Prime Services Hub

Prime Services

PROJECT C

support@pr meserviceshub.com

THE HISTORY OF A CRIME

THE AMBUSH. CHAPTER I. "SECURITY" On December 1, 1851, Charras shrugged his shoulder and unloaded his pistols. In truth, the belief in the possibility of a coup d'état had become humiliating. The supposition of such illegal violence on the part of M. Louis Bonaparte vanished upon serious consideration. The great question of the day was manifestly the Devincq election; it was clear that the Government was only thinking of that matter. As to a conspiracy against the Republic and against the People, how could any one premeditate such a plot? Where was the man capable of entertaining such a dream? For a tragedy there must be an actor, and here assuredly the actor was wanting. To outrage Right, to suppress the Assembly, to abolish the Constitution, to strangle the Republic, to overthrow the Nation, to sully the Flag, to dishonor the Army, to suborn the Clergy and the Magistracy, to succeed, to triumph, to govern, to administer, to exile, to banish, to transport, to ruin, to assassinate, to reign, with such complicities that the law at last resembles a foul bed of corruption. What! All these enormities were to be committed! And by whom? By a Colossus? No, by a dwarf. People laughed at the notion. They

no longer said "What a crime!" but "What a farce!" For after all they reflected; heinous crimes require stature. Certain crimes are too lofty for certain hands. A man who would achieve an 18th Brumaire must have Arcola in his past and Austerlitz in his future. The art of becoming a great scoundrel is not accorded to the first comer. People said to themselves, Who is this son of Hortense? He has Strasbourg behind him instead of Arcola, and Boulogne in place of Austerlitz. He is a Frenchman, born a Dutchman, and naturalized a Swiss; he is a Bonaparte crossed with a Verhuell; he is only celebrated for the ludicrousness of his imperial attitude, and he who would pluck a feather from his eagle would risk finding a goose's quill in his hand. This Bonaparte does not pass currency in the array, he is a counterfeit image less of gold than of lead, and assuredly French soldiers will not give us the change for this false Napoleon in rebellion, in atrocities, in massacres, in outrages, in treason. If he should attempt roguery it would miscarry. Not a regiment would stir. Besides, why should he make such an attempt? Doubtless he has his suspicious side, but why suppose him an absolute villain? Such extreme outrages are beyond

him; he is incapable of them physically, why judge him capable of them morally? Has he not pledged honor? Has he not said, "No one in Europe doubts my word?" Let us fear nothing. To this could be answered, Crimes are committed either on a grand or on a mean scale. In the first category there is Caesar; in the second there is Mandrin. Caesar passes the Rubicon, Mandrin bestrides the gutter. But wise men interposed, "Are we not prejudiced by offensive conjectures? This man has been exiled and unfortunate. Exile enlightens, misfortune corrects." For his part Louis Bonaparte protested energetically. Facts abounded in his favor. Why should he not act in good faith? He had made remarkable promises. Towards the end of October, 1848, then a candidate for the Presidency, he was calling at No. 37, Rue de la Tour d'Auvergne, on a certain personage, to whom he remarked, "I wish to have an explanation with you. They slander me. Do I give you the impression of a madman? They think that I wish to revivify Napoleon. There are two men whom a great ambition can take for its models, Napoleon and Washington. The one is a man of Genius, the other is a man of Virtue. It is ridiculous to say, 'I will be a man of Genius;' it is

honest to say, 'I will be a man of Virtue.' Which of these depends upon ourselves? Which can we accomplish by our will? To be Genius? No. To be Probity? Yes. The attainment of Genius is not possible; the attainment of Probity is a possibility. And what could I revive of Napoleon? One sole thing—a crime. Truly a worthy ambition! Why should I be considered man? The Republic being established, I am not a great man, I shall not copy Napoleon; but I am an honest man. I shall imitate Washington. My name, the name of Bonaparte, will be inscribed on two pages of the history of France: on the first there will be crime and glory, on the second probity and honor. And the second will perhaps be worth the first. Why? Because if Napoleon is the greater, Washington is the better man. Between the guilty hero and the good citizen I choose the good citizen. Such is my ambition." From 1848 to 1851 three years elapsed. People had long suspected Louis Bonaparte; but long-continued suspicion blunts the intellect and wears itself out by fruitless alarms. Louis Bonaparte had had dissimulating ministers such as Magne and Rouher; but he had also had straightforward ministers such as Léon Faucher and Odilon

Barrot; and these last had affirmed that he was upright and sincere. He had been seen to beat his breast before the doors of Ham; his foster sister, Madame Hortense Cornu, wrote to Mieroslawsky, "I am a good Republican, and I can answer for him." His friend of Ham, Peauger, a loyal man, declared, "Louis Bonaparte is incapable of treason." Had not Louis Bonaparte written the work entitled "Pauperism"? In the intimate circles of the Elysée Count Potocki was a Republican and Count d'Orsay was a Liberal; Louis Bonaparte said to Potocki, "I am a man of the Democracy," and to D'Orsay, "I am a man of Liberty." The Marquis du Hallays opposed the coup d'état, while the Marquise du Hallays was in its favor. Louis Bonaparte said to the Marquis, "Fear nothing" (it is true that he whispered to the Marquise, "Make your mind easy"). The Assembly, after having shown here and there some symptoms of uneasiness, had grown calm. There was General Neumayer, "who was to be depended upon," and who from his position at Lyons would at need march upon Paris. Changarnier exclaimed, "Representatives of the people, deliberate in peace." Even

Louis Bonaparte himself had pronounced these famous words, "I should see an enemy of my country in any one who would change by force that which has been established by law," and, moreover, the Army was "force," and the Army possessed leaders, leaders who were beloved and victorious. Lamoricière, Changarnier, Cavaignac, Leflô, Bedeau, Charras; how could any one imagine the Army of Africa arresting the Generals of Africa? On Friday, November 28, 1851, Louis Bonaparte said to Michel de Bourges, "If I wanted to do wrong, I could not. Yesterday, Thursday, I invited to my table five Colonels of the garrison of Paris, and the whim seized me to question each one by himself. All five declared to me that the Army would never lend itself to a coup de force, nor attack the inviolability of the Assembly. You can tell your friends this."—"He smiled," said Michel de Bourges, reassured, "and I also smiled." After this, Michel de Bourges declared in the Tribune, "this is the man for me." In that same month of November a satirical journal, charged with calumniating the President of the Republic, was sentenced to fine and imprisonment for a caricature depicting a shooting-gallery and Louis Bonaparte using the Constitution as

a target. Morigny, Minister of the Interior, declared in the Council before the President "that a Guardian of Public Power ought never to violate the law as otherwise he would be—" "a dishonest man," interposed the President. All these words and all these facts were notorious. The material and moral impossibility of the coup d'état was manifest to all. To outrage the National Assembly! To arrest the Representatives! What madness! As we have seen, Charras, who had long remained on his guard, unloaded his pistols. The feeling of security was complete and unanimous. Nevertheless there were some of us in the Assembly who still retained a few doubts, and who occasionally shook our heads, but we were looked upon as fools. CHAPTER II. PARIS SLEEPS—THE BELL RINGS On the 2d December, 1851, Representative Versigny, of the Haute-Saône, who resided at Paris, at No. 4, Rue Léonie, was asleep. He slept soundly; he had been working till late at night. Versigny was a young man of thirty-two, soft-featured and faircomplexioned, of a courageous spirit, and a mind tending towards social and economical studies. He had passed the first hours of the night in the perusal of a book by Bastiat, in which he was making

marginal notes, and, leaving the book open on the table, he had fallen asleep. Suddenly he awoke with a start at the sound of a sharp ring at the bell. He sprang up in surprise. It was dawn. It was about seven o'clock in the morning. Never dreaming what could be the motive for so early a visit, and thinking that someone had mistaken the door, he again lay down, and was about to resume his slumber, when a second ring at the bell, still louder than the first, completely aroused him. He got up in his night-shirt and opened the door. Michel de Bourges and

Théodore Bac entered. Michel de Bourges was the neighbor of Versigny; he lived at No. 16, Rue de Milan. Théodore Bac and Michel were pale, and appeared greatly agitated. "Versigny," said Michel, "dress yourself at once—Baune has just been arrested." "Bah!" exclaimed Versigny. "Is the Mauguin business beginning again?" "It is more than that," replied Michel. "Baune's wife and daughter came to me half-anhour ago. They awoke me. Baune was arrested in bed at six o'clock this morning." "What does that mean?" asked Versigny. The bell

rang again. "This will probably tell us," answered Michel de Bourges. Versigny opened the door. It was the Representative Pierre Lefranc. He brought, in truth, the solution of the enigma. "Do you know what is happening?" said he. "Yes," answered Michel. "Baune is in prison." "It is the Republic who is a prisoner," said Pierre Lefranc. "Have you read the placards?" "No." Pierre Lefranc explained to them that the walls at that moment were covered with placards which the curious crowd were thronging to read, that he had glanced over one of them at the corner of his street, and that the blow had fallen. "The blow!" exclaimed Michel. "Say rather the crime." Pierre Lefranc added that there were three placards—one decree and two proclamations—all three on white paper, and pasted close together. The decree was printed in large letters. The ex-Constituent Laissac, who lodged, like Michel de Bourges, in the neighborhood (No. 4, Cité Gaillard), then came in. He brought the same news, and announced further arrests which had been made during the night. There was not a minute to lose. They went to impart the news to Yvan, the Secretary of the Assembly, who had been appointed by the Left, and who lived

in the Rue de Boursault. An immediate meeting was necessary. Those Republican Representatives who were still at liberty must be warned and brought together without delay. Versigny said, "I will go and find Victor Hugo." It was eight o'clock in the morning. I was awake and was working in bed. My servant entered and said, with an air of alarm,— "A Representative of the people is outside who wishes to speak to you, sir." "Who is it?" "Monsieur Versigny:" "Show him in." Versigny entered, and told me the state of affairs. I sprang out of bed. He told me of the "rendezvous" at the rooms of the ex-Constituent Laissac. "Go at once and inform the other Representatives," said I. He left me.

CHAPTER III. WHAT HAD HAPPENED DURING THE NIGHT

Previous to the fatal days of June, 1848, the esplanade of the Invalides was divided into eight huge grass plots, surrounded by wooden railings and enclosed between two groves of trees, separated by a street running perpendicularly to the front of the Invalides. This street was traversed by three streets running parallel to the Seine. There were large lawns upon which children were wont to play. The centre of the eight grass plots

was marred by a pedestal which under the Empire had borne the bronze lion of St. Mark, which had been brought from Venice; under the Restoration a white marble statue of Louis XVIII.; and under Louis Philippe a plaster bust of Lafayette. Owing to the Palace of the Constituent Assembly having been nearly seized by a crowd of insurgents on the 22d of June, 1848, and there being no barracks in the neighborhood, General Cavaignac had constructed at three hundred paces from the Legislative Palace, on the grass plots of the Invalides, several rows of long huts, under which the grass was hidden. These huts, where three or four thousand men could be accommodated, lodged the troops specially appointed to keep watch over the National Assembly. On the 1st December, 1851, the two regiments hutted on the Esplanade were the 6th and the 42d Regiments of the Line, the 6th commanded by Colonel Garderens de Boisse, who was famous before the Second of December, the 42d by Colonel Espinasse, who became famous since that date. The ordinary night-guard of the Palace of the Assembly was composed of a battalion of Infantry and of thirty artillerymen, with a captain. The Minister of War, in addition,

sent several troopers for orderly service. Two mortars and six pieces of cannon, with their ammunition wagons, were ranged in a little square courtyard situated on the right of the Cour d'Honneur, and which was called the Cour des Canons. The Major, the military commandant of the Palace, was placed under the immediate control of the Questors. At nightfall the gratings and the doors were secured, sentinels were posted, instructions were issued to the sentries, and the Palace was closed like a fortress. The password was the same as in the Place de Paris. The special instructions drawn up by the Questors prohibited the entrance of any armed force other than the regiment on duty. On the night of the 1st and 2d of December the Legislative Palace was guarded by a battalion of the 42d. The sitting of the 1st of December, which was exceedingly peaceable, and had been devoted to a discussion on the municipal law, had finished late, and was terminated by a Tribunal vote. At the moment when M. Baze, one of the Questors, ascended the Tribune to deposit his vote, a Representative, belonging to what was called "Les Bancs Elyséens" approached him, and said in a low tone, "To-night

you will be carried off." Such warnings as these were received every day, and, as we have already explained, people had ended by paying no heed to them. Nevertheless, immediately after the sitting the Questors sent for the Special Commissary of Police of the Assembly, President Dupin being present. When interrogated, the Commissary declared that the reports of his agents indicated "dead calm"—such was his expression—and that assuredly there was no danger to be apprehended for that night. When the Questors pressed him further, President Dupin, exclaiming "Bah!" left the room. On that same day, the 1st December, about three o'clock in the afternoon, as General Leflô's father-in-law crossed the boulevard in front of Tortoni's, some one rapidly passed by him and whispered in his ear these significant words, "Eleven o'clock— midnight." This incident excited but little attention at the Questure, and several even laughed at it. It had become customary with them.

Nevertheless General Leflô would not go to bed until the hour mentioned had passed by, and remained in the Offices of the Questure until nearly one o'clock in the morning. The shorthand department of the Assembly was done out of doors

by four messengers attached to the Moniteur, who were employed to carry the copy of the shorthand writers to the printing-office, and to bring back the proof-sheets to the Palace of the Assembly, where M. Hippolyte Prévost corrected them. M. Hippolyte Prévost was chief of the stenographic staff, and in that capacity had apartments in the Legislative Palace. He was at the same time editor of the musical feuilleton of the Moniteur. On the 1st December he had gone to the Opéra Comique for the first representation of a new piece, and did not return till after midnight. The fourth messenger from the Moniteur was waiting for him with a proof of the last slip of the sitting; M. Prévost corrected the proof, and the messenger was sent off. It was then a little after one o'clock, profound quiet reigned around, and, with the exception of the guard, all in the Palace slept. Towards this hour of the night, a singular incident occurred. The Captain-AdjutantMajor of the Guard of the Assembly came to the Major and said, "The Colonel has sent for me," and he added according to military etiquette, "Will you permit me to go?" The Commandant was astonished. "Go," he said with some sharpness, "but the Colonel is wrong to disturb

an officer on duty." One of the soldiers on guard, without understanding the meaning of the words, heard the Commandant pacing up and down, and muttering several times, "What the deuce can he want?" Half an hour afterwards the Adjutant-Major returned. "Well," asked the Commandant, "what did the Colonel want with you?" "Nothing," answered the Adjutant, "he wished to give me the orders for to-morrow's duties." The night became further advanced. Towards four o'clock the Adjutant-Major came again to the Major. "Major," he said, "the Colonel has asked for me." "Again!" exclaimed the Commandant. "This is becoming strange; nevertheless, go." The Adjutant-Major had amongst other duties that of giving out the instructions to the sentries, and consequently had the power of rescinding them. As soon as the Adjutant-Major had gone out, the Major, becoming uneasy, thought that it was his duty to communicate with the Military Commandant of the Palace. He went upstairs to the apartment of the Commandant—Lieutenant Colonel Niols. Colonel Niols had gone to bed and the attendants had retired to their rooms in the attics. The Major, new to the Palace, groped about the corridors, and, knowing

little about the various rooms, rang at a door which seemed to him that of the Military Commandant. Nobody answered, the door was not opened, and the Major returned downstairs, without having been able to speak to anybody. On his part the Adjutant-Major re-entered the Palace, but the Major did not see him again. The Adjutant remained near the grated door of the Place Bourgogne, shrouded in his cloak, and walking up and down the courtyard as though expecting some one. At the instant that five o'clock sounded from the great clock of the dome, the soldiers who slept in the hut-camp before the Invalides were suddenly awakened. Orders were given in a low voice in the huts to take up arms, in silence. Shortly afterwards two regiments, knapsack on back were marching upon the Palace of the Assembly; they were the 6th and the 42d. At this same stroke of five, simultaneously in all the quarters of Paris, infantry soldiers filed out noiselessly from every barrack, with their colonels at their head. The aides-decamp and orderly officers of Louis Bonaparte, who had been distributed in all the barracks, superintended this taking up of arms. The cavalry were not set in motion until three-quarters of an hour after the

infantry, for fear that the ring of the horses' hoofs on the stones should wake slumbering Paris too soon. M. de Persigny, who had brought from the Elysée to the camp of the Invalides the order to take up arms, marched at the head of the 42d, by the side of Colonel Espinasse. A story is current in the army, for at the present day, wearied as people are with dishonorable incidents, these occurrences are yet told with a species of gloomy indifference—the story is current that at the moment of setting out with his regiment one of the colonels who could be named hesitated, and that the emissary from the Elysée, taking a sealed packet from his pocket, said to him, "Colonel, I admit that we are running a great risk. Here in this envelope, which I have been charged to hand to you, are a hundred thousand francs in banknotes for contingencies." The envelope was accepted, and the regiment set out. On the evening of the 2d of December the colonel said to a lady, "This morning I earned a hundred thousand francs and my General's epaulets." The lady showed him the door. Xavier Durrieu, who tells us this story, had the curiosity later on to see this lady. She confirmed the story. Yes, certainly! she had shut the door in the face of

this wretch; a soldier, a traitor to his flag who dared visit her! She receive such a man? No! she could not do that, "and," states Xavier Durrieu, she added, "And yet I have no character to lose." Another mystery was in progress at the Prefecture of Police. Those belated inhabitants of the Cité who may have returned home at a late hour of the night might have noticed a large number of street cabs loitering in scattered groups at different points round about the Rue de Jerusalem. From eleven o'clock in the evening, under pretext of the arrivals of refugees at Paris from Genoa and London, the Brigade of Surety and the eight hundred sergents de ville had been retained in the Prefecture. At three o'clock in the morning a summons had been sent to the forty-eight Commissaries of Paris and of the suburbs, and also to the peace officers. An hour afterwards all of them arrived. They were ushered into a separate chamber, and isolated from each other as much as possible. At five o'clock a bell was sounded in the Prefect's cabinet. The Prefect Maupas called the Commissaries of Police one after another into his cabinet, revealed the plot to them, and allotted to each his portion of the crime. None refused; many thanked him. It

was a question of arresting at their own homes seventy-eight Democrats who were influential in their districts, and dreaded by the Elysée as possible chieftains of barricades. It was necessary, a still more daring outrage, to arrest at their houses sixteen Representatives of the People. For this last task were chosen among the Commissaries of Police such of those magistrates who seemed the most likely to become ruffians. Amongst these were divided the Representatives. Each had his man. Sieur Courtille had Charras, Sieur Desgranges had Nadaud, Sieur Hubaut the elder had M. Thiers, and Sieur Hubaut the younger General Bedeau, General Changarnier was allotted to Lerat, and General Cavaignac to Colin. Sieur Dourlens took

Representative Valentin, Sieur Benoist Representative Miot, Sieur Allard Representative Cholat, Sieur Barlet took Roger (Du Nord), General Lamoricière fell to Commissary Blanchet, Commissary Gronfier had Representative Greppo, and Commissary Boudrot Representative Lagrange. The Questors were similarly allotted, Monsieur Baze to the Sieur Primorin, and General Leflô to Sieur Bertoglio. Warrants with the name

of the Representatives had been drawn up in the Prefect's private Cabinet. Blanks had been only left for the names of the Commissaries. These were filled in at the moment of leaving. In addition to the armed force which was appointed to assist them, it had been decided that each Commissary should be accompanied by two escorts, one composed of sergents de ville, the other of police agents in plain clothes. As Prefect Maupas had told M. Bonaparte, the Captain of the Republican Guard, Baudinet, was associated with Commissary Lerat in the arrest of General Changarnier. Towards half-past five the fiacres which were in waiting were called up, and all started, each with his instructions. During this time, in another corner of Paris—the old Rue du Temple—in that ancient Soubise Mansion which had been transformed into a Royal Printing Office, and is today a National Printing Office, another section of the Crime was being organized. Towards one in the morning a passer-by who had reached the old Rue du Temple by the Rue de Vieilles-Haudriettes, noticed at the junction of these two streets several long and high windows brilliantly lighted up, These were the windows of the workrooms of the National

Printing Office. He turned to the right and entered the old Rue du Temple, and a moment afterwards paused before the crescent-shaped entrance of the front of the printing-office. The principal door was shut, two sentinels guarded the side door. Through this little door, which was ajar, he glanced into the courtyard of the printing-office, and saw it filled with soldiers. The soldiers were silent, no sound could be heard, but the glistening of their bayonets could be seen. The passer-by surprised, drew nearer. One of the sentinels thrust him rudely back, crying out, "Be off." Like the sergents de ville at the Prefecture of Police, the workmen had been retained at the National Printing Office under plea of night-work. At the same time that M. Hippolyte Prévost returned to the Legislative Palace, the manager of the National Printing Office re-entered his office, also returning from the Opéra Comique, where he had been to see the new piece, which was by his brother, M. de St. Georges. Immediately on his return the manager, to whom had come an order from the Elysée during the day, took up a pair of pocket pistols, and went down into the vestibule, which communicates by means of a few steps with the courtyard.

Shortly afterwards the door leading to the street opened, a fiacre entered, a man who carried a large portfolio alighted.

The manager went up to the man, and said to him, "Is that you, Monsieur de Béville?" "Yes," answered the man. The fiacre was put up, the horses placed in a stable, and the coachman shut up in a parlor, where they gave him drink, and placed a purse in his hand. Bottles of wine and louis d'or form the groundwork of this hind of politics. The coachman drank and then went to sleep. The door of the parlor was bolted. The large door of the courtyard of the printing-office was hardly shut than it reopened, gave passage to armed men, who entered in silence, and then reclosed. The arrivals were a company of the Gendarmerie Mobile, the fourth of the first battalion, commanded by a captain named La Roche d'Oisy. As may be remarked by the result, for all delicate expeditions the men of the coup d'état took care to employ the Gendarmerie Mobile and the Republican Guard, that it is to say the two corps almost entirely composed of former Municipal Guards, bearing at heart a revengeful remembrance of the events of February.

Captain La Roche d'Oisy brought a letter from the Minister of War, which placed himself and his soldiers at the disposition of the manager of the National Printing Office. The muskets were loaded without a word being spoken. Sentinels were placed in the workrooms, in the corridors, at the doors, at the windows, in fact, everywhere, two being stationed at the door leading into the street. The captain asked what instructions he should give to the sentries. "Nothing more simple," said the man who had come in the fiacre. "Whoever attempts to leave or to open a window, shoot him." This man, who, in fact, was De Béville, orderly officer to M. Bonaparte, withdrew with the manager into the large cabinet on the first story, a solitary room which looked out on the garden. There he communicated to the manager what he had brought with him, the decree of the dissolution of the Assembly, the appeal to the Army, the appeal to the People, the decree convoking the electors, and in addition, the proclamation of the Prefect Maupas and his letter to the Commissaries of Police. The four first documents were entirely in the handwriting of the President, and here and there some erasures might be noticed. The compositors were in

waiting. Each man was placed between two gendarmes, and was forbidden to utter a single word, and then the documents which had to be printed were distributed throughout the room, being cut up in very small pieces, so that an entire sentence could not be read by one workman. The manager announced that he would give them an hour to compose the whole. The different fragments were finally brought to Colonel Béville, who put them together and corrected the proof sheets. The machining was conducted with the same precautions, each press being between two soldiers. Notwithstanding all possible diligence the work lasted two hours. The gendarmes watched over the workmen. Béville watched over St. Georges. When the work was finished a suspicious incident occurred, which greatly resembled a treason within a treason. To a traitor a greater traitor. This species of crime is subject to such accidents. Béville and St. Georges, the two trusty confidants in whose hands lay the secret of the coup d'état, that is to say the head of the President;—that secret, which ought at no price to be allowed to transpire before the appointed hour, under risk of causing everything to miscarry, took it into their heads to confide it at

once to two hundred men, in order "to test the effect," as the ex-Colonel Béville said later on, rather naïvely. They read the mysterious document which had just been printed to the Gendarmes Mobiles, who were drawn up in the courtyard. These ex-municipal guards applauded. If they had hooted, it might be asked what the two experimentalists in the coup d'état would have done. Perhaps M. Bonaparte would have waked up from his dream at Vincennes. The coachman was then liberated, the fiacre was horsed, and at four o'clock in the morning the orderly officer and the manager of the National Printing Office, henceforward two criminals, arrived at the Prefecture of Police with the parcels of the decrees. Then began for them the brand of shame. Prefect Maupas took them by the hand. Bands of bill-stickers, bribed for the occasion, started in every direction, carrying with them the decrees and proclamations. This was precisely the hour at which the Palace of the National Assembly was invested. In the Rue de l'Université there is a door of the Palace which is the old entrance to the Palais Bourbon, and which opened into the avenue which leads to the house of the President of the

Assembly. This door, termed the Presidency door, was according to custom guarded by a sentry. For some time past the Adjutant-Major, who had been twice sent for during the night by Colonel Espinasse, had remained motionless and silent, close by the sentinel. Five minutes after, having left the huts of the Invalides, the 42d Regiment of the line, followed at some distance by the 6th Regiment, which had marched by the Rue de Bourgogne, emerged from the Rue de l'Université. "The regiment," says an eye-witness, "marched as one steps in a sickroom." It arrived with a stealthy step before the Presidency door. This ambuscade came to surprise the law. The sentry, seeing these soldiers arrive, halted, but at the moment when he was going to challenge them with a qui-vive, the Adjutant-Major seized his arm, and, in his capacity as the officer empowered to countermand all instructions, ordered him to give free passage to the 42d, and at the same time commanded the amazed porter to open the door. The door turned upon its hinges, the soldiers spread themselves through the avenue. Persigny entered and said, "It is done." The National Assembly was invaded. At the noise of the footsteps the Commandant

Mennier ran up. "Commandant," Colonel Espinasse cried out to him, "I come to relieve your battalion." The Commandant turned pale for a moment, and his eyes remained fixed on the ground. Then suddenly he put his hands to his shoulders, and tore off his epaulets, he drew his sword, broke it across his knee, threw the two fragments on the pavement, and, trembling with rage, exclaimed with a solemn voice, "Colonel, you disgrace the number of your regiment." "All right, all right," said Espinasse. The Presidency door was left open, but all the other entrances remained closed. All the guards were relieved, all the sentinels changed, and the battalion of the night guard was sent back to the camp of the Invalides, the soldiers piled their arms in the avenue, and in the Cour d'Honneur. The 42d, in profound silence, occupied the doors outside and inside, the courtyard, the reception-rooms, the galleries, the corridors, the passages, while every one slept in the Palace. Shortly afterwards arrived two of those little chariots which are called "forty sons," and two fiacres, escorted by two detachments of the Republican Guard and of the Chasseurs de Vincennes, and by several squads of police. The Commissaries Bertoglio and

Primorin alighted from the two chariots. As these carriages drove up a personage, bald, but still young, was seen to appear at the grated door of the Place de Bourgogne. This personage had all the air of a man about town, who had just come from the opera, and, in fact, he had come from thence, after having passed through a den. He came from the Elysée. It was De Morny. For an instant he watched the soldiers piling their arms, and then went on to the Presidency door. There he exchanged a few words with M. de Persigny. A quarter of an hour afterwards, accompanied by 250 Chasseurs de Vincennes, he took possession of the ministry of the Interior, startled M. de Thorigny in his bed, and handed him brusquely a letter of thanks from Monsieur Bonaparte. Some days previously honest M. De Thorigny, whose ingenuous remarks we have already cited, said to a group of men near whom M. de Morny was passing, "How these men of the Mountain calumniate the President! The man who would break his oath, who would achieve a coup d'état must necessarily be a worthless wretch." Awakened rudely in the middle of the night, and relieved of his

post as Minister like the sentinels of the Assembly, the worthy man, astounded, and rubbing his eyes, muttered, "Eh! then the President is a ——." "Yes," said Morny, with a burst of laughter. He who writes these lines knew Morny. Morny and Walewsky held in the quasireigning family the positions, one of Royal bastard, the other of Imperial bastard. Who was Morny? We will say, "A noted wit, an intriguer, but in no way austere, a friend of Romieu, and a supporter of Guizot possessing the manners of the world, and the habits of the roulette table, self-satisfied, clever, combining a certain liberality of ideas with a readiness to accept useful crimes, finding means to wear a gracious smile with bad teeth, leading a life of pleasure, dissipated but reserved, ugly, good-tempered, fierce, well-dressed, intrepid, willingly leaving a brother prisoner under bolts and bars, and ready to risk his head for a brother Emperor, having the same mother as Louis Bonaparte, and like Louis Bonaparte, having some father or other, being able to call himself Beauharnais, being able to call himself Flahaut, and yet calling himself Morny, pursuing literature as far as light comedy, and politics, as far as tragedy, a deadly free liver,

possessing all the frivolity consistent with assassination, capable of being sketched by Marivaux and treated of by Tacitus, without conscience, irreproachably elegant, infamous, and amiable, at need a perfect duke. Such was this malefactor."
It was not yet six o'clock in the morning. Troops began to mass themselves on the Place de la Concorde, where Leroy-Saint-Arnaud on horseback held a review. The Commissaries of Police, Bertoglio and Primorin ranged two companies in order under the vault of the great staircase of the Questure, but did not ascend that way. They were accompanied by agents of police, who knew the most secret recesses of the Palais Bourbon, and who conducted them through various passages. General Leflô was lodged in the Pavilion inhabited in the time of the Duc de Bourbon by Monsieur Feuchères. That night General Leflô had staying with him his sister and her husband, who were visiting Paris, and who slept in a room, the door of which led into one of the corridors of the Palace. Commissary Bertoglio knocked at the door, opened it, and together with his agents abruptly burst into the room, where a woman was in bed. The general's brother-in-out sprang out of bed, and cried

out to the Questor, who slept in an adjoining room, "Adolphe, the doors are being forced, the Palace is full of soldiers. Get up!" The General opened his eyes, he saw Commissary Bertoglio standing beside his bed. He sprang up. "General," said the Commissary, "I have come to fulfil a duty." "I understand," said General Leflô, "you are a traitor." The Commissary stammering out the words, "Plot against the safety of the State," displayed a warrant. The General, without pronouncing a word, struck this infamous paper with the back of his hand. Then dressing himself, he put on his full uniform of Constantine and of Médéah, thinking in his imaginative, soldier-like loyalty that there were still generals of Africa for the soldiers whom he would find on his way. All the generals now remaining were brigands. His wife embraced him; his son, a child of seven years, in his nightshirt, and in tears, said to the Commissary of Police, "Mercy, Monsieur Bonaparte." The General, while clasping his wife in his arms, whispered in her ear, "There is artillery in the courtyard, try and fire a cannon." The Commissary and his men led him away. He regarded these policemen with contempt, and did not speak to them, but

when he recognized Colonel Espinasse, his military and Breton heart swelled with indignation. "Colonel Espinasse," said he, "you are a villain, and I hope to live long enough to tear the buttons from your uniform." Colonel Espinasse hung his head, and stammered, "I do not know you." A major waved his sword, and cried, "We have had enough of lawyer generals." Some soldiers crossed their bayonets before the unarmed prisoner, three sergents de ville pushed him into a fiacre, and a sub-lieutenant approaching the carriage, and looking in the face of the man who, if he were a citizen, was his Representative, and if he were a soldier was his general, flung this abominable word at him, "Canaille!" Meanwhile Commissary Primorin had gone by a more roundabout way in order the more surely to surprise the other Questor, M. Baze. Out of M. Baze's apartment a door led to the lobby communicating with the chamber of the Assembly. Sieur Primorin knocked at the door. "Who is there?" asked a servant, who was dressing. "The Commissary of Police," replied Primorin. The servant, thinking that he was the Commissary of Police of the Assembly, opened the door. At this moment M.

Baze, who had heard the noise, and had just awakened, put on a dressing-gown, and cried, "Do not open the door." He had scarcely spoken these words when a man in plain clothes and three sergents de ville in uniform rushed into his chamber. The man, opening his coat, displayed his scarf of office, asking M. Baze, "Do you recognize this?" "You are a worthless wretch," answered the Questor. The police agents laid their hands on M. Baze. "You will not take me away," he said. "You, a Commissary of Police, you, who are a magistrate, and know what you are doing, you outrage the National Assembly, you violate the law, you are a criminal!" A hand-to-hand struggle ensued—four against one. Madame Baze and her two little girls giving vent to screams, the servant being thrust back with blows by the sergents de ville. "You are ruffians," cried out Monsieur Baze. They carried him away by main force in their arms, still struggling, naked, his dressing-gown being torn to shreds, his body being covered with blows, his wrist torn and bleeding. The stairs, the landing, the courtyard, were full of soldiers with fixed bayonets and grounded arms. The Questor spoke to them. "Your Representatives are being arrested, you have not

received your arms to break the laws!" A sergeant was wearing a brandnew cross. "Have you been given the cross for this?" The sergeant answered, "We only know one master." "I note your number," continued M. Baze. "You are a dishonored regiment." The soldiers listened with a stolid air, and seemed still asleep. Commissary Primorin said to them, "Do not answer, this has nothing to do with you." They led the Questor across the courtyard to the guard-house at the Porte Noire. This was the name which was given to a little door contrived under the vault opposite the treasury of the Assembly, and which opened upon the Rue de Bourgogne, facing the Rue de Lille. Several sentries were placed at the door of the guard-house, and at the top of the flight of steps which led thither, M. Baze being left there in charge of three sergents de ville. Several soldiers, without their weapons, and in their shirt-sleeves, came in and out. The Questor appealed to them in the name of military honor. "Do not answer," said the sergent de ville to the soldiers. M. Baze's two little girls had followed him with terrified eyes, and when they lost sight of him the youngest burst into tears. "Sister," said the elder, who was seven years

old, "let us say our prayers," and the two children, clasping their hands, knelt down. Commissary Primorin, with his swarm of agents, burst into the Questor's study, and laid hands on everything. The first papers which he perceived on the middle of the table, and which he seized, were the famous decrees which had been prepared in the event of the Assembly having voted the proposal of the Questors. All the drawers were opened and searched. This overhauling of M. Baze's papers, which the Commissary of Police termed a domiciliary visit, lasted more than an hour. M. Baze's clothes had been taken to him, and he had dressed. When the "domiciliary visit" was over, he was taken out of the guard-house. There was a fiacre in the courtyard, into which he entered, together with the three sergents de ville. The vehicle, in order to reach the Presidency door, passed by the Cour d'Honneur and then by the Courde Canonis. Day was breaking. M. Baze looked into the courtyard to see if the cannon were still there. He saw the ammunition wagons ranged in order with their shafts raised, but the places of the six cannon and the two mortars were vacant. In the avenue of the Presidency the fiacre stopped for a moment. Two

lines of soldiers, standing at ease, lined the footpaths of the avenue. At the foot of a tree were grouped three men: Colonel Espinasse, whom M. Baze knew and recognized, a species of Lieutenant-Colonel, who wore a black and orange ribbon round his neck, and a Major of Lancers, all three sword in hand, consulting together. The windows of the fiacre were closed; M. Baze wished to lower them to appeal to these men; the sergents de ville seized his arms. The Commissary Primorin then came up, and was about to reenter the little chariot for two persons which had brought him. "Monsieur Baze," said he, with that villainous kind of courtesy which the agents of the coup d'état willingly blended with their crime, "you must be uncomfortable with those three men in the fiacre. You are cramped; come in with me." "Let me alone," said the prisoner. "With these three men I am cramped; with you I should be contaminated." An escort of infantry was ranged on both sides of the fiacre. Colonel Espinasse called to the coachman, "Drive slowly by the Quai d'Orsay until you meet a cavalry escort. When the cavalry shall have assumed the charge, the infantry can come back." They set out. As the fiacre turned into the

Quai d'Orsay a picket of the 7th Lancers arrived at full speed. It was the escort: the troopers surrounded the fiacre, and the whole galloped off. No incident occurred during the journey. Here and there, at the noise of the horses' hoofs, windows were opened and heads put forth; and the prisoner, who had at length succeeded in lowering a window heard startled voices saying, "What is the matter?" The fiacre stopped. "Where are we?" asked M. Baze. "At Mazas," said a sergent de ville. The Questor was taken to the office of the prison. Just as he entered he saw Baune and Nadaud being brought out. There was a table in the centre, at which Commissary Primorin, who had followed the fiacre in his chariot, had just seated himself. While the Commissary was writing, M. Baze noticed on the table a paper which was evidently a jail register, on which were these names, written in the following order: Lamoricière, Charras, Cavaignac,
Changarnier, Leflô, Thiers, Bedeau, Roger (du Nord),
Chambolle. This was probably the order in which the Representatives had arrived at the prison. When Sieur Primorin had finished writing, M. Baze said, "Now, you will be good

enough to receive my protest, and add it to your official report." "It is not an official report," objected the Commissary, "it is simply an order for committal." "I intend to write my protest at once," replied M. Baze. "You will have plenty of time in your cell," remarked a man who stood by the table. M. Baze turned round. "Who are you?" "I am the governor of the prison," said the man. "In that case," replied M. Baze, "I pity you, for you are aware of the crime you are committing." The man turned pale, and stammered a few unintelligible words. The Commissary rose from his seat; M. Baze briskly took possession of his chair, seated himself at the table, and said to Sieur Primorin, "You are a public officer; I request you to add my protest to your official report." "Very well," said the Commissary, "let it be so." Baze wrote the protest as follows:—"I, the undersigned, Jean-Didier Baze, Representative of the People, and Questor of the National Assembly, carried off by violence from my residence in the Palace of the National Assembly, and conducted to this prison by an armed force which it was impossible for me to resist, protest in the name of the National Assembly and in my own name against the

outrage on national representation committed upon my colleagues and upon myself. "Given at Mazas on the 2d December 1851, at eight o'clock in the morning. "BAZE." While this was taking place at Mazas, the soldiers were laughing and drinking in the courtyard of the Assembly. They made their coffee in the saucepans. They had lighted enormous fires in the courtyard; the flames, fanned by the wind, at times reached the walls of the Chamber. A superior official of the Questure, an officer of the National Guard, Ramond de la Croisette, ventured to say to them, "You will set the Palace on fire;" whereupon a soldier struck him a blow with his fist. Four of the pieces taken from the Cour de Canons were ranged in battery order against the Assembly; two on the Place de Bourgogne were pointed towards the grating, and two on the Pont de la Concorde were pointed towards the grand staircase. As side-note to this instructive tale let us mention a curious fact. The 42d Regiment of the line was the same which had arrested Louis Bonaparte at Boulogne. In 1840 this regiment lent its aid to the law against the conspirator. In 1851 it lent its aid to the conspirator against the law: such is the beauty of passive

obedience. CHAPTER IV. OTHER DOINGS OF THE NIGHT During the same night in all parts of Paris acts of brigandage took place. Unknown men leading armed troops, and themselves armed with hatchets, mallets, pincers, crowbars, life-preservers, swords hidden under their coats, pistols, of which the butts could be distinguished under the folds of their cloaks, arrived in silence before a house, occupied the street, encircled the approaches, picked the lock of the door, tied up the porter, invaded the stairs, and burst through the doors upon a sleeping man, and when that man, awakening with a start, asked of these bandits,

"Who are you?" their leader answered, "A Commissary of Police." So it happened to Lamoricière who was seized by Blanchet, who threatened him with the gag; to Greppo, who was brutally treated and thrown down by Gronfier, assisted by six men carrying a dark lantern and a pole-axe; to Cavaignac, who was secured by Colin, a smooth-tongued villain, who affected to be shocked on hearing him curse and swear; to M. Thiers, who was arrested by Hubaut (the elder); who professed that he had seen him "tremble and weep," thus adding

falsehood to crime; to Valentin, who was assailed in his bed by Dourlens, taken by the feet and shoulders, and thrust into a padlocked police van; to Miot, destined to the tortures of African casemates; to Roger (du Nord), who with courageous and witty irony offered sherry to the bandits. Charras and Changarnier were taken unawares. They lived in the Rue St. Honoré, nearly opposite to each other, Changarnier at No. 3, Charras at No. 14. Ever since the 9th of September Changarnier had dismissed the fifteen men armed to the teeth by whom he had hitherto been guarded during the night, and on the 1st December, as we have said, Charras had unloaded his pistols. These empty pistols were lying on the table when they came to arrest him. The Commissary of Police threw himself upon them. "Idiot," said Charras to him, "if they had been loaded, you would have been a dead man." These pistols, we may note, had been given to Charras upon the taking of Mascara by General Renaud, who at the moment of Charras' arrest was on horseback in the street helping to carry out the coup d'état. If these pistols had remained loaded, and if General Renaud had had the task of arresting Charras, it would have been curious if

Renaud's pistols had killed Renaud. Charras assuredly would not have hesitated. We have already mentioned the names of these police rascals. It is useless to repeat them. It was Courtille who arrested Charras, Lerat who arrested Changarnier, Desgranges who arrested Nadaud. The men thus seized in their own houses were Representatives of the people; they were inviolable, so that to the crime of the violation of their persons was added this high treason, the violation of the Constitution. There was no lack of impudence in the perpetration of these outrages. The police agents made merry. Some of these droll fellows jested. At Mazas the under-jailors jeered at Thiers, Nadaud reprimanded them severely. The Sieur Hubaut (the younger) awoke General Bedeau. "General, you are a prisoner."—"My person is inviolable."— "Unless you are caught red-handed, in the very act."—"Well," said Bedeau, "I am caught in the act, the heinous act of being asleep." They took him by the collar and dragged him to a fiacre. On meeting together at Mazas, Nadaud grasped the hand of Greppo, and Lagrange grasped the hand of Lamoricière. This made the police gentry laugh. A colonel, named Thirion, wearing a

commander's cross round his neck, helped to put the Generals and the Representatives into jail. "Look me in the face," said Charras to him. Thirion moved away. Thus, without counting other arrests which took place later on, there were imprisoned during the night of the 2d of December, sixteen Representatives and seventy-eight citizens. The two agents of the crime furnished a report of it to Louis Bonaparte. Morny wrote "Boxed up;" Maupas wrote "Quadded." The one in drawing-room slang, the other in the slang of the galleys. Subtle gradations of language. CHAPTER V. THE DARKNESS OF THE CRIME Versigny had just left me. While I dressed hastily there came in a man in whom I had every confidence. He was a poor cabinet-maker out of work, named Girard, to whom I had given shelter in a room of my house, a carver of wood, and not illiterate. He came in from the street; he was trembling. "Well," I asked, "what do the people say?" Girard answered me,—"People are dazed. The blow has been struck in such a manner that it is not realized.

Workmen read the placards, say nothing, and go to their work. Only one in a hundred speaks. It is to say, 'Good!' This is how it

appears to them. The law of the 31st May is abrogated—'Well done!' Universal suffrage is re-established—'Also well done!' The reactionary majority has been driven away—'Admirable!' Thiers is arrested—'Capital!' Changarnier is seized—'Bravo!' Round each placard there are claqueurs. Ratapoil explains his coup d'état to Jacques Bonhomme, Jacques Bonhomme takes it all in. Briefly, it is my impression that the people give their consent." "Let it be so," said I. "But," asked Girard of me, "what will you do, Monsieur Victor Hugo?" I took my scarf of office from a cupboard, and showed it to him. He understood. We shook hands. As he went out Carini entered. Colonel Carini is an intrepid man. He had commanded the cavalry under Mieroslawsky in the Sicilian insurrection. He has, in a few moving and enthusiastic pages, told the story of that noble revolt. Carini is one of those Italians who love France as we Frenchmen love Italy. Every warm-hearted man in this century has two fatherlands— the Rome of yesterday and the Paris of to-day. "Thank God," said Carini to me, "you are still free," and he added, "The blow has been struck in a formidable manner. The Assembly is invested. I have come from thence. The Place

de la Révolution, the Quays, the Tuileries, the boulevards, are crowded with troops. The soldiers have their knapsacks. The batteries are harnessed. If fighting takes place it will be desperate work." I answered him, "There will be fighting." And I added, laughing, "You have proved that the colonels write like poets; now it is the turn of the poets to fight like colonels." I entered my wife's room; she knew nothing, and was quietly reading her paper in bed. I had taken about me five hundred francs in gold. I put on my wife's bed a box containing nine hundred francs, all the money which remained to me, and I told her what had happened. She turned pale, and said to me, "What are you going to do?" "My duty." She embraced me, and only said two words:— "Do it." My breakfast was ready. I ate a cutlet in two mouthfuls. As I finished, my daughter came in. She was startled by the manner in which I kissed her, and asked me, "What is the matter?" "Your mother will explain to you." And I left them. The Rue de la Tour d'Auvergne was as quiet and deserted as usual. Four workmen were, however, chatting near my door; they wished me "Good morning." I cried out to them, "You know what is going on?" "Yes," said they. "Well. It is

treason! Louis Bonaparte is strangling the Republic. The people are attacked. The people must defend themselves." "They will defend themselves." "You promise me that?" "Yes," they answered. One of them added, "We swear it." They kept their word. Barricades were constructed in my street (Rue de la Tour d'Auvergne), in the Rue des Martyrs, in the Cité Rodier, in the Rue Coquenard, and at Notre-Dame de Lorette. CHAPTER VI. "PLACARDS" On leaving these brave men I could read at the corner of the Rue de la Tour d'Auvergne and the Rue des Martyrs, the three infamous placards which had been posted on the walls of Paris during the night. Here they are. "PROCLAMATION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC. "Appeal to the People. "FRENCHMEN! The present situation can last no longer. Every day which passes enhances the dangers of the country. The Assembly, which ought to be the firmest support of order, has become a focus of conspiracies. The patriotism of three hundred of its members has been unable to check its fatal tendencies. Instead of making laws in the public interest it forges arms for civil war; it attacks the power which I hold directly from the People, it encourages all

bad passions, it compromises the tranquillity of France; I have dissolved it, and I constitute the whole People a judge between it and me. "The Constitution, as you know, was constructed with the object of weakening beforehand the power which you were about to confide to me. Six millions of votes formed an emphatic protest against it, and yet I have faithfully respected it. Provocations, calumnies, outrages, have found me unmoved. Now, however, that the fundamental compact is no longer respected by those very men who incessantly invoke it, and that the men who have ruined two monarchies wish to tie my hands in order to overthrow the Republic, my duty is to frustrate their treacherous schemes, to maintain the Republic, and to save the Country by appealing to the solemn judgment of the only Sovereign whom I recognize in France—the People. "I therefore make a loyal appeal to the whole nation, and I say to you: If you wish to continue this condition of uneasiness which degrades us and compromises our future, choose another in my place, for I will no longer retain a power which is impotent to do good, which renders me responsible for actions which I cannot prevent, and which binds me to the helm when I

see the vessel driving towards the abyss. "If on the other hand you still place confidence in me, give me the means of accomplishing the great mission which I hold from you. "This mission consists in closing the era of revolutions, by satisfying the legitimate needs of the People, and by protecting them from subversive passions. It consists, above all, in creating institutions which survive men, and which shall in fact form the foundations on which something durable may be established. "Persuaded that the instability of power, that the preponderance of a single Assembly, are the permanent causes of trouble and discord, I submit to your suffrage the following fundamental bases of a Constitution which will be developed by the Assemblies later on:— "1. A responsible Chief appointed for ten years. "2.
Ministers dependent upon the Executive Power alone. "3. A Council of State composed of the most distinguished men, who shall prepare laws and shall support them in debate before the Legislative Body. "4. A Legislative Body which shall discuss and vote the laws, and which shall be elected by universal suffrage, without scrutin de liste, which falsifies the elections. "5. A

Second Assembly composed of the most illustrious men of the country, a power of equipoise the guardian of the fundamental compact, and of the public liberties. "This system, created by the first Consul at the beginning of the century, has already given repose and prosperity to France; it would still insure them to her. "Such is my firm conviction. If you share it, declare it by your votes. If, on the contrary, you prefer a government without strength, Monarchical or Republican, borrowed I know not from what past, or from what chimerical future, answer in the negative. "Thus for the first time since 1804, you will vote with a full knowledge of the circumstances, knowing exactly for whom and for what. "If I do not obtain the majority of your suffrages I shall call together a New Assembly and shall place in its hands the commission which I have received from you. "But if you believe that the cause of which my name is the symbol,—that is to say, France regenerated by the Revolution of '89, and organized by the Emperor, is to be still your own, proclaim it by sanctioning the powers which I ask from you. "Then France and Europe will be preserved from anarchy, obstacles will be removed, rivalries will have disappeared, for all will respect, in

the decision of the People, the decree of Providence. "Given at the Palace of the Elysée, 2d December, 1851. "LOUIS NAPOLEON BONAPARTE." PROCLAMATION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC TO THE ARMY. "Soldiers! Be proud of your mission, you will save the country, for I count upon you not to violate the laws, but to enforce respect for the first law of the country, the national Sovereignty, of which I am the Legitimate Representative. "For a long time past, like myself, you have suffered from obstacles which have opposed themselves both to the good that I wished to do and to the demonstrations of your sympathies in my favor. These obstacles have been broken down. "The Assembly has tried to attack the authority which hold from the whole Nation. It has ceased to exist. "I make a loyal appeal to the People and to the Army, and I say to them: Either give me the means of insuring your prosperity, or choose another in my place. "In 1830, as in 1848, you were treated as vanquished men. After having branded your heroic disinterestedness, they disdained to consult your sympathies and your wishes, and yet you are the flower of the Nation. Today, at this solemn moment, I am resolved that the voice of

the Army shall be heard. "Vote, therefore, freely as citizens; but, as soldiers do not forget that passive obedience to the orders of the Chief of the State is the rigorous duty of the Army, from the general to the private soldier. "It is for me, responsible for my actions both to the People and to posterity, to take those measures which may seem to me indispensable for the public welfare. "As for you, remain immovable within the rules of discipline and of honor. By your imposing attitude help the country to manifest its will with calmness and reflection. "Be ready to repress every attack upon the free exercise of the sovereignty of the People. "Soldiers, I do not speak to you of the memories which my name recalls. They are engraven in your hearts. We are united by indissoluble ties. Your history is mine. There is between us, in the past, a community of glory and of misfortune. "There will be in the future community of sentiment and of resolutions for the repose and the greatness of France. "Given at the Palace of the Elysée, December 2d, 1851. "(Signed) L.N. BONAPARTE." "IN THE NAME OF THE

FRENCH PEOPLE. "The President of the Republic decrees:—"ARTICLE I. The National Assembly is dissolved. "ARTICLE II. Universal suffrage is re-established. The law of May 31 is abrogated. "ARTICLE III. The French People are convoked in their electoral districts from the 14th December to the 21st December following. "ARTICLE IV. The State of Siege is decreed in the district of the first Military Division. "ARTICLE V. The Council of State is dissolved. "ARTICLE VI. The Minister of the Interior is charged with the execution of this decree. "Given at the Palace of the Elysée, 2d December, 1851. "LOUIS NAPOLEON BONAPARTE. "DE MORNY, Minister of the Interior." CHAPTER VII. NO. 70, RUE BLANCHE The Cité Gaillard is somewhat difficult to find. It is a deserted alley in that new quarter which separates the Rue des Martyrs from the Rue Blanche. I found it, however. As I reached No. 4, Yvan came out of the gateway and said, "I am here to warn you. The police have an eye upon this house, Michel is waiting for you at No. 70, Rue Blanche, a few steps from here." I knew No. 70, Rue Blanche. Manin, the celebrated President of the Venetian Republic, lived there. It was not in his rooms, however, that the

meeting was to take place. The porter of No. 70 told me to go up to the first floor. The door was opened, and a handsome, gray-haired woman of some forty summers, the Baroness Coppens, whom I recognized as having seen in society and at my own house, ushered me into a drawingroom. Michel de Bourges and Alexander Rey were there, the latter an ex-Constituent, an eloquent writer, a brave man. At that time Alexander Rey edited the National. We shook hands. Michel said to me,— "Hugo, what will you do?" I answered him,— "Everything." "That also is my opinion," said he. Numerous representatives arrived, and amongst others Pierre Lefranc, Labrousse, Théodore Bac, Noël Parfait, Arnauld (de l'Ariége), Demosthenes Ollivier, an ex-Constituent, and Charamaule. There was deep and unutterable indignation, but no useless words were spoken. All were imbued with that manly anger whence issue great resolutions. They talked. They set forth the situation. Each brought forward the news which he had learnt. Théodore Bac came from Léon Faucher, who lived in the Rue Blanche. It was he who had awakened Léon Faucher, and had announced the news to him. The first words of Léon Faucher

were, "It is an infamous deed." From the first moment Charamaule displayed a courage which, during the four days of the struggle, never flagged for a single instant. Charamaule is a very tall man, possessed of vigorous features and convincing eloquence; he voted with the Left, but sat with the Right. In the Assembly he was the neighbor of Montalembert and of Riancey. He sometimes had warm disputes with them, which we watched from afar off, and which amused us. Charamaule had come to the meeting at No. 70 dressed in a sort of blue cloth military cloak, and armed, as we found out later on. The situation was grave; sixteen Representatives arrested, all the generals of the Assembly, and he who was more than a general, Charras. All the journals suppressed, all the printing offices occupied by soldiers. On the side of Bonaparte an army of 80,000 men which could be doubled in a few hours; on our side nothing. The people deceived, and moreover disarmed. The telegraph at their command. All the walls covered with their placards, and at our disposal not a single printing case, not one sheet of paper. No means of raising the protest, no means of beginning the combat. The coup d'état was clad with mail,

the Republic was naked; the coup d'état had a speaking trumpet, the Republic wore a gag. What was to be done? The raid against the Republic, against the Assembly, against Right, against Law, against Progress, against Civilization, was commanded by African generals. These heroes had just proved that they were cowards. They had taken their precautions well. Fear alone can engender so much skill. They had arrested all the men of war of the Assembly, and all the men of action of the Left, Baune, Charles Lagrange, Miot, Valentin, Nadaud, Cholat. Add to this that all the possible chiefs of the barricades were in prison. The organizers of the ambuscade had carefully left at liberty Jules Favre, Michel de Bourges, and myself, judging us to be less men of action than of the Tribune; wishing to leave the Left men capable of resistance, but incapable of victory, hoping to dishonor us if we did not fight, and to shoot us if we did fight. Nevertheless, no one hesitated. The deliberation began. Other representatives arrived every minute, Edgar Quinet, Doutre, Pelletier, Cassal, Bruckner, Baudin, Chauffour. The room was full, some were seated, most were standing, in confusion, but without tumult. I was the first

to speak. I said that the struggle ought to be begun at once. Blow for blow. That it was my opinion that the hundred and fifty Representatives of the Left should put on their scarves of office, should march in procession through the streets and the boulevards as far as the Madeleine, and crying "Vive la République! Vive la Constitution!" should appear before the troops, and alone, calm and unarmed, should summon Might to obey Right. If the soldiers yielded, they should go to the Assembly and make an end of Louis Bonaparte. If the soldiers fired upon their legislators, they should disperse throughout Paris, cry "To Arms," and resort to barricades. Resistance should be begun constitutionally, and if that failed, should be continued revolutionarily. There was no time to be lost. "High treason," said I, "should be seized red-handed, is a great mistake to suffer such an outrage to be accepted by the hours as they elapse. Each minute which passes is an accomplice, and endorses the crime. Beware of that calamity called an 'Accomplished fact.' To arms!" Many warmly supported this advice, among others Edgar Quinet, Pelletier, and Doutre. Michel de Bourges seriously objected. My instinct was to begin

at once, his advice was to wait and see. According to him there was danger in hastening the catastrophe. The coup d'état was organized, and the People were not. They had been taken unawares. We must not indulge in illusion. The masses could not stir yet. Perfect calm reigned in the faubourgs; Surprise existed, yes; Anger, no. The people of Paris, although so intelligent, did not understand. Michel added, "We are not in 1830. Charles X., in turning out the 221, exposed himself to this blow, the re-election of the 221. We are not in the same situation. The 221 were popular. The present Assembly is not: a Chamber which has been insultingly dissolved is always sure to conquer, if the People support it. Thus the People rose in 1830. To-day they wait. They are dupes until they shall be victims." Michel de Bourges concluded, "The People must be given time to understand, to grow angry, to rise. As for us, Representative, we should be rash to precipitate the situation. If we were to march immediately straight upon the troops, we should only be shot to no purpose, and the glorious insurrection for Right would thus be beforehand deprived of its natural leaders—the Representatives of the People. We should decapitate the

popular army. Temporary delay, on the contrary, would be beneficial. Too much zeal must be guarded against, self-restraint is necessary, to give way would be to lose the battle before having begun it. Thus, for example, we must not attend the meeting announced by the Right for noon, all those who went there would be arrested. We must remain free, we must remain in readiness, we must remain calm, and must act waiting the advent of the People. Four days of this agitation without fighting would weary the army." Michel, however, advised a beginning, but simply by placarding Article 68 of the Constitution. But where should a printer be found? Michel de Bourges spoke with an experience of revolutionary procedure which was wanting in me. For many years past he had acquired a certain practical knowledge of the masses. His council was wise. It must be added that all the information which came to us seconded him, and appeared conclusive against me. Paris was dejected. The army of the coup d'état invaded her peaceably. Even the placards were not torn down. Nearly all the Representatives present, even the most daring, agreed with Michel's counsel, to wait and see what would happen. "At

night," said they, "the agitation will begin," and they concluded, like Michel de Bourges, that the people must be given time to understand. There would be a risk of being alone in too hasty a beginning. We should not carry the people with us in the first moment. Let us leave the indignation to increase little by little in their hearts. If it were begun prematurely our manifestation would miscarry. These were the sentiments of all. For myself, while listening to them, I felt shaken. Perhaps they were right. It would be a mistake to give the signal for the combat in vain. What good is the lightning which is not followed by the thunderbolt? To raise a voice, to give vent to a cry, to find a printer, there was the first question. But was there still a free

Press? The brave old ex-chief of the 6th Legion, Colonel Forestier, came in. He took Michel de Bourges and myself aside. "Listen," said he to us. "I come to you. I have been dismissed. I no longer command my legion, but appoint me in the name of the Left, Colonel of the 6th. Sign me an order and I will go at once and call them to arms. In an hour the regiment will be on foot." "Colonel," answered I, "I will do more than sign

an order, I will accompany you." And I turned towards Charamaule, who had a carriage in waiting. "Come with us," said I. Forestier was sure of two majors of the 6th. We decided to drive to them at once, while Michel and the other Representatives should await us at Bonvalet's, in the Boulevard du Temple, near the Café Turc. There they could consult together. We started. We traversed Paris, where people were already beginning to swarm in a threatening manner. The boulevards were thronged with an uneasy crowd. People walked to and fro, passers-by accosted each other without any previous acquaintance, a noteworthy sign of public anxiety; and groups talked in loud voices at the corners of the streets. The shops were being shut. "Come, this looks better," cried Charamaule. He had been wandering about the town since the morning, and he had noticed with sadness the apathy of the masses. We found the two majors at home upon whom Colonel Forestier counted. They were two rich linendrapers, who received us with some embarrassment. The shopmen had gathered together at the windows, and watched us pass by. It was mere curiosity. In the meanwhile one of the two majors

countermanded a journey which he was going to undertake on that day, and promised us his co-operation. "But," added he, "do not deceive yourselves, one can foresee that we shall be cut to pieces. Few men will march out." Colonel Forestier said to us, "Watrin, the present colonel of the 6th, does not care for fighting; perhaps he will resign me the command amicably. I will go and find him alone, so as to startle him the less, and will join you at Bonvalet's." Near the Porte St. Martin we left our carriage, and Charamaule and myself proceeded along the boulevard on foot, in order to observe the groups more closely, and more easily to judge the aspect of the crowd. The recent levelling of the road had converted the boulevard of the Porte St. Martin into a deep cutting, commanded by two embankments. On the summits of these embankments were the footways, furnished with railings. The carriages drove along the cutting, the foot passengers walked along the footways. Just as we reached the boulevard, a long column of infantry filed into this ravine with drummers at their head. The thick waves of bayonets filled the square of St. Martin, and lost themselves in the depths of the Boulevard Bonne Nouvelle. An

enormous and compact crowd covered the two pavements of the Boulevard St. Martin. Large numbers of workmen, in their blouses, were there, leaning upon the railings. At the moment when the head of the column entered the defile before the Theatre of the Porte St. Martin a tremendous shout of "Vive la République!" came forth from every mouth as though shouted by one man. The soldiers continued to advance in silence, but it might have been said that their pace slackened, and many of them regarded the crowd with an air of indecision. What did this cry of "Vive la République!" mean? Was it a token of applause? Was it a shout of defiance? It seemed to me at that moment that the Republic raised its brow, and that the coup d'état hung its head. Meanwhile Charamaule said to me, "You are recognized." In fact, near the Château d'Eau the crowd surrounded me. Some young men cried out, "Vive Victor Hugo!" One of them asked me, "Citizen Victor Hugo, what ought we to do?" I answered,

"Tear down the seditious placards of the coup d'état, and cry 'Vive la Constitution!'" "And suppose they fire on us?" said a young workman. "You will hasten to arms." "Bravo!" shouted

the crowd. I added, "Louis Bonaparte is a rebel, he has steeped himself to-day in every crime. We, Representatives of the People, declare him an outlaw, but there is no need for our declaration, since he is an outlaw by the mere fact of his treason. Citizens, you have two hands; take in one your Right, and in the other your gun and fall upon Bonaparte." "Bravo! Bravo!" again shouted the people. A tradesman who was shutting up his shop said to me, "Don't speak so loud, if they heard you talking like that, they would shoot you." "Well, then," I replied, "you would parade my body, and my death would be a boon if the justice of God could result from it." All shouted "Long live Victor Hugo!" "Shout 'Long live the Constitution,'" said I. A great cry of "Vive la Constitution! Vive la République;" came forth from every breast. Enthusiasm, indignation, anger flashed in the faces of all. I thought then, and I still think, that this, perhaps, was the supreme moment. I was tempted to carry off all that crowd, and to begin the battle. Charamaule restrained me. He whispered to me,— "You will bring about a useless fusillade. Every one is unarmed. The infantry is only two paces from us, and see, here comes the

artillery." I looked round; in truth several pieces of cannon emerged at a quick trot from the Rue de Bondy, behind the Château d'Eau. The advice to abstain, given by Charamaule, made a deep impression on me. Coming from such a man, and one so dauntless, it was certainly not to be distrusted. Besides, I felt myself bound by the deliberation which had just taken place at the meeting in the Rue Blanche. I shrank before the responsibility which I should have incurred. To have taken advantage of such a moment might have been victory, it might also have been a massacre. Was I right? Was I wrong? The crowd thickened around us, and it became difficult to go forward. We were anxious, however, to reach the rendezvous at Bonvalet's. Suddenly some one touched me on the arm. It was Léopold Duras, of the National. "Go no further," he whispered, "the Restaurant Bonvalet is surrounded. Michel de Bourges has attempted to harangue the People, but the soldiers came up. He barely succeeded in making his escape. Numerous Representatives who came to the meeting have been arrested. Retrace your steps. We are returning to the old rendezvous in the Rue Blanche. I have been looking for you to

tell you this." A cab was passing; Charamaule hailed the driver. We jumped in, followed by the crowd, shouting, "Vive la République! Vive Victor Hugo!" It appears that just at that moment a squadron of sergents de ville arrived on the Boulevard to arrest me. The coachman drove off at full speed. A quarter of an hour afterwards we reached the Rue Blanche. CHAPTER VIII. "VIOLATION OF THE CHAMBER" At seven o'clock in the morning the Pont de la Concorde was still free. The large grated gate of the Palace of the Assembly was closed; through the bars might be seen the flight of steps, that flight of steps whence the Republic had been proclaimed on the 4th May, 1848, covered with soldiers; and their piled arms might be distinguished upon the platform behind those high columns, which, during the time of the Constituent Assembly, after the 15th of May and the 23d June, masked small mountain mortars, loaded and pointed. A porter with a red collar, wearing the livery of the Assembly, stood by the little door of the grated gate. From time to time Representatives arrived. The porter said, "Gentlemen, are you Representatives?" and opened the door. Sometimes he asked their names. M. Dupin's

quarters could be entered without hindrance. In the great gallery, in the dining-room, in the salon d'honneur of the Presidency, liveried attendants silently opened the doors as usual. Before daylight, immediately after the arrest of the Questors MM. Baze and Leflô, M. de Panat, the only Questor who remained free, having been spared or disdained as a Legitimist, awoke M. Dupin and begged him to summon immediately the Representatives from their own homes. M. Dupin returned this unprecedented answer, "I do not see any urgency." Almost at the same time as M. Panat, the Representative Jerôme Bonaparte had hastened thither. He had summoned M. Dupin to place himself at the head of the Assembly. M. Dupin had answered, "I cannot, I am guarded." Jerôme Bonaparte burst out laughing. In fact, no one had deigned to place a sentinel at M. Dupin's door; they knew that it was guarded by his meanness. It was only later on, towards noon, that they took pity on him. They felt that the contempt was too great, and allotted him two sentinels. At half-past seven, fifteen or twenty Representatives, among whom were MM. Eugène Sue, Joret, de Rességuier, and de Talhouet, met

together in M. Dupin's room. They also had vainly argued with M. Dupin. In the recess of a window a clever member of the Majority, M. Desmousseaux de Givré, who was a little deaf and exceedingly exasperated, almost quarrelled with a Representative of the Right like himself whom he wrongly supposed to be favorable to the coup d'état. M. Dupin, apart from the group of Representatives, alone dressed in black, his hands behind his back, his head sunk on his breast, walked up and down before the fireplace, where a large fire was burning. In his own room, and in his very presence, they were talking loudly about himself, yet he seemed not to hear.

Two members of the Left came in, Benoît (du Rhône), and Crestin. Crestin entered the room, went straight up to M. Dupin, and said to him, "President, you know what is going on? How is it that the Assembly has not yet been convened?" M. Dupin halted, and answered, with a shrug which was habitual with him,— "There is nothing to be done." And he resumed his walk. "It is enough," said M. de Rességuier. "It is too much," said Eugène Sue. All the Representatives left the room. In the meantime the Pont de la Concorde became covered with

troops. Among them General Vast-Vimeux, lean, old, and little; his lank white hair plastered over his temples, in full uniform, with his laced hat on his head. He was laden with two huge epaulets, and displayed his scarf, not that of a Representative, but of a general, which scarf, being too long, trailed on the ground. He crossed the bridge on foot, shouting to the soldiers inarticulate cries of enthusiasm for the Empire and the coup d'état. Such figures as these were seen in 1814. Only instead of wearing a large tri-colored, cockade, they wore a large white cockade. In the main the same phenomenon; old men crying, "Long live the Past!" Almost at the same moment M. de Larochejaquelein crossed the Place de la Concorde, surrounded by a hundred men in blouses, who followed him in silence, and with an air of curiosity. Numerous regiments of cavalry were drawn up in the grand avenue of the Champs Elysées. At eight o'clock a formidable force invested the Legislative Palace. All the approaches were guarded, all the doors were shut. Some Representatives nevertheless succeeded in penetrating into the interior of the Palace, not, as has been wrongly stated, by the passage of the President's house on the side of the Esplanade

of the Invalides, but by the little door of the Rue de Bourgogne, called the Black Door. This door, by what omission or what connivance I do not know, remained open till noon on the 2d December. The Rue de Bourgogne was nevertheless full of troops. Squads of soldiers scattered here and there in the Rue de l'Université allowed passers-by, who were few and far between, to use it as a thoroughfare. The Representatives who entered by the door in Rue de Bourgogne, penetrated as far as the Salle des Conférences, where they met their colleagues coming out from M. Dupin. A numerous group of men, representing every shade of opinion in the Assembly, was speedily assembled in this hall, amongst whom were MM. Eugène Sue, Richardet, Fayolle, Joret, Marc Dufraisse, Benoît (du Rhône), Canet, Gambon, d'Adelsward, Créqu, Répellin, Teillard-Latérisse, Rantion, General Leydet, Paulin Durrieu, Chanay, Brilliez, Collas (de la Gironde), Monet, Gaston, Favreau, and Albert de Rességuier. Each new-comer accosted M. de Panat. "Where are the vice-Presidents?" "In prison." "And the two other Questors?" "Also in prison. And I beg you to believe, gentlemen," added M. de Panat, "that I have had nothing to do

with the insult which has been offered me, in not arresting me." Indignation was at its height; every political shade was blended in the same sentiment of contempt and anger, and M. de Rességuier was no less energetic than Eugène Sue. For the first time the Assembly seemed only to have one heart and one voice. Each at length said what he thought of the man of the Elysée, and it was then seen that for a long time past Louis Bonaparte had imperceptibly created a profound unanimity in the Assembly—the unanimity of contempt. M. Collas (of the Gironde) gesticulated and told his story. He came from the Ministry of the Interior. He had seen M. de Morny, he had spoken to him; and he, M. Collas, was incensed beyond measure at M. Bonaparte's crime. Since then, that Crime has made him Councillor of State. M. de Panat went hither and thither among the groups, announcing to the Representatives that he had convened the Assembly for one o'clock. But it was impossible to wait until that hour. Time pressed. At the Palais Bourbon, as in the Rue Blanche, it was the universal feeling that each hour which passed by helped to accomplish the coup d'état. Every one felt as a reproach the weight of his silence or

of his inaction; the circle of iron was closing in, the tide of soldiers rose unceasingly, and silently invaded the Palace; at each instant a sentinel the more was found at a door, which a moment before had been free. Still, the group of Representatives assembled together in the Salle des Conférences was as yet respected. It was necessary to act, to speak, to deliberate, to struggle, and not to lose a minute. Gambon said, "Let us try Dupin once more; he is our official man, we have need of him." They went to look for him. They could not find him. He was no longer there, he had disappeared, he was away, hidden, crouching, cowering, concealed, he had vanished, he was buried. Where? No one knew. Cowardice has unknown holes. Suddenly a man entered the hall. A man who was a stranger to the Assembly, in uniform, wearing the epaulet of a superior officer and a sword by his side. He was a major of the 42d, who came to summon the

Representatives to quit their own House. All, Royalists and Republicans alike, rushed upon him. Such was the expression of an indignant eye-witness. General Leydet addressed him in

language such as leaves an impression on the cheek rather than on the ear. "I do my duty, I fulfil my instructions," stammered the officer. "You are an idiot, if you think you are doing your duty," cried Leydet to him, "and you are a scoundrel if you know that you are committing a crime. Your name? What do you call yourself? Give me your name." The officer refused to give his name, and replied, "So, gentlemen, you will not withdraw?" "No." "I shall go and obtain force." "Do so." He left the room, and in actual fact went to obtain orders from the Ministry of the Interior. The Representatives waited in that kind of indescribable agitation which might be called the Strangling of Right by Violence. In a short time one of them who had gone out came back hastily, and warned them that two companies of the Gendarmerie Mobile were coming with their guns in their hands. Marc Dufraisse cried out, "Let the outrage be thorough. Let the coup d'état find us on our seats. Let us go to the Salle des Séances," he added. "Since things have come to such a pass, let us afford the genuine and living spectacle of an 18th Brumaire." They all repaired to the Hall of Assembly. The

passage was free. The Salle Casimir-Périer was not yet occupied by the soldiers. They numbered about sixty. Several were girded with their scarves of office. They entered the Hall meditatively. There, M. de Rességuier, undoubtedly with a good purpose, and in order to form a more compact group, urged that they should all install themselves on the Right side. "No," said Marc Dufraisse, "every one to his bench." They scattered themselves about the Hall, each in his usual place. M. Monet, who sat on one of the lower benches of the Left Centre, held in his hand a copy of the Constitution. Several minutes elapsed. No one spoke. It was the silence of expectation which precedes decisive deeds and final crises, and during which every one seems respectfully to listen to the last instructions of his conscience. Suddenly the soldiers of the Gendarmerie Mobile, headed by a captain with his sword drawn, appeared on the threshold. The Hall of Assembly was violated. The Representatives rose from their seats simultaneously, shouting "Vive la République!" The Representative Monet alone remained standing, and in a loud and indignant voice, which resounded through the empty hall like a trumpet, ordered the

soldiers to halt. The soldiers halted, looking at the Representatives with a bewildered air. The soldiers as yet only blocked up the lobby of the Left, and had not passed beyond the Tribune. Then the Representative Monet read the Articles 36, 37, and 68 of the Constitution. Articles 36 and 37 established the inviolability of the Representatives. Article 68 deposed the President in the event of treason. That moment was a solemn one. The soldiers listened in silence. The Articles having been read, Representative d'Adelsward, who sat on the first lower bench of the Left, and who was nearest to the soldiers, turned towards them and said,— "Soldiers, you see that the President of the Republic is a traitor, and would make traitors of you. You violate the sacred precinct of rational Representation. In the name of the Constitution, in the name of the Law, we order you to withdraw." While Adelsward was speaking, the major commanding the Gendarmerie Mobile had entered. "Gentlemen," said he, "I have orders to request you to retire, and, if you do not withdraw of your own accord, to expel you." "Orders to expel us!" exclaimed Adelsward; and all the Representatives added, "Whose orders; Let us see the orders.

Who signed the orders?" The major drew forth a paper and unfolded it. Scarcely had he unfolded it than he attempted to replace it in his pocket, but General Leydet threw himself upon him and seized his arm. Several Representatives leant forward, and read the order for the expulsion of the Assembly, signed "Fortoul, Minister of the Marine." Marc Dufraisse turned towards the Gendarmes Mobiles, and cried out to them,— "Soldiers, your very presence here is an act of treason. Leave the Hall!" The soldiers seemed undecided. Suddenly a second column emerged from the door on the right, and at a signal from the commander, the captain shouted,— "Forward! Turn them all out!" Then began an indescribable hand-to-hand fight between the gendarmes and the legislators. The soldiers, with their guns in their hands, invaded the benches of the Senate. Repellin, Chanay, Rantion, were forcibly torn from their seats. Two gendarmes rushed upon Marc Dufraisse, two upon Gambon. A long struggle took place on the first bench of the Right, the same place where MM. Odilon Barrot and Abbatucci were in the habit of sitting. Paulin Durrieu resisted violence by force, it needed three men to drag him from his

bench. Monet was thrown down upon the benches of the Commissaries. They seized Adelsward by the throat, and thrust him outside the Hall. Richardet, a feeble man, was thrown down and brutally treated. Some were pricked with the points of the bayonets; nearly all had their clothes torn. The commander shouted to the soldiers, "Rake them out." It was thus that sixty

Representatives of the People were taken by the collar by the coup d'état, and driven from their seats. The manner in which the deed was executed completed the treason. The physical performance was worthy of the moral performance. The three last to come out were Fayolle, Teillard-Latérisse, and Paulin Durrieu. They were allowed to pass by the great door of the Palace, and they found themselves in the Place Bourgogne. The Place Bourgogne was occupied by the 42d Regiment of the Line, under the orders of Colonel Garderens. Between the Palace and the statue of the Republic, which occupied the centre of the square, a piece of artillery was pointed at the Assembly opposite the great door. By the side of the cannon some Chasseurs de Vincennes were loading their guns and

biting their cartridges. Colonel Garderens was on horseback near a group of soldiers, which attracted the attention of the Representatives Teillard-Latérisse, Fayolle, and Paulin Durrieu. In the middle of this group three men, who had been arrested, were struggling crying, "Long live the Constitution! Vive la République!" Fayolle, Paulin Durrieu, and Teillard-Latérisse approached, and recognized in the three prisoners three members of the majority, Representatives Toupet-des-Vignes Radoubt, Lafosse, and Arbey. Representative Arbey was warmly protesting. As he raised his voice, Colonel Garderens cut him short with these words, which are worthy of preservation,—"Hold your tongue! One word more, and I will have you thrashed with the butt-end of a musket." The three Representatives of the Left indignantly called on the Colonel to release their colleagues. "Colonel," said Fayolle, "You break the law threefold." "I will break it sixfold," answered the Colonel, and he arrested Fayolle, Durrieu, and Teillard-Latérisse. The soldiery were ordered to conduct them to the guard house of the Palace then being built for the Minister of Foreign Affairs. On the way the six prisoners, marching between a double file of

bayonets, met three of their colleagues Representatives Eugène Sue, Chanay, and Benoist (du Rhône). Eugène Sue placed himself before the officer who commanded the detachment, and said to him,— "We summon you to set our colleagues at liberty." "I cannot do so," answered the officer. "In that case complete your crimes," said Eugène Sue, "We summon you to arrest us also." The officer arrested them. They were taken to the guard-house of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and, later on, to the barracks of the Quai d'Orsay. It was not till night that two companies of the line came to transfer them to this ultimate resting-place. While placing them between his soldiers the commanding officer bowed down to the ground, politely remarking, "Gentlemen, my men's guns are loaded." The clearance of the hall was carried out, as we have said, in a disorderly fashion, the soldiers pushing the Representatives before them through all the outlets. Some, and amongst the number those of whom we have just spoken, wens out by the Rue de Bourgogne, others were dragged through the Salle des

Pas Perdus towards the grated door opposite the Pont de la Concorde. The Salle des Pas Perdus has an ante-chamber, a sort of crossway room, upon which opened the staircase of the High Tribune, and several doors, amongst others the great glass door of the gallery which leads to the apartments of the President of the Assembly. As soon as they had reached this crossway room which adjoins the little rotunda, where the side door of exit to the Palace is situated, the soldiers set the Representatives free. There, in a few moments, a group was formed, in which the Representatives Canet and Favreau began to speak. One universal cry was raised, "Let us search for Dupin, let us drag him here if it is necessary." They opened the glass door and rushed into the gallery. This time M. Dupin was at home. M. Dupin, having learnt that the gendarmes had cleared out the Hall, had come out of his hiding-place. The Assembly being thrown prostrate, Dupin stood erect. The law being made prisoner, this man felt himself set free. The group of Representatives, led by MM. Canet and Favreau, found him in his study. There a dialogue ensued. The Representatives summoned the President to put himself at their head, and to

re-enter the Hall, he, the man of the Assembly, with them, the men of the Nation. M. Dupin refused point-blank, maintained his ground, was very firm, and clung bravely to his nonentity. "What do you want me to do?" said he, mingling with his alarmed protests many law maxims and Latin quotations, an instinct of chattering jays, who pour forth all their vocabulary when they are frightened. "What do you want me to do? Who am I? What can I do? I am nothing. No one is any longer anything. Ubi nihil, nihil. Might is there. Where there is Might the people lose their Rights. Novus nascitur ordo. Shape your course accordingly. I am obliged to submit. Dura lex, sed lex. A law of necessity we admit, but not a law of right. But what is to be done? I ask to be let alone. I can do nothing. I do what I can. I am not wanting in good will. If I had a corporal and four men, I would have them killed." "This man only recognizes force," said the Representatives. "Very well, let us employ force." They used violence towards him, they girded him with a scarf like a cord round his neck, and, as they had said, they dragged him towards the Hall, begging for his "liberty," moaning, kicking—I would say wrestling, if the word were not too exalted. Some

minutes after the clearance, this Salle des Pas Perdus, which had just witnessed Representatives pass by in the clutch of gendarmes, saw M. Dupin in the clutch of the Representatives. They did not get far. Soldiers barred the great green folding-doors. Colonel Espinasse hurried thither, the commander of the gendarmerie came up. The butt-ends of a pair of pistols were seen peeping out of the commander's pocket. The colonel was pale, the commander was pale, M. Dupin was livid. Both sides were afraid. M. Dupin was afraid of the colonel; the colonel assuredly was not afraid of M. Dupin, but behind this laughable and miserable figure he saw a terrible phantom rise up—his crime, and he trembled. In Homer there is a scene where Nemesis appears behind Thersites. M. Dupin remained for some moments stupefied, bewildered and speechless. The Representative Gambon exclaimed to him,— "Now then, speak, M. Dupin, the Left does not interrupt you." Then, with the words of the Representatives at his back, and the bayonets of the soldiers at his breast, the unhappy man spoke. What his mouth uttered at this moment, what the President of the Sovereign Assembly of France stammered to the gendarmes at

this intensely critical moment, no one could gather. Those who heard the last gasps of this moribund cowardice, hastened to purify their ears. It appears, however, that he stuttered forth something like this:— "You are Might, you have bayonets; I invoke Right and I leave you. I have the honor to wish you good day." He went away. They let him go. At the moment of leaving he turned round and let fall a few more words. We will not gather them up. History has no rag-picker's basket. CHAPTER IX. AN END WORSE THAN DEATH We should have been glad to have put aside, never to have spoken of him again, this man who had borne for three years this most honorable title, President of the National Assembly of France, and who had only known how to be lacquey to the majority. He contrived in his last hour to sink even lower than could have been believed possible even for him. His career in the Assembly had been that of a valet, his end was that of a scullion. The unprecedented attitude that M. Dupin assumed before the gendarmes when uttering with a grimace his mockery of a protest, even engendered suspicion. Gambion exclaimed, "He resists like an accomplice. He knew all." We believe these suspicions to be

unjust. M. Dupin knew nothing. Who indeed amongst the organizers of the coup d'état would have taken the trouble to make sure of his joining them? Corrupt M. Dupin? was it possible? and, further, to what purpose? To pay him? Why? It would be money wasted when fear alone was enough. Some connivances are secured before they are sought for. Cowardice is the old fawner upon felony. The blood of the law is quickly wiped up. Behind the assassin who holds the poniard comes the trembling wretch who holds the sponge. Dupin took refuge in his study. They followed him. "My God!" he cried, "can't they understand that I want to be left in peace." In truth they had tortured him ever since the morning, in order to extract from him an impossible scrap of courage. "You ill-treat me worse than the gendarmes," said he. The Representatives installed themselves in his study, seated themselves at his table, and, while he groaned and scolded in an arm-chair, they drew up a formal report of what had just taken place, as they wished to leave an official record of the outrage in the archives. When the official report was ended Representative Canet read it to the President, and offered him a pen. "What do you want me to do

with this?" he asked. "You are the President," answered Canet. "This is our last sitting. It is your duty to sign the official report." This man refused.

CHAPTER X. THE BLACK DOOR M. Dupin is a matchless disgrace. Later on he had his reward. It appears that he became some sort of an Attorney-General at the Court of Appeal. M. Dupin renders to Louis Bonaparte the service of being in his place the meanest of men. To continue this dismal history. The Representatives of the Right, in their first bewilderment caused by the coup d'état, hastened in large numbers to M. Daru, who was Vice-President of the Assembly, and at the same time one of the Presidents of the Pyramid Club. This Association had always supported the policy of the Elysée, but without believing that a coup d'état was premeditated. M. Daru lived at No. 75, Rue de Lille. Towards ten o'clock in the morning about a hundred of these Representatives had assembled at M. Daru's home. They resolved to attempt to penetrate into the Hall where the Assembly held its sittings. The Rue de Lille opens out

into the Rue de Bourgogne, almost opposite the little door by which the Palace is entered, and which is called the Black Door. They turned their steps towards this door, with M. Daru at their head. They marched arm in arm and three abreast. Some of them had put on their scarves of office. They took them off later on. The Black Door, half-open as usual, was only guarded by two sentries. Some of the most indignant, and amongst them M. de Kerdrel, rushed towards this door and tried to pass. The door, however, was violently shut, and there ensued between the Representatives and the sergents de ville who hastened up, a species of struggle, in which a Representative had his wrist sprained. At the same time a battalion which was drawn up on the Place de Bourgogne moved on, and came at the double towards the group of Representatives. M. Daru, stately and firm, signed to the commander to stop; the battalion halted, and M. Daru, in the name of the Constitution, and in his capacity as Vice-President of the Assembly, summoned the soldiers to lay down their arms, and to give free passage to the Representatives of the Sovereign People. The commander of the battalion replied by an order to clear the

street immediately, declaring that there was no longer an Assembly; that as for himself, he did not know what the Representatives of the People were, and that if those persons before him did not retire of their own accord, he would drive them back by force. "We will only yield to violence," said M. Daru. "You commit high treason," added M. de Kerdrel. The officer gave the order to charge. The soldiers advanced in close order. There was a moment of confusion; almost a collision. The Representatives, forcibly driven back, ebbed into the Rue de Lille. Some of them fell down. Several members of the Right were rolled in the mud by the soldiers. One of them, M. Etienne, received a blow on the shoulder from the butt-end of a musket. We may here add that a week afterwards M. Etienne was a member of that concern which they styled the Consultative Committee. He found the coup d'état to his taste, the blow with the buttend of a musket included. They went back to M. Daru's house, and on the way the scattered group reunited, and was even strengthened by some new-comers. "Gentlemen," said M. Daru, "the President has failed us, the Hall is closed against us. I am the Vice-President; my house is

the Palace of the Assembly." He opened a large room, and there the Representatives of the Right installed themselves. At first the discussions were somewhat noisy. M. Daru, however, observed that the moments were precious, and silence was restored. The first measure to be taken was evidently the deposition of the President of the Republic by virtue of Article 68 of the Constitution. Some Representatives of the party which was called Burgraves sat round a table and prepared the deed of deposition. As they were about to read it aloud a Representative who came in from out of doors appeared at the door of the room, and announced to the Assembly that the Rue de Lille was becoming filled with troops, and that the house was being surrounded. There was not a moment to lose. M. Benoist-d'Azy said, "Gentlemen, let us go to the Mairie of the tenth arrondissement; there we shall be able to deliberate under the protection of the tenth legion, of which our colleague, General Lauriston, is the colonel." M. Daru's house had a back entrance by a little door which was at the bottom of the garden. Most of the Representatives went out that way. M. Daru was about to follow them. Only himself, M. Odilon Barrot,

and two or three others remained in the room, when the door opened. A captain entered, and said to M. Daru,— "Sir, you are my prisoner." "Where am I to follow you?" asked M. Daru. "I have orders to watch over you in your own house." The house, in truth, was militarily occupied, and it was thus that M. Daru was prevented from taking part in the sitting at the Mairie of the tenth arrondissement. The officer allowed M. Odilon Barrot to go out.

CHAPTER XI. THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE While all this was taking place on the left bank of the river, towards noon a man was noticed walking up and down the great Salles des Pas Perdus of the Palace of Justice. This man, carefully buttoned up in an overcoat, appeared to be attended at a distance by several possible supporters—for certain police enterprises employ assistants whose dubious appearance renders the passers-by uneasy, so much so that they wonder whether they are magistrates or thieves. The man in the buttoned-up overcoat loitered from door to door, from lobby to lobby, exchanging signs of intelligence with the myrmidons who followed him; then came back to the great Hall, stopping on the

way the barristers, solicitors, ushers, clerks, and attendants, and repeating to all in a low voice, so as not to be heard by the passers-by, the same question. To this question some answered "Yes," others replied "No." And the man set to work again, prowling about the Palace of Justice with the appearance of a bloodhound seeking the trail. He was a Commissary of the Arsenal Police. What was he looking for? The High Court of Justice. What was the High Court of Justice doing? It was hiding.

Why? To sit in Judgment? Yes and no. The Commissary of the Arsenal Police had that morning received from the Prefect Maupas the order to search everywhere for the place where the High Court of Justice might be sitting, if perchance it thought it its duty to meet. Confusing the High Court with the Council of State, the Commissary of Police had first gone to the Quai d'Orsay. Having found nothing, not even the Council of State, he had come away emptyhanded, at all events had turned his steps towards the Palace of Justice, thinking that as he had to search for justice he would perhaps find it there. Not finding it, he went away. The High Court, however, had

nevertheless met together. Where, and how? We shall see. At the period whose annals we are now chronicling, before the present reconstruction of the old buildings of Paris, when the Palace of Justice was reached by the Cour de Harlay, a staircase the reverse of majestic led thither by turning out into a long corridor called the Gallerie Mercière. Towards the middle of this corridor there were two doors; one on the right, which led to the Court of Appeal, the other on the left, which led to the Court of Cassation. The folding-doors to the left opened upon an old gallery called St. Louis, recently restored, and which serves at the present time for a Salle des Pas Perdus to the barristers of the Court of Cassation. A wooden statue of St. Louis stood opposite the entrance door. An entrance contrived in a niche to the right of this statue led into a winding lobby ending in a sort of blind passage, which apparently was closed by two double doors. On the door to the right might be read "First President's Room;" on the door to the left, "Council Chamber." Between these two doors, for the convenience of the barristers going from the Hall to the Civil Chamber, which formerly was the Great Chamber of Parliament, had been

formed a narrow and dark passage, in which, as one of them remarked, "every crime could be committed with impunity." Leaving on one side the First President's Room and opening the door which bore the inscription "Council Chamber," a large room was crossed, furnished with a huge horseshoe table, surrounded by green chairs. At the end of this room, which in 1793 had served as a deliberating hall for the juries of the Revolutionary Tribunal, there was a door placed in the wainscoting, which led into a little lobby where were two doors, on the right the door of the room appertaining to the President of the Criminal Chamber, on the left the door of the Refreshment Room. "Sentenced to death!—Now let us go and dine!" These two ideas, Death and Dinner, have jostled against each other for centuries. A third door closed the extremity of this lobby. This door was, so to speak, the last of the Palace of Justice, the farthest off, the least known, the most hidden; it opened into what was called the Library of the Court of Cassation, a large square room lighted by two windows overlooking the great inner yard of the Conciègerie, furnished with a few leather chairs, a large table covered with green

cloth, and with law books lining the walls from the floor to the ceiling. This room, as may be seen, is the most secluded and the best hidden of any in the Palace. It was here,—in this room, that there arrived successively on the 2d December, towards eleven o'clock in the morning, numerous men dressed in black, without robes, without badges of office, affrighted, bewildered, shaking their heads, and whispering together. These trembling men were the High Court of Justice. The High Court of Justice, according to the terms of the Constitution, was composed of seven magistrates; a President, four Judges, and two Assistants, chosen by the Court of Cassation from among its own members and renewed every year. In December, 1851, these seven judges were named Hardouin, Pataille, Moreau, Delapalme, Cauchy, Grandet, and Quesnault, the two last-named being Assistants. These men, almost unknown, had nevertheless some antecedents. M. Cauchy, a few years previously President of the Chamber of the Royal Court of Paris, an amiable man and easily frightened, was the brother of the mathematician, member of the Institute, to whom we owe the computation of waves of sound, and of the ex-Registrar Archivist of the

Chamber of Peers. M. Delapalme had been Advocate-General, and had taken a prominent part in the Press trials under the Restoration; M. Pataille had been Deputy of the Centre under the Monarchy of July; M. Moreau (de la Seine) was noteworthy, inasmuch he had been nicknamed "de la Seine" to distinguish him from M. Moreau (de la Meurthe), who on his side was noteworthy, inasmuch as he had been nicknamed "de la Meurthe" to distinguish him from M. Moreau (de la Seine). The first Assistant, M. Grandet, had been President of the Chamber at Paris. I have read this panegyric of him: "He is known to possess no individuality or opinion of his own whatsoever." The second Assistant, M. Quesnault, a Liberal, a Deputy, a Public Functionary, AdvocateGeneral, a Conservative, learned, obedient, had attained by making a stepping-stone of each of these attributes, to the Criminal Chamber of the Court of Cassation, where he was known as one of the most severe members. 1848 had shocked his notion of Right, he had resigned after the 24th of February; he did not resign after the 2d December. M. Hardouin, who presided over the High Court, was an ex-President of Assizes, a religious man, a rigid

Jansenist, noted amongst his colleagues as a "scrupulous magistrate," living in Port Royal, a diligent reader of Nicolle, belonging to the race of the old Parliamentarians of the Marais, who used to go to the Palais de Justice mounted on a mule; the mule had now gone out of fashion, and whoever visited President Hardouin would have found no more obstinacy in his stable than in his conscience. On the morning of the 2d December, at nine o'clock, two men mounted the stairs of M. Hardouin's house, No. 10, Rue de Condé, and met together at his door. One was M. Pataille; the other, one of the most prominent members of the bar of the Court of Cassation, was the ex-Constituent Martin (of Strasbourg). M. Pataille had just placed himself at M. Hardouin's disposal. Martin's first thought, while reading the placards of the coup d'état, had been for the High Court. M. Hardouin ushered M. Pataille into a room adjoining his study, and received Martin (of Strasbourg) as a man to whom he did not wish to speak before witnesses. Being formally requested by Martin (of Strasbourg) to convene the High Court, he begged that he would leave him alone, declared

that the High Court would "do its duty," but that first he must "confer with his colleagues," concluding with this expression, "It shall be done to-day or to-morrow." "To-day or to-morrow!" exclaimed Martin (of Strasbourg); "Mr. President, the safety of the Republic, the safety of the country, perhaps, depends on what the High Court will or will not do. Your responsibility is great; bear that in mind. The High Court of Justice does not do its duty to-day or to-morrow; it does it at once, at the moment, without losing a minute, without an instant's hesitation." Martin (of Strasbourg) was right, Justice always belongs to To-day. Martin (of Strasbourg) added, "If you want a man for active work, I am at your service." M. Hardouin declined the offer; declared that he would not lose a moment, and begged Martin (of Strasbourg) to leave him to "confer" with his colleague, M. Pataille. In fact, he called together the High Court for eleven o'clock, and it was settled that the meeting should take place in the Hall of the Library. The Judges were punctual. At a quarter-past eleven they were all assembled. M. Pataille arrived the last. They sat at the end of the great green table.