had no place to

call his home; his fortune was swept away; he was even dependent upon others for the necessaries of life.

But friends Lafayette never lacked. They seemed to be raised up for him always in times of need. Washington, you remember, had sent Madame Lafayette money in her deepest distress; he had welcomed and provided for Lafayette's son when the boy was shipped off to America. As soon as he heard of Lafayette's release, he sent the lad home at his own expense, and with a loving letter to Lafayette. Other Americans hastened to show their appreciation, while two Englishwomen, strangers to the illustrious exile, opportunely died and, in their wills, left to Lafayette legacies amounting to over fifteen thousand dollars.

Holland, the only nation in Europe that was not influenced by envy or hatred, offered to Lafayette the exile, as generations before she had offered to the fugitive Puritans of England, a refuge and a home. In the town of Vianen, in Central Holland, not far from the city of Utrecht, the Lafayettes made their home. After awhile, however, Madame Lafayette discovered that there was a chance to save some of her own property; so she went to France to recover what she could, to turn what she might into money to relieve her husband of the debts he so detested, and to report to him on the political condition of France, and when it would be safe for him to return.

The political conditions soon took on a new phase. Victorious over the enemies of France and over France's republican rulers, Napoleon Bonaparte, after his dazzling though disastrous campaign amid the Pyramids, returned to France from his Egyptian campaign in 1799, to take a hand in the political upheaval in France, and to put a stern and sudden end to the long reign of blood and terror there. He overthrew the Directory, as the rulers of France were called; he drove back the allied armies that were threatening France, and, himself, took the chief position as head of the nation. He called himself First Consul of the Republic; but he was really, however, dictator and absolute ruler. The nation was tired of blood and welcomed the strong hand of a master. Again, as you see, France was not America.

Lafayette was delighted. He did not yet see through the real Napoleon; he saw only the liberator, – the soldier who had saved the republic from anarchy, and placed it, as he believed, on the road to popular liberty. He was soon to learn the real truth.

Madame Lafayette in France had already, by her shrewdness and ability, rescued so much of her own property from the wreck that she was able to make a home out of the chateau of Lagrange, about forty miles from Paris, left her by her murdered mother; and now that the Directory, to which Lafayette would not yield, seemed about to be overthrown by Bonaparte, she worked hard for her husband's return to France.

At his wife's suggestion, Lafayette wrote to Napoleon a letter of thanks and confidence, although, as he declared, he wrote it to please her rather than himself; for Lafayette never would and never could surrender his principles, and Napoleon was still a puzzle to him.

Scarcely had that letter been received by Bonaparte, before he seated himself in the chair of state as First Consul. Rumor had it that Lafayette was to be made general of the armies of France; the republican governor of the Dutch city of Utrecht gave as the password for the day "Liberty, Paris, and Lafayette," and the fugitive, feeling that his long exile was indeed over, crossed the borders into France, and was soon in Paris – home again!

But he had been, as you boys say, "too previous." Liberty – the liberty Lafayette desired – had by no means come to France. Napoleon aimed to be the master and not the servant of France, and although, for policy, he had freed Lafayette, he had no wish to see the former hero of France the father of France's constitutional liberty – at home again where he might, by his influence and his actions, be able to put obstacles in the path of Napoleon Bonaparte's progress to a throne.

So when the First Consul heard that Lafayette had returned to France, he was very angry, and began to threaten and scold; but once again Madame Lafayette,

watchful for her husband's safety, went to Napoleon, and, while not lowering Lafayette's dignity nor excusing his principles, pleaded so earnestly for his comfort and spoke so eloquently of the love he bore for France and the sacrifices he had made for his country, that Napoleon's anger was dispelled and his jealousy conquered. When, too, he felt assured that Lafayette had no desire to set himself against the First Consul nor to force his way into politics, the master of France restored to the exile his citizenship, his property, and his rank in the army, all of which had been taken from him by the republican tyrants of France.

But Lafayette was not the man to sit quietly by and see the republic turned into an empire. The Consul and the general became friends, to a certain extent, because each one saw the strong qualities in the other. Napoleon, indeed, really admired, even though he distrusted Lafayette; and the patriotic Frenchman felt that, if but the First Consul were true to his promises, the French republic might be made as free and independent as the United States.

"I have but one wish, general," said Lafayette to Napoleon, – "a free government and you at the head of it."

He soon discovered, however, that his idea of freedom was quite different from that of Napoleon. Each felt a fear as to the possible actions of the other, and their friendship was neither deep nor lasting.

Lafayette soon began to fathom the ambitious designs of Napoleon, and he could not be bribed by the advances or offers that were made him. Napoleon wished him to take office under the government; he asked him to become a senator or to accept the agreeable post of ambassador to the United States; but none of these would Lafayette take, fearing lest an obligation be attached; and when he was made, by the vote of his neighbors, an "elector" of his department he won the enmity of Napoleon by refusing to vote to make the First Consul a dictator or, as the title ran, "Consul for life."

Gradually these two men who, had they but been able to work together for good results, might have done so much for France and liberty and human progress, drew apart more and more. Napoleon, bent upon his personal advancement, could not forgive Lafayette's hostility to his plans. He called Lafayette a "noodle," and yet he wished for his good opinion above that of any man in France. He took a petty revenge by personal slights, such as withholding promotion from Lafayette's son George, who had become a gallant soldier of France; and yet, beneath his hostility, Napoleon had so great a respect for Lafayette's abilities that he would have purchased his friendship at almost any price.

But, as you do not need to be told, Lafayette's friendship could not be purchased; the love he gave to Washington the liberator could not be won by

Napoleon the dictator. His love of real liberty was "not transferable."

"Every time, General Bonaparte," said Lafayette one day, when the Consul complained of his attitude toward the government, "that I am asked whether your government accords with my ideas of liberty, I shall answer No; because, when all is said and done, general, though I wish to be a prudent man, I will not be a false one; I will not be a renegade."

That was Lafayette's chief characteristic, unflinching integrity and absolute loyalty to his convictions; it is what has made good men great, as it made Washington and Lincoln the greatest of men.

When at last Napoleon Bonaparte's ambition and greed for greatness led him to the final step of usurpation; when he yielded to the temptation that only Washington was great enough to resist; when the little Corsican lieutenant ascended the throne of France as the Emperor Napoleon, the last hope, to which, in spite of all, Lafayette had held in this remarkable man, fell to the ground. He was disappointed, disgusted, distressed. He resisted all attempts that were made to bring him over to the emperor, and, retiring to his estates in the country, at Lagrange and Chavaniac, he devoted himself to farming and tried to forget the sad ending to his lifelong dream of a free French republic.

Napoleon was so deeply hurt by Lafayette's action that he was infuriated. Probably, too, he knew in his heart that Lafayette was as right as he was steadfast, and that increased his anger.

"Gentlemen," he said, hotly, to his chief councillors, in the midst of a tirade against the men who had first upset the monarchy and brought about the Revolution in France, "this talk is not aimed at you; I know your devotion to the throne. Everybody in France is corrected. I was thinking of the only man who is not, – Lafayette. He has never retreated an inch."

It was a compliment to Lafayette's courage and loyalty, was it not? It was an acknowledgment of his greatness even while it was an attack upon him. To what extent Napoleon would have gone in his anger at Lafayette I cannot say. He would certainly have arrested and imprisoned him had he dared. But even this self-seeking emperor dared not go too far and touch the man who was still a hero to the French people – a hero because always a soldier of liberty.

There came a great plot against the life of Napoleon, and the emperor would, if he could, have charged Lafayette with being concerned in it.

"Don't be afraid," said his brother Joseph. "Wherever there are aristocrats and kings you are certain not to find Lafayette."

In the midst of his troubles with the emperor came more serious ones at home. Lafayette, by a fall on the

ice, broke his thigh-bone, and was only saved by the torture of an unskillful surgery which kept his leg whole but left the general lame for life.

"Never mind," he said, after the worst of the blunder was over; "humanity will benefit by the experiment. I am glad of it."

Next his wife fell ill. Her terrible prison experiences in Paris and at Olmutz had made her a hopeless invalid and slowly sapped her strength, until, on Christmas eve in the year 1807, she died – as noble an example of a real woman and of entire self-sacrifice as any we can find in history.

Lafayette mourned her death deeply, and the tribute he paid to her memory was at once tender and strong.

"During the thirty-four years of a union, in which the love and the elevation, the delicacy and the generosity of her soul charmed, adorned, and honored my days," he says, "I was so much accustomed to all that she was to me, that I did not distinguish her from my own existence. Her heart wedded all that interested me. I thought that I loved her and needed her; but it is only in losing her that I can at last clearly see the wreck of me that remains for the rest of my life; for there only remain for me memories of the woman to whom I owed the happiness of every moment, undimmed by any cloud."

Her portrait, in a medallion, hung ever after about his neck. The anniversary of her death was always spent by him as a solitary and sacred anniversary, and the world can add to its regard for Lafayette the hero a yet deeper regard for the appreciative husband who could bear so closely on his heart the memory of "Adrienne," his loving, faithful, devoted helper, friend, and wife.



LAFAYETTE MOURNING FOR HIS WIFE.

"*He mourned her death deeply, and the tribute he paid her was at once tender and strong.*"

Through all the glory and all the grandeur of the Emperor Napoleon's reign Lafayette remained in retirement at Lagrange. Amid the wreck and ruin of that dazzling empire Lafayette's first thought was for his dear France. When Napoleon was driven from France and the allied armies of Europe entered the conquered capital, the general who once had saved the city wept over its present downfall and capture. Then, when the brother of the murdered King Louis sat upon the throne as Louis XVIII, Lafayette dreamed again that a

new France with a constitutional king might arise out of the ruins of Napoleon's empire, and he hastened to offer his services to the new king.

But Louis XVIII of France was that same Count of Provence whom Lafayette, in his youth, as you may remember, took pains to anger in order that he need not be attached to his person as a follower and courtier at the court of France. The new king, like the Bourbon he was, never forgot nor forgave. He hated Lafayette and his republican principles, and did not wish his services even while he felt that it would not do to belittle or make an enemy of the most independent man in France.

And Lafayette, it must be confessed, did not like King Louis XVIII. But, even before this new King Louis had a chance to try his hand at governing, the exiled emperor at Elba came again to France, and by the strength and splendor of his name sent the weak Bourbon king flying for his life, and aroused all France to a brief but vociferous welcome for "the emperor."

Lafayette could not believe in the pledges and promises that Napoleon, again on the throne, made to the people of France. But they sounded well; so, hopeful as ever, the patriot of the Revolution became what he had refused to be under the absolute emperor, a member of the Chamber of Deputies; largely, however, it may be said, in order to restrain and check the power of the returned exile.

Then came Waterloo and Napoleon's final downfall. Lafayette had firmly demanded his abdication, and when the "Little Corporal" was sent a prisoner to St. Helena, and a provisional government was formed in France, Lafayette, the veteran of two revolutions, tried to remake the government under the same Declaration of Rights he had prepared for it in 1789.

But times had changed; and when Lafayette was sent by the government to make terms with the allied armies, the provisional government itself played false with him; for, while he was striving for an honorable peace, they brought back the Bourbon King Louis XVIII, in whom Lafayette had no faith.

The old patriot again found himself deceived in the rulers of France, who, to him, seemed blind to real liberty, and bent only on their own selfish desires. He was speedily stung to action by the stupid follies of this Bourbon king, whom he had as good as called a fool in his boyhood, and by those of his councillors who tried to help the king put things back where they were before the Revolution as if things could ever be put back! Still dreaming only of the welfare of France, Lafayette conspired for the overthrow of the Bourbon king, and had very nearly accomplished his purpose, when the plot was discovered. Again he tried, and again, by blunders, was the conspiracy brought to failure. Lafayette was known to be connected with these plots, but no convicting evidence could be found, and neither

the king nor his ministers dared to make a prisoner of him or even to call him to account. The old hero, you see, was still a very important man in France.

Again he withdrew from public life and went to live among his children and grandchildren in the chateau of Lagrange. He was sixty-six years old; but, even as he was a man among men, so he was a child with the children; adored and reverenced by them all; the joy and centre of the big family which he gathered about him on his estates. Then, suddenly, he determined to go over the sea and again revisit America.

Through all the ups and downs of his eventful life, while France alternately exalted and exiled him, and her terribly changing story changed his life as well, one land steadfastly honored, loved, and appreciated him, the land for whose independence he had risked his life and fortune, in whose service he had been wounded, and in whose liberation he had borne a foremost part: America.

Lafayette's correspondents in America were many, from Washington down. He watched America's steady growth and progress, rejoiced at it, and felt himself part of it. Her festival anniversaries were also his; and even in the gloom of his prison at Olmutz, as I told you, two July holidays were always fervently kept by him, the fourth of July which gave America independence, and the fourteenth of July when the destruction of the

Bastile (that terrible prison of Paris) opened the way to French liberty.

When France misunderstood and banished him, when the royalties of Europe feared and imprisoned him, and the loss of his large estates, swept away by confiscation, reduced him to poverty, it was America that remembered and sought to aid him. Morris and Monroe, American ministers to France, helped his wife with money and with protection in time of danger. Washington, as you know, again and again applied for Lafayette's release, or sought to lighten the horrors of his imprisonment, and there are few things that better show the delicacy, tact, and generosity of our noblest American than his letter to Madame Lafayette, accompanying the money sent for her necessities.

"Madame," he wrote her from Philadelphia, where in 1793 he was living as President of the United States, "if I had words that would convey to you an adequate idea of my feelings on the present situation of the Marquis de Lafayette, this letter would appear to you in a different garb. The sole object in writing to you now is to inform you that I have deposited in the hands of Nicholas Van Staphorst, of Amsterdam, two thousand three hundred and ten gilders, Holland currency, equal to two hundred guineas, subject to your orders. This sum is, I am certain, the least I am indebted for services rendered to me by the Marquis de Lafayette, of which I have never yet received the account. I could add much, but it is best, perhaps, that

I should say little on this subject. Your goodness will supply the deficiency."

What those "services" were Washington knew, although there was no account of them on paper; and those services were equally appreciated by the American people whose sympathy went out to "the marquis" in all his troubles and sacrifices. Congress voted him money to pay an unclaimed salary for his services as a general in the American army; eleven thousand acres of Ohio lands were voted him as a further compensation; a large tract in Louisiana was given him, and when the vast territory of Louisiana came by purchase into the possession of the United States, Jefferson, then President, urged him to come to the new territory which he would find to be, in its welcome to him, "a land trembling beneath his feet." The representatives of the United States in France followed up President Jefferson's request by a formal invitation to Lafayette to become the governor of the great Louisiana territory, and friends, in Congress and out, begged him to make America his home.

But Lafayette was, as you know, first of all a Frenchman and a patriot. To him, even in defeat and exile, his duty was to serve France, and what Lafayette believed to be his duty he did, unhesitatingly and devotedly.

When, in 1798, France and America seemed on the verge of war, Lafayette was deeply distressed, and he

wrote to Washington assuring him that France, most of all, desired peace with America, though its exiled aristocrats and its foemen of England would do their best to force the two republics into war by their plots and schemes.

"But you are there, my dear general," he said to Washington, "independent of all parties, venerated by all; and if, as I hope, your informant leads you to judge favorably of the disposition of the French government, your influence ought to prevent the breach from widening, and should ensure a noble and durable reconciliation."

The reconciliation came through the wisdom and will of the rising master of France, Napoleon Bonaparte, who saw the folly and the danger of a war between the former allied nations, and Lafayette, still an exile from his native land, rejoiced greatly.

So, through all the changes and experiences of those forty eventful years that had passed since he left America ("soon, however, to visit you again," as he had assured Washington in his farewell to the United States), his interest and affection alike had turned toward the land which had remembered him in misfortune, which had welcomed his son, a fugitive from France, and assisted his wife in her poverty, her privation, and her noble self-sacrifice.

The republic too, you may be sure, had not forgotten the friend and hero of its days of struggle.

The thirteen colonies had grown into twenty-four free, independent, and prosperous States; their population had increased from three millions to twelve; and their possessions stretched from sea to sea. The President of the United States of America was that James Monroe, soldier of the Revolution and minister to France, who had helped the Lafayettes in distress, and who loved "the marquis" as a brother and a patriot.

The first half century of American independence drew near, and the Congress of the United States, recalling the stirring days that led to liberty and Lafayette's wonderful part therein, voted unanimously that President Monroe be requested to invite General Lafayette to visit America as the guest of the United States.

President Monroe joyfully and very happily acted as Congress desired, and placed at the service of Lafayette a warship of the American navy to bring him across the sea.

Lafayette received the invitation with pleasure. He was sixty-seven years old and had gone through many harsh and sad experiences. But his heart was as young, his desire as great, his love for the United States as strong as ever. The sea voyage had few terrors for him in view of the welcome awaiting him on the farther shore, and it must be confessed that General Lafayette did enjoy hero-worship, when he played the part of the hero.

He declined, however, to accept the proffered war-ship. He wished to visit the land of Washington without too much display, and he chose to sail by a regular passenger vessel, a ship of peace rather than one of war.

So, on the thirteenth of July, in the year 1824, bidding adieu to his dear home in France, Lafayette, with his son George Washington Lafayette and his private secretary, went aboard the American merchant-ship "Cadmus" at Havre, and set sail for America.

The French government, with whom Lafayette, as an "independent," was no more popular than he had been under the empire and the republic, took great pains to prevent any show of popular enthusiasm for the famous Frenchman as he left his native shores. But as he sailed out of Havre, the American vessels in the harbor ran up all their flags in his honor, and fired their guns in joyful salute; and with this intimation of America's rejoicing at his visit greeting his eyes and ears even as he left his silent fatherland, Lafayette sailed over the seas to the mightier welcome that was awaiting him on the shores of the great republic for whose independence he had fought, and in whose glory he had lot and part.

Chapter 13

How He Returned to France and Fame

This famous visit of Lafayette to the United States in 1824 is one of the brightest spots in the history of America. It was the spontaneous welcome by an appreciative people extended to a man whose story was familiar to all, and dear to all.

They were the sons and successors of the men by whose side the young Frenchman had fought for independence. He was an old man now. The chief actors had passed away; only a few remained, after forty intervening years, to recall the old associations and extend a comrade's welcome to the gallant Frenchman whose whole life had been a struggle for popular liberty.

But that welcome, extended by the sons of those who had known him, and by the land he had helped to free, was enthusiastic and American from the instant of his arrival in New York harbor on the fifteenth of August, 1824. Along the Battery-line thousands of soldiers were drawn up in salute; behind them, forty

thousand people gathered in welcome, and as the steamboat "Chancellor Livingston," bearing the nation's guest from the "Cadmus" off Staten Island, and escorted by four other gaily decorated craft, brought Lafayette to the Battery - landing, the noise of echoing cheers, booming cannon, and stirring music told "the marquis" that America had not forgotten his services, and was proud to recall and commemorate them in this vociferous welcome.

From one end to the other of the thirteen colonies which he had helped make into twenty-four sovereign States, from Maine to Georgia the nation's guest travelled in one continuous "personally conducted tour." He revisited the old places dear to him by the memories and associations of his early days. He pointed out the spot where, in his first battle, he fell wounded upon the field of Brandywine; he traced the lines of the old redoubt at Yorktown, against which his soldiers charged in triumph; at Camden, in South Carolina, he laid the corner-stone of the monument erected to the memory of the famous German "baron" who had been his companion in his runaway voyage to America, the brave and mysterious De Kalb; on the crest of Bunker Hill in Massachusetts he laid the corner-stone of America's most historic monument; and before the tomb of Washington, at Mount Vernon, he stood with uncovered head and swiftly falling tears, with his son beside him, his memory recalling all that was good and gracious and fatherly and imperishable

in that old-time friendship of the man and the boy "my dear general" and "my young soldier."

Receptions that would have been wearisome had not affection and enthusiasm been their source and spring; speeches that would have bored a less appreciative soul; journeys which, in the crude condition of those days of imperfect communications, would have been fatiguing had not the French veteran joined to a strong constitution a curiosity to see new sections of a growing nation, all these and all the other inconveniences and dangers as well as the hospitalities and delights of a hero's triumphal progress he accepted and enjoyed for the space of a year and a month, and the memory of that historic visit has never yet died from the recollection of Americans.

Even as I write these words I clip from a newspaper just delivered at my door this extract from the letter of an eye-witness, Mr. Freeman Foster, of Arlington, Massachusetts, now an old man of ninety-two, then a boy of eighteen:

"I also took part," he writes, in proud and garrulous recollection, "in the welcome extended to Lafayette, in 1824, by the people of our country. The numbers now are small who were active at that period. I was eighteen years of age at that time, and living at Dunstable, now Nashua, New Hampshire, and, with several other young men, had organized a band, playing on various musical instruments, clarinets, bugles, fifes, etc. When

Lafayette visited the capital of New Hampshire, the governor ordered out the Independent Company of Cadets of Dunstable, Captain Israel Hunt, commander, and they engaged our band for the occasion. We were ordered to escort Lafayette over the line from Massachusetts into New Hampshire. We went in carriages from Dunstable, and stayed over night at a tavern in the town of Bow. The next morning the governor ordered us to cross the Merrimac River into Pembroke. In a short time we met the procession escorting the man who stood next to Washington in the hearts of the people. He was in an open carriage drawn by six dapple-gray horses; his son followed in a carriage drawn by four iron-grays; his portrait was on almost everything at that time, on our handkerchiefs, as well as in the hats we wore, and even if he had not been so prominent a figure, we should readily have recognized him. We halted and saluted him. We then recrossed the bridge, escorting the procession to Concord, into the grounds in front of the State House. He entered the building and addressed the people from the balcony. The day was warm, and we, tired with the march and our heavy uniforms, lay down on the grass to rest. If there should be any of that little company still living, this reminiscence will recall the events of that day to their minds." So the present and the past touch hands in grateful memories of that time of jubilee, and in the hearts of eighty millions of Americans today lives the memory of the man who knew and struggled for

their independence when their numbers scarce counted three millions, and who rejoiced with them again when, within half a century, he moved among those three millions already grown to twelve.

It is one of the proud memories of my own family that my mother when a very small girl received a bow from Lafayette as his carriage paused before her home, and that he took a glass of water from my uncle's hand. And it was on that very day when escorted by a great procession, in the midst of music and shouts and cheers, he rode on to lay the corner-stone of Bunker Hill monument and hear from the lips of Daniel Webster, America's greatest orator, those famous words of welcome:

"Fortunate, fortunate man! with what measure of devotion will you not thank God for the circumstances of your extraordinary life! You are connected with both hemispheres and with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain that the electric spark of liberty should be conducted, through you, from the New World to the Old; and we, who are now here to perform this duty of patriotism, have all of us, long ago, received it from our fathers to cherish your name and your virtues. You now behold the field, the renown of which reached you in the heart of France and caused a thrill in your ardent bosom. . . . Those who survived that day and whose lives have been prolonged to the present hour, are now around you. . . . Behold they now stretch forth their feeble arms to embrace you! Behold, they raise their

trembling voices to invoke the blessing of God on you and yours forever."

Twice did Lafayette visit Washington, the capital of the nation; twice did he receive the greeting and the thanks of Congress, and the treasurer of the United States was directed to pay to General Lafayette, as a substantial recognition and appreciation of services that could never be sufficiently recognized or appreciated, the sum of two hundred thousand dollars.

In the presence of Congress he stood while every member sprang to his feet in applauding welcome, and the tall Speaker of the House, America's most popular man for a generation, Henry Clay of Kentucky, towering above the red-wigged, heavy-featured, homely but gracious and gallant old Frenchman, extended his hand and raised his voice in greeting.

"The vain wish has been sometimes indulged," said Henry Clay to Lafayette, "that Providence would allow the patriot, after death, to return to his country and to contemplate the immediate changes which had taken place; to view the forests felled, the cities built, the mountains leveled, the canals cut, the highways constructed, the progress of the arts, the advancement of learning, and the increase of population. General, your present visit to the United States is a realization of the consoling object of that wish. You are in the midst of posterity. Everywhere you must have been struck with the great changes, physical and moral, which have

occurred since you left us. Even this very city, bearing a venerated name, alike endeared to you and to us, has since emerged from the forest which then covered its site. In one respect you behold us unaltered, and this is the sentiment of continued devotion to liberty, and of ardent affection and profound gratitude to your departed friend, the Father of his Country, and to you, and to your illustrious associates in the field and in the Cabinet, for the multiplied blessings which surround us, and for the very privilege of addressing you which I now exercise. This sentiment, now fondly cherished by more than ten millions of people, will be transmitted with unabated vigor down the tide of time, through the countless millions who are destined to inhabit this continent to the latest posterity."

So, welcomed by Congress, honored by the people, ringed about with shouting throngs, by music and salute, reception, banquet, and hero-worship to his heart's content, "the marquis," as Americans persisted in calling the man who had long since dropped what he esteemed a superfluous title, passed one happy year in the land where his name was held highest in esteem and affection. Then he sailed home to France. An American frigate, named the "Brandywine," in compliment to the hero's first blow for liberty on American soil, bore him across the seas and, even as he sailed, there lingered in his ears the words of farewell spoken, in behalf of the American people, by the President of the United States, John Quincy Adams,

standing in the presence of those three Revolutionary patriots and ex-Presidents of the United States, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe.

"You are ours, sir," said President Adams, "by that unshaken sentiment of gratitude for your services which is a precious portion of our inheritance; ours by that tie of love, stronger than death, which has linked your name for the endless ages of time with the name of Washington. At the painful moment of parting with you we take comfort in the thought that, wherever you may be, to the last pulsation of your heart, our country will ever be present to your affections. And a cheering consolation assures us that we are not called to sorrow, most of all that we shall see your face no more, for we shall indulge the pleasing anticipation of beholding our friend again. In the name of the whole people of the United States, I bid you a reluctant and affectionate farewell."

It was a peculiar thing in all Lafayette's leave-takings from America, that they were always in the spirit of the song, "Say au revoir but not good-bye." It was "farewell for the present; I hope to come again." And even in this last departure from American soil, the happy, or what is called the optimistic side of Lafayette's nature, was displayed. For he declared that he really hoped to come to America again. But he never did.

The liberty he left in America he did not find in France. The people who had overthrown tyranny were

being dragged within its influence again; for a Bourbon king once more sat on the throne of France, and the royalists, who hated the very name of liberty, so disliked Lafayette and resented the outpourings of welcome which had been showered upon him by the people of the United States that they gave him no sign of greeting on his return and sent files of soldiers to charge upon and drive away the throngs of people gathered at Rouen to welcome the home-returning hero of liberty. Indeed, it was only after a long and serious discussion that the harbor forts at Havre were allowed to return the salute of the U. S. frigate "Brandywine," bringing Lafayette home to France once more.

But the people were not to be put down by drawn swords or by sabre-charges, when they were determined to honor a hero of the people. Such they regarded Lafayette; for, even like the king who detested him, the people recognized the strength and integrity of the one man whose devotion to liberty was inextinguishable.

"There is a man who never changes," cried the Bourbon king. And the people, in quite another spirit, echoed the words of the king and welcomed Lafayette on his return from America with cheers and enthusiasm.

The government of France feared Lafayette in 1825, just as Napoleon had in 1805, as the

Revolutionists had in 1795, as the aristocrats had in 1785.

"He will lead away the people!" that was always the fear with regard to Lafayette that existed in the minds of the rulers of France. It was to be made a fact before long.

In 1830, Charles X, the Bourbon king of France, true to the ill-favored traditions of his family, sought to re-enslave the people of France by violating their liberties and overthrowing their constitution. Instead, the people of France overthrew King Charles and his throne, and, rising in revolution, drove the Bourbon from France.

To do this, they summoned Lafayette from his farm at Lagrange and asked him to take command of the national guard, – the Forces of France, as it was called.

"I will not refuse, " said the old hero, without hesitating. "I will behave at seventy-three as I did at thirty-two."

He took possession of Paris, drove out the hired troops of the king and so strengthened the cause of the people and their determination for constitutional liberty, that King Charles, in fear alike for his own crown and his life, weakened in his stubbornness and humbly sent his surrender to Lafayette.

"It is too late now," Lafayette declared. "We have revoked the ordinances ourselves. Charles X has ceased to reign."

It was indeed true. The people, led by Lafayette, had asserted their rights, and the Bourbon King Charles went sadly off into exile, saying hard things of "that old republican, Lafayette," who had, he declared, "caused all the mischief."

It was Friday, the thirtieth of July, 1830, that the king was dethroned and the Deputies made plans for a new one. There was no hesitation in the minds of the people as to who should stand at the head of the nation either as king or as governor. They demanded Lafayette.

The French captain of the American merchant-ship that hurried the discrowned King Charles away from France himself told the ex-king, "If Lafayette, during the recent events, had desired the crown, he could have obtained it. I myself was a witness to the enthusiasm that the sight of him inspired among the people."

But the old hero of the French people, who had been a liberty lover from his boyhood, and had learned his lessons in freedom, integrity, and patriotism by the side of Washington, that spotless patriot who himself had indignantly spurned the offer of a crown, as indignantly silenced such suggestions, and stood true to his convictions and his principles.



GENERAL LAFAYETTE. COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE FORCES OF FRANCE.

From a painting by Court.

When the deputies offered to the republican prince, Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, the head of the state, under the title of Lieutenant-Governor of the French, the people assembled in vast crowds before the City Hall of Paris to shout for Lafayette and the Constitution; but they showed no enthusiasm for the prince presented to them as their governor. The French people had grown to be an important factor in deciding the affairs of France since the days of the Revolution, and without the support of the people the Duke of Orleans would be but a poor figure-head.

To secure this support the members of the Chamber of Deputies (the Congress of France) marched in procession escorting Louis Philippe to the City Hall in Paris. There was Lafayette; there were the troops; there were the people; and the cries of "Hurrah for the Duke of Orleans" were drowned by the swelling "Hurrah for liberty!"

All now depended upon Lafayette. Had he said but one word the people would have made him king in spite of himself. But the veteran republican felt that at last that golden hour so long desired by him for France had come. Here was the opportunity to give to France a constitutional king, ruling not by divine right nor territorial possession but by the will of the people, – not merely a king of France but a king of the French.

The Duke of Orleans had made all necessary promises and accepted all the constitutional

requirements. It now only remained for the people to accept him. But the people hesitated; they did not altogether trust a royal prince.

Then Lafayette acted. He suddenly appeared upon the balcony of the City Hall, and as the people recognized the old patriot they broke into a great burst of cheers. But he waved them into silence, and presented to them the man at his side. It was the Duke of Orleans; his arm was linked with that of Lafayette, and in his hand he held, not the lily flag of the distrusted Bourbons, but the beloved tricolor of the French people.

"Hurrah for the Constitution! Long live the Duke of Orleans!" shouted the people, won to the side of the prince by Lafayette's presence and words. And Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, became king of the French, while Lafayette had added one more act of patriotism to his record. He deliberately declined the crown he might have worn, and himself placed it upon the head of the man for whom he had won acceptance by the people.

But though the old patriot had seen his principles triumph his work was not yet done. His presence was needed at the court. For a new ruler in France has but an unstable seat, and with such a one it has ever been as Shakespeare declared, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

Lafayette knew this as well as any one, and when the throne of the neighboring kingdom of Belgium, made vacant by a rising of the people, was offered to Lafayette, he again declined to be a king.

"What would I do with a crown!" exclaimed the old republican. "Why, it would suit me about as much as a ring would become a cat," and again he pushed aside the offer of royalty.

In Paris the people still clamored for their rights and objected to any laws that would restrict their independence. Mobs threatened the palace and the Chamber of Deputies, and could only be stilled when Lafayette appeared as Commander of the National Guard and declared that if he were to be responsible for public order the people must help him by being orderly.

At once the mobs subsided, and when on an August day in 1830 Lafayette marched his reorganized National Guard, thirty thousand strong, in review before the king, he, more than king or prince, was recognized as the most popular man in France.

In fact, so great was his popularity that both king and court grew envious, fearing that, after all, Lafayette might be made king of the French. So they schemed and plotted to get rid of him or send him into exile; but the people fathomed their jealousy and again burst out into mobs and threatening, only again to be quieted and dispersed by Lafayette's personal influence.

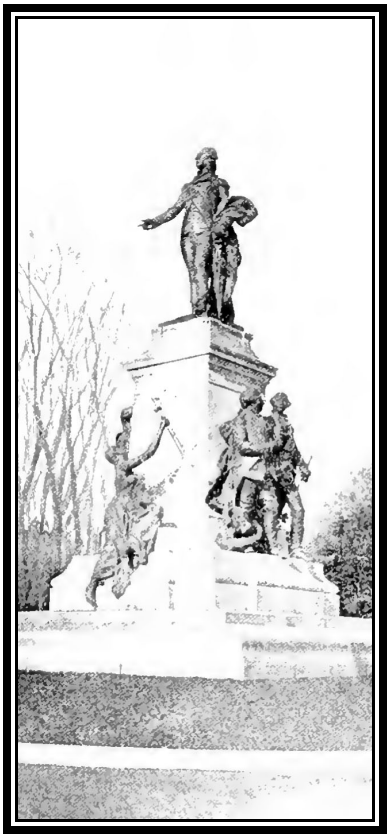
But Lafayette, brave patriot and true Frenchman though he was, could not long stand the strain of thus acting as "a buffer" between the people and the king. His age and the exertion and hardships of his life began to wear upon him. He asked to be relieved of his duties and resigned his office as Commander of the National Guard.

For awhile as a Deputy he interested himself in National affairs, distrusting more and more the king he had given to the people as he saw how the old Bourbon strain of tyranny would now and then break out. But he preached loyalty to the government they had founded as the chief duty of the people, and when, in 1832, a revolution seemed imminent, Lafayette would have no part in it, and by his stern and contemptuous words quickly brought it to nothing.

It was his last public effort. A sudden and rapid illness, due, like that which had killed Washington, to a neglected and dangerous cold, caught in bad weather, broke his sturdy constitution and slowly sapped his strength, and, in his city home in Paris, on the twenty-second of May, in the year 1834, Lafayette died; and the whole world mourned.

Gathered about him in his last hours was his large family, – children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. And when his body was borne through the streets of Paris, to be laid beside that of his beloved wife in the obscure little cemetery of Picpus, in the

heart of the great capital, a vast throng followed him to his grave. As the tidings went abroad the bells of five nations tolled out their sorrow; the army and navy of the United States paid to the memory of Lafayette the same honors they had yielded to Washington; the Congress of the United States went into mourning for thirty days, while America vowed never to forget him and America never has.



IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL.

Monument to the memory of Lafayette, in Lafayette Square, Washington, near the White House.

All the world recognized that a great and historic character had been taken from the scene of his restless and long-continued activity. France realized the loss of its leading patriot, its sturdiest defender, its safest guide; America mourned over the departure of a man who, more than any other, had connected the present

and the past, and for over half a century had kept alive, by his actual existence, the memories of those great men who, with George Washington as their leader, had fought their way to independence, progress, and power.

The life of Lafayette was, as you have seen, a long and busy one. Men deny him greatness, and yet few men have stamped their names and deeds more firmly upon the history of the world. Neglected in France by the rapid change of events that have marked the history of that impressible nation since his death, America has ever held the name and memory of Lafayette in dear and grateful remembrance. His name, next to that of Washington, is the favored one selected by Americans in christening their children, their towns, streets, mercantile companies, and popular enterprises; statues and monuments have been raised to his memory; and, linked to that of Washington, the name of Lafayette stands as the embodiment of friendship, valor, and faith in the days of the American Revolution.

In his oration at the dedication of the splendid surrender monument at Yorktown on the nineteenth of October, 1881, Robert C. Winthrop, of Massachusetts, said: "It was from the lips of James Madison under his own roof at Montpelier that I learned to think and speak of Lafayette, not merely as an ardent lover of liberty, a bosom friend of Washington, and a brave and disinterested volunteer for American independence, – leading the way, as a

pioneer, for France to follow, but as a man of eminent practical ability, and as great, in all true senses of that term, as he was chivalrous and generous and good. Honor to his memory this day from every American heart and tongue."

That honor has been and will be forever given him by every American to whom America's liberty, strength, and glory are dear. And while appreciating the worth of Lafayette to Americans as the man to whose unflagging enthusiasm, devotion, and sacrifices the success of the independence of the republic was so largely due, let all Americans also accord to "the marquis," the friend of America, that wider meed of praise, too long withheld from him, as to a great extent the shaper and maker, by his zeal and his acts, of the progress of France and the enfranchisement of Europe. For these came, through blood and tears, indeed, but they came at last largely through the influence and example of the one Frenchman who remained ever true to the principles adopted by him in boyhood and dear to him in old age, – the glorious principles of "liberty, equality, fraternity," for which he fought beneath the stars and stripes, for which he contended by the side of Washington, and for which he labored alike in America and in his own cherished fatherland, a notable figure in the sight of all the world.

Letters from Lafayette to His Wife

from Memoirs, Correspondence and Manuscripts of General Lafayette

Published by his Family

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

On board the "Victory", May 30th, 1777.

I am writing to you from a great distance, my dearest love, and, in addition to this painful circumstance, I feel also the still more dreadful uncertainty of the time in which I may receive any news of you. I hope, however, soon to have a letter from you; and, amongst the various reasons which render me so desirous of a speedy arrival, this is the one which excites in me the greatest degree of impatience. How many fears and anxieties enhance the keen anguish I feel at being separated from all that I love most fondly in the world! How have you borne my second departure? have you loved me less? have you pardoned me? have you reflected that, at all events, I must equally have been parted from you, – wandering about in Italy,[1] dragging on an inglorious life, surrounded by the persons most opposed to my projects, and to my manner of thinking? All these reflections did not prevent my experiencing the most bitter grief when the moment arrived for quitting my native shore. Your sorrow, that of my friends, Henrietta,[2] all rushed upon my thoughts, and my heart

was torn by a thousand painful feelings. I could not at that instant find any excuse for my own conduct. If you could know all that I have suffered, and the melancholy days that I have passed, whilst thus flying from all that I love best in the World! Must I join to this affliction the grief of hearing that you do not pardon me? I should, in truth, my love, be too unhappy. But I am not speaking to you of myself and of my health, and I well know that these details will deeply interest you.

Since writing my last letter, I have been confined to the most dreary of all regions: the sea is so melancholy, that we mutually, I believe, sadden each other. I ought to have landed by this time, but the winds have been most provokingly contrary; I shall not arrive at Charlestown for eight or ten days. It will be a great pleasure to me to land, as I am expecting to do, in that city. When I am once on shore, I shall hope each day to receive news from France; I shall learn so many interesting, things, both concerning the new country I am seeking, and, above all, that home which I have quitted with so much regret! Provided I only learn that you are in good health, that you still love me, and that a certain number of my friends entertain the same feelings towards me, I can become a perfect philosopher with respect to all the rest, – whatever it may be, or whatever land it may concern. But if my heart be attacked in its most vulnerable part, if you were to love me less, I should feel, in truth, too

miserable. But I need not fear this – need I, my dearest love? I was very ill during the first part of my voyage, and I might have enjoyed the pleasure of an ill-natured person, that of knowing that I had many fellow sufferers. I treated myself according to my own judgment, and recovered sooner than the other passengers; I am now nearly the same as if I were on shore. I am certain that, on my arrival, I shall be in a perfect state of health, and continue so for a long time. Do not fancy that I shall incur any real dangers by the occupations I am undertaking. The post of general officer has always been considered like a commission for immortality. The service will be very different from the one I must have performed if I had been, for example, a colonel in the French army. My attendance will only be required in the council. Ask the opinion of all general officers, – and these are very numerous, because, having once attained that height, they are no longer exposed to any hazards, and do not therefore yield their places to inferior officers, as is the case in other situations. To prove that I do not wish to deceive you, I will acknowledge that we are at this moment exposed to some danger, from the risk of being attacked by English vessels, and that my ship is not of sufficient force for defence. But when I have once landed, I shall be in perfect safety. You see that I tell you everything, my dearest love; confide therefore in me, and do not, I conjure you, give way to idle fears. I

will not write you a journal of my voyage: days succeed each other, and, what is worse, resemble each other. Always sky, always water, and the next day a repetition of the same thing. In truth, those who write volumes upon a sea voyage must be incessant babblers; for my part, I have had contrary winds, as well as other people; I have made a long voyage, like other people; I have encountered storms; I have seen vessels, and they were far more interesting for me than for any other person: well! I have not observed one single event worth the trouble of relating, or that has not been described by many other persons.

Let us speak of more important things: of yourself, of dear Henriette, and of her brother or sister. Henriette is so delightful, that she has made me in love with little girls. To whichever sex our new infant may belong, I shall receive it with unbounded joy. Lose not a moment in hastening my happiness by apprising me of its birth. I know not if it be because I am twice a father, but my parental feelings are stronger than they ever were. Mr. Deane, and my friend Carmichael, will forward your letters, and will, I am sure, neglect nothing to promote my happiness as soon as possible. Write, and even send me a confidential person, it would give me such pleasure to question any one who has seen you: Landrin, for example; in short, whom you please. You do not know the warmth and extent of my affection, if you fancy that you may neglect

anything relating to yourself. You will be, at first, a long time without hearing from me; but when I am once established you will receive letters constantly, and of a very recent date. There is no great difference of time between letters from America and letters from Sicily. I own that Sicily weighs heavily on my heart. I fancied myself near seeing you again! But let me break off at the word Sicily. Adieu, my dearest love; I shall write to you from Charlestown, and write to you also before I arrive there. Good night, for the present.

Footnotes:

1. At the moment when M. de Lafayette's project of departure was taking place, he had been desired to join the Duke d'Ayen, and Madame de Tesse, his sister, who were setting out for Italy and Sicily.

2. The first-born of M. de Lafayette, which died during his voyage. (See letter 16th June, 1778.)

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

7th June.

I am still floating on this dreary plain, the most wearisome of all human habitations. To console myself a little, I think of you and of my friends: I think of the pleasure of seeing you again. How delightful will be the moment of my arrival! I shall hasten to surprise and embrace you. I shall perhaps find you with your children. To think, only, of that happy moment, is an inexpressible pleasure to me; do not fancy that it is distant; although the time of my absence will appear, I own, very long to me, yet we shall meet sooner than you can expect. Without being able myself to fix the day or the month of our reunion, without being aware even of the cause of our absence, the exile prescribed by the Duke d'Ayen, until the month of January, appeared to me so immeasurably long, that I certainly shall not inflict upon myself one of equal length. You must acknowledge, my love, that the occupation and situation I shall have are very different from those that were intended for me during that useless journey. Whilst defending the liberty I adore, I shall enjoy perfect freedom myself: I but offer my service to that interesting republic from motives of the purest kind,

unmixed with ambition or private views; her happiness and my glory are my only incentives to the task. I hope that, for my sake, you will become a good American, for that feeling is worthy of every noble heart. The happiness of America is intimately connected with the happiness of all mankind; she will become the safe and respected asylum of virtue, integrity, toleration, equality, and tranquil happiness.

We have occasionally some slight alarms, but, with a little skill and good luck, I am certain of reaching the port in safety. I am more pleased with this prospect, because I feel that I am becoming, every day, extremely reasonable. You know that the viscount[3] has the habit of repeating, that "travelling forms young men;" if he said this but once every morning and once every evening, in truth it would not be too much, for I am constantly more strongly impressed with the justice of the observation. I know not where the poor viscount is at this present moment, nor the prince,[4] nor all my other friends. This state of uncertainty is a very painful one. Whenever you chance to meet any one whom I love, tell him a thousand and ten thousand things from me. Embrace tenderly my three sisters, and tell them that they must remember me, and love me; present my compliments to Mademoiselle Marin;[5] I recommend, also, poor Abbe Fayon to your care. As to the Marshal de Noailles, tell him that I do not write to him, for fear of tiring him, and because I should have nothing to

announce to him but my arrival; that I am expecting his commissions for trees or plants, or whatever else he may desire, and that I should wish my exactness in fulfilling his wishes to be a proof of my affection for him. Present, also, my respects to the Duchess de la Tremoille,[6] and tell her that I make the same offer to her as to the Marshal de Noailles, either for herself or her daughter-in-law, who has such a beautiful garden. Tell my old friend Desplaus,[7] also, that I am well. As to my aunts, Madame d'Ayen and the viscountess, I am myself writing to them.

These are my little commissions, my love; I have also written to Sicily. We have seen, today, several kinds of birds, which announce that we are not far from shore. The hope of arriving is very sweet, for a ship life is a most wearisome one. My health, fortunately, allows me to occupy myself a little; I divide my time between military books and English books. I have made some progress in this language, which will become very necessary to me. Adieu; night obliges me to discontinue my letter, as I forbade some days ago, any candles being used in my vessel: see how prudent I have become! Once more, adieu; if my fingers be at all guided by my heart, it is not necessary to see clearly to tell you that I love you, and that I shall love you all my life.

Footnotes:

3. The Viscount de Noailles, brother-in-law to M. de Lafayette.

4. The Prince de Poix, son of the Marshal de Mouchy, and consequently uncle, according to the mode of Bretagne, to Madame de Lafayette.

5. Mademoiselle Marin was governess to Mesdemoiselles de Noailles; and the Abbe Fayon was tutor to M. de Lafayette.

6. Madame de Lafayette, author of the Princess de Clever, had only one daughter, who became Madame de la Tremoille, and heiress to the property of the Lafayette family; and who cheerfully consented to restore to her cousins, who inhabited the province, those estates which a love of their family might make them wish to conserve to the heritors of the name of Lafayette. Since that period, the members of that branch, of which M. de Lafayette was the last scion, have constantly kept up feelings, not only of relationship, but of friendship, with the family of la Tremoille.

7. An old valet de chambre.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

15th June – At Major Hughes's.[8]

I have arrived, my dearest love, in perfect health, at the house of an American officer; and, by the most fortunate chance in the world, a French vessel is on the point of sailing; conceive how happy I am. I am going this evening to Charlestown, from whence I will write to you. There is no important news. The campaign is opened, but there is no fighting, or at least, very little. The manners in this part of the world are simple, polite, and worthy in every respect of the country in which the noble name of liberty is constantly repeated. I intended writing to Madame d'Ayen, but I find it is impossible. Adieu, adieu, my love. From Charlestown I shall repair, by land, to Philadelphia, to rejoin the army. Is it not true that you will always love me?

Footnote:

8. The father of him who so generously devoted himself to save Lafayette from the prisons of Olmutz – (Note of M. de Lafayette.)

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

June 19th, 1777, Charlestown.

If my last letter, my dearest love, written five or six days ago, was closed hastily, I hope at least that the American captain, whom I then believed to be a French one, will remit it to you as soon as possible. That letter announced to you that I had landed safely in this country, after having suffered a little from sea-sickness during the first weeks of my voyage; that I was staying with a very kind officer, in whose house I was received upon my arrival; that I had been nearly two months at sea, and was anxious to continue my journey immediately; that letter spoke of everything which interests my heart most deeply, of my regret at having quitted you, of your pregnancy, and of our dear children; it told you, also, that I was in perfect health. I repeat this extract from it, because the English may very possibly amuse themselves by seizing it on its way. I place, however, so much confidence in my lucky star, that I hope it will reach you safely. That same star has protected me to the astonishment of every person; you may, therefore, trust a little to it in future, my love, and let this conviction tranquillize your fears. I landed after having sailed for several days along a coast swarming

with hostile vessels. On my arrival here every one told me that my ship must undoubtedly be taken, because two English frigates had blockaded the harbour. I even sent, both by land and sea, orders to the captain to put the men on shore, and burn the vessel, if he had still the power of doing so. Well! by a most extraordinary piece of good fortune, a sudden gale of wind having blown away the frigates for a short time, my vessel arrived at noon-day, without having encountered friend or foe. At Charlestown I have met with General Howe, a general officer, now engaged in service. The governor of the state is expected this evening from the country. All the persons with whom I wished to be acquainted have shewn me the greatest attention and politeness (not European politeness merely); I can only feel gratitude for the reception I have met with, although I have not yet thought proper to enter into any detail respecting my future prospects and arrangements. I wish to see the congress first. I hope to set out in two days for Philadelphia, which is a land journey of more than two hundred and fifty leagues. We shall divide into small parties; I have already purchased horses and light carriages for this purpose. There are some French and American vessels at present here, who are to sail out of the harbour in company tomorrow morning, taking advantage of a moment when the frigates are out of sight: they are numerous and armed, and have promised me to defend themselves stoutly against the

small privateers they will undoubtedly meet with. I shall distribute my letters amongst the different ships, in case any accident should happen to either one of them.

I shall now speak to you, my love, about the country and its inhabitants, who are as agreeable as my enthusiasm had led me to imagine. Simplicity of manner, kindness of heart, love of country and of liberty, and a delightful state of equality, are met with universally. The richest and the poorest man are completely on a level; and although there are some immense fortunes in this country, I may challenge any one to point out the slightest difference in their respective manner towards each other. I first saw and judged of a country life at Major Hughes's house: I am at present in the city, where everything somewhat resembles the English customs, except that you find more simplicity here than you would do in England. Charlestown is one of the best built, handsomest, and most agreeable cities that I have ever seen. The American women are very pretty, and have great simplicity of character; and the extreme neatness of their appearance is truly delightful: cleanliness is everywhere even more studiously attended to here than in England. What gives me most pleasure is to see how completely the citizens are all brethren of one family. In America there are none poor, and none even that can be called peasants. Each citizen has some

property, and all citizens have the same rights as the richest individual, or landed proprietor, in the country. The inns are very different from those of Europe; the host and hostess sit at table with you, and do the honours of a comfortable meal; and when you depart, you pay your bill without being obliged to tax it. If you should dislike going to inns, you may always find country houses in which you will be received, as a good American, with the same attention that you might expect in a friend's house in Europe.

My own reception has been most peculiarly agreeable. To have been merely my travelling companion, suffices to secure the kindest welcome. I have just passed five hours at a large dinner given in compliment to me by an individual of this town. Generals Howe and Moultrie, and several officers of my suite, were present. We drank each other's health, and endeavoured to talk English, which I am beginning to speak a little. I shall pay a visit tomorrow, with these gentlemen, to the governor of the state, and make the last arrangements for my departure. The next day, the commanding officers here will take me to see the town and its environs, and I shall then set out to join the army. I must close and send my letter immediately, because the vessel goes tonight to the entrance of the harbour, and sails tomorrow at five o'clock. As all the ships are exposed to some risk, I shall divide my letters amongst them. I write to M M. de Coigny, de Poix, de

Noailles, de Segur, and to Madame d'Ayen.[1] If either of these should not receive my letter, be so kind as to mention this circumstance.

From the agreeable life I lead in this country, from the sympathy which makes me feel as much at ease with the inhabitants as if I had known them for twenty years, the similarity between their manner of thinking and of my own, my love of glory and of liberty, you might imagine that I am very happy: but you are not with me, my dearest love; my friends are not with me; and there is no happiness for me when far from you and them. I often ask you if you still love, but I put that question still more often to myself and my heart ever answers, yes: I trust that heart does not deceive me. I am inexpressibly anxious to hear from you; I hope to find some letters at Philadelphia. My only fear is that the privateer which was to bring them to me should have been captured on her way. Although I can easily imagine that I have excited the especial displeasure of the English, by taking the liberty of coming hither in spite of them, and landing before their very face, yet I must confess that we shall be even more than on a par if they succeed in catching that vessel, the object of my fondest hopes, by which I am expecting to receive your letters. I entreat you to send me both long and frequent letters. You are not sufficiently conscious of the joy with which I shall receive them. Embrace, most tenderly, my Henriette: may I add, embrace our

children? The father of those poor children is a wanderer, but he is, nevertheless, a good, honest man, – a, good father, warmly attached to his family, and a good husband also, for he loves his wife most tenderly. Present my compliments to your friends and to mine; may I not say "our" friends? with the permission of the Countess Auguste and Madame de Fronsac. [2] By "my friends", you know that I mean my own dear circle, formerly of the court, and which afterwards became the society of "the wooden sword"; [3] we republicans like it the better for the change. This letter will be given you by a French captain, who, I think, will deliver it into your own hands; but I must confide to you that I have an agreeable anticipation for tomorrow, which is to write to you by an American, who will sail on the same day, but at a later hour. Adieu, then, my dearest love; I must leave off for want of time and paper; and if I do not repeat ten thousand times that I love you, it is not from want of affection, but from my having the vanity to hope that I have already convinced you of it. The night is far advanced, the heat intense, and I am devoured by gnats; but the best countries, as you perceive, have their inconveniences. Adieu, my love, adieu.

Footnotes:

1. The Viscount de Coigny, son of the last marshal of that name, was the intimate friend of M. de Lafayette in his youth. He died young, perhaps even

during this voyage. – (See the letter of January the 6th, 1778.) The Count de Segur, who had married the sister of the Duchess d'Ayen, and who was, therefore, the uncle of M. de Lafayette, continued, to the last, his friend.

2. The Countess Auguste d'Aremberg, the wife of Count de Lamark, the friend of Mirabeau, and the Duchess de Fronsac, daughter-in-law to the Marshal de Richelieu.

3. A society of young men, who first assembled at Versailles, and afterwards at an inn at Paris. – (Note by M. de Lafayette.)

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

Petersburg, July 17th, 1777.

I am very happy, my dearest love, if the word happiness can truly be applied to me, whilst I am separated from all I love; there is a vessel on the point of sailing for France, and I am enabled to tell you, before setting out for Philadelphia, that I love you, my dearest life, and that you may be perfectly tranquil respecting my health. I bore the fatigue of the journey without suffering from it; although the land expedition was long and wearisome, yet the confinement of my melancholy ship was far more so. I am now eight days' journey from Philadelphia, in the beautiful state of Virginia. All fatigue is over, and I fear that my martial labours will be very light, if it be true that General Howe has left New York, to go I know not whither. But all the accounts I receive are so uncertain, that I cannot form any fixed opinion until I reach my destination; from thence, my love, I shall write you a long letter. You must already have received four letters from me, if they have not fallen into the hands of the English. I have received no news of you, and my impatience to arrive at Philadelphia to hear, from you cannot be compared to any other earthly feeling. Conceive the

state of my mind, after having passed such an immense length of time without, having received a line from any friend! I hope all this will soon end, for I cannot live in such a state of uncertainty. I have undertaken a task which is, in truth, beyond my power, for my heart was not formed for so much suffering.

You must have learnt the particulars of the commencement of my journey: you know that I set out in a brilliant manner in a carriage, and I must now tell you that we are all on horseback,--having broken the carriage, according to my usual praiseworthy custom, – and I hope soon to write to you that we have arrived on foot. The journey is somewhat fatiguing; but although several of my comrades have suffered a great deal, I have scarcely myself been conscious of fatigue. The captain who takes charge of this letter will, perhaps, pay you a visit; I beg you in that case to receive him with great kindness.

I scarcely dare think of the time of your confinement, and yet I think of it every moment of the day. I cannot dwell upon it without the most dreadful anxiety. I am, indeed, unfortunate, at being so distant from you; even if you did not love me, you ought to pity me; but you do love me, and we shall mutually render each other happy. This little note will be short in comparison to the volumes I have already sent you, but you shall receive another letter in a few days from me.

The farther I advance to the north, the better pleased am I with the country and inhabitants. There is no attention or kindness that I do not receive, although many scarcely know who I am. But I will write all this to you more in detail from Philadelphia. I have only time to intreat you, my dearest love, not to forget an unhappy man, who pays most dearly for the error he committed in parting from you, and who never felt before how tenderly he loved you.

My respectful compliments to Madame d'Ayen, and my affectionate regards to my sisters. Tell M. de Coigny and M. de Poix that I am in good health, in case some letters should miscarry which I shall send by another opportunity, by which I shall also send a line to you, although I do not consider it so secure as this one.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

July 23rd, 1777.

I am always meeting, my dearest love, with opportunities of sending letters; I have this time only a quarter of an hour to give you. The vessel is on the point of sailing, and I can only announce to you my safe arrival at Annapolis, forty leagues from Philadelphia. I can tell you nothing of the town, for, as I alighted from my horse, I armed myself with a little weapon dipt in invisible ink. You must already have received five letters from me, unless King George should have received some of them. The last one was despatched three days since; in it I announced to you that my health was perfectly good, and had not been even impaired by my anxiety to arrive at Philadelphia. I have received bad news here; Ticonderoga, the strongest American post, has been forced by the enemy; this is very unfortunate, and we must endeavour to repair the evil. Our troops have taken, in retaliation, an English general officer, near New York. I am each day more miserable from having quitted you, my dearest love; I hope to receive news of you at Philadelphia, and this hope adds much to the impatience I feel to arrive in that city. Adieu, my life; I

am in such haste that I know not what I write, but I do know that I love you more tenderly than ever; that the pain of this separation were necessary to convince me how very dear you are to me, and that I would give at this moment half my existence for the pleasure of embracing you again, and telling you with my own lips how well I love you. My respects to Madame d'Ayen, my compliments to the viscountess, my sisters, and all my friends: to you only have I time to write. O! if you knew how much I sigh to see you, how much I suffer at being separated from you, and all that my heart has been called on to endure, you would think me somewhat worthy of your love! I have left no space for Henriette; may I say for my children? Give them a hundred thousand embraces; I shall most heartily share them with you.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

Philadelphia, September 12th, 1777.

I write you a line, my dearest love, by some French officers, my friends, who embarked with me, but, not having received any appointment in the American army, are returning to France. I must begin by telling you that I am perfectly well, because I must end by telling you that we fought seriously last night, and that we were not the strongest on the field of battle. Our Americans, after having stood their ground for some time, ended at length by being routed: whilst endeavouring to rally them, the English honoured me with a musket ball, which slightly wounded me in the leg, – but it is a trifle, my dearest love; the ball touched neither bone nor nerve, and I have escaped with the obligation of lying on my back for some time, which puts me much out of humour. I hope that you will feel no anxiety; this event ought, on the contrary, rather to reassure you, since I am incapacitated from appearing on the field for some time: I have resolved to take great care of myself; be convinced of this, my love. This affair, will, I fear, be attended with bad consequences for America. We will endeavour, if possible, to repair the evil. You must have received many letters from me,

unless the English be equally ill-disposed towards my epistles as towards my legs. I have not yet received one letter, and I am most impatient to hear from you. Adieu; I am forbidden to write longer. For several days I have not had time to sleep. Our retreat, and my journey hither, took up the whole of last night; I am perfectly well taken care of in this place. Tell all my friends that I am in good health. My tender respects to Madame d'Ayen. A thousand compliments to the viscountess and my sisters. The officers will soon set out. They will see you; what pleasure! Good night, my dearest life! I love you better than ever.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

October 1st, 1777.

I wrote to you, my dearest love, the 12th of September; the twelfth was the day after the eleventh, and I have a little tale to relate to you concerning that eleventh day. To render my action more meritorious, I might tell you that prudent reflections induced me to remain for some weeks in my bed, safe sheltered from all danger; but I must acknowledge that I was encouraged to take this measure by a slight wound, which I met with I know not how, for I did not, in truth, expose myself to peril. It was the first conflict at which I had been present; so you see how very rare engagements are. It will be the last of this campaign, or, in all probability, at least, the last great battle; and if anything should occur, you see that I could not myself be present.

You may, therefore, my love, feel perfectly secure. I have much pleasure in thus reassuring you. While I am desiring you not to be alarmed on my account, I repeat to myself that you love me; and this little conversation with my own heart is inexpressibly delightful to me, for I love you more tenderly than I have ever done before.

My first occupation was to write to you the day after that affair: I told you that it was a mere trifle, and I was right; all I fear is that you should not have received my letter. As General Howe is giving, in the meantime, rather pompous details of his American exploits to the king his master, if he should write word that I am wounded, he may also write word that I am killed, which would not cost him anything; but I hope that my friends, and you especially, will not give faith to the reports of those persons who last year dared to publish that General Washington, and all the general officers of his army, being in a boat together, had been upset, and every individual drowned. But let us speak about the wound: it is only a flesh-wound, and has neither touched bone nor nerve. The surgeons are astonished at the rapidity with which it heals; they are in an ecstasy of joy each time they dress it, and pretend it is the finest thing in the world: for my part, I think it most disagreeable, painful, and wearisome; but tastes often differ: if a man, however, wished to be wounded for his amusement only, he should come and examine how I have been struck, that he might be struck precisely in the same manner. This, my dearest love, is what I pompously style my wound, to give myself airs, and render myself interesting.

I must now give you your lesson, as wife of an American general officer. They will say to you, "They have been beaten:" you must answer, – "That is true;

but when two armies of "equal number" meet in the field, old soldiers have naturally the advantage over new ones; they have, besides, had the pleasure of killing a great many of the enemy, many more than they have lost." They will afterwards add: "All that is very well; but Philadelphia is taken, the capital of America, the rampart of liberty!" You must politely answer, "You are all great fools! Philadelphia is a poor forlorn town, exposed on every side, whose harbour was already closed; though the residence of congress lent it, I know not why, some degree of celebrity. This is the famous city which, be it added, we will, sooner or later, make them yield back to us." If they continue to persecute you with questions, you may send them about their business in terms which the Viscount de Noailles will teach you, for I cannot lose time by talking to you of politics.

I have delayed writing your letter till the last, in the hope of receiving one from you, answering it, and giving you the latest intelligence of my health; but I am told, if I do not send immediately to congress, twenty-five leagues from hence, my captain will have set out, and I shall lose the opportunity of writing to you. This is the cause of my scrawl being more unintelligible than usual; however, if I were to send you anything but a hurried scrawl, I ought, in that case, to beg your pardon, from the singularity of the case. Recollect, my dearest love, that I have only once heard of you, from

Count Pulaski. I am much provoked, and am very miserable. Imagine how dreadful it is to be far from all I love, in this state of suspense and almost despair; it is impossible to support it; and I feel, at the same time, that I do not deserve to be pitied. Why was I so obstinately bent on coming hither? I have been well punished for my error; my affections are too strongly rooted for me to be able to perform such deeds. I hope you pity me; if you knew all I suffer, especially at this moment, when everything concerning you is so deeply interesting! I cannot, without shuddering, think of this. I am told that a parcel has arrived from France; I have despatched expresses on every road and in every corner; I have sent an officer to congress; I am expecting him every day, and you may conceive with what feelings of intense anxiety. My surgeon is also very anxious for his arrival, for this suspense keeps my blood in a state of effervescence, and he would fain require that it should flow calmly. O, my dearest life, if I receive good news from you, and all I love, – if those delightful letters arrive today, how happy I shall be! – but with what agitation, also, I shall open them!

Be perfectly at ease about my wound; all the faculty in America are engaged in my service. I have a friend, who has spoken to them in such a manner that I am certain of being well attended to; that friend is General Washington. This excellent man, whose talents and virtues I admired, and whom I have learnt to revere as

I know him better, has now become my intimate friend: his affectionate interest in me instantly won my heart. I am established in his house, and we live together like two attached brothers, with mutual confidence and cordiality. This friendship renders me as happy as I can possibly be in this country. When he sent his best surgeon to me, he told him to take charge of me as if I were his son, because he loved me with the same affection. Having heard that I wished to rejoin the army too soon, he wrote me a letter full of tenderness, in which he requested me to attend to the perfect restoration of my health. I give you these details, my dearest love, that you may feel quite certain of the care that is taken of me. Amongst the French officers, who have all expressed the warmest interest for me, M. de Gimat, my aide-de-camp, has followed me about like my shadow, both before and since the battle, and has given me every possible proof of attachment. You may thus feel quite secure on this account, both for the present and for the future.

All the foreigners who are in the army, – for I do not speak only of those who have not been employed, and who, on their return to France, will naturally give an unjust account of America, because the discontented, anxious to revenge their fancied injuries, cannot be impartial, – all the foreigners, I say, who have been employed here are dissatisfied, complain, detest others, and are themselves detested: they do not understand

why I am the only stranger beloved in America, and I cannot understand why they are so much hated. In the midst of the disputes and dissensions common to all armies, especially when there are officers of various nations, I, for my part, who am an easy and a good-tempered man, am so fortunate as to be loved by all parties, both foreigners and Americans: I love them all – I hope I deserve their esteem; and we are perfectly satisfied the one with the other. I am at present in the solitude of Bethlehem, which the Abbe Raynal has described so minutely. This establishment is a very interesting one; the fraternity lead an agreeable and a very tranquil life: we will talk over all this on my return; and I intend to weary those I love, yourself, of course, in the first place, by the relation of my adventures, for you know that I was always a great prattler. You must become a prattler also, my love, and say many things for me to Henriette – my poor little Henriette! embrace her a thousand times – talk of me to her, but do not tell her all I deserve to suffer; my punishment will be, not to be recognized by her on my arrival; that is the penance Henriette will impose on me. Has she a brother or a sister? – the choice is quite indifferent to me, provided I have a second time the pleasure of being a father, and that I may soon learn that circumstance. If I should have a son, I will tell him to examine his own heart carefully; and if that heart should be a tender one, if he should have a wife whom

he loves as I love you, in that case I shall advise him not to give way to feelings of enthusiasm, which would separate him from the object of his affection, for that affection will afterwards give rise to a thousand dreadful fears.

I am writing, by a different opportunity, to various persons, and also to yourself. I think this letter will arrive first; if this vessel should accidentally arrive, and the other one be lost, I have given the viscount a list of the letters I have addressed to him. I forgot to mention my aunts;[1] give them news of me as soon as this reaches you. I have made no "duplicata" for you, because I write to you by every opportunity. Give news of me, also, to M. Margelay,[2] the Abbe Fayon, and Desplaces.

A thousand tender regards to my sisters; I permit them to despise me as an infamous deserter – but they must also love me at the same time. My respects to Madame la Comtesse Auguste, and Madame de Fronsac. If my grandfather's letters should not reach him, present to him my respectful and affectionate regards. Adieu, adieu, my dearest life; continue to love me, for I love you most tenderly.

Present my compliments to Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane; I wished to write to them, but cannot find time.

Footnotes:

1. Madame de Chavaniac and Madame de Motier, sisters of General Lafayette's father.

2. An ancient officer, to whom M. de Lafayette was confided, on leaving college, as to a governor.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.
The Camp near Whitemarsh, Oct. 29th, 1777.

I send you an open letter, my dearest love, in the person of M. de Valfort, my friend, whom I entreat you to receive as such. He will tell you at length everything concerning me; but I must tell you myself how well I love you. I have too much pleasure in experiencing this sentiment not to have also pleasure in repeating it to you a thousand times, if that were possible. I have no resource left me, my love, but to write and write again, without even hoping that my letters will ever reach you, and I endeavour to console myself, by the pleasure of conversing with you, for the disappointment and anguish of not receiving one single line from France. It is impossible to describe to you how completely my heart is torn by anxiety and fear; nor should I wish to express all I feel, even if it were in my power to do so; for I would not disturb, by any painful impressions, the happiest moments of my exile – those in which I can speak to you of my tenderness. But do you, at least, pity me? Do you comprehend all that I endure? If I could only know at this moment where you are, and what you are doing! but in the course of time I shall learn all

this, for I am not separated from you in reality, as if I were dead. I am expecting your letters with an impatience, from which nothing can for an instant divert my thoughts: every one tells me they must soon arrive; but can I rely on this? Neglect not one opportunity of writing to me, if my happiness be still dear to you. Repeat to me that you love me: the less I merit your affection, the more necessary to me are your consoling assurances of it. You must have received so many accounts of my slight wound, that all repetitions on the subject would be useless; and if you ever believed it was anything serious, M. de Valfort can undeceive you. In a very short time I shall not even be lame.

Is it not dreadful, my love, to reflect that it is by the public, by English papers, by our enemy's gazettes, that I should receive intelligence concerning you? In an unimportant article relating to my arrival here, they ended by speaking of yourself, your situation, and approaching confinement; that source of all my fears, agitations, hopes, and joy. How happy I should feel if I could learn that I had become a second time a father, that you are in good health, that my two children and their mother are likely to constitute the felicity of my future life! This country is delightful for the growth of filial and paternal love: these feelings may even be termed passions, and give rise to the most assiduous and unremitting care. The news of your confinement

will be received with joy by the whole army, and above all by its commander.

I shall find my poor little Henriette very amusing on my return. I hope she will deliver a long sermon of reproof, and that she will speak to me with all the frankness of friendship; for my daughter will be always, I trust, my most intimate friend; I will only be a father in affection, and paternal love shall unite in my heart with friendship. Embrace her, my love, – may I say embrace "them?" – for me! But I will not dwell upon all I suffer from this painful uncertainty. I know that you share all the sorrows of my heart, and I will not afflict you. I wrote by the last opportunity to Madame d'Ayen; since my wound I have written to everybody; but those letters have perhaps been lost. It is not my fault; I wish to return a little evil to those wicked letter-stealers when they are on land, but on the sea I have only the consolation of the weak, that of cursing heartily those of whom I cannot be revenged. A thousand tender respects to your mother; my kind regards to your sisters. Do not forget my compliments to the Marshal de Noailles, and to your paternal and maternal relations. I have received four foolish lines from the Marshal de Mouchy, who does not say one word of you; I swore at him in every language. Adieu, my love, adieu; ask questions of my good, excellent friend, M. de Valfort, for my paper is coming to a close. It is dreadful to be reduced to hold no communication

but by letter with a person whom one loves as I love you, and as I shall ever love you, until I draw my latest breath.

I have not missed a single opportunity, not even the most indirect one, without writing to you. Do the same also on your side, my dearest life, if you love me; but I should indeed be unfeeling and ungrateful if I were to doubt your love.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

Camp of Whitemarsh, November 6th, 1777.

You will perhaps receive this letter, my dearest love, at the expiration of five or six years, for I am writing to you by an accidental opportunity, in which I do not place great trust. See what a circuit my letter must make. An officer in the army will carry it to Fort Pitt, three hundred miles in the interior of the continent; it will then embark on the great Ohio river, and traverse regions inhabited only by savages; having reached New Orleans, a small vessel will transport it to the Spanish islands; a ship of that nation – God knows when! – will carry it with her on her return to Europe. But it will even then be very distant from you; and it is only after having been soiled by the dirty hands of all the Spanish post-masters that it will be allowed to pass the Pyrenees. It may very possibly be unsealed and resealed five or six times before it be finally placed in your hands; but it will prove to you that I neglect no opportunity, not even the most indirect one, of sending you news of myself, and of repeating how well I love you. It is, however, for my own satisfaction only that I delight to tell you so at present; I hope that I shall have

the pleasure of throwing this letter in the fire when it arrives, for be it understood I shall be there also, and my presence will render this piece of paper very insignificant. The idea is most soothing to my heart, and I indulge it with rapture. How enchanting to think of the moments when we shall be together! but how painful also to recollect that my joy is only caused by an illusion, and that I am separated from the reality of my happiness by two thousand leagues, an immense ocean, and villanous English vessels! Those wretched vessels make me very unhappy. One letter, one letter only, have I yet received from you, my love; the others have been lost or taken, and are probably at the bottom of the sea. I must consider our enemy the cause of this dreadful loss; for I am certain you do not neglect to write to me from every port, and by all the despatches sent by Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane. And yet some ships arrived; I have sent couriers to every corner of the continent; but all my hopes have been frustrated. Perhaps you have not been properly informed. I entreat you, my love, to inquire carefully in what manner you may best send your letters. It is so dreadful for me to be deprived of them, and I am so unhappy at being separated from all I love! I am guilty, it is true, of having caused my own calamity; but you would pity me if you knew all that my heart endured.

But why tell you news in a letter destined to travel about the world for years, which will reach you perhaps

in shreds, and will represent antiquity personified? My other despatches must have informed you of the various events of the campaign. The battle of Brandywine, in which I most skilfully lost a small part of my leg; the taking possession of Philadelphia, which will by no means, however, be attended with the ill consequences which have been expected in Europe; the attack of a post at Germantown, at which I was not present, from having received a recent wound, and which did not prove successful; the surrender of General Burgoyne, with five thousand men – that same Burgoyne who wished to devour us all, last spring, but who finds himself this autumn the prisoner of war of our northern army; and finally, our present situation, stationed immediately opposite each other, at four leagues distance, and General Howe established at Philadelphia, making great exertion to take certain forts, and having already lost in the attempt one large and one small vessel. You are now quite as well informed on the subject as if you were general-in-chief of either army. I need only at this moment add, that the wound of the 11th of September, of which I have spoken to you a thousand times, is almost completely healed, although I am still a little lame, but that in a few days there will scarcely remain any traces of this accident. All these details will be given you very circumstantially by my friend Mr. de Valfort, to whom I have given a letter for you, and on whose accounts

you may implicitly rely. I have just learnt that he has sailed, not, as I expected, in a packet, but in a good frigate of thirty-five guns: it would be unlucky indeed if he were taken. From his lips, and the epistle which I confided to him five or six days ago, you will learn all that your affection for me may make you wish to know. I wish you also knew the precise day of my return, and I am most impatient to fix that day myself, and to be able to say to you, in the joy of my heart, – upon such a day I set out to rejoin you, and obtain all earthly happiness.

A little gentleman, in a blue coat, with lemon-coloured facings and a white waistcoat, a German, coming hither to solicit an employment, (which he will not obtain,) and speaking wretched French, told me that he quitted Europe in the month of August: he talked to me of politics and of the ministry; he upset all Europe generally, and every court individually; but he knew not a word of what was most interesting to my heart. I examined him in every way; I mentioned fifty names to him; his answer was always, "Me not know them noblemen."

I will not weary you with a long account of the state of my finances. The accident which occurred to my vessel was a source of vexation to me, because that vessel would have been useful to me in the present settlement of my affairs; but it is no longer in being, and I should reproach myself with having sent it back,

had I not been obliged to make its return a clause in my engagements, on account of my minority.[1] Everything here is incredibly dear. We feel the consolation of the malevolent in thinking that the scarcity is still greater in Philadelphia. In time of war, we become reconciled to all we may ourselves endure by making our enemies suffer ten times more. We have here an abundance of provisions, and we learn with pleasure that our English neighbours are not so fortunate.

Do not think at present of being uneasy on my account; all the hard blows are over, and there can be, at most, but some little miniature strokes, which cannot concern me; I am not less secure in this camp than I should be were I in the centre of Paris. If every possible advantage to be attained by serving here; if the friendship of the army in gross and in detail; if a tender union with the most respectable and admirable of men, General Washington, sustained by mutual confidence; if the affection of those Americans by whom I wish to be beloved; if all this were sufficient to constitute my happiness, I should indeed have nothing to desire. But my heart is far from being tranquil. You would compassionate me, if you knew how much that heart suffers, and how well it loves you!

The present season of the year makes me hope to receive some letters. What may they announce to me? what may I hope? O, my dearest love, how cruel it is to endure this painful anxiety, under circumstances which

are so all-important to my happiness! Have I two children? have I another infant to share my tender affection with my dearest Henriette? Embrace my dear little girl a thousand times for me; embrace them both tenderly, my dearest life. I trust they will know one day how well I love them.

A thousand respectful compliments to Madame d'Ayen; a thousand tender ones to the viscountess and my sisters; to my friends a million of kind regards; remember me to every one. Adieu! take care of your own health; give me circumstantial details of all things; believe that I love you more than ever, that you are the first object of my affection, and the surest guarantee of my felicity. The sentiments so deeply engraven on a heart which belongs to you alone, shall remain, whilst that heart continues to vibrate. Will you, too, always love me, my dearest life? I dare believe it, and that we shall mutually render each other happy by an affection equally tender and eternal. Adieu, adieu! how delightful would it be to embrace you at this moment, and say to you with my own lips, I love thee better than I have ever loved, and I shall love thee for the remainder of my life.

Footnotes:

1. It will be seen by the memoirs that that vessel was wrecked on the bar of Charlestown.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

Camp, near Valley-Forge, January 6th, 1778.

What a date, my dearest love, and from what a region I am now writing, in the month of January! It is in a camp, in the centre of woods, fifteen hundred leagues from you, that I find myself enclosed in the midst of winter. It is not very long since we were only separated from the enemy by a small river; we are at present stationed seven leagues from them, and it is on this spot that the American army will pass the whole winter, in small barracks, which are scarcely more cheerful than dungeons. I know not whether it will be agreeable to General Howe to visit our new city, in which case we would endeavour to receive him with all due honour. The bearer of this letter will describe to you the pleasant residence which I choose in preference to the happiness of being with you, with all my friends, in the midst of all possible enjoyments; in truth, my love, do you not believe that powerful reasons are requisite to induce a person to make such a sacrifice? Everything combined to urge me to depart, – honour alone told me to remain; and when you learn in detail the circumstances in which I am placed, those

in which the army, my friend, its commander, and the whole American cause were placed, you will not only forgive me, but you will excuse, and I may almost venture to say, applaud me. What a pleasure I shall feel in explaining to you myself all the reasons of my conduct, and, in asking, whilst embracing you, a pardon, which I am very certain I shall then obtain! But do not condemn me before hearing my defence. In addition to the reasons I have given you, there is one other reason which I would not relate to every one, because it might appear like affecting airs of ridiculous importance. My presence is more necessary at this moment to the American cause, than you can possibly conceive; many foreigners, who have been refused employment, or whose ambitious views have been frustrated, have raised up some powerful cabals; they have endeavoured, by every sort of artifice, to make me discontented with this revolution, and with him who is its chief; they have spread as widely as they could, the report that I was quitting the continent. The English have proclaimed also, loudly, the same intention on my side. I cannot in conscience appear to justify the malice of these people. If I were to depart, many Frenchmen who are useful here would follow my example. General Washington would feel very unhappy if I were to speak of quitting him; his confidence in me is greater than I dare acknowledge, on account of my youth. In the place he occupies, he is liable to be surrounded by

flatterers or secret enemies; he finds in me a secure friend, in whose bosom he may always confide his most secret thoughts, and who will always speak the truth. Not one day passes without his holding long conversations with me, writing me long letters, and he has the kindness to consult me on the most important matters. A peculiar circumstance is occurring at this moment which renders my presence of some use to him: this is not the time to speak of my departure. I am also at present engaged in an interesting correspondence with the president of congress. The desire to debase England, to promote the advantage of my own country, and the happiness of humanity, which is strongly interested in the existence of one perfectly free nation, all induces me not to depart at the moment when my absence might prove injurious to the cause I have embraced. The General, also, after a slight success in Jersey, requested me, with the unanimous consent of congress, to accept a division in the army, and to form it according to my own judgment, as well as my feeble resources might permit; I ought not to have replied to such a mark of confidence, by asking what were his commissions for Europe. These are some of the reasons, which I confide to you, with an injunction of secrecy. I will repeat to you many more in person, which I dare not hazard in a letter. This letter will be given you by a good Frenchman, who has come a hundred miles to ask me

for my commissions. I wrote to you a few days ago by the celebrated Mr. Adams; he will facilitate your sending me letters. You must have received those I sent you as soon as I heard of your confinement. How very happy that event has rendered me, my dearest love! I delight in speaking of it in all my letters, because I delight in occupying myself with it at every moment of my life! What a pleasure it will give me to embrace my two poor little girls, and make them request their mother to forgive me! You do not believe me so hard hearted, and at the same time so ridiculous, as to suppose that the sex of our new infant can have diminished in any degree my joy at its birth. Our age is not so far advanced, that we may not expect to have another child, without a miracle from Heaven. The next one must absolutely be a boy. However, if it be on account of the name that we are to regret not having a son, I declare that I have formed the project of living long enough to bear it many years myself, before I yield it to any other person. I am indebted to the Marshal de Noailles for the joyful news. I am anxiously expecting a letter from you. I received the other day one from Desplaces, who mentioned having sent a preceding one; but the caprice of the winds, without speaking of English ships, often deranges the order of my correspondence. I was for some days very uneasy about the Viscount de Coigny, who, some of my letters announced, was in a precarious state of health. But that

letter from Desplaces, who told me all were well, without mentioning the viscount's name, has quite reassured me. I have also received some other letters which do not speak of his health. When you write, I entreat you to send me many details of all the people whom I love, and even of all my acquaintance. It is very extraordinary that I have not heard of Madame de Fronsac's confinement. Say a thousand tender and respectful things from me to her, as well as to the Countess Auguste. If those ladies do not enter into the reasons which force me to remain here, they must indeed think me a most absurd being, more especially as they have opportunities of seeing clearly what a charming wife I am separated from; but even that may prove to them what powerful motives must guide my conduct. Several general officers have brought their wives to the camp; I envy them--not their wives--but the happiness they enjoy in being able to see them. General Washington has also resolved to send for his wife. As to the English, they have received a reinforcement of three hundred young ladies from New York; and we have captured a vessel filled with chaste officers' wives, who had come to rejoin their husbands: they were in great fear of being kept for the American army.

You will learn by the bearer of this letter that my health is very good, that my wound is healed, and that the change of country has produced no effect upon me.

Do you not think that, at my return, we shall be old enough to establish ourselves in our own house, live there happily together, receive our friends, institute a delightful state of freedom, and read foreign newspapers, without feeling any curiosity to judge by ourselves of what may pass in foreign countries? I enjoy thus building, in France, castles of felicity and pleasure: you always share them with me, my dearest love, and when we are once united, nothing shall again separate us, or prevent our experiencing together, and through each other, the joy of mutual affection, and the sweetest and most tranquil happiness. Adieu, my love; I only wish this project could be executed on this present day. Would it not be agreeable to you also? Present my tender respects to Madame d'Ayen: embrace a thousand times the viscountess and my sisters. Adieu, adieu; continue to love me, and forget not for a moment the unhappy exile who thinks incessantly of thee with renewed ardour and tenderness.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

York, February 3rd, 1778.

I shall never have any cause to reproach myself, my dearest love, with having allowed an opportunity to pass without writing to you, and I have found one by M. du Bouchet, who has the happiness of embarking for France. You must have already received several letters in which I speak of the birth of our new infant, and of the pleasure this joyful event has given me. If I thought that you could imagine the happiness I feel at this event had been at all diminished because our Anastasia is only a daughter, I should be so much displeased with you, that I should but love you a very little for a few moments. O, my love! what an enchanting pleasure it will be for me to embrace you all; what a consolation to be able to weep with my other friends for the dear friend whom I have lost!

I will not give you a long account of the proofs of confidence with which I have been honoured by America. Suffice it to say that Canada is oppressed by the English; the whole of that immense country is in the power of the enemy, who are there in possession of troops, forts, and a fleet. I am to repair thither with the title of General of the Northern Army, at the head of

three thousand men, to see if no evil can be done to the English in that country. The idea of rendering the whole of New France free, and of delivering her from a heavy yoke, is too glorious for me to allow myself to dwell upon it. My army would, in that case, increase at an immense rate, and would be increased also by the French. I am undertaking a most difficult task, above all taking into account the few resources I possess. As to those my own merit offers, they are very trifling in comparison to the importance of the place; nor can a man of twenty be fit to command an army, charged with the numerous details to which a general must attend, and having under his direct orders a vast extent of country.

The number of the troops I shall command would appear, I own, trifling in Europe, but it is considerable for America. What gives me most pleasure in all this is, that, under any circumstances, I shall be now sooner able to rejoin you. How delightful it will be to hurry through my affairs with the English there above! I am just setting out for Albany, and from thence to another place, nearly a hundred and fifty leagues from hence, where my labours will commence. I shall go part of the way on sledges; having once reached that spot, I shall have only ice to tread upon.

I do not write to any of my friends by this opportunity. I have an immense deal of business to do; there is an infinite number of military and political

affairs to arrange; there are so many things to repair, so many new obstacles to remove, that I should require, in truth, forty years' experience, and very superior talents, to be able to conquer all the difficulties I meet with. I will, at least, do the best I can, and if I only succeed in occupying the enemy's attention in the north, even if I do them no other injury, it would be rendering an important service, and my little army would not be wholly useless. Be so kind as to tell the prince[1] that his youthful captain, although now a general-in-chief, has not acquired more knowledge than he possessed at Polygone, and that he knows not how, unless chance or his good angel should direct him, to justify the confidence which has been placed in him. A thousand tender respects to Madame d'Ayen. A thousand assurances of my tender affection to the viscountess and all my sisters. Do not forget me to your father, Madame de Tesse, and the Marshal de Noailles. Adieu, adieu, my dearest love; embrace our dear children; I embrace a million of times their beloved mother. When shall I find myself again within her arms?

Footnote:

1. The Prince de Poix, colonel of the regiment de Noailles, in which M. de Lafayette was captain.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

Valley Forge Camp, in Pennsylvania, April 14th, 1778.

If thirty opportunities were to present themselves at once, my dearest love, you may rest assured that I would write thirty letters; and that, if you do not receive any news from me, I have nothing, at least, to reproach myself with. This letter will be accompanied by others, saying nearly the same things, and having nearly the same date; but accidents are unfortunately very common, and by this means, some letters may reach you safely. Respecting your own, my love, I prefer accusing fate, the waves, Lord Howe, and the devil, to suspecting you for one moment of negligence. I am convinced that you will not allow a single opportunity to escape of writing to me; but I should feel, if possible, still more so, if I could only hope that you knew the degree of happiness your letters give me. I love you more ardently than ever, and repeated assurances of your affection are absolutely necessary to my repose, and to that species of felicity which I can enjoy whilst separated from all I love most fondly--if, however, the word "felicity" can be applied to my melancholy, exiled state. Endeavour to afford me some consolation, and neglect no opportunity of writing to

me. Millions of ages have elapsed since I have received a line from any one. This complete ignorance of the situation of all those who are most dear to me, is, indeed, a dreadful calamity: I have, however, some reason to believe that it cannot last for ever; the scene will soon become interesting; France must take some decisive part, and vessels will then arrive with letters. I can give you no news at present; we are all in a state of repose, and are waiting with impatience for the opening campaign to awaken us from our stupor. In my other letters, I mentioned my journey to Albany, and my visit to an assembly of savages. I am expecting some good Iroquois who have promised to rejoin me here. Either after, or before receiving this letter, Madame d'Ayen, the viscountess, and my grandfather[1], will receive letters by an opportunity which, I believe, is more secure than the one I am now writing by; I have written a longer letter to you also at the same time. I write an immense number of epistles; God grant that they may arrive! Present my affectionate respects to your mother, and my grandfather; embrace a thousand times the viscountess and my sisters; recall me to the remembrance of the Countess Auguste, Madame de Fronsac, and all your and my friends. Embrace a thousand times our dearest family. When shall I be able to assure you, my dearest life, that I love you better than any other person in the world, and that I shall love

you as long as I live? Adieu; I only look upon this letter as a note.

Present my respects to the Marshal de Noailles, and tell him that I have sent him some trees from Albany; but I will send him others also at various times, that I may feel certain of his receiving a few of them. When you present my compliments to my acquaintance, do not forget the Chevalier de Chastellux.

Footnote:

1. The Count de la Riviere, (Charles-Ives-Thibault), lieutenant-captain of the black musketeers, was grandfather of the mother of M. de Lafayette of whom he had been appointed guardian.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

Germantown, April 28th, 1778.

I write to you, my dearest love, by a very strange opportunity, since it is an English officer who has taken charge of my letter. But your wonder will cease, when you hear that that officer is my friend Fitz-Patrick.[1] He is returning to England, and I could not resist my wish of embracing him before his departure. It was the first time we had met unarmed in America, and that manner of meeting suits us both much better than the hostile appearance which we had, until now, thought proper to affect. It is long since I have received any news from France, and I am very impatiently expecting letters. Write frequently, my love, I need the consolation of hearing often from you during this painful separation. There is no important news; neither would it be proper for Mr. Fitz-Patrick to carry political news from a hand at present engaged in fighting with his army. I am in perfect health; my wound is completely healed, but my heart is far from being tranquil, for I am far from all those I love; and my anxiety about them, as well as my impatience to behold them, increase every hour. Say a thousand things for me to all my friends; present my respects to Madame d'Ayen, and to the Marshal de

Noailles. Embrace, above all, our children, my dearest love, and be convinced yourself that every moment that separates me from you and them appears to me an age. Adieu; I must quit you, for the hour is far advanced, and tomorrow will not be an idle day. Adieu, Adieu!

Footnote:

1. M. de Lafayette had become very intimate with him in England: he is the same General Fitz-Patrick, who made two famous motions in the House of Commons; the one March 17th, 1794, for the prisoners of Magdebourg, and the other, December 16th, 1796, for the prisoners of Olmutz.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

Valley Forge Camp, June 16, 1778.

Chance has furnished me, my dearest love, with a very uncertain opportunity of writing to you, but, such as it is, I shall take advantage of it, for I cannot resist the wish of saying a few words to you. You must have received many letters from me lately, if my writing unceasingly, at least, may justify this hope. Several vessels have sailed, all laden with my letters. My expressions of heartfelt grief must even have added to your distress. What a dreadful thing is absence! I never experienced before all the horrors of separation. My own deep sorrow is aggravated by the feeling that I am not able to share and sympathize in your anguish. The length of time that elapsed before I heard of this event had also increased my misery. Consider, my love, how dreadful it must be to weep for what I have lost, and tremble for what remains. The distance between Europe and America appears to me more enormous than ever. The loss of our poor child is almost constantly in my thoughts: this sad news followed immediately that of the treaty; and whilst my heart was torn by grief, I was obliged to receive and take part in expressions of public joy. I learnt, at the same time, the

loss of our little Adrien, for I always considered that child as my own, and I regretted him as I should have done a son. I have written twice to the viscount and viscountess, to express to them my deep regret, and I hope my letters will reach them safely. I am writing only to you at present, because I neither know when the vessel sails, nor when she will arrive, and I am told that a packet will soon set out which will probably reach Europe first.

I received letters from M. de Cambrai and M. Carmichael. The first one will be employed, I hope, in an advantageous and agreeable manner; the second, whom I am expecting with great impatience, has not yet arrived at the army: how delighted I shall be to see him, and talk to him about you! – he will come to the camp as soon as possible. We are expecting every day news from Europe; they will be deeply interesting, especially to me, who offer up such earnest prayers for the success and glory of my country. The King of Prussia, it is said, has entered into Bohemia, and has forgotten to declare war. If a conflict were to take place between France and England, I should prefer our being left completely to ourselves, and that the rest of Europe should content herself with looking on; we should, in that case, have a glorious war, and our successes would be of a kind to please and gratify the nation.

If the, unfortunate news had reached me sooner, I should have set out immediately to rejoin you; but the

account of the treaty, which we received the first of May, prevented my leaving this country. The opening campaign does not allow me to retire. I have always been perfectly convinced that by serving the cause of humanity, and that of America, I serve also the interest of France. Another motive for remaining longer is, that the commissioners have arrived, and that I am well pleased to be within reach of the negotiations. To be useful in any way to my country will always be agreeable to me. I do not understand why a minister plenipotentiary, or something of that kind, has not been already sent to America; I am most anxious to see one, provided always it may not be myself, for I am but little disposed to quit the military career to enter into the diplomatic corps.

There is no news here; the only topic of conversation is the news from Europe, and to that many idle tales are always prefixed: there has been little action on either side; the only important affair was the one which fell to my share the 20th of last month, and there was not any blood shed even there.

General Washington had entrusted me to conduct a detachment of two thousand four hundred chosen men to the vicinity of Philadelphia. It would be too long to explain to you the cause, but it will suffice to tell you, that, in spite of all my precautions, I could not prevent the hostile army from making a nocturnal march, and I found myself the next morning with part

of the army in front, and seven thousand men in my rear. These gentlemen were so obliging as to take measures for sending to New York those who should not be killed; but they were so kind, also, as to permit us to retire quietly, without doing us any injury. We had about six or seven killed or wounded, and they twenty-five or thirty, which did not make them amends for a march, in which one part of the army had been obliged to make forty miles.

Some days afterwards, our situation having altered, I returned to the camp, and no events of importance have occurred since. We are expecting the evacuation of Philadelphia, which must, we fancy, soon take place. I have been told that on the 10th of April they were thinking of negotiating rather than of fighting, and that England was becoming each day more humble.

If this letter ever reaches you, my dearest love, present my respects to the Duke d'Ayen, the Marshal de Noailles, and Madame de Tesse, to whom I have written by every vessel, although she accuses me of having neglected her, which my heart is incapable of doing. I have also written to Madame d'Ayen by the two last ships, and by several previous ones. Embrace a thousand times the dear viscountess, and tell her how well I love her. A thousand tender regards to my sisters; a thousand affectionate ones to the viscount, M. de Poix, to Coigny,[1] Segur, his brother, Etienne,[2] and all my other friends. Embrace, a million of times, our little

Anastasia; – alas! she alone remains to us! I feel that she has engrossed the affection that was once divided between my two children: take great care of her. Adieu; I know not when this may reach you, and I even doubt its ever reaching you.

Footnotes:

1. Probably the Marquis de Coigny.

2. The Count Etienne de Durfort, now peer of France.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

Bristol, near Rhode Island, Sept. 13th, 1778.

If any thing could lessen my pleasure in writing to you, my dearest love, it would be the painful idea that I am writing to you from a corner of America, and that all I love is two thousand leagues from me. But I have reason to hope that the actual state of things cannot subsist for any length of time, and that the moment appointed for our meeting is not very far removed. War, which so often causes separation, must reunite us; it even secures my return by bringing French vessels here, and the fear of being taken will soon completely vanish; we shall be at least two to play at the game, and if the English attempt to interrupt my course, we shall be able to answer them. How delightful it would be for me to congratulate myself upon having heard from you; but that happiness has not been granted me. Your last letter arrived at the same time as the fleet; since that very distant day, since two months, I have been expecting letters, and none have reached me. It is true that the admiral, and the King's minister, have not been better treated by fortune; it is true that several vessels

are expected, one in particular, every day: this gives me hope; and it is upon hope, that void and meagre food, that I must even subsist. Do not leave me in such a painful state of uncertainty, and although I do not expect to be here to receive an answer to the letter I am now writing, yet I entreat you to send me a very long one immediately, as if I were only waiting for your letter to depart; when you read this, therefore, call instantly for pen and ink, and write to me by every opportunity that you love me, and that you will be glad to see me again, not but that I am well convinced of this; my affection does not permit me to make use of any compliments with you, and there would be more vanity in telling you that I doubt your love, than in assuring you that I depend fully upon it, and for the remainder of my life. But every repetition of this truth always gives me pleasure. The feeling itself is so dear to me, and is so very necessary to my happiness, that I cannot but rejoice in your sweet expressions of it. It is not my reason (for I do not doubt your love) but my heart that you delight by repeating a thousand times what gives me more pleasure, if possible, each time you utter it. O, when shall I be with you, my love; when shall I embrace you a hundred times?

I flattered myself that the declaration of war would recall me immediately to France: independent of the ties which draw my heart towards those most dear to me, the love of my country, and my wish to serve her,

are powerful motives for my return. I feared even that people, who did not know me, might imagine that ambition, a taste for the command I am entrusted with, and the confidence with which I am honoured, would induce me to remain here some time longer. I own that I felt some satisfaction in making these sacrifices to my country, and in quitting everything to fly to her assistance, without saying one word about the service I was giving up. This would have been a source of the purest gratification to me, and I had resolved to set out the moment the news of war arrived. You shall now learn what has delayed me, and I may venture to say you will approve of my conduct.

The news was brought by a French fleet, who came to co-operate with the American troops; new operations were just commencing; it was in the midst of a campaign; this was not a moment to quit the army. I was also assured, from good authority, that nothing would take place this year in France, and that I lost, therefore, nothing by remaining here. I ran the risk, on the contrary, of passing the whole autumn in a vessel, and with a strong desire to fight everywhere, to fight in truth nowhere, I was flattered in this country with the hope of undertaking some enterprise in concert with M. d'Estaing; and persons like himself charged with the affairs of France, told me my quitting America would be prejudicial, and my remaining in it useful, to my country. I was forced to sacrifice my delightful hopes,

and delay the execution of my most agreeable projects. But at length the happy moment of rejoining you will arrive, and next winter will see me united to all I love best in the world.

You will hear so much said about war, naval combats, projected expeditions, and military operations, made and to be made, in America, that I will spare you the ennui of a gazette. I have, besides, related to you the few events that have taken place since the commencement of the campaign. I have been so fortunate as to be constantly employed, and I have never made an unlucky encounter with balls or bullets, to arrest me in my path. It is now more than a year since I dragged about, at Brandywine, a leg that had been somewhat rudely handled, but since that time it has quite recovered, and my left leg is now almost as strong as the other one. This is the only scratch I have received, or ever shall receive, I can safely promise you, my love. I had a presentiment that I should be wounded at the first affair, and I have now a presentiment that I shall not be wounded again. I wrote to you after our success at Monmouth, and I scrawled my letter almost on the field of battle, and still surrounded with slashed faces. Since that period, the only events that have taken place, are the arrival and operations of the French fleet, joined to our enterprise on Rhode Island. I have sent a full detail of them to your father. Half the Americans say that I am

passionately fond of my country, and the other half say that since the arrival of the French ships, I have become mad, and that I neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep, but according to the winds that blow. Betwixt ourselves, they are a little in the right; I never felt so strongly what may be called national pride. Conceive the joy I experienced on beholding the whole English fleet flying full sail before ours, in presence of the English and American armies, stationed upon Rhode Island. M. d'Estaing having unfortunately lost some masts, has been obliged to put into the Boston harbour. He is a man whose talents, genius, and great qualities of the heart I admire as much as I love his virtues, patriotism, and agreeable manners. He has experienced every possible difficulty; he has not been able to do all he wished to do; but he appears to me a man formed to advance the interests of such a nation as ours. Whatever may be the private feeling of friendship that unites me to him, I separate all partiality from the high opinion I entertain of our admiral. The Americans place great confidence in him, and the English fear him. As to the Rhode Island expedition, I shall content myself with saying that General Washington was not there, and that he sent me to conduct a reinforcement to the commanding officer, my senior in service. We exchanged, for several days, some cannon balls, which did no great harm on either side, and General Clinton having brought succours to his party, we evacuated the

island, not without danger, but without any accident. We are all in a state of inaction, from which we shall soon awaken.

Whilst we were on the Island, an officer, who has passed the winter with me, named Touzard, of the regiment of "La Fere ", seeing an opportunity of snatching a piece of cannon from the enemy, threw himself amongst them with the utmost bravery. This action attracted the fire of his antagonists, which killed his horse, and carried off part of his right arm, which has since been amputated. If he were in France, such an action, followed by such an accident, would have been the means of his receiving the cross of St. Louis and a pension. I should feel the greatest pleasure if, through you and my friends, I could obtain for him any recompence.

I entreat you to present my respectful and affectionate compliments to the Marshal de Noailles; he must have received the trees I sent him. I will take advantage of the month of September, the most favourable time, to send him a still larger quantity. Do not forget me to Madame la Marechale de Noailles; embrace my sisters a thousand and a thousand times. If you see the Chevalier de Chastellux, present to him my compliments and assurances of affection.

But what shall I say to you, my love? What expressions can my tenderness find sufficiently strong

for our dear Anastasia? You will find them but in your own heart, and in mine, which is equally open to you. Cover her with kisses; teach her to love me by loving you. We are so completely united, that it is impossible to love one without loving also the other. That poor little child must supply all we have lost; she has two places to occupy in my heart, and this heavy task our misfortune has imposed on her. I love her most fondly, and the misery of trembling for her life does not prevent my feeling for her the warmest affection. Adieu; when shall I be permitted to see thee, to part from thee no more; to make thy happiness as thou makest mine, and kneel before thee to implore thy pardon. Adieu, adieu; we shall not be very long divided.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

Near Fort Lee, opposite Fort Washington, on the North River,

Oct. 7th, 1780.

You must have already learnt, my dearest love, all that can interest you relating to myself, from my arrival at Boston until my voyage to Rhode Island, which place public affairs, and the desire of seeing my friends, induced me to visit soon after my landing. I have been since to Hartford in Connecticut, to be present at an interview between the French generals and General Washington: of all my young friends, Damas[1] was the only one who accompanied us. The viscount [2] and I often write to each other, but we do not meet, and the poor man remains shut up in Rhode Island; the French squadron detains the army there, and is itself detained by nineteen ships of the line and sundry other ships of war, upon which M. Rodney proudly exhibits the British colours. So long as our naval inferiority lasts, you need feel no anxiety about the health of your friends in America.

I must speak to you, however, about my health; it continues excellent, and has not been interrupted for a single moment; a soldier's mode of living is extremely frugal, and the general officers of the rebel army fare very differently from the French army at Newport. You have probably heard that, on my arrival in America, I found the army of General Washington very weak in numbers, and still more so in resources. Our prospects were not brilliant, and the loss of Charleston was for us a most heavy blow, but the desire of co-operating with their allies gave new vigour to the states. General Washington's army increased more than half in number, and more than ten thousand militia were added to it, who would have come forward if we had acted offensively. Associations of merchants and patriotic banks were formed to supply the army with subsistence. The ladies made, and are still making, subscriptions, to afford succour to the soldiers. When that idea was first proposed, I made myself your ambassador to the ladies of Philadelphia, and you are inscribed on the list for a hundred guineas. General Gates had in the south an army quite sufficient for defence; but he has been completely beaten in Carolina. The fruit of all these labours has been, to prove to the French that the Americans desire nothing better than to second their views upon England, to prove to the English that the flame of liberty was not wholly extinguished in America, and to keep us, during

the whole campaign, in daily expectation of a battle, which General Clinton, although equal to us in number, has never thought proper to accept. If we had only had ships, we should have been enabled to do a great deal more.

As I know that all that interests me deeply is also interesting to you, I will tell you that we are much occupied by an important system, which would secure to us a considerable army during the whole war, and would bring into action all the resources which America is capable of making. God grant that the nation may understand its true interests, and our affairs will go on without difficulty!

M. de Rochambeau and M. de Ternay, as well as all the other French officers, conduct themselves extremely well here. A little ebullition of frankness gave rise to a slight altercation between those generals and myself. As I perceived I could not convince them, and that it was important for the public good that we should remain friends; I declared, with due humility, that I had been mistaken, that I had committed an error, and, in short, in proper terms, I asked their pardon, which produced such an excellent effect that we are now on a more amicable footing than ever.

I command a flying corps, which always forms an advance guard, and is quite independent of the great army; this is far too grand for our pacific situation.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

On the Hackensack River, Oct. 8th, 1780.

You will learn, my dearest love, an important event, which has exposed America to the greatest danger. A frightful conspiracy has been planned by the celebrated Arnold: he sold to the English the fort of West Point, which was under his command, and, consequently, the whole navigation of the river: the plot was within an ace of succeeding, and quite as many chances combined together to discover it as in that affair of the "Alliance", which I have so often described to you.[3] After our journey to Hartford, General Washington passed by West Point, which was not on his road; but he was desirous of shewing me the works that had been constructed since my departure for France. Detained by various accidents upon the road, we arrived at the traitor's house just as he received the letters which announced that he had been discovered. He had not time to intercept those proofs of infamy, and consequently he could only make his escape towards New York half an hour before our arrival.

The adjutant-general of the English army has been arrested under a feigned name and dress. He was an important person, the friend and confidant of General

Clinton. He behaved with so much frankness, courage, and delicacy, that I could not help lamenting his unhappy fate.

I received, with great delight, the letters of my dear sisters; I shall write to them tomorrow; but I shall send this scrawl, as I fear the frigate may depart. I finish my letter in this place, having begun it rather more close to the enemy: we had approached them to protect a small enterprise, in which a detachment of my advance-guard has been engaged, and which only ended by capturing two officers, and fifteen men and horses. We are now marching towards a place you will find marked upon the map Sotawa, whither the grand army is also to repair. I shall write to Madame d'Ayen and to my sisters.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

Sotawa Bridge, October 10th, 1780.

I am closing my letter, but before sealing it, I must again speak to you for a moment of my affection. General Washington was much pleased by the kind messages which I delivered from you; he desires me to present to you his tender regards; he is affectionately attached to George, and is much gratified by the name we have given him. We often speak of you and of the little family. Adieu, adieu.

Footnotes:

1. The Count Charles de Damas, died a peer of France under the restoration.

2. The Viscount de Noailles.

3. The conspiracy discovered on board the frigate which brought home M. de Lafayette, in September, 1779.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

New Windsor, in the North River, February 2nd, 1781.

The person who will deliver this to you, my dearest love, is a man I am much attached to, and whom I wish you to become intimate with. He is the son of president Laurens, who has been lately established in the Tower of London;[1] he is lieutenant-colonel in our service, and aide- de-camp to General Washington; he has been sent by congress on a private mission to the court of France. I knew him well during the two first campaigns, and his probity, frankness, and patriotism, have attached me extremely to him. General Washington is very fond of him; and of all the Americans whom you have hitherto seen, he is the one I most particularly wish you to receive with kindness. If I were in France, he should live entirely at my house, and I would introduce him to all my friends (I have even introduced him to some by letter); and give him every opportunity in my power of making acquaintance, and of passing his time agreeably at Versailles; and in my absence, I entreat you to replace me. Introduce him to Madame d'Ayen, the Marshal de Mouchy, the Marshal de Noailles, and treat him in

every respect as a friend of the family: he will tell you all that has occurred during our campaign, the situation in which we are at present placed, and give you all details relating to myself.

Since my arrival here, my health has not for a moment failed. The air of this country agrees with me extremely well, and exercise is very beneficial to me. My exertions during the last campaign did not lead me into much danger, and in that respect we have not, in truth, much to boast. The French squadron has remained constantly blockaded in Rhode Island, and I imagine that the Chevalier Ternay died of grief in consequence of this event. However this may be, he is positively dead. He was a very rough and obstinate man, but firm, and clear in all his views, and, taking all things into consideration, we have sustained a great loss. The French army has remained at Newport, and although its presence has been very useful to us, although it has disconcerted some plans of the enemy which would have been very injurious to us, it might have done still more good if it had, not been thus blockaded.

Several Frenchmen have passed by head quarters. They have all been delighted with General Washington, and I perceive with pleasure that he will be much beloved by the auxiliary troops. Laval and Custine disputed together during the whole journey, and at each station would have done much better than

the American and English generals, but never both in the same manner. The viscount and Damas have taken a long journey on the continent; we have also had the Count des Deux-Ponts, whom I like very much; M. de Charlus is at present in Philadelphia. I intend setting out about the 15th, for Rhode Island, and I shall accompany General Washington during his visit to the French army. When you recollect how "those poor rebels" were looked upon in France, when I came to be hung with them, and when you reflect upon my warm affection for General Washington, you will conceive how delightful it will be for me to witness his reception there as generalissimo of the combined armies of the two nations.

The Americans continue to testify for me the greatest kindness: there is no proof of affection and confidence which I do not receive each day from the army and nation. I am serving here in the most agreeable manner possible. At every campaign I command a separate flying corps, composed of chosen troops; I experience for the American officers and soldiers that friendship which arises from having shared with them, for a length of time, dangers, sufferings, and both good and evil fortune. We began by struggling together; our affairs have often been at the lowest possible ebb. It is gratifying to me to crown this work with them, by giving the European troops a high idea of the soldiers who have been formed with

us. To all these various motives of interest for the cause and army, are joined my sentiments of regard for General Washington: amongst his aides-de-camp there is one man I like very much, and of whom I have often spoken to you; this is Colonel Hamilton.

I depend on Colonel Laurens to give you the details of our campaign. We remained sufficiently near the English to merit the accusation of boldness; but they would not take advantage of any of the opportunities we offered them. We are all in winter quarters in this part of the country. There is some activity in the south, and I was preparing to go there; but the wishes of General Washington, and the hope of being useful to my countrymen, have detained me here. The corps I command having returned to the regiments, I have established myself at headquarters. America made great efforts last summer, and has renewed them this winter, but in a more durable manner, by only making engagements for the war, and I trust that none will have cause to be dissatisfied with us.

Arnold, who has now become an English general, landed in Virginia, with a corps, which appears well pleased to serve under his orders. There is no accounting for taste; but I do not feel sorry, I own, to see our enemies rather degrade themselves, by employing one of our generals, whose talents, even before we knew his treachery, we held in light estimation: abilities must, in truth, be rare in New

York. But whilst speaking of baseness, Colonel Laurens will tell you of the fine embassy sent by General Clinton to some mutinous soldiers. He will describe to you also the details of that mutiny; the means employed to arrest it with the Pennsylvanians, and also those we employed with the Jersey troops. This only proves, however, that human patience has its limits, as no European army would endure the tenth part of such sufferings, that "citizens" alone can support nudity, hunger, cold, labour, and the absolute want of that pay which is necessary to soldiers, who are more hardy and more patient, I believe, than any others in existence.

Embrace our children a thousand and a thousand times for me; their father, although a wanderer, is not less tender, not less constantly occupied with them, and not less happy at receiving news from them. My heart dwells with peculiar delight on the moment when those dear children will be presented to me by you, and when we may embrace and caress them together. Do you think that Anastasia will recollect me? Embrace tenderly for me my dear and amiable viscountess, Madame du Roure, my two sisters, de Noailles and d'Ayen, &c. &c.

Footnote:

1. He was detained both as a prisoner of war and a rebel. The 18th of October, Madame de Lafayette had herself written in his favour to M. de Vergennes, a letter which is still preserved, in the archives of foreign affairs.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

Camp, between the branches of York River, August 24, 1781.

The residence of Virginia is anything but favourable to my correspondence. I do not accuse public affairs of this evil; and as I find so much time to think of my affection for you, I could doubtless find some, also, to assure you of it; but there are no opportunities here of sending letters, and we are obliged to despatch them to Philadelphia and expose them to many hazards; these dangers, in addition to those of the sea, and the increased delay they occasion, must necessarily render the arrival of letters far more difficult. If you receive a greater number from the French than from the Virginian army, it would be unjust to imagine that I have been to blame.

Your self-love has, perhaps, been gratified by the part I have been obliged to act: you may have hoped that I could not be equally awkward on every theatre; but I should accuse you of an egregious degree of vanity (for all things being in common between us, there is vanity in rating me too highly) if you have not trembled for the perils to which I have been exposed.

I am not speaking of cannon balls, but of the more dangerous master-strokes with which I was threatened by Lord Cornwallis. It was not prudent in the general to confide to me such a command. If I had been unfortunate, the public would have called that partiality an error in his judgment.

To begin, even from the deluge, I must speak to you of that miserable Portsmouth expedition. General Rochambeau had intended sending a thousand Frenchmen there, under the Baron de Viomenil. You must have heard that the French squadron gained a great deal of glory, whilst the English attained their desired end. Admiral Arbuthnot will since have informed you that I was blockaded; but, although we were not sailors, that blockade did not detain us four hours. You will have learnt, afterwards, that General Phillips having made some preparations at Portsmouth, we marched in all haste to Richmond, where we arrived nearly at the same time; but I arrived first. They then came from New York and Carolina to unite with the Virginian troops; the whole was commanded by the formidable Lord Cornwallis, who abandoned his first conquests to fulfil the ministerial plan by the conquest of Virginia. It was not without some difficulty that we avoided the battle he wished for; but, after many marches, we became stronger than we were at the commencement, and we pretended to be stronger than we were; we regained what we had

lost without risking a battle, and, after two trifling affairs, the hostile army proceeded to Portsmouth, which it has since evacuated, and whose fortifications we have destroyed. That army is now in York River, whither they repaired by water. If the naval superiority which we are so fully expecting should arrive, I shall rejoice at the campaign closing by the English army's assuming that position.

The French and American troops before New York are under the orders of the generalissimo. My friend Greene has had great success in Carolina, and that campaign has taken a far better turn than we had any reason to expect or hope. "It may perhaps end in a very favourable manner". It is said that the British ministry are sending here the Governor of Virginia; I fancy they have founded rather too many hopes upon the success of their army. The Pennsylvanians, who were to have joined them, are at present here with us. But for the virtue, zeal, and courage of the regular troops who were with me, it would have been impossible for me to have saved myself. I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude to those with whom I have undertaken this fatiguing campaign. The militia have done all they could. I have been well pleased, with our little army, and only hope it may have been also pleased with me.

I must speak of my health, which is a monotonous subject, – for I need only repeat favourable accounts of

my own constitution: the sun of Virginia has a very bad character, and I had received many alarming predictions; many persons, in truth, have had fevers; but this climate agrees with me as well as any other, and the only effect fatigue has upon me is to increase my appetite.

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

On board "La Ville de Paris", in Chesapeak Bay, Oct. 22, 1781.

This is the last moment, my dearest love, allowed me for writing to you; M. de Lauzun is going to join the frigate and return to Europe; some business I had to settle with the admiral affords me the pleasure of thus giving you some news of me two days later; what relates to public affairs will be detailed to you by M. de Lauzun. The close of this campaign is truly brilliant for the allied troops; our movements have been all remarkably well combined, and I must, indeed, be difficult to please, if I were not completely satisfied with the close of my Virginian campaign. You must have learnt all the trouble that Lord Cornwallis's talents and superior forces gave me, – the good luck we had in regaining the ground we had lost, – and, finally, our drawing Lord Cornwallis into the very position that was necessary to enable us to capture him: at that precise moment all the troops rushed upon him. I count as amongst the happiest epochs of my life, that in which the division of M. de St. Simon remained united to my army, and that in which I alternately commanded the three field-marshals, with the troops

under their orders. I pity Lord Cornwallis, for whom I have the highest respect; he is kind enough to express some esteem for me, and after having allowed myself the pleasure, in the capitulation, of repaying the incivilities of Charlestown, I do not intend to carry my vengeance any farther. My health is extremely good, and I met with no accident during our encounter.

Present my most affectionate respects to Madame d'Ayen, and the Marshal de Noailles; a thousand kind regards to all my sisters, the Abbe Fayon, and M. de Margelay. I embrace ten thousand times our beloved children. Adieu, adieu.