

The Confessions of J. J. Rousseau, Book 1

Jean Jacques Rousseau

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BOOK I.

INTRODUCTION.

Among the notable books of later times—we may say, without exaggeration, of all time—must be reckoned The Confessions of Jean Jacques Rousseau. It deals with leading personages and transactions of a momentous epoch, when absolutism and feudalism were rallying for their last struggle against the modern spirit, chiefly represented by Voltaire, the Encyclopedists, and Rousseau himself—a struggle to which, after many fierce intestine quarrels and sanguinary wars throughout Europe and America, has succeeded the prevalence of those more tolerant and rational principles by which the statesmen of our own day are actuated.

On these matters, however, it is not our province to enlarge; nor is it necessary to furnish any detailed account of our author's political, religious, and philosophic axioms and systems, his paradoxes and his errors in logic: these have been so long and so exhaustively disputed over by contending factions that little is left for even the most assiduous gleaner in the field. The inquirer will find, in Mr. John Money's excellent work, the opinions of Rousseau reviewed succinctly and impartially. The 'Contrat Social', the 'Lettres Ecrites de la Montagne', and other treatises that once aroused fierce controversy, may therefore be left in the repose to which they have long been consigned, so far as the mass of mankind is concerned, though they must always form part of the library of the politician and the historian. One prefers to turn to the man Rousseau as he paints himself in the remarkable work before us.

That the task which he undertook in offering to show himself—as Persius puts it—'Intus et in cute', to posterity, exceeded his powers, is a trite criticism; like all human enterprises, his purpose was only imperfectly fulfilled; but this circumstance in no way lessens the attractive qualities of his book, not only for the student of history or psychology, but for the intelligent man of the world. Its startling frankness gives it a peculiar interest wanting in most other autobiographies.

Many censors have elected to sit in judgment on the failings of this strangely constituted being, and some have pronounced upon him very severe sentences. Let it be said once for all that his faults and mistakes were generally due to causes over which he had but little control, such as a defective education, a too acute sensitiveness, which engendered suspicion of his fellows, irresolution, an overstrained sense of honour and independence, and an obstinate refusal to take advice from those who really wished to befriend him; nor should it be forgotten that he was afflicted during the greater part of his life with an incurable disease.

Lord Byron had a soul near akin to Rousseau's, whose writings naturally made a deep impression on the poet's mind, and probably had an influence on his conduct and modes of thought: In some stanzas of 'Childe Harold' this sympathy is expressed with truth and power; especially is the weakness of the Swiss philosopher's character summed up in the following admirable lines:

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"Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,
The apostle of affliction, he who threw
Enchantment over passion, and from woe
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew
The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew
How to make madness beautiful, and cast
O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue
Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they passed
The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast.

"His life was one long war with self-sought foes,
Or friends by him self-banished; for his mind
Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and chose,
For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind,
'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange and blind.
But he was frenzied,—wherefore, who may know?
Since cause might be which skill could never find;
But he was frenzied by disease or woe
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning show."

One would rather, however, dwell on the brighter hues of the picture than on its shadows and blemishes; let us not, then, seek to "draw his frailties from their dread abode." His greatest fault was his renunciation of a father's duty to his offspring; but this crime he expiated by a long and bitter repentance. We cannot, perhaps, very readily excuse the way in which he has occasionally treated the memory of his mistress and benefactress. That he loved Madame de Warens—his 'Mamma'—deeply and sincerely is undeniable, notwithstanding which he now and then dwells on her improvidence and her feminine indiscretions with an unnecessary and unbecoming lack of delicacy that has an unpleasant effect on the reader, almost seeming to justify the remark of one of his most lenient critics—that, after all, Rousseau had the soul of a lackey. He possessed, however, many amiable and charming qualities, both as a man and a writer, which were evident to those amidst whom he lived, and will be equally so to the unprejudiced reader of the Confessions. He had a profound sense of justice and a real desire for the improvement and advancement of the race. Owing to these excellences he was beloved to the last even by persons whom he tried to repel, looking upon them as members of a band of conspirators, bent upon destroying his domestic peace and depriving him of the means of subsistence.

Those of his writings that are most nearly allied in tone and spirit to the 'Confessions' are the 'Reveries d'un Promeneur Solitaire' and 'La Nouvelle Heloise'. His correspondence throws much light on his life and character, as do also parts of 'Emile'. It is not easy in our day to realize the effect wrought upon the public mind by the advent of 'La Nouvelle Heloise'. Julie and Saint-Preux became names to conjure with; their ill-starred amours were everywhere sighed and wept over by the tender-hearted fair; indeed, in composing this work, Rousseau may be said to have done for Switzerland what the author of the Waverly Novels did for Scotland, turning its mountains, lakes and islands, formerly regarded with aversion, into a fairyland peopled with creatures whose joys and sorrows appealed irresistibly to every breast. Shortly after its publication began to flow that stream of tourists and travellers which tends to make Switzerland not only more celebrated but more opulent every year. It is one of the few romances written in the epistolary form that do not oppress the reader with a sense of languor and unreality; for its creator poured into its pages a tide of passion unknown to his frigid and stilted predecessors, and dared to depict Nature as she really is, not as she was misrepresented by the modish authors and artists of the age. Some persons seem shy of owning an acquaintance with this work; indeed, it has been made the butt of ridicule by the disciples of a decadent school. Its faults and its beauties are on the surface; Rousseau's own estimate is freely expressed at the beginning of the eleventh book of the Confessions and elsewhere. It might be wished that the preface had been differently conceived and worded; for the assertion made therein that the book may prove dangerous has caused it to be inscribed on a sort of Index, and good folk who never read a line of it blush at its name. Its "sensibility," too, is a little overdone, and has supplied the wits with opportunities for satire; for example, Canning, in his 'New Morality':

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"Sweet Sensibility, who dwells enshrined
In the fine foldings of the feeling mind....
Sweet child of sickly Fancy!—her of yore
From her loved France Rousseau to exile bore;
And while 'midst lakes and mountains wild he ran,
Full of himself, and shunned the haunts of man,
Taught her o'er each lone vale and Alpine, steep
To lisp the story of his wrongs and weep."

As might be imagined, Voltaire had slight sympathy with our social reformer's notions and ways of promulgating them, and accordingly took up his wonted weapons—sarcasm and ridicule—against poor Jean-Jacques. The quarrels of these two great men cannot be described in this place; but they constitute an important chapter in the literary and social history of the time. In the work with which we are immediately concerned, the author seems to avoid frequent mention of Voltaire, even where we should most expect it. However, the state of his mind when he penned this record of his life should be always remembered in relation to this as well as other occurrences.

Rousseau had intended to bring his autobiography down to a later date, but obvious causes prevented this: hence it is believed that a summary of the chief events that marked his closing years will not be out of place here.

On quitting the Ile de Saint-Pierre he travelled to Strasbourg, where he was warmly received, and thence to Paris, arriving in that city on December 16, 1765. The Prince de Conti provided him with a lodging in the Hotel Saint-Simon, within the precincts of the Temple—a place of sanctuary for those under the ban of authority. 'Every one was eager to see the illustrious proscrip, who complained of being made a daily show, "like Sancho Panza in his island of Barataria." During his short stay in the capital there was circulated an ironical letter purporting to come from the Great Frederick, but really written by Horace Walpole. This cruel, clumsy, and ill-timed joke angered Rousseau, who ascribed it to, Voltaire. A few sentences may be quoted:

"My Dear Jean-Jacques,—You have renounced Geneva, your native place. You have caused your expulsion from Switzerland, a country so extolled in your writings; France has issued a warrant against you: so do you come to me. My states offer you a peaceful retreat. I wish you well, and will treat you well, if you will let me. But, if you persist in refusing my help, do not reckon upon my telling any one that you did so. If you are bent on tormenting your spirit to find new misfortunes, choose whatever you like best. I am a king, and can procure them for you at your pleasure; and, what will certainly never happen to you in respect of your enemies, I will cease to persecute you as soon as you cease to take a pride in being persecuted. Your good friend,

"FREDERICK."

Early in 1766 David Hume persuaded Rousseau to go with him to England, where the exile could find a secure shelter. In London his appearance excited general attention. Edmund Burke had an interview with him and held that inordinate vanity was the leading trait in his character. Mr. Davenport, to whom he was introduced by Hume, generously offered Rousseau a home at Wootton, in Staffordshire, near the Peak Country; the latter, however, would only accept the offer on condition that he should pay a rent of L 30 a year. He was accorded a pension of L 100 by George III., but declined to draw after the first annual payment. The climate and scenery of Wootton being similar to those of his native country, he was at first delighted with his new abode, where he lived with Therese, and devoted his time to herborising and inditing the first six books of his Confessions. Soon, however, his old hallucinations acquired strength, and Rousseau convinced himself that enemies were bent upon his capture, if not his death. In June, 1766, he wrote a violent letter to Hume, calling him "one of the worst of men." Literary Paris had combined with Hume and the English Government to surround him—as he supposed—with guards and spies; he revolved in his troubled mind all the reports and rumours he had heard for months and years; Walpole's forged letter rankled in his bosom; and in the spring of 1767 he fled; first to Spalding, in Lincolnshire, and subsequently to Calais, where he landed in May.

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On his arrival in France his restless and wandering disposition forced him continually to change his residence, and acquired for him the title of "Voyageur Perpetuel." While at Trye, in Gisors, in 1767—8, he wrote the second part of the Confessions. He had assumed the surname of Renou, and about this time he declared before two witnesses that Therese was his wife—a proceeding to which he attached the sanctity of marriage. In 1770 he took up his abode in Paris, where he lived continuously for seven years, in a street which now bears his name, and gained a living by copying music. Bernardin de Saint—Pierre, the author of 'Paul and Virginia', who became acquainted with him in 1772, has left some interesting particulars of Rousseau's daily mode of life at this period. Monsieur de Girardin having offered him an asylum at Ermemonville in the spring of 1778, he and Therese went thither to reside, but for no long time. On the 3d of July, in the same year, this perturbed spirit at last found rest, stricken by apoplexy. A rumor that he had committed suicide was circulated, but the evidence of trustworthy witnesses, including a physician, effectually contradicts this accusation. His remains, first interred in the Ile des Peupliers, were, after the Revolution, removed to the Pantheon. In later times the Government of Geneva made some reparation for their harsh treatment of a famous citizen, and erected his statue, modelled by his compatriot, Pradier, on an island in the Rhone.

"See nations, slowly wise and meanly just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust."

November, 1896.

S. W. ORSON.

BOOK I.

I have entered upon a performance which is without example, whose accomplishment will have no imitator. I mean to present my fellow— mortals with a man in all the integrity of nature; and this man shall be myself.

I know my heart, and have studied mankind; I am not made like any one I have been acquainted with, perhaps like no one in existence; if not better, I at least claim originality, and whether Nature did wisely in breaking the mould with which she formed me, can only be determined after having read this work.

Whenever the last trumpet shall sound, I will present myself before the sovereign judge with this book in my hand, and loudly proclaim, thus have I acted; these were my thoughts; such was I. With equal freedom and veracity have I related what was laudable or wicked, I have concealed no crimes, added no virtues; and if I have sometimes introduced superfluous ornament, it was merely to occupy a void occasioned by defect of memory: I may have supposed that certain, which I only knew to be probable, but have never asserted as truth, a conscious falsehood. Such as I was, I have declared myself; sometimes vile and despicable, at others, virtuous, generous and sublime; even as thou hast read my inmost soul: Power eternal! assemble round thy throne an innumerable throng of my fellow— mortals, let them listen to my confessions, let them blush at my depravity, let them tremble at my sufferings; let each in his turn expose with equal sincerity the failings, the wanderings of his heart, and, if he dare, aver, I was better than that man.

I was born at Geneva, in 1712, son of Isaac Rousseau and Susannah Bernard, citizens. My father's share of a moderate competency, which was divided among fifteen children, being very trivial, his business of a watchmaker (in which he had the reputation of great ingenuity) was his only dependence. My mother's circumstances were more affluent; she was daughter of a Mons. Bernard, minister, and possessed a considerable share of modesty and beauty; indeed, my father found some difficulty in obtaining her hand.

The affection they entertained for each other was almost as early as their existence; at eight or nine years old they walked together every evening on the banks of the Treille, and before they were ten, could not support the idea of separation. A natural sympathy of soul confined those sentiments of predilection which habit at first produced; born with minds susceptible of the most exquisite sensibility and tenderness, it was only necessary to encounter

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similar dispositions; that moment fortunately presented itself, and each surrendered a willing heart.

The obstacles that opposed served only to give a decree of vivacity to their affection, and the young lover, not being able to obtain his mistress, was overwhelmed with sorrow and despair. She advised him to travel—to forget her. He consented—he travelled, but returned more passionate than ever, and had the happiness to find her equally constant, equally tender. After this proof of mutual affection, what could they resolve?—to dedicate their future lives to love! the resolution was ratified with a vow, on which Heaven shed its benediction.

Fortunately, my mother's brother, Gabriel Bernard, fell in love with one of my father's sisters; she had no objection to the match, but made the marriage of his sister with her brother an indispensable preliminary. Love soon removed every obstacle, and the two weddings were celebrated the same day: thus my uncle became the husband of my aunt, and their children were doubly cousins german. Before a year was expired, both had the happiness to become fathers, but were soon after obliged to submit to a separation.

My uncle Bernard, who was an engineer, went to serve in the empire and Hungary, under Prince Eugene, and distinguished himself both at the siege and battle of Belgrade. My father, after the birth of my only brother, set off, on recommendation, for Constantinople, and was appointed watchmaker to the Seraglio. During his absence, the beauty, wit, and accomplishments—

[They were too brilliant for her situation, the minister, her father, having bestowed great pains on her education. She was aught drawing, singing, and to play on the theorbo; had learning, and wrote very agreeable verses. The following is an extempore piece which she composed in the absence of her husband and brother, in a conversation with some person relative to them, while walking with her sister-in-law, and their two children:

Ces deux messieurs, qui sont absens,
Nous sont chers e bien des manieres;
Ce sont nos amiss, nos amans,
Ce sont nos maris et nos freres,
Et les peres de ces enfans.

These absent ones, who just claim
Our hearts, by every tender name,
To whom each wish extends
Our husbands and our brothers are,
The fathers of this blooming pair,
Our lovers and our friends.

of my mother attracted a number of admirers, among whom Mons. de la Closure, Resident of France, was the most assiduous in his attentions. His passion must have been extremely violent, since after a period of thirty years I have seen him affected at the very mention of her name. My mother had a defence more powerful even than her virtue; she tenderly loved my father, and conjured him to return; his inclination seconding his request, he gave up every prospect of emolument, and hastened to Geneva.

I was the unfortunate fruit of this return, being born ten months after, in a very weakly and infirm state; my birth cost my mother her life, and was the first of my misfortunes. I am ignorant how my father supported her loss at that time, but I know he was ever after inconsolable. In me he still thought he saw her he so tenderly lamented, but could never forget I had been the innocent cause of his misfortune, nor did he ever embrace me, but his sighs, the convulsive pressure of his arms, witnessed that a bitter regret mingled itself with his caresses, though, as may be supposed, they were not on this account less ardent. When he said to me, "Jean Jacques, let us talk of your mother," my usual reply was, "Yes, father, but then, you know, we shall cry," and immediately the tears started from his eyes. "Ah!" exclaimed he, with agitation, "Give me back my wife; at least console me for her loss; fill

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up, dear boy, the void she has left in my soul. Could I love thee thus wert thou only my son?" Forty years after this loss he expired in the arms of his second wife, but the name of the first still vibrated on his lips, still was her image engraved on his heart.

Such were the authors of my being: of all the gifts it had pleased Heaven to bestow on them, a feeling heart was the only one that descended to me; this had been the source of their felicity, it was the foundation of all my misfortunes.

I came into the world with so few signs of life, that they entertained but little hope of preserving me, with the seeds of a disorder that has gathered strength with years, and from which I am now relieved at intervals, only to suffer a different, though more intolerable evil. I owed my preservation to one of my father's sisters, an amiable and virtuous girl, who took the most tender care of me; she is yet living, nursing, at the age of four—score, a husband younger than herself, but worn out with excessive drinking. Dear aunt! I freely forgive your having preserved my life, and only lament that it is not in my power to bestow on the decline of your days the tender solicitude and care you lavished on the first dawn of mine. My nurse, Jaqueline, is likewise living; and in good health—the hands that opened my eyes to the light of this world may close them at my death. We suffer before we think; it is the common lot of humanity. I experienced more than my proportion of it. I have no knowledge of what passed prior to my fifth or sixth year; I recollect nothing of learning to read, I only remember what effect the first considerable exercise of it produced on my mind; and from that moment I date an uninterrupted knowledge of myself.

Every night, after supper, we read some part of a small collection of romances which had been my mother's. My father's design was only to improve me in reading, and he thought these entertaining works were calculated to give me a fondness for it; but we soon found ourselves so interested in the adventures they contained, that we alternately read whole nights together, and could not bear to give over until at the conclusion of a volume. Sometimes, in a morning, on hearing the swallows at our window, my father, quite ashamed of this weakness, would cry, "Come, come, let us go to bed; I am more a child than thou art."

I soon acquired, by this dangerous custom, not only an extreme facility in reading and comprehending, but, for my age, a too intimate acquaintance with the passions. An infinity of sensations were familiar to me, without possessing any precise idea of the objects to which they related—I had conceived nothing—I had felt the whole. This confused succession of emotions did not retard the future efforts of my reason, though they added an extravagant, romantic notion of human life, which experience and reflection have never been able to eradicate.

My romance reading concluded with the summer of 1719, the following winter was differently employed. My mother's library being quite exhausted, we had recourse to that part of her father's which had devolved to us; here we happily found some valuable books, which was by no means extraordinary, having been selected by a minister that truly deserved that title, in whom learning (which was the rage of the times) was but a secondary commendation, his taste and good sense being most conspicuous. The history of the Church and Empire by Le Sueur, Bossuett's Discourses on Universal History, Plutarch's Lives, the history of Venice by Nani, Ovid's Metamorphoses, La Bruyere, Fontenelle's World, his Dialogues of the Dead, and a few volumes of Moliere, were soon ranged in my father's closet, where, during the hours he was employed in his business, I daily read them, with an avidity and taste uncommon, perhaps unprecedented at my age.

Plutarch presently became my greatest favorite. The satisfaction I derived from repeated readings I gave this author, extinguished my passion for romances, and I shortly preferred Agesilaus, Brutus, and Aristides, to Orondates, Artemenes, and Juba. These interesting studies, seconded by the conversations they frequently occasioned with my father, produced that republican spirit and love of liberty, that haughty and invincible turn of mind, which rendered me impatient of restraint or servitude, and became the torment of my life, as I continually found myself in situations incompatible with these sentiments. Incessantly occupied with Rome and Athens, conversing, if I may so express myself with their illustrious heroes; born the citizen of a republic, of a father

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whose ruling passion was a love of his country, I was fired with these examples; could fancy myself a Greek or Roman, and readily give into the character of the personage whose life I read; transported by the recital of any extraordinary instance of fortitude or intrepidity, animation flashed from my eyes, and gave my voice additional strength and energy. One day, at table, while relating the fortitude of Scoevola, they were terrified at seeing me start from my seat and hold my hand over a hot chafing—dish, to represent more forcibly the action of that determined Roman.

My brother, who was seven years older than myself, was brought up to my father's profession. The extraordinary affection they lavished on me might be the reason he was too much neglected: this certainly was a fault which cannot be justified. His education and morals suffered by this neglect, and he acquired the habits of a libertine before he arrived at an age to be really one. My father tried what effect placing him with a master would produce, but he still persisted in the same ill conduct. Though I saw him so seldom that it could hardly be said we were acquainted. I loved him tenderly, and believe he had as strong an affection for me as a youth of his dissipated turn of mind could be supposed capable of. One day, I remember, when my father was correcting him severely, I threw myself between them, embracing my brother, whom I covered with my body, receiving the strokes designed for him; I persisted so obstinately in my protection, that either softened by my cries and tears, or fearing to hurt me most, his anger subsided, and he pardoned his fault. In the end, my brother's conduct became so bad that he suddenly disappeared, and we learned some time after that he was in Germany, but he never wrote to us, and from that day we heard no news of him: thus I became an only son.

If this poor lad was neglected, it was quite different with his brother, for the children of a king could not be treated with more attention and tenderness than were bestowed on my infancy, being the darling of the family; and what is rather uncommon, though treated as a beloved, never a spoiled child; was never permitted, while under paternal inspection, to play in the street with other children; never had any occasion to contradict or indulge those fantastical humors which are usually attributed to nature, but are in reality the effects of an injudicious education. I had the faults common to my age, was talkative, a glutton, and sometimes a liar, made no scruple of stealing sweetmeats, fruits, or, indeed, any kind of eatables; but never took delight in mischievous waste, in accusing others, or tormenting harmless animals. I recollect, indeed, that one day, while Madam Clot, a neighbor of ours, was gone to church, I made water in her kettle: the remembrance even now makes me smile, for Madame Clot (though, if you please, a good sort of creature) was one of the most tedious grumbling old women I ever knew. Thus have I given a brief, but faithful, history of my childish transgressions.

How could I become cruel or vicious, when I had before my eyes only examples of mildness, and was surrounded by some of the best people in the world? My father, my aunt, my nurse, my relations, our friends, our neighbors, all I had any connection with, did not obey me, it is true, but loved me tenderly, and I returned their affection. I found so little to excite my desires, and those I had were so seldom contradicted, that I was hardly sensible of possessing any, and can solemnly aver I was an absolute stranger to caprice until after I had experienced the authority of a master.

Those hours that were not employed in reading or writing with my father, or walking with my governess, Jaqueline, I spent with my aunt; and whether seeing her embroider, or hearing her sing, whether sitting or standing by her side, I was ever happy. Her tenderness and unaffected gayety, the charms of her figure and countenance have left such indelible impressions on my mind, that her manner, look, and attitude are still before my eyes; I recollect a thousand little caressing questions; could describe her clothes, her head—dress, nor have the two curls of fine black hair which hung on her temples, according to the mode of that time, escaped my memory.

Though my taste, or rather passion, for music, did not show itself until a considerable time after, I am fully persuaded it is to her I am indebted for it. She knew a great number of songs, which she sung with great sweetness and melody. The serenity and cheerfulness which were conspicuous in this lovely girl, banished melancholy, and made all round her happy.

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The charms of her voice had such an effect on me, that not only several of her songs have ever since remained on my memory, but some I have not thought of from my infancy, as I grow old, return upon my mind with a charm altogether inexpressible. Would any one believe that an old dotard like me, worn out with care and infirmity, should sometime surprise himself weeping like a child, and in a voice querulous, and broken by age, muttering out one of those airs which were the favorites of my infancy? There is one song in particular, whose tune I perfectly recollect, but the words that compose the latter half of it constantly refuse every effort to recall them, though I have a confused idea of the rhymes. The beginning, with what I have been able to recollect of the remainder, is as follows:

Tircis, je n'ose
Ecouter ton Chalumeau
Sous l'Ormeau;
Car on en cause
Deja dans notre hameau.
— — — —
— -- un Berger
s'engager
sans danger,
Et toujours l'epine est sons la rose.

I have endeavored to account for the invincible charm my heart feels on the recollection of this fragment, but it is altogether inexplicable. I only know, that before I get to the end of it, I always find my voice interrupted by tenderness, and my eyes suffused with tears. I have a hundred times formed the resolution of writing to Paris for the remainder of these words, if any one should chance to know them: but I am almost certain the pleasure I take in the recollection would be greatly diminished was I assured any one but my poor aunt Susan had sung them.

Such were my affections on entering this life. Thus began to form and demonstrate itself, a heart, at once haughty and tender, a character effeminate, yet invincible; which, fluctuating between weakness and courage, luxury and virtue, has ever set me in contradiction to myself; causing abstinence and enjoyment, pleasure and prudence, equally to shun me.

This course of education was interrupted by an accident, whose consequences influenced the rest of my life. My father had a quarrel with M. G——, who had a captain's commission in France, and was related to several of the Council. This G——, who was an insolent, ungenerous man, happening to bleed at the nose, in order to be revenged, accused my father of having drawn his sword on him in the city, and in consequence of this charge they were about to conduct him to prison. He insisted (according to the law of this republic) that the accuser should be confined at the same time; and not being able to obtain this, preferred a voluntary banishment for the remainder of his life, to giving up a point by which he must sacrifice his honor and liberty.

I remained under the tuition of my uncle Bernard, who was at that time employed in the fortifications of Geneva. He had lost his eldest daughter, but had a son about my own age, and we were sent together to Bossey, to board with the Minister Lambercier. Here we were to learn Latin, with all the insignificant trash that has obtained the name of education.

Two years spent in this village softened, in some degree, my Roman fierceness, and again reduced me to a state of childhood. At Geneva, where nothing was exacted, I loved reading, which was, indeed, my principal amusement; but, at Bossey, where application was expected, I was fond of play as a relaxation. The country was so new, so charming in my idea, that it seemed impossible to find satiety in its enjoyments, and I conceived a passion for rural life, which time has not been able to extinguish; nor have I ever ceased to regret the pure and tranquil pleasures I enjoyed at this place in my childhood; the remembrance having followed me through every age, even to that in which I am hastening again towards it.

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M. Lambercier was a worthy, sensible man, who, without neglecting our instruction, never made our acquisitions burthensome, or tasks tedious. What convinces me of the rectitude of his method is, that notwithstanding my extreme aversion to restraint, the recollection of my studies is never attended with disgust; and, if my improvement was trivial, it was obtained with ease, and has never escaped memory.

The simplicity of this rural life was of infinite advantage in opening my heart to the reception of true friendship. The sentiments I had hitherto formed on this subject were extremely elevated, but altogether imaginary. The habit of living in this peaceful manner soon united me tenderly to my cousin Bernard; my affection was more ardent than that I had felt for my brother, nor has time ever been able to efface it. He was a tall, lank, weakly boy, with a mind as mild as his body was feeble, and who did not wrong the good opinion they were disposed to entertain for the son of my guardian. Our studies, amusements, and tasks, were the same; we were alone; each wanted a playmate; to separate would in some measure, have been to annihilate us. Though we had not many opportunities of demonstrating our attachment to each other, it was certainly extreme; and so far from enduring the thought of separation, we could not even form an idea that we should ever be able to submit to it. Each of a disposition to be won by kindness, and complaisant, when not soured by contradiction, we agreed in every particular. If, by the favor of those who governed us he had the ascendant while in their presence, I was sure to acquire it when we were alone, and this preserved the equilibrium so necessary in friendship. If he hesitated in repeating his task, I prompted him; when my exercises were finished, I helped to write his; and, in our amusements, my disposition being most active, ever had the lead. In a word, our characters accorded so well, and the friendship that subsisted between us was so cordial, that during the five years we were at Bossey and Geneva we were inseparable: we often fought, it is true, but there never was any occasion to separate us. No one of our quarrels lasted more than a quarter of an hour, and never in our lives did we make any complaint of each other. It may be said, these remarks are frivolous; but, perhaps, a similiar example among children can hardly be produced.

The manner in which I passed my time at Bossey was so agreeable to my disposition, that it only required a longer duration absolutely to have fixed my character, which would have had only peaceable, affectionate, benevolent sentiments for its basis. I believe no individual of our kind ever possessed less natural vanity than myself. At intervals, by an extraordinary effort, I arrived at sublime ideas, but presently sunk again into my original languor. To be loved by every one who knew me was my most ardent wish. I was naturally mild, my cousin was equally so, and those who had the care of us were of similiar dispositions. Everything contributed to strengthen those propensities which nature had implanted in my breast, and during the two years I was neither the victim nor witness of any violent emotions.

I knew nothing so delightful as to see every one content, not only with me, but all that concerned them. When repeating our catechism at church, nothing could give me greater vexation, on being obliged to hesitate, than to see Miss Lambercier's countenance express disapprobation and uneasiness. This alone was more afflicting to me than the shame of faltering before so many witnesses, which, notwithstanding, was sufficiently painful; for though not oversolicitous of praise, I was feelingly alive to shame; yet I can truly affirm, the dread of being reprimanded by Miss Lambercier alarmed me less than the thought of making her uneasy.

Neither she nor her brother were deficient in a reasonable severity, but as this was scarce ever exerted without just cause, I was more afflicted at their disapprobation than the punishment. Certainly the method of treating youth would be altered if the distant effects, this indiscriminate, and frequently indiscreet method produces, were more conspicuous. I would willingly excuse myself from a further explanation, did not the lesson this example conveys (which points out an evil as frequent as it is pernicious) forbid my silence.

As Miss Lambercier felt a mother's affection, she sometimes exerted a mother's authority, even to inflicting on us when we deserved it, the punishment of infants. She had often threatened it, and this threat of a treatment entirely new, appeared to me extremely dreadful; but I found the reality much less terrible than the idea, and what is still more unaccountable, this punishment increased my affection for the person who had inflicted it. All this affection, aided by my natural mildness, was scarcely sufficient to prevent my seeking, by fresh offences, a return of the

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same chastisement; for a degree of sensuality had mingled with the smart and shame, which left more desire than fear of a repetition. I was well convinced the same discipline from her brother would have produced a quite contrary effect; but from a man of his disposition this was not probable, and if I abstained from meriting correction it was merely from a fear of offending Miss Lambercier, for benevolence, aided by the passions, has ever maintained an empire over me which has given law to my heart.

This event, which, though desirable, I had not endeavored to accelerate, arrived without my fault; I should say, without my seeking; and I profited by it with a safe conscience; but this second, was also the last time, for Miss Lambercier, who doubtless had some reason to imagine this chastisement did not produce the desired effect, declared it was too fatiguing, and that she renounced it for the future. Till now we had slept in her chamber, and during the winter, even in her bed; but two days after another room was prepared for us, and from that moment I had the honor (which I could very well have dispensed with) of being treated by her as a great boy.

Who would believe this childish discipline, received at eight years old, from the hands of a woman of thirty, should influence my propensities, my desires, my passions, for the rest of my life, and that in quite a contrary sense from what might naturally have been expected? The very incident that inflamed my senses, gave my desires such an extraordinary turn, that, confined to what I had already experienced, I sought no further, and, with blood boiling with sensuality, almost from my birth, preserved my purity beyond the age when the coldest constitutions lose their insensibility; long tormented, without knowing by what, I gazed on every handsome woman with delight; imagination incessantly brought their charms to my remembrance, only to transform them into so many Miss Lamberciers.

If ever education was perfectly chaste, it was certainly that I received; my three aunts were not only of exemplary prudence, but maintained a degree of modest reserve which women have long since thought unnecessary. My father, it is true, loved pleasure, but his gallantry was rather of the last than the present century, and he never expressed his affection for any woman he regarded in terms a virgin could have blushed at; indeed, it was impossible more attention should be paid to that regard we owe the morals of children than was uniformly observed by every one I had any concern with. An equal degree of reserve in this particular was observed at M. Lambercier's, where a good maid-servant was discharged for having once made use of an expression before us which was thought to contain some degree of indelicacy. I had no precise idea of the ultimate effect of the passions, but the conception I had formed was extremely disgusting; I entertained a particular aversion for courtesans, nor could I look on a rake without a degree of disdain mingled with terror.

These prejudices of education, proper in themselves to retard the first explosions of a combustible constitution, were strengthened, as I have already hinted, by the effect the first moments of sensuality produced in me, for notwithstanding the troublesome ebullition of my blood, I was satisfied with the species of voluptuousness I had already been acquainted with, and sought no further.

Thus I passed the age of puberty, with a constitution extremely ardent, without knowing or even wishing for any other gratification of the passions than what Miss Lambercier had innocently given me an idea of; and when I became a man, that childish taste, instead of vanishing, only associated with the other. This folly, joined to a natural timidity, has always prevented my being very enterprising with women, so that I have passed my days in languishing in silence for those I most admired, without daring to disclose my wishes.

To fall at the feet of an imperious mistress, obey her mandates, or implore pardon, were for me the most exquisite enjoyments, and the more my blood was inflamed by the efforts of a lively imagination the more I acquired the appearance of a whining lover.

It will be readily conceived that this mode of making love is not attended with a rapid progress or imminent danger to the virtue of its object; yet, though I have few favors to boast of, I have not been excluded from enjoyment, however imaginary. Thus the senses, in concurrence with a mind equally timid and romantic, have

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preserved my moral chaste, and feelings uncorrupted, with precisely the same inclinations, which, seconded with a moderate portion of effrontery, might have plunged me into the most unwarrantable excesses.

I have made the first, most difficult step, in the obscure and painful maze of my Confessions. We never feel so great a degree of repugnance in divulging what is really criminal, as what is merely ridiculous. I am now assured of my resolution, for after what I have dared disclose, nothing can have power to deter me. The difficulty attending these acknowledgments will be readily conceived, when I declare, that during the whole of my life, though frequently laboring under the most violent agitation, being hurried away with the impetuosity of a passion which (when in company with those I loved) deprived me of the faculty of sight and hearing, I could never, in the course of the most unbounded familiarity, acquire sufficient resolution to declare my folly, and implore the only favor that remained to bestow.

In thus investigating the first traces of my sensible existence, I find elements, which, though seemingly incompatible, have united to produce a simple and uniform effect; while others, apparently the same, have, by the concurrence of certain circumstances, formed such different combinations, that it would never be imagined they had any affinity; who would believe, for example, that one of the most vigorous springs of my soul was tempered in the identical source from whence luxury and ease mingled with my constitution and circulated in my veins? Before I quit this subject, I will add a striking instance of the different effects they produced.

One day, while I was studying in a chamber contiguous to the kitchen, the maid set some of Miss Lamercier's combs to dry by the fire, and on coming to fetch them some time after, was surprised to find the teeth of one of them broken off. Who could be suspected of this mischief? No one but myself had entered the room: I was questioned, but denied having any knowledge of it. Mr. and Miss Lamercier consult, exhort, threaten, but all to no purpose; I obstinately persist in the denial; and, though this was the first time I had been detected in a confirmed falsehood, appearances were so strong that they overthrew all my protestations. This affair was thought serious; the mischief, the lie, the obstinacy, were considered equally deserving of punishment, which was not now to be administered by Miss Lamercier. My uncle Bernard was written to; he arrived; and my poor cousin being charged with a crime no less serious, we were conducted to the same execution, which was inflicted with great severity. If finding a remedy in the evil itself, they had sought ever to allay my depraved desires, they could not have chosen a shorter method to accomplish their designs, and, I can assure my readers, I was for a long time freed from the dominion of them.

As this severity could not draw from me the expected acknowledgment, which obstinacy brought on several repetitions, and reduced me to a deplorable situation, yet I was immovable, and resolutely determined to suffer death rather than submit. Force, at length, was obliged to yield to the diabolical infatuation of a child, for no better name was bestowed on my constancy, and I came out of this dreadful trial, torn, it is true, but triumphant. Fifty years have expired since this adventure—the fear of punishment is no more. Well, then, I aver, in the face of Heaven, I was absolutely innocent: and, so far from breaking, or even touching the comb, never came near the fire. It will be asked, how did this mischief happen? I can form no conception of it, I only know my own innocence.

Let any one figure to himself a character whose leading traits were docility and timidity, but haughty, ardent, and invincible, in its passions; a child, hitherto governed by the voice of reason, treated with mildness, equity, and complaisance, who could not even support the idea of injustice, experiencing, for the first time, so violent an instance of it, inflicted by those he most loved and respected. What perversion of ideas! What confusion in the heart, the brain, in all my little being, intelligent and moral!—let any one, I say, if possible, imagine all this, for I am incapable of giving the least idea of what passed in my mind at that period.

My reason was not sufficiently established to enable me to put myself in the place of others, and judge how much appearances condemned me, I only beheld the rigor of a dreadful chastisement, inflicted for a crime I had not committed; yet I can truly affirm, the smart I suffered, though violent, was inconsiderable compared to what I felt

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from indignation, rage, and despair. My cousin, who was almost in similar circumstances, having been punished for an involuntary fault as guilty of a premeditated crime, became furious by my example. Both in the same bed, we embraced each other with convulsive transport; we were almost suffocated; and when our young hearts found sufficient relief to breathe out our indignation, we sat up in the bed, and with all our force, repeated a hundred times, Carnifex! Carnifex! Carnifex! executioner, tormentor.

Even while I write this I feel my pulse quicken, and should I live a hundred thousand years, the agitation of that moment would still be fresh in my memory. The first instance of violence and oppression is so deeply engraved on my soul, that every relative idea renews my emotion: the sentiment of indignation, which in its origin had reference only to myself, has acquired such strength, and is at present so completely detached from personal motives, that my heart is as much inflamed at the sight or relation of any act of injustice (whatever may be the object, or wheresoever it may be perpetrated) as if I was the immediate sufferer. When I read the history of a merciless tyrant, or the dark and the subtle machination of a knavish designing priest, I could on the instant set off to stab the miscreants, though I was certain to perish in the attempt.

I have frequently fatigued myself by running after and stoning a cock, a cow, a dog, or any animal I saw tormenting another, only because it was conscious of possessing superior strength. This may be natural to me, and I am inclined to believe it is, though the lively impression of the first injustice I became the victim of was too long and too powerfully remembered not to have added considerable force to it.

This occurrence terminated my infantine serenity; from that moment I ceased to enjoy a pure unadulterated happiness, and on a retrospection of the pleasure of my childhood, I yet feel they ended here. We continued at Bossey some months after this event, but were like our first parents in the Garden of Eden after they had lost their innocence; in appearance our situation was the same, in effect it was totally different.

Affection, respect; intimacy, confidence, no longer attached the pupils to their guides; we beheld them no longer as divinities, who could read the secrets of our hearts; we were less ashamed of committing faults, more afraid of being accused of them: we learned to dissemble, to rebel, to lie: all the vices common to our years began to corrupt our happy innocence, mingle with our sports, and embitter our amusements. The country itself, losing those sweet and simple charms which captivate the heart, appeared a gloomy desert, or covered with a veil that concealed its beauties. We cultivated our little gardens no more: our flowers were neglected. We no longer scratched away the mould, and broke out into exclamations of delight, on discovering that the grain we had sown began to shoot. We were disgusted with our situation; our preceptors were weary of us. In a word, my uncle wrote for our return, and we left Mr. and Miss Lambercier without feeling any regret at the separation.

Near thirty years passed away from my leaving Bossey, without once recalling the place to my mind with any degree of satisfaction; but after having passed the prime of life, as I decline into old age (while more recent occurrences are wearing out apace) I feel these remembrances revive and imprint themselves on my heart, with a force and charm that every day acquires fresh strength; as if, feeling life fleet from me, I endeavored to catch it again by its commencement. The most trifling incident of those happy days delight me, for no other reason than being of those days. I recall every circumstance of time, place, and persons; I see the maid or footman busy in the chamber, a swallow entering the window, a fly settling on my hand while repeating my lessons. I see the whole economy of the apartment; on the right hand Mr. Lambercier's closet, with a print representing all the popes, a barometer, a large almanac, the windows of the house (which stood in a hollow at the bottom of the garden) shaded by raspberry shrubs, whose shoots sometimes found entrance; I am sensible the reader has no occasion to know all this, but I feel a kind of necessity for relating it. Why am I not permitted to recount all the little anecdotes of that thrice happy age, at the recollection of whose joys I ever tremble with delight? Five or six particularly—let us compromise the matter—I will give up five, but then I must have one, and only one, provided I may draw it out to its utmost length, in order to prolong my satisfaction.

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If I only sought yours, I should choose that of Miss Lamercier's backside, which by an unlucky fall at the bottom of the meadow, was exposed to the view of the King of Sardinia, who happened to be passing by; but that of the walnut tree on the terrace is more amusing to me, since here I was an actor, whereas, in the abovementioned scene I was only a spectator; and I must confess I see nothing that should occasion risibility in an accident, which, however laughable in itself, alarmed me for a person I loved as a mother, or perhaps something more.

Ye curious readers, whose expectations are already on the stretch for the noble history of the terrace, listen to the tragedy, and abstain from trembling, if you can, at the horrible catastrophe!

At the outside of the courtyard door, on the left hand, was a terrace; here they often sat after dinner; but it was subject to one inconvenience, being too much exposed to the rays of the sun; to obviate this defect, Mr. Lamercier had a walnut tree set there, the planting of which was attended with great solemnity. The two boarders were godfathers, and while the earth was replacing round the root, each held the tree with one hand, singing songs of triumph. In order to water it with more effect, they formed a kind of luson around its foot: myself and cousin, who were every day ardent spectators of this watering, confirmed each other in the very natural idea that it was nobler to plant trees on the terrace than colors on a breach, and this glory we were resolved to procure without dividing it with any one.

In pursuance of this resolution, we cut a slip off a willow, and planted it on the terrace, at about eight or ten feet distance from the august walnut tree. We did not forget to make a hollow round it, but the difficulty was how to procure a supply of water, which was brought from a considerable distance, and we not permitted to fetch it: but water was absolutely necessary for our willow, and we made use of every stratagem to obtain it.

For a few days everything succeeded so well that it began to bud, and throw out small leaves, which we hourly measured convinced (tho' now scarce a foot from the ground) it would soon afford us a refreshing shade. This unfortunate willow, by engrossing our whole time, rendered us incapable of application to any other study, and the cause of our inattention not being known, we were kept closer than before. The fatal moment approached when water must fail, and we were already afflicted with the idea that our tree must perish with drought. At length necessity, the parent of industry, suggested an invention, by which we might save our tree from death, and ourselves from despair; it was to make a furrow underground, which would privately conduct a part of the water from the walnut tree to our willow. This undertaking was executed with ardor, but did not immediately succeed—our descent was not skilfully planned—the water did not run, the earth falling in and stopping up the furrow; yet, though all went contrary, nothing discouraged us, 'omnia vincit labor improbus'. We made the bason deeper, to give the water a more sensible descent; we cut the bottom of a box into narrow planks; increased the channel from the walnut tree to our willow and laying a row flat at the bottom, set two others inclining towards each other, so as to form a triangular channel; we formed a kind of grating with small sticks at the end next the walnut tree, to prevent the earth and stones from stopping it up, and having carefully covered our work with well—trodden earth, in a transport of hope and fear attended the hour of watering. After an interval, which seemed an age of expectation, this hour arrived. Mr. Lamercier, as usual, assisted at the operation; we contrived to get between him and our tree, towards which he fortunately turned his back. They no sooner began to pour the first pail of water, than we perceived it running to the willow; this sight was too much for our prudence, and we involuntarily expressed our transport by a shout of joy. The sudden exclamation made Mr. Lamercier turn about, though at that instant he was delighted to observe how greedily the earth, which surrounded the root of his walnut tree, imbibed the water. Surprised at seeing two trenches partake of it, he shouted in his turn, examines, perceives the roguery, and, sending instantly for a pick axe, at one fatal blow makes two or three of our planks fly, crying out meantime with all his strength, an aqueduct! an aqueduct! His strokes redoubled, every one of which made an impression on our hearts; in a moment the planks, the channel, the bason, even our favorite willow, all were ploughed up, nor was one word pronounced during this terrible transaction, except the above mentioned exclamation. An aqueduct! repeated he, while destroying all our hopes, an aqueduct! an aqueduct!

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It maybe supposed this adventure had a still more melancholy end for the young architects; this, however, was not the case; the affair ended here. Mr. Lamercier never reproached us on this account, nor was his countenance clouded with a frown; we even heard him mention the circumstance to his sister with loud bursts of laughter. The laugh of Mr. Lamercier might be heard to a considerable distance. But what is still more surprising after the first transport of sorrow had subsided, we did not find ourselves violently afflicted; we planted a tree in another spot, and frequently recollected the catastrophe of the former, repeating with a significant emphasis, an aqueduct! an aqueduct! Till then, at intervals, I had fits of ambition, and could fancy myself Brutus or Aristides, but this was the first visible effect of my vanity. To have constructed an aqueduct with our own hands, to have set a slip of willow in competition with a flourishing tree, appeared to me a supreme degree of glory! I had a juster conception of it at ten than Caesar entertained at thirty.

The idea of this walnut tree, with the little anecdotes it gave rise to, have so well continued, or returned to my memory, that the design which conveyed the most pleasing sensations, during my journey to Geneva, in the year 1754, was visiting Bossey, and reviewing the monuments of my infantine amusement, above all, the beloved walnut tree, whose age at that time must have been verging on a third of a century, but I was so beset with company that I could not find a moment to accomplish my design. There is little appearance now of the occasion being renewed; but should I ever return to that charming spot, and find my favorite walnut tree still existing, I am convinced I should water it with my tears.

On my return to Geneva, I passed two or three years at my uncle's, expecting the determination of my friends respecting my future establishment. His own son being devoted to genius, was taught drawing, and instructed by his father in the elements of Euclid; I partook of these instructions, but was principally fond of drawing. Meantime, they were irresolute, whether to make me a watchmaker, a lawyer, or a minister. I should have preferred being a minister, as I thought it must be a charming thing to preach, but the trifling income which had been my mother's, and was to be divided between my brother and myself, was too inconsiderable to defray the expense attending the prosecution of my studies. As my age did not render the choice very pressing, I remained with my uncle, passing my time with very little improvement, and paying pretty dear, though not unreasonably, for my board.

My uncle, like my father, was a man of pleasure, but had not learned, like him, to abridge his amusements for the sake of instructing his family, consequently our education was neglected. My aunt was a devotee, who loved singing psalms better than thinking of our improvement, so that we were left entirely to ourselves, which liberty we never abused.

Ever inseparable, we were all the world to each other; and, feeling no inclination to frequent the company of a number of disorderly lads of our own age, we learned none of those habits of libertinism to which our idle life exposed us. Perhaps I am wrong in charging myself and cousin with idleness at this time, for, in our lives, we were never less so; and what was extremely fortunate, so incessantly occupied with our amusements, that we found no temptation to spend any part of our time in the streets. We made cages, pipes, kites, drums, houses, ships, and bows; spoiled the tools of my good old grandfather by endeavoring to make watches in imitation of him; but our favorite amusement was wasting paper, in drawing, washing, coloring, etc. There came an Italian mountebank to Geneva, called Gamber-Corta, who had an exhibition of puppets, that he made play a kind of comedy. We went once to see them, but could not spare time to go again, being busily employed in making puppets of our own and inventing comedies, which we immediately set about making them perform, mimicking to the best of our abilities the uncouth voice of Punch; and, to complete the business, my good aunt and uncle Bernard had the patience to see and listen to our imitations; but my uncle, having one day read an elaborate discourse to his family, we instantly gave up our comedies, and began composing sermons.

These details, I confess, are not very amusing, but they serve to demonstrate that the former part of our education was well directed, since being, at such an early age, the absolute masters of our time, we found no inclination to abuse it; and so little in want of other companions, that we constantly neglected every occasion of seeking them.

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When taking our walks together, we observed their diversions without feeling any inclination to partake of them. Friendship so entirely occupied our hearts, that, pleased with each other's company the simplest pastimes were sufficient to delight us.

We were soon remarked for being thus inseparable: and what rendered us more conspicuous, my cousin was very tall, myself extremely short, so that we exhibited a very whimsical contrast. This meagre figure, small, sallow countenance, heavy air, and supine gait, excited the ridicule of the children, who, in the gibberish of the country, nicknamed him 'Barna Bredanna'; and we no sooner got out of doors than our ears were assailed with a repetition of "Barna Bredanna." He bore this indignity with tolerable patience, but I was instantly for fighting. This was what the young rogues aimed at. I engaged accordingly, and was beat. My poor cousin did all in his power to assist me, but he was weak, and a single stroke brought him to the ground. I then became furious, and received several smart blows, some of which were aimed at 'Barna Bredanna'. This quarrel so far increased the evil, that, to avoid their insults, we could only show ourselves in the streets while they were employed at school.

I had already become a redresser of grievances; there only wanted a lady in the way to be a knight-errant in form. This defect was soon supplied; I presently had two. I frequently went to see my father at Nion, a small city in the Vaudois country, where he was now settled. Being universally respected, the affection entertained for him extended to me: and, during my visits, the question seemed to be, who should show me most kindness. A Madame de Vulson, in particular, loaded me with caresses; and, to complete all, her daughter made me her gallant. I need not explain what kind of gallant a boy of eleven must be to a girl of two and twenty; the artful hussies know how to set these puppets up in front, to conceal more serious engagements. On my part I saw no inequality between myself and Miss Vulson, was flattered by the circumstance, and went into it with my whole heart, or rather my whole head, for this passion certainly reached no further, though it transported me almost to madness, and frequently produced scenes sufficient to make even a cynic expire with laughter.

I have experienced two kinds of love, equally real, which have scarce any affinity, yet each differing materially from tender friendship. My whole life has been divided between these affections, and I have frequently felt the power of both at the same instant. For example, at the very time I so publically and tyrannically claimed Miss Vulson, that I could not suffer any other of my sex to approach her, I had short, but passionate, assignations with a Miss Goton, who thought proper to act the schoolmistress with me. Our meetings, though absolutely childish, afforded me the height of happiness. I felt the whole charm of mystery, and repaid Miss Vulson in kind, when she least expected it, the use she made of me in concealing her amours. To my great mortification, this secret was soon discovered, and I presently lost my young schoolmistress.

Miss Goton was, in fact, a singular personage. She was not handsome, yet there was a certain something in her figure which could not easily be forgotten, and this for an old fool, I am too often convinced of. Her eyes, in particular, neither corresponded with her age, her height, nor her manner; she had a lofty imposing air, which agreed extremely well with the character she assumed, but the most extraordinary part of her composition was a mixture of forwardness and reserve difficult to be conceived; and while she took the greatest liberties with me, would never permit any to be taken with her in return, treating me precisely like a child. This makes me suppose she had either ceased herself to be one, or was yet sufficiently so to behold us play the danger to which this folly exposed her.

I was so absolutely in the power of both these mistresses, that when in the presence of either, I never thought of her who was absent; in other respects, the effects they produced on me bore no affinity. I could have passed my whole life with Miss Vulson, without forming a wish to quit her; but then, my satisfaction was attended with a pleasing serenity; and, in numerous companies, I was particularly charmed with her. The sprightly sallies of her wit, the arch glance of her eye, even jealousy itself, strengthened my attachment, and I triumphed in the preference she seemed to bestow on me, while addressed by more powerful rivals; applause, encouragement, and smiles, gave animation to my happiness. Surrounded by a throng of observers, I felt the whole force of love—I was passionate, transported; in a tete-a-tete, I should have been constrained, thoughtful, perhaps unhappy. If

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Miss Vulson was ill, I suffered with her; would willingly have given up my own health to establish hers (and, observe I knew the want of it from experience); if absent, she employed my thoughts, I felt the want of her; when present, her caresses came with warmth and rapture to my heart, though my senses were unaffected. The familiarities she bestowed on me I could not have supported the idea of her granting to another; I loved her with a brother's affection only, but experienced all the jealousy of a lover.

With Miss Goton this passion might have acquired a degree of fury; I should have been a Turk, a tiger, had I once imagined she bestowed her favors on any but myself. The pleasure I felt on approaching Miss Vulson was sufficiently ardent, though unattended with uneasy sensations; but at sight of Miss Goton, I felt myself bewildered—every sense was absorbed in ecstasy. I believe it would have been impossible to have remained long with her; I must have been suffocated with the violence of my palpitations. I equally dreaded giving either of them displeasure; with one I was more complaisant; with the other, more submissive. I would not have offended Miss Vulson for the world; but if Miss Goton had commanded me to throw myself into the flames, I think I should have instantly obeyed her. Happily, both for her and myself, our amours; or rather rendezvous, were not of long duration: and though my connection with Miss Vulson was less dangerous, after a continuance of some greater length, that likewise had its catastrophe; indeed the termination of a love affair is good for nothing, unless it partakes of the romantic, and can furnish out at least an exclamation.

Though my correspondence with Miss Vulson was less animated, it was perhaps more endearing; we never separated without tears, and it can hardly be conceived what a void I felt in my heart. I could neither think nor speak of anything but her. These romantic sorrows were not affected, though I am inclined to believe they did not absolutely centre in her, for I am persuaded (though I did not perceive it at that time) being deprived of amusement bore a considerable share in them.

To soften the rigor of absence, we agreed to correspond with each other, and the pathetic expressions these letters contained were sufficient to have split a rock. In a word, I had the honor of her not being able to endure the pain of separation. She came to see me at Geneva.

My head was now completely turned; and during the two days she remained here, I was intoxicated with delight. At her departure, I would have thrown myself into the water after her, and absolutely rent the air with my cries. The week following she sent me sweetmeats, gloves, etc. This certainly would have appeared extremely gallant, had I not been informed of her marriage at the same instant, and that the journey I had thought proper to give myself the honor of, was only to buy her wedding suit.

My indignation may easily be conceived; I shall not attempt to describe it. In this heroic fury, I swore never more to see the perfidious girl, supposing it the greatest punishment that could be inflicted on her. This, however, did not occasion her death, for twenty years after, while on a visit to my father, being on the lake, I asked who those ladies were in a boat not far from ours. "What!" said my father smiling, "does not your heart inform you? It is your former flame, it is Madame Christin, or, if you please, Miss Vulson." I started at the almost forgotten name, and instantly ordered the waterman to turn off, not judging it worth while to be perjured, however favorable the opportunity for revenge, in renewing a dispute of twenty years past, with a woman of forty.

Thus, before my future destination was determined, did I fool away the most precious moments of my youth. After deliberating a long time on the bent of my natural inclination, they resolved to dispose of me in a manner the most repugnant to them. I was sent to Mr. Masseron, the City Register, to learn (according to the expression of my uncle Bernard) the thriving occupation of a scraper. This nickname was inconceivably displeasing to me, and I promised myself but little satisfaction in the prospect of heaping up money by a mean employment. The assiduity and subjection required, completed my disgust, and I never set foot in the office without feeling a kind of horror, which every day gained fresh strength.

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Mr. Masseron, who was not better pleased with my abilities than I was with the employment, treated me with disdain, incessantly upbraiding me with being a fool and blockhead, not forgetting to repeat, that my uncle had assured him I was a knowing one, though he could not find that I knew anything. That he had promised to furnish him with a sprightly boy, but had, in truth, sent him an ass. To conclude, I was turned out of the registry, with the additional ignominy of being pronounced a fool by all Mr. Masseron's clerks, and fit only to handle a file.

My vocation thus determined, I was bound apprentice; not, however, to a watchmaker, but to an engraver, and I had been so completely humiliated by the contempt of the register, that I submitted without a murmur. My master, whose name was M. Ducommon, was a young man of a very violent and boorish character, who contrived in a short time to tarnish all the amiable qualities of my childhood, to stupefy a disposition naturally sprightly, and reduce my feelings, as well as my condition, to an absolute state of servitude. I forgot my Latin, history, and antiquities; I could hardly recollect whether such people as Romans ever existed. When I visited my father, he no longer beheld his idol, nor could the ladies recognize the gallant Jean Jacques; nay, I was so well convinced that Mr. and Miss Lambercier would scarce receive me as their pupil, that I endeavored to avoid their company, and from that time have never seen them. The vilest inclinations, the basest actions, succeeded my amiable amusements and even obliterated the very remembrance of them. I must have had, in spite of my good education, a great propensity to degenerate, else the declension could not have followed with such ease and rapidity, for never did so promising a Caesar so quickly become a Laradon.

The art itself did not displease me. I had a lively taste for drawing. There was nothing displeasing in the exercise of the graver; and as it required no very extraordinary abilities to attain perfection as a watchcase engraver, I hoped to arrive at it. Perhaps I should have accomplished my design, if unreasonable restraint, added to the brutality of my master, had not rendered my business disgusting. I wasted his time, and employed myself in engraving medals, which served me and my companions as a kind of insignia for a new invented order of chivalry, and though this differed very little from my usual employ, I considered it as a relaxation. Unfortunately, my master caught me at this contraband labor, and a severe beating was the consequence. He reproached me at the same time with attempting to make counterfeit money because our medals bore the arms of the Republic, though, I can truly aver, I had no conception of false money, and very little of the true, knowing better how to make a Roman As than one of our threepenny pieces.

My master's tyranny rendered insupportable that labor I should otherwise have loved, and drove me to vices I naturally despised, such as falsehood, idleness, and theft. Nothing ever gave me a clearer demonstration of the difference between filial dependence and abject slavery, than the remembrance of the change produced in me at that period. Hitherto I had enjoyed a reasonable liberty; this I had suddenly lost. I was enterprising at my father's, free at Mr. Lambercier's, discreet at my uncle's; but, with my master, I became fearful, and from that moment my mind was vitiated. Accustomed to live on terms of perfect equality, to be witness of no pleasures I could not command, to see no dish I was not to partake of, or be sensible of a desire I might not express; to be able to bring every wish of my heart to my lips—what a transition! —at my master's I was scarce allowed to speak, was forced to quit the table without tasting what I most longed for, and the room when I had nothing particular to do there; was incessantly confined to my work, while the liberty my master and his journeymen enjoyed, served only to increase the weight of my subjection. When disputes happened to arise, though conscious that I understood the subject better than any of them, I dared not offer my opinion; in a word, everything I saw became an object of desire, for no other reason than because I was not permitted to enjoy anything. Farewell gayety, ease, those happy turns of expressions, which formerly even made my faults escape correction. I recollect, with pleasure, a circumstance that happened at my father's, which even now makes me smile. Being for some fault ordered to bed without my supper, as I was passing through the kitchen, with my poor morsel of bread in my hand, I saw the meat turning on the spit; my father and the rest were round the fire; I must bow to every one as I passed. When I had gone through this ceremony, leering with a wistful eye at the roast meat, which looked so inviting, and smelt so savory, I could not abstain from making that a bow likewise, adding in a pitiful tone, good bye, roast meal! This unpremeditated pleasantry put them in such good humor, that I was permitted to stay, and partake of it. Perhaps the same thing might have produced a similar effect at my master's, but such a thought could never have

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occurred to me, or, if it had, I should not have had courage to express it.

Thus I learned to covet, dissemble, lie, and, at length, to steal, a propensity I never felt the least idea of before, though since that time I have never been able entirely to divest myself of it. Desire and inability united naturally led to this vice, which is the reason pilfering is so common among footmen and apprentices, though the latter, as they grow up, and find themselves in a situation where everything is at their command, lose this shameful propensity. As I never experienced the advantage, I never enjoyed the benefit.

Good sentiments, ill-directed, frequently lead children into vice. Notwithstanding my continual wants and temptations, it was more than a year before I could resolve to take even eatables. My first theft was occasioned by complaisance, but it was productive of others which had not so plausible an excuse.

My master had a journeyman named Verrat, whose mother lived in the neighborhood, and had a garden at a considerable distance from the house, which produced excellent asparagus. This Verrat, who had no great plenty of money, took it in his head to rob her of the most early production of her garden, and by the sale of it procure those indulgences he could not otherwise afford himself; but not being very nimble, he did not care to run the hazard of a surprise. After some preliminary flattery, which I did not comprehend the meaning of, he proposed this expedition to me, as an idea which had that moment struck him. At first I would not listen to the proposal; but he persisted in his solicitation, and as I could never resist the attacks of flattery, at length prevailed. In pursuance of this virtuous resolution, I every morning repaired to the garden, gathered the best of the asparagus, and took it to the Holard where some good old women, who guessed how I came by it, wishing to diminish the price, made no secret of their suspicions; this produced the desired effect, for, being alarmed, I took whatever they offered, which being taken to Mr. Verrat, was presently metamorphosed into a breakfast, and divided with a companion of his; for, though I procured it, I never partook of their good cheer, being fully satisfied with an inconsiderable bribe.

I executed my roguery with the greatest fidelity, seeking only to please my employer; and several days passed before it came into my head, to rob the robber, and tittle Mr. Verrat's harvest. I never considered the hazard I run in these expeditions, not only of a torrent of abuse, but what I should have been still more sensible of, a hearty beating; for the miscreant, who received the whole benefit, would certainly have denied all knowledge of the fact, and I should only have received a double portion of punishment for daring to accuse him, since being only an apprentice, I stood no chance of being believed in opposition to a journeyman. Thus, in every situation, powerful rogues know how to save themselves at the expense of the feeble.

This practice taught me it was not so terrible to thieve as I had imagined: I took care to make this discovery turn to some account, helping myself to everything within my reach, that I conceived an inclination for. I was not absolutely ill-fed at my master's, and temperance was only painful to me by comparing it with the luxury he enjoyed. The custom of sending young people from table precisely when those things are served up which seem most tempting, is calculated to increase their longing, and induces them to steal what they conceive to be so delicious. It may be supposed I was not backward in this particular: in general my knavery succeeded pretty well, though quite the reverse when I happened to be detected.

I recollect an attempt to procure some apples, which was attended with circumstances that make me smile and shudder even at this instant. The fruit was standing in the pantry, which by a lattice at a considerable height received light from the kitchen. One day, being alone in the house, I climbed up to see these precious apples, which being out of my reach, made this pantry appear the garden of Hesperides. I fetched the spit—tried if it would reach them—it was too short—I lengthened it with a small one which was used for game,—my master being very fond of hunting, darted at them several times without success; at length was more fortunate; being transported to find I was bringing up an apple, I drew it gently to the lattice—was going to seize it when (who can express my grief and astonishment!) I found it would not pass through—it was too large. I tried every expedient to accomplish my design, sought supporters to keep the spits in the same position, a knife to divide the apple, and

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a lath to hold it with; at length, I so far succeeded as to effect the division, and made no doubt of drawing the pieces through; but it was scarcely separated, (compassionate reader, sympathize with my affliction) when both pieces fell into the pantry.

Though I lost time by this experiment, I did not lose courage, but, dreading a surprise, I put off the attempt till next day, when I hoped to be more successful, and returned to my work as if nothing had happened, without once thinking of what the two obvious witnesses I had left in the pantry deposed against me.

The next day (a fine opportunity offering) I renew the trial. I fasten the spits together; get on the stool; take aim; am just going to dart at my prey—unfortunately the dragon did not sleep; the pantry door opens, my master makes his appearance, and, looking up, exclaims, "Bravo!"—The horror of that moment returns—the pen drops from my hand.

A continual repetition of ill treatment rendered me callous; it seemed a kind of composition for my crimes, which authorized me to continue them, and, instead of looking back at the punishment, I looked forward to revenge. Being beat like a slave, I judged I had a right to all the vices of one. I was convinced that to rob and be punished were inseparable, and constituted, if I may so express myself, a kind of traffic, in which, if I perform my part of the bargain, my master would take care not to be deficient in his; that preliminary settled, I applied myself to thieving with great tranquility, and whenever this interrogatory occurred to my mind, "What will be the consequence?" the reply was ready, "I know the worst, I shall be beat; no matter, I was made for it."

I love good eating; am sensual, but not greedy; I have such a variety of inclinations to gratify, that this can never predominate; and unless my heart is unoccupied, which very rarely happens, I pay but little attention to my appetite; to purloining eatables, but extended this propensity to everything I wished to possess, and if I did not become a robber in form, it was only because money never tempted me.

My master had a closet in the workshop, which he kept locked; this I contrived to open and shut as often as I pleased, and laid his best tools, fine drawings, impressions, in a word, everything he wished to keep from me, under contribution.

These thefts were so far innocent, that they were always employed in his service, but I was transported at having the trifles in my possession, and imagined I stole the art with its productions. Besides what I have mentioned, his boxes contained threads of gold and silver, a number of small jewels, valuable medals, and money; yet, though I seldom had five sous in my pocket, I do not recollect ever having cast a wishful look at them; on the contrary, I beheld these valuables rather with terror than with delight.

I am convinced the dread of taking money was, in a great measure, the effect of education. There was mingled with the idea of it the fear of infamy, a prison, punishment, and death: had I even felt the temptation, these objects would have made me tremble; whereas my failings appeared a species of waggery, and, in truth, they were little else; they could but occasion a good trimming, and this I was already prepared for. A sheet of fine drawing paper was a greater temptation than money sufficient to have purchased a ream. This unreasonable caprice is connected with one of the most striking singularities of my character, and has so far influenced my conduct, that it requires a particular explanation.

My passions are extremely violent; while under their influence, nothing can equal my impetuosity; I am an absolute stranger to discretion, respect, fear, or decorum; rude, saucy, violent, and intrepid: no shame can stop, no danger intimidate me. My mind is frequently so engrossed by a single object, that beyond it the whole world is not worth a thought; this is the enthusiasm of a moment, the next, perhaps, I am plunged in a state of annihilation. Take me in my moments of tranquility, I am indolence and timidity itself; a word to speak, the least trifle to perform, appear an intolerable labor; everything alarms and terrifies me; the very buzzing of a fly will make me shudder; I am so subdued by fear and shame, that I would gladly shield myself from mortal view.

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When obliged to exert myself, I am ignorant what to do! when forced to speak, I am at a loss for words; and if any one looks at me, I am instantly out of countenance. If animated with my subject, I express my thoughts with ease, but, in ordinary conversations, I can say nothing— absolutely nothing; and, being obliged to speak, renders them insupportable.

I may add, that none of my predominant inclinations centre in those pleasures which are to be purchased: money empisons my delight; I must have them unadulterated; I love those of the table, for instance, but cannot endure the restraints of good company, or the intemperance of taverns; I can enjoy them only with a friend, for alone it is equally impossible; my imagination is then so occupied with other things, that I find no pleasure in eating. Women who are to be purchased have no charms for me; my beating heart cannot be satisfied without affection; it is the same with every other enjoyment, if not truly disinterested, they are absolutely insipid; in a word, I am fond of those things which are only estimable to minds formed for the peculiar enjoyment of them.

I never thought money so desirable as it is usually imagined; if you would enjoy you must transform it; and this transformation is frequently attended with inconvenience; you must bargain, purchase, pay dear, be badly served, and often duped. I buy an egg, am assured it is new-laid— I find it stale; fruit in its utmost perfection—'tis absolutely green. I love good wine, but where shall I get it? Not at my wine merchant's— he will poison me to a certainty. I wish to be universally respected; how shall I compass my design? I must make friends, send messages, write letters, come, go, wait, and be frequently deceived. Money is the perpetual source of uneasiness; I fear it more than I love good wine.

A thousand times, both during and since my apprenticeship, have I gone out to purchase some nicety, I approach the pastry-cook's, perceive some women at the counter, and imagine they are laughing at me. I pass a fruit shop, see some fine pears, their appearance tempts me; but then two or three young people are near, or a man I am acquainted with is standing at the door; I take all that pass for persons I have some knowledge of, and my near sight contributes to deceive me. I am everywhere intimidated, restrained by some obstacle, and with money in my pocket return as I went, for want of resolution to purchase what I long for.

I should enter into the most insipid details was I to relate the trouble, shame, repugnance, and inconvenience of all kinds which I have experienced in parting with my money, whether in my own person, or by the agency of others; as I proceed, the reader will get acquainted with my disposition, and perceive all this without my troubling him with the recital.

This once comprehended, one of my apparent contradictions will be easily accounted for, and the most sordid avarice reconciled with the greatest contempt of money. It is a movable which I consider of so little value, that, when destitute of it, I never wish to acquire any; and when I have a sum I keep it by me, for want of knowing how to dispose of it to my satisfaction; but let an agreeable and convenient opportunity present itself, and I empty my purse with the utmost freedom; not that I would have the reader imagine I am extravagant from a motive of ostentation, quite the reverse; it was ever in subservience to my pleasures, and, instead of glorying in expense, I endeavor to conceal it. I so well perceive that money is not made to answer my purposes, that I am almost ashamed to have any, and, still more, to make use of it.

Had I ever possessed a moderate independence, I am convinced I should have had no propensity to become avaricious. I should have required no more, and cheerfully lived up to my income; but my precarious situation has constantly and necessarily kept me in fear. I love liberty, and I loathe constraint, dependence, and all their kindred annoyances. As long as my purse contains money it secures my independence, and exempts me from the trouble of seeking other money, a trouble of which I have always had a perfect horror; and the dread of seeing the end of my independence, makes me proportionately unwilling to part with my money. The money that we possess is the instrument of liberty, that which we lack and strive to obtain is the instrument of slavery. Thence it is that I hold fast to aught that I have, and yet covet nothing more.

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My disinterestedness, then, is in reality only idleness, the pleasure of possessing is not in my estimation worth the trouble of acquiring; and my dissipation is only another form of idleness; when we have an opportunity of disbursing pleasantly we should make the best possible use of it.

I am less tempted by money than by other objects, because between the moment of possessing the money and that of using it to obtain the desired object there is always an interval, however short; whereas to possess the thing is to enjoy it. I see a thing and it tempts me; but if I see not the thing itself but only the means of acquiring it, I am not tempted. Therefore it is that I have been a pilferer, and am so even now, in the way of mere trifles to which I take a fancy, and which I find it easier to take than to ask for; but I never in my life recollect having taken a farthing from any one, except about fifteen years ago, when I stole seven francs and ten sous. The story is worth recounting, as it exhibits a concurrence of ignorance and stupidity I should scarcely credit, did it relate to any but myself.

It was in Paris: I was walking with M. de Franceul at the Palais Royal; he pulled out his watch, he looked at it, and said to me, "Suppose we go to the opera?"—"With all my heart." We go: he takes two box tickets, gives me one, and enters himself with the other; I follow, find the door crowded; and, looking in, see every one standing; judging, therefore, that M. de Franceul might suppose me concealed by the company, I go out, ask for my ticket, and, getting the money returned, leave the house, without considering, that by then I had reached the door every one would be seated, and M. de Franceul might readily perceive I was not there.

As nothing could be more opposite to my natural inclination than this abominable meanness, I note it, to show there are moments of delirium when men ought not to be judged by their actions: this was not stealing the money, it was only stealing the use of it, and was the more infamous for wanting the excuse of a temptation.

I should never end these accounts, was I to describe all the gradations through which I passed, during my apprenticeship, from the sublimity of a hero to the baseness of a villain. Though I entered into most of the vices of my situation, I had no relish for its pleasures; the amusements of my companions were displeasing, and when too much restraint had made my business wearisome, I had nothing to amuse me. This renewed my taste for reading which had long been neglected. I thus committed a fresh offence, books made me neglect my work, and brought on additional punishment, while inclination, strengthened by constraint, became an unconquerable passion. La Tribu, a well-known librarian, furnished me with all kinds; good or bad, I perused them with avidity, and without discrimination.

It will be said; "at length, then, money became necessary" —true; but this happened at a time when a taste for study had deprived me both of resolution and activity; totally occupied by this new inclination, I only wished to read, I robbed no longer. This is another of my peculiarities; a mere nothing frequently calls me off from what I appear the most attached to; I give in to the new idea; it becomes a passion, and immediately every former desire is forgotten.

Reading was my new hobby; my heart beat with impatience to run over the new book I carried in my pocket; the first moment I was alone, I seized the opportunity to draw it out, and thought no longer of rummaging my master's closet. I was even ashamed to think that I had been guilty of such meanness; and had my amusements been more expensive, I no longer felt an inclination to continue it. La Tribu gave me credit, and when once I had the book in my possession, I thought no more of the trifle I was to pay for it; as money came it naturally passed to this woman; and when she chanced to be pressing, nothing was so conveniently at hand as my own effects; to steal in advance required foresight, and robbing to pay was no temptation.

The frequent blows I received from my master, with my private and ill-chosen studies, rendered me reserved, unsociable, and almost deranged my reason. Though my taste had not preserved me from silly unmeaning books, by good fortune I was a stranger to licentious or obscene ones; not that La Tribu (who was very accommodating) had any scruple of lending these, on the contrary, to enhance their worth she spoke of them with an air of mystery;

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this produced an effect she had not foreseen, for both shame and disgust made me constantly refuse them. Chance so well seconded my bashful disposition, that I was past the age of thirty before I saw any of those dangerous compositions.

In less than a year I had exhausted La Tribu's scanty library, and was unhappy for want of further amusement. My reading, though frequently bad, had worn off my childish follies, and brought back my heart to nobler sentiments than my condition had inspired; meantime disgusted with all within my reach, and thinking everything charming that was out of it, my present situation appeared extremely miserable. My passions began to acquire strength, I felt their influence, without knowing whither they would conduct me. I sometimes, indeed, thought of my former follies, but sought no further.

At this time my imagination took a turn which helped to calm my increasing emotions; it was, to contemplate those situations in the books I had read, which produced the most striking effect on my mind; to recall, combine, and apply them to myself in such a manner, as to become one of the personages my recollection presented, and be continually in those fancied circumstances which were most agreeable to my inclinations; in a word, by contriving to place myself in these fictitious situations, the idea of my real one was in a great measure obliterated.

This fondness for imaginary objects, and the facility with which I could gain possession of them, completed my disgust for everything around me, and fixed that inclination for solitude which has ever since been predominant. We shall have more than once occasion to remark the effects of a disposition, misanthropic and melancholy in appearance, but which proceed, in fact, from a heart too affectionate, too ardent, which, for want of similar dispositions, is constrained to content itself with nonentities, and be satisfied with fiction. It is sufficient, at present, to have traced the origin of a propensity which has modified my passions, set bounds to each, and by giving too much ardor to my wishes, has ever rendered me too indolent to obtain them.

Thus I attained my sixteenth year, uneasy, discontented with myself and everything that surrounded me; displeased with my occupation; without enjoying the pleasures common to my age, weeping without a cause, sighing I knew not why, and fond of my chimerical ideas for want of more valuable realities.

Every Sunday, after sermon-time, my companions came to fetch me out, wishing me to partake of their diversions. I would willingly have been excused, but when once engaged in amusement, I was more animated and enterprising than any of them; it was equally difficult to engage or restrain me; indeed, this was ever a leading trait in my character. In our country walks I was ever foremost, and never thought of returning till reminded by some of my companions. I was twice obliged to be from my master's the whole night, the city gates having been shut before I could reach them. The reader may imagine what treatment this procured me the following mornings; but I was promised such a reception for the third, that I made a firm resolution never to expose myself to the danger of it. Notwithstanding my determination, I repeated this dreaded transgression, my vigilance having been rendered useless by a cursed captain, named M. Minutoli, who, when on guard, always shut the gate he had charge of an hour before the usual time. I was returning home with my two companions, and had got within half a league of the city, when I heard them beat the tattoo; I redouble my pace, I run with my utmost speed, I approach the bridge, see the soldiers already at their posts, I call out to them in a suffocated voice—it is too late; I am twenty paces from the guard, the first bridge is already drawn up, and I tremble to see those terrible horns advanced in the air which announce the fatal and inevitable destiny, which from this moment began to pursue me.

I threw myself on the glacis in a transport of despair, while my companions, who only laughed at the accident, immediately determined what to do. My resolution, though different from theirs, was equally sudden; on the spot, I swore never to return to my master's, and the next morning, when my companions entered the city, I bade them an eternal adieu, conjuring them at the same time to inform my cousin Bernard of my resolution, and the place where he might see me for the last time.

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From the commencement of my apprenticeship I had seldom seen him; at first, indeed, we saw each other on Sundays, but each acquiring different habits, our meetings were less frequent. I am persuaded his mother contributed greatly towards this change; he was to consider himself as a person of consequence, I was a pitiful apprentice; notwithstanding our relationship, equality no longer subsisted between us, and it was degrading himself to frequent my company. As he had a natural good heart his mother's lessons did not take an immediate effect, and for some time he continued to visit me.

Having learned my resolution, he hastened to the spot I had appointed, not, however, to dissuade me from it, but to render my flight agreeable, by some trifling presents, as my own resources would not have carried me far. He gave me among other things, a small sword, which I was very proud of, and took with me as far as Turin, where absolute want constrained me to dispose of it. The more I reflect on his behavior at this critical moment, the more I am persuaded he followed the instructions of his mother, and perhaps his father likewise: for, had he been left to his own feelings, he would have endeavored to retain, or have been tempted to accompany me; on the contrary, he encouraged the design, and when he saw me resolutely determined to pursue it, without seeming much affected, left me to my fate. We never saw or wrote to each other from that time; I cannot but regret this loss, for his heart was essentially good, and we seemed formed for a more lasting friendship.

Before I abandon myself to the fatality of my destiny, let me contemplate for a moment the prospect that awaited me had I fallen into the hands of a better master. Nothing could have been more agreeable to my disposition, or more likely to confer happiness, than the peaceful condition of a good artificer, in so respectable a line as engravers are considered at Geneva. I could have obtained an easy subsistence, if not a fortune; this would have bounded my ambition; I should have had means to indulge in moderate pleasures, and should have continued in my natural sphere, without meeting with any temptation to go beyond it. Having an imagination sufficiently fertile to embellish with its chimeras every situation, and powerful enough to transport me from one to another, it was immaterial in which I was fixed: that was best adapted to me, which, requiring the least care or exertion, left the mind most at liberty; and this happiness I should have enjoyed. In my native country, in the bosom of my religion, family and friends, I should have passed a calm and peaceful life, in the uniformity of a pleasing occupation, and among connections dear to my heart. I should have been a good Christian, a good citizen, a good friend, a good man. I should have relished my condition, perhaps have been an honor to it, and after having passed a life of happy obscurity, surrounded by my family, I should have died at peace. Soon it may be forgotten, but while remembered it would have been with tenderness and regret.

Instead of this—what a picture am I about to draw!—Alas! why should I anticipate the miseries I have endured? The reader will have but too much of the melancholy subject.