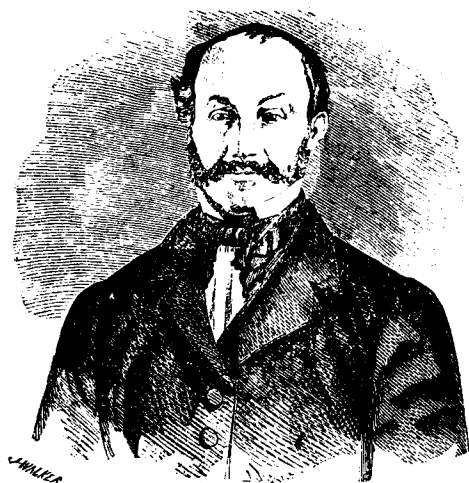


ESCAPED FROM THE GALLOWS  
—  
**SOUVENIRS**  
OF A  
**CANADIAN STATE PRISONER**  
IN 1838



*Felice Poutre*

— *Price, 25 Cents.* —

**MONTREAL**

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1862



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I am neither an educated man nor a writer, much less have I any pretensions to a flowing style. I have for a long time hesitated to publish these souvenirs, because they have in the first place but little importance by themselves, and specially because I did not think it possible to place them in an acceptable form before the public. However, for several years past, a number of my friends have endeavoured to persuade me to publish them, and even those whom I could almost consider as my gaolers, the men who were directly acting under the orders of the authorities in 1838, have strongly urged me to do so, for the sole pleasure of amusing the public at the expense of the officials who had so long and so completely been duped by me.

My life having in all probability been spared on account of a feigned attack of insanity during several months, a very difficult part in which I did not fail for a single instant, it was thought that my narrative would not be one of the least curious episodes of the political imprisonments.

To simulate epilepsy and madness during the space of four or five months, convince the medical attendants of the jail as well as the magistrates, who now and then came in to interrogate the prisoners, that I was really insane; to blind the gaolers themselves with whom I was in constant relation, and to persuade even intimate friends, (one of whom alone knew my secret, after being duped as well as the others,) required a great deal more of vigilance, of self-observation, of self command, of a spirit of combination, and of *continuous mental effort* than can be generally supposed. Every day I was called upon to invent some new method of exhibiting my madness; I was closely watched by my gaolers; (it will shortly be seen how I got rid of the old Dr. of the gaol, Dr. Arnoldi.) The other prisoners although their sympathy was enlisted in my behalf, would not perhaps have kept my secret, had they suspected or discovered my stratagem. I was therefore obliged to be constantly on my guard day and night, and although I

sometimes spoke sensibly, I took care to show some extravagant indications of madness whenever it might have been suspected that I was in possession of my senses.

Sometimes I was as tame as a lamb, a moment after I was ready to tear to pieces any person who dared to approach me. I was at that time endowed with extraordinary powers of strength. Two men were as light as a feather in my hands, and it is perhaps due to my physical strength more than to any thing else, that I forced upon the gaolers and the prisoners the conviction that I was mad. When it was first attempted to master me, I got rid with such vigorous strength of those who attempted to hold me, and sent them spinning, pivoting and tumbling with so little ceremony that the *madman* at once inspired them with the respect of fear.

"None but a mad man," thought the keepers, "can send us flying like a pair of gloves in such a manner."

It will therefore surprise nobody when I mention that the greatest difficulty I experienced when I saw all eyes upon me, was to keep an imperturbable countenance, which I never lost for a single moment.

To play the part of a madman is in itself a difficult thing; but to see about one's self so many persons stupefied with surprise or fear at the sight of my madness and capers, especially to see the magistrates and sheriff take for genuine all the nonsense spoken and acted before them, and never allow one's face to betray the slightest mark of laughter, (I had always been addicted to laughing) was certainly the greatest difficulty I had to contend with in my position, and I may almost say the greatest misery I had to endure, for the disposition to laugh, would come in spite of myself and yet I never gave way to it.

At the time of the rebellion in 1838 I was of the age of twenty one years. I helped my father to do the work of the farm. I took a great deal of interest in politics, constantly reading the papers, looking upon the would be *constitutionalists* of that day like brigands, and believing thoroughly in my conscience that the majority of the house of Assembly in 1836 had nobly performed its duty. It is not necessary for me to say that I have remained of the same opinion, and that I have not, like many others, foresworn that period and heaped insults on the heads of the greatest names in our history.

In that time none dreamed among the Canadian population, that in Lord Gosford's government were to be found traitors and rascals such as Solicitor General Ogden for instance, who counselled arbitrary and rigorous measures in order to goad on the people to armed resistance, in order to crush them, and to reign afterwards by means of a victorious minority.

The rebellion in 1837, where positive right, if not prudence and political prevision were with us, had electrified all Canadian hearts, and as we had in St. Johns, where I resided, ultra-loyalists who were resolved upon hanging all those who bore the name of Canadians, we had on our part the most sincere desire of cutting down some of them.

In St. Johns as well as in other places, it was remarked that Canadians who devoted themselves body and soul to the defense of the government, were generally far more determined in their hostility towards their countrymen than the

English themselves. In all countries the deserters are invariably more violent against their former friends, more abject in regard to their adopted masters than the natural enemies of their own race. This is sufficiently explained by the fact that the traitor is only such when nobility of soul, and elevation of thought have ceased to exist for him. A good and generous heart has never throbbed in the breast of a traitor, for this would be as a contradiction in terms. For that reason the Canadian deserters in 1837 and 1838 were all vile and cowardly, and became traitors to their race only because they were wanting in patriotism and honour.

A man who is sufficiently devoid of feeling and self respect to overstep the limits of the strictest neutrality, and become an informer and the executioner of his own countrymen, will never stop half way in the road of meanness and dishonour.

The wanton and often brutal vexations to which our population was subjected to in 1837, had left behind an irritating sense of exasperation easily understood. We could not bear to meet in our streets, with the sour or ferocious countenances of one of these men, who had become the humble valets of the chiefs of the *Doric Club*; who were so haughty towards us and so servile towards them; who played the despots at St. Johns and vicinity, and were so meanly subservient to the influential torys of the day; we could not, as I have said, meet them in our streets without an insuperable feeling of anger and hatred. These men were, generally speaking, of no personal value. Fear or the thirst of gain, of rewards or of honours alone was the cause of their animosity against us. Without a single generous idea, not one elevated aspiration, not an honorable intention, nor one useful project! they were nothing but mere informers *and have never risen for a moment* above that infamous calling.

We never could discover on their hostile countenances, nor find in their malignant expressions, anything but the desire of humbling us or of playing the tyrant over us. Useless to say that we returned their hatred a hundred-fold.

I have not the slightest doubt that the vexations we had to endure from our own countrymen, that their efforts to make themselves agreeable to government by using us as footstools to their ambition, and as the victims at which was aimed their servilism, have contributed more than any thing else to keep up a spirit of disaffection throughout the Canadian population and to exasperate it against the government.

We considered that the English could not act otherwise than they did and their hostility towards us did not lower them in our esteem; but when we saw Canadians abandon their own position, which was at least that of *neutrality*, to perform the part of spies over their old friends and of informers against their brethren, the only feeling left in our hearts, was that of contempt and vengeance.

Such is according to my views—and it is easy to judge of the feelings of many others by mine,—the probable and sole cause of the rebellion in 1838, in which alone I took part.

I entered my twenty-first year in 1838. Politics were then the predominant occupation of our population. Excited by the continual vexations and an-

noyances of the loyalists around us, we received weekly news of a generally exaggerated character from the United-States, where it was reported that Drs. Nelson and Côte were organizing a large force for the purpose of liberating the country. A little reflection at that time would have quickly convinced us that our independance could not be accomplished by such means ; that having a far more favourable opportunity in 1837, it was almost impossible, in 1838, to arrive at any serious results ; and that the sympathies of individuals in the United-States, were powerless against our want of unity, of organization, and the considerable forces at the disposition of the colonial government. We should also have thought that the sympathisers, even if it had been their intention, could not have supplied us with any considerable amount of arms or money, and that those who urged us on to resistance at that time, were leading us to a butchery, as the events have proved. But at that time, we thought of nothing but the little acts of tyranny which were practised against us ; we were persuaded that the American government would interfere ; it was constantly repeated that it would interfere, but that there must be a beginning, that it was necessary to commit ourselves to a certain extent to furnish it with the right of aiding us effectually ; all these rumours appeared both wise and reasonable, and we longed for the moment when we could at last rise in arms, in our part of the country and take full revenge of our disasters in 1837.

On the third of September, 1838, whilst working with some dozen men on my father's farm, I saw two men coming towards me through the fields. One of them was Dr. Côte, of Napierville. I was slightly acquainted with him, he shook hands with me and introduced me to his friend, Dr. Robert Nelson. After a few words of conversation, I gradually retired, until out of hearing of the men who surrounded me. Dr. Côte then suddenly addressing me, said : " Poutré, we are on our march to overthrow the government, will you join us ? " I had then just 21 years ; I was strongly affected by anglophobia ; boiling with rage since a long time, not only on account of the useless outrages committed that year, but I had moreover at heart to humble our St. Johns' loyalists, and repay with bitterness their shabby tyranny, the stupid vexations to which we had continually been subjected to. I fancied that I saw them pass before me with their haughty air, their disdainful look, with an expression of satisfaction at our humiliation, and I could not help saying unto myself : " Ah ! that I could for once have my turn." Besides I found that labour was rather hard ; a revolution promised me an excellent means of advancement and an only chance of appearing with haughty mein before our enraged loyalists. I therefore replied to Côte :

—That will do for me. It will exactly suit my plans ; the heat is powerful in the fields ; and I would to a certainty prefer to be governor of the country.

—Not so fast, not so fast, replied he ; you are not the only one to be provided for.

—Never mind, let us go forward at all events, we will see what is to be done afterwards. I do not make it a condition. I will be satisfied with much less.

—We will succeed this time, said Côte.

—That would be rather a propos. The blows are sometimes all on our side.

—It is perhaps because we did not succeed last year, that experience will aid us. You understand that we know to day in what we have failed.



I will tell you one of your most signal faults ; and that was to send our *habitants* to fight with muskets without locks. How the deuce do you want us to knock down an englishman with muskets not worth a stick ? If you want us to fight we are ready ; oh ! you will find men, do not be afraid ; but give them at least muskets and guns, and powder and balls to blow up Messrs. the loyalists. With these requisites many of these gentlemen will fall to the ground. We will blow them up these loyalists !

—You shall get muskets and guns, and powder and balls. Our plans are well laid. But you ought also to help us a little. If you want us to make you free, you must raise funds to enable us to purchase the greatest quantity of arms possible. Get up subscriptions amongst yourselves ! Appoint officers and collectors ; hold frequent meetings, that will keep the people on the alert, and will enable you to obtain reliable information of all that is going on. Besides, we will keep you all well informed of what is going on, and many a thing is on foot in the United States of which you are not sufficiently well aware of.

—As far as that goes it is true, we are not sufficiently organized. There is also among us many a man who can afford to pay for a musket ; and it would really be far better that they should provide one themselves, and leave as many as possible for those who cannot afford to purchase one.

While we were thus conversing, Dr. Nelson, Côte's companion, did not utter a word, he was as serious as a portrait and was staring at me fixedly. I had never met with such a stern look, nor such a cold expression of countenance as his own.

At last he spoke :—

—Poutré, you appear to be a man full of activity, intelligence and good will, a good patriot, devoted to the cause ; you can perform a great part if you choose. Are you prepared for the worst ? Our undertaking is a serious one. Once started, it is impossible to go back. Before you join in the movement, reflect ; for if once you begin, you will in spite of yourself be obliged to go on to the end.

—I am not a man to back out, Dr. My determination is irrevocable ; I will liberate my country, and follow you.

—Not yet, said he. There is too much to do here to deprive ourselves of your services. Two things are pressing above all :

1o. The organisation of committees to become companies hereafter.

2o. The collection of funds for the purpose of purchasing arms.

—Will you devote yourself to the attainment of either of these two objects ?

—T's done, I replied.

—Well then ! we will first swear you in, and you shall at once proceed to work. I, in consequence took the following oath. "You swear to devote your energy and courage to drive the English out of the Canadian soil, and to never pause as long as a single one remains within its limits."

After taking the oath, Côte addressed me thus :

—Now Poutré, we know that we can rely on you. Take a bible, go through the country and bind by the same oath all the Canadian patriots to join us. In the mean time, you will solicit subscriptions towards the purchase of the arms

necessary to our success; for without arms we cannot move. Will you do this with zeal and discretion?

—On my head and honour, I promise it.

—That is right, good morrow! We leave you to your work, and commence as soon as possible.

They both left me then, and I felt myself as if taller by twelve inches. The mission of swearing in my countrymen, of raising funds, of organizing committees, gave me in my own eyes an importance above all my expectations. Such a situation was taking in my mind the grandest proportions, I felt myself under the weight of a responsibility, which after all was serious, and I resolved to set to work immediately.

Useless for me to state that I slept as little as possible during that night.

On the very next day, after providing myself with a Bible, I went round the country swearing in friends and collecting money. In a short time, I swore in upwards of 3,000 men, and although the collection did not amount to what I had anticipated, it was attended with rather gratifying results. The greatest difficulty I had to encounter was in the organization of committees of which every body was speaking, but not one out of thirty was willing to join them. Every system of organisation was adopted with enthusiasm but never executed, all the meetings ended in empty words.

Nevertheless time flew past and events followed a pace. Our intelligence from the United-States gave us to understand that preparations on a large scale were going on for the purpose of coming to our help.

Rumors of depots of arms and ammunition, of volunteers ready to cross the frontier to join our ranks, were circulating. It was also mentioned that the government would interfere as soon as we could obtain any serious advantage over the British troops. Confiding in those reports, we looked upon the success as probable, since we would have this year at least, arms, men and money. We therefore awaited with the greatest impatience the moment when we would be possessed of those arms so long desired and so long expected.

We had received orders to be prepared for action about the beginning of November 1838. I had been appointed Captain of a company. I was full of fire, but could not guard against a sort of uneasiness, when I thought that we had not as yet received one single cannon or musket. We were often told not to be anxious, and that when wanted every thing would come in good time; but however I could not help thinking that "to come in good time," ought to mean before the battle rather than after.

However, having received orders to march to Napierville on the first of November, I arrived there on the night of the second; at least 3000 men were assembled on that night in the village. The volunteers were intrenched at Odelltown. We were informed that they had fortified the church and that they awaited our attack there. The cemetery extended as usual around the church, and was enclosed with a stone wall which they had not had time to embattle.

The attack upon Odelltown having been resolved upon, we made an inspection of our forces and arms. We numbered upwards of 3000 men and had but 400

fowling pieces in all, 100 of which would fire, as it were, when it suited their own convenience. And the arms from the United-States were always coming but never arriving.

On the sixth of November an order to be in readiness for an attack on Odelltown early the next morning was issued. Here then was a battle where we could encounter those volunteers so fond of bragging when they had to deal with women and children.

One thousand men were ordered for this expedition, although we could supply but 400 with arms ; but it was understood that those who were unarmed would take possession of the muskets of the volunteers who would fall in the struggle.

In 1838 the country round Odelltown was far from being cleared as it is at present. The woods were within a very short distance of the cemetery, and that side was selected for the attack. In a few minutes we had cleared the distance which separated us from the enclosure of the cemetery, and under cover of that wall we opened a well directed fire against the church where the volunteers were intrenched. They had a gun commanding that position ; but it did but little service, for we had made choice of a first rate marksman with a number of loaded guns within his reach, who shot to a dead certainty everyman who approached the cannon. After one hour or two of firing without any apparent effect, we were ordered to retreat, and our band marched back to Napierville. We renewed the attack on the next day with the same results. Having no guns we could not with any chance of success attack the church, nor attempt to dislodge the volunteers. We nevertheless killed some of their men and lost some of ours, and finally we abandoned the attack and returned for the night at Napierville. We were told that our loss amounted to 43 men and that of the volunteers to 150. Such a result evidently amounted to nothing.

On our return to Napierville I contrived to approach Dr. Côte, and asked of him whether we would be supplied with muskets and guns or not.

—What can we do without cannon, said I, to drive out these rascals from the church ? If we have no arms, better to give up at once ! Where are the arms promised ? Without arms you know full well that you are leading us to nothing but useless slaughter.

Although he tried to put on a good countenance, I saw by his embarrassment that he had no good news to impart. He appeared to me to be keeping back a secret which tormented him, and I thought he did not look as usual. He recommended me to visit him at Napierville.

From that moment I began to think that something was not going on well. Several circumstances rushed to my mind which my preoccupation had prevented me from judging with accuracy. The more I meditated on all I had seen and heard since a week, the more I could not but think that evidently these men were deceiving us and that we should get no arms. After all if it was true that depots of arms did exist on the other side of the lines, what could be simpler than to distribute them when we were at Odelltown, bordering on the lines. Was there any mark of common sense to lead us on to battle without arms, when it was pretended that we had depots near at hand ?

I found it hard to persuade myself to believe that there were men so treacherous as to urge on thousands of men to battle under the promise of supplying them with arms and laugh at them afterwards. There was something so infamous in the fact of revolutionizing a whole population to deliver them afterwards to the vengeance of the government, that I felt the blood boiling in my veins when I thought that my suspicions might be realized. I knew perfectly well that after all I had done, that after my excursions through the country, my collections of money, the oaths administered by me, and above all my presence in the ranks of the patriots, I had no chance of mercy or forgiveness to expect. I could not bear the thought that I had fought like a madman for men who were laughing at me and my fellow countrymen. I felt myself choking with rage at the idea of having thus been fooled. I therefore said in my mind : " We shall see to night what they will say. It is time that all that nonsense should be put a stop to ! To fight against walls with muskets ball, would require two months more ! If we only had two small guns ; how quickly we would dislodge those rascally volunteers ? And to think that since upwards of two months they promise to supply us with arms, and not a single musket has arrived yet ! And all these confiding and honest men who are all here, are compromised by madmen or traitors ! For after all there is no middle course, if they have arms and do not bring them on at once, it is an imbecility without a name ; if they have none, these men have been betraying us since two months ! And yet, after all, if such was the case, how could they dare to remain in our midst ! If they do really betray us they must know that neither I nor the others are disposed to let them escape quietly, while we are perhaps destined to the gallows through their fault ! Had they told us at once : ' We can not procure arms,' nobody would have thought of leaving their homes ! "

We arrived in the evening at Napierville more discouraged than fatigued. Tormented as I was with fears and suspicions, I hastened to see Côte. I could not obtain an entrance. I returned at nine o'clock with the same result. That to me was a mystery ! He had told me himself to come to see him ! At last, at ten o'clock I returned, determined to pass over the bodies of ten men if necessary, to speak to him. To my great surprise I entered without difficulty, and Côte said :

—My dear Poutré, we have just heard that troops are marching in the direction of Napierville. They are still at five leagues from hence ; in consequence they will arrive here to-morrow afternoon, between the hours of four or five. It is reported that they form a column of 5,000 men. Start at day break, and proceed to Lacolle where the arms must be arrived by this time. You ought to find there 5,000 muskets and ammunition. Bring carts, and I give you full power to organize the defense, and endeavour to bring in everything here by twelve o'clock at latest. Select active and willing men to help you and use the greatest speed.

If we had all of us been in full possession of our sober senses, and I might say our simple common sense, I, for one, should have seen that all that was nothing but mockery and falsehood, from beginning to end. In the state that the roads were

in—and we all know what they are like in November—one hundred and fifty carts would not have been sufficient to bring on 5,000 muskets and a proportionate supply of ammunition. Now, to pretend to unload from on board a vessel the guns and ammunition ; to place them on the carts, (which we had to find first,) and return to Napierville by twelve o'clock, was such a physical impossibility that an order of the kind could only emanate from a man out of his senses or determined to deceive us to the last moment.

But the order was given so seriously and with such apparent candour ; Master Côte appeared so glad to announce the arrival of the arms so long desired and expected ; we were so desirous of handling at last those good arms instead of our rusty old ones, which had never killed anything but hares and partridges, and seemed to be afraid to shoot at an Englishman, that we received the announcement with hearty cheers, instead of examining it coolly, which at once would have proved its falsehood.

I took good care to start before day break on my route to Lacolle, being determined to fulfil my mission with credit to myself. On my way, I stopped at every house where I hoped to find a horse and cart, and ordered rather than asked the people to leave immediately for Lacolle to bring out the arms.

Some of them made no objections, but the greatest number were afraid to attempt the journey on account of the horrible state of the roads and of the weather. Several demanded really most ridiculous prices, and that kind of speculation considering our feeble means exasperated me ! I spared neither remonstrances nor threats ; but very few consented. They seemed instinctively to perceive either that I was deceiving them, or that I was made a fool of in attempting to execute such an order under such circumstances.

As soon as I arrived at Lacolle, I was convinced in less than ten minutes that I had been duped as well as my friends at Napierville. I will not here repeat the horrible oath which escaped my lips, when the light broke upon me at last with evidence and irresistible force ; such an oath can be uttered but once in a lifetime, and moreover, no expressions can convey the fiery indignation which sent the blood rushing to my brains.

The few carts engaged by me were just then arriving. I did not know where to hide myself, after giving such peremptory orders, accompanied by such insistence and threats, and to find these poor people there before me, asking me in all candour, where shall we load ? I wished myself a hundred feet under ground.

They became furious, and justly so, when they found themselves at day break at Lacolle, where nothing could be found and obliged to return without a load. But as to me who had been more deeply imposed upon, my position was unbearable, for they really took me for the guilty author of this infamous piece of humbug. They were determined to cut me into pieces. I was however so furious myself that they were soon convinced that my indignation was as natural as their own, and after endless explanations with each of them, and after a distribution of a few pieces of silver, we remained, I will not say good friends, for their journey by night was lying heavy at the bottom of their hearts, but at least on such terms as to lead me to hope that I would not leave my bones at Lacolle.

But if I contrived to pacify them I could not succeed in doing so myself. The trick was too infamous. It was therefore but too true that we had been dealing with two traitors, with two rascals, who had dared to deceive a whole population up to the very last moment with such impudence. That population was compromised by them, willingly compromised ; given up for the future to the hatred of the Tories and to the vengeance of a Colborne. As for me, Félix Poutré, I had suffered myself to be imposed upon during two long months without a suspicion of the folly into which I was led ! I had accepted, believed and swallowed with the credulity of a child all sorts of nonsense of the most ridiculous and stupid nature ! I had in fact candidly taken for the truth, for patriotic deeds, all the stupid tales invented by these two worthy humbugs ! I had believed everything, eaten up every word, as it were, just as if that nonsense had even the appearance of common sense ! I awoke as from a long dream, and asked myself whether I was the man who had been the hero of such an adventure.

And then what would be the consequences of all this ? What was to be done ? Besides the troops were coming ! We stood between two fires ! The troops on one side and the volunteers on the other, who, most evidently, must have received the order to push on to Napierville ! We were caught in a net, as it were ! ! What was to become of all my poor friends, their families, and their property, with that propensity of the British to burn every thing ! ! How many of us would be arrested, imprisoned, shot or hanged ! ! These thoughts were all crowding in my head at that moment, and I felt as if I was restored to my senses. It seemed to me as if awaking from a dream, and that the real value of objects was suddenly appearing before me, enlightening my intellect which the absence of those arms so often promised was reviving by the light of a new day.

One thing particularly was preying on my mind. " Why the devil," thought I, " was I sent here when they knew that it was labour lost ? " The explanation came at last and aroused my exasperated feelings to their utmost pitch. I saw clearly that the sole object of my mission was to keep me away for a moment in order to furnish Nelson and Côte with an opportunity of escaping more easily. They were rid of one pair of eyes at least by that device.

I felt as if endowed with a second sight and I fancied that I saw them both gliding warily towards the lines. It will shortly be seen that my former blindness had given place to a complete perception of the situation. The idea of their escape, that species of vision which passed suddenly before my eyes, elicited from my lips a curse addressed to these two traitors, a curse which I do not wish to justify, but which appears to me *honestly* justifiable at such a moment. I remained rooted to the spot for half an hour, a prey to all the reflexions which I have attempted to describe, but the idea of the flight of Nelson and Côte brought me back to a full sense of my situation : " Come ! I may perhaps arrive in time ! " And I returned to Napierville with the pace of a man in a fit of rage.

During the way I had leisure to review in my mind the events of the two last months ; to weigh by means of my better judgment, and not of my illusions of misled patriotism, my own acts and those of others ; to reflect on their probable and inevitable consequences ! I seriously looked into my position and that of my

friends ; the position in which we had placed Lower-Canada through our thoughtlessness, and the notorious disloyalty of two men. It was evident that a second rebellion would be repressed with greater rigor than the first ; I was convinced that we had commenced the movement in that year with less chances of success than in 1837, for the reason that the government was better prepared ; I realized that we were sacrificed ; and the more I thought on that subject the more I was convinced that the blows and the vengeance would fall upon us rather than upon those who were really the guilty parties.

In 1837 we had not 4,000 men stationed in the province ; in 1838 we had 15,000 men, and as many volunteers organized and well armed. I at last felt convinced that reason had returned two months too late ! !

Restored to my senses and to myself, as it were, my conscience and reason were resuming their empire. An inward voice was telling me : Poutré, who is responsible for the sums you have solicited, for the organization of secret committees under your direction ? Who is responsible for the three thousand oaths administered by you all over the country without authority, without right, and in violation of all knowledge of justice and sound judgment ? You have stirred up a rebellion in several parishes, you have excited the people against the government by the delusive hopes of obtaining succour and arms, where are you all to day ? If blood is spilt, if executions follow, have you not a large share of the responsibility ? Are you not one of the most guilty causes of the situation in which we are now placed through your ridiculous credulity ? Should you not have found out long ago that you were played upon and that they were speculating on your ignorance ? How many families will perhaps be plunged in affliction by your fault ? How many of your friends will perhaps be ruined for ever ? Can you now atone for the wrongs you have inflicted on so many persons ?

These reflexions and many others were racking my mind.

On my arrival at Napierville, about noon, I was soon surrounded by the numerous crowd which filled the streets. I had but one word to say : “ No arms, my friends, no arms ! Deceived ! sacrificed ! Where are they, that I may tell them to their faces what I think of them ? ”

—Who ?

—Well then ! Côte and Nelson !

—Ah ! It appears that they are gone !

—Damnation ! I thought so ! I come to late ! How is it possible that I did not suspect anything ?

—Ah ! they have taken care of their hides ! Had I been here, scoundrels, you would not have got off so easily !

—No body has seen them go ! We think they must have gone off before day-break, but since they are no where to be found, it is evident that we will never see them again !

—What are we to do, Poutré ? The troops are hardly two leagues off.

—What can we do against, 5,000 men with 400 fowling pieces in bad order ! Ah ! exclaimed I fiercely, if we could, but for once have good muskets, real sol-

dier's muskets. But to what purpose ? All is over, it is evident ! Let us disband, and each take his own way ! Woe to those who will be taken here !

—Every one in consequence sorrowfully meditating on the future, returned to his respective concession and his home. For myself, I repaired directly to my father's house.

The troops marched into the village of Napierville early in the afternoon. More than 200 patriots, mostly all inhabitants of the village were made prisoners. The soldiers ill treated the patriots and loyal subjects equally, and both were plundered. Several of them who attempted to escape, when they saw that their *loyalty* could not protect them against the brutality of the soldiers, were fired at and many were wounded. A patriot, named François Chouinard was shot. Another, Charles Pouliot by name, while attempting to escape with a child four months old in his arms was shot and the child seriously wounded. Chouinard's wife received some relief, but the child whom she supported has never received any thing.

I arrived at my father's house on the 9th in the evening. When I had left him eight days before, I did not expect to return so soon and under such circumstances. At my departure, I fancied myself armed cap-a-pie, with a sword at my side, pistols in my belt and a good rifle on my shoulder ; and now after an absence of eight days I was returning, not only disenchanted and having lost my illusions, but in an imminent danger of being arrested and . . . . . who knows . . . of being hanged perhaps ! For if such has not been my fate, it was no fault on the part of those who were charged with the execution of the vengeance of the government. I certainly do them no injustice when I say that they had a terrible longing to see me dance upon anything but my feet.

I passed a very restless night, and the little sleep which I took was frequently interrupted by starts caused by the idea that some one was laying hands upon me to arrest me. I rose at half past two of the clock in the morning, and went down stairs, but my father had slept still less than I, and was silently smoking his pipe near the stove :

—Well ! said he, after pleasure comes pain ! What are you going to do at present ?

—I should like to know myself !

—You shall certainly be arrested !

—Perhaps they will keep quiet ! I have not done so much, after all !

—How now, you have not done so much ? Are you serious ? You have organized committees, you were the captain of a company, you fought at Odelltown, you travelled through the parishes with a Bible for six weeks to swear in the patriots, and you tell me that you have not done much ! Ah ! well, but I say, that you have done much more than is necessary to . . . . . you understand . . . . . and a tear dropped slowly down the old man's pallid cheek ! But recovering immediately :

—Well, well, old man ! speaking to himself, no weakness, that is the part of women ! the greater the adversity, the stronger the resistance against it . . . . .

—Look ye, Félix, I have thought more than I slept to night, said my father.



No good can come out of a piece of folly such as this. At that sort of game we always risk our head, and yours is not very steady on your shoulders at this moment ! That, is a certain fact ! Besides you know very well that rogue M. . . . . does not like you, you are set down on his list by this time. The day will not pass without their coming here in search of you ! If found, you are a dead man. It is of no use to deceive ourselves, such is the fact. Therefore . . . . .

At that moment one of my village friends entered in the greatest hurry, who before he discovered me, cried out to my father :

—Let not Félix stay here for a single moment, for he will be arrested. Then perceiving me behind my father :

—Away ! away at once, exclaimed he, Mr. . . . . has just this moment given an order to arrest you.

—How the devil has he found out that I was here already ?

—If he has not been informed of the fact, he suspects it. At all events, here is what I have just seen and heard. I went out at two o'clock to call upon the Doctor for Marie, who is sick, and as I passed the door of that old scoundrel M. . . . I saw D. . . . coming out. . . .

—Oh ! the rascal, exclaimed my father.

—And the old man said as he shut the door : (I saw him with his red woollen cap, *tuque*, and his big eyes like a screech owl, just as well as I see you). “Here ! begin by Félix, if he is with his father, the old man has a sharp nose, and he will not keep him long. Go thither at once ! I would not miss that one, for I have been watching him since a year.” I understood quite well that he meant you, and I cut across the fields to tell you. Had the roads been good, perhaps I might not have been here in time, because D. . . . has his light chesnut mare ; but with such roads he must be fully half a league off. You have about twenty minutes in advance, take advantage of that, you see the time is pressing !

—What, said my father, you have not stopped at the Doctor's ; and should Marie be very sick !

And if Félix is arrested ! By calling on the Doctor the delay might have lost all, if he slept rather soundly. When Marie knows why I have been so long, she will forgive me, I am sure. Well, good day ; for I am also in a hurry. But, father Poutré I have run so hard, and must run again so far, that a little *drop* would do me no harm.

—Ah ! poor child, said my father ; how could I be so stupid as not to think of it ! Surely ! You are quite used up ! See you, my son, there are times when a man is not master of his own head, and I beg of you to excuse me, I am not in the habit of welcoming so coldly my best friends.

—Oh ! don't mention it, father Poutré, I know full well that the heart is not wanting.

Thereupon, my father poured out a brimming glass of his good old rum for our friend : we heartily shook hands with him for the service rendered and he ran back to the village.

It was yet quite dark. I put on a pair of long boots, took a small parcel of linen and all that was necessary to light a fire and set off for the woods.

I had hardly proceeded 100 feet on my journey, when I heard the tramping of a horse's feet in the mud. It was very dark and cloudy, I therefore was running no risk of being seen. I retraced my steps in order to see what was going on. I took my position at the gable end of the house, near a glazed door very seldom used, and through which I could see Master D.... with his sharp features and ferret like eyes, attempting to pierce through the walls with his looks.

The conversation was already commenced between my father and him when I reached the door steps.

..... Very bad times, father Poutré.

—Yes, indeed very bad, for the poor Canadians will have many an evil hour to endure.

—But why do they revolt against the government ? Who urges them on to it ? There is no country in the world as happy as this ! Is it not so father Poutré ?

—Hem.....

—How now, do you not think that the Canadians are happy in living under our good government ?

Look here D.... do not make me talk ! I know what is within me. I have not moved in this matter ! I considered it as a folly ! I have even told the young men so ! Unfortunately when once the signal was given, nothing has been able to stop all these poor children ! But between saying that they were guilty of folly and calling the government *good*, the distance is great. I have not said.... that it was bad, I tell nobody of my thoughts, but before I admit that it is good, you know, my dear fellow, I will go and dance upon nothing.....

—After all that does not matter, what brings you here ?

—So then, father Poutré, you think that the government is not good ?

I saw my father's eyes brighten.

—I say nothing D.... but I repeat it, do not force me to talk, for I might speak of something else besides the government. Tell me what you want here ?

—Oh ! not much. Just to chat as I was passing. I am the bearer of writs for L'Acadie, and seeing a light within, I made up my mind to stop. You have been an early riser, this morning, father Poutré !

—Ah ! do you see, the sun is a late riser at this season of the year, and if we rose as late as he, the threshing would not go on very fast.

—Have you heard of what has taken place at Napierville ? It is reported that great misfortunes have happened !

—I know nothing about the matter, replied my father dryly.

—It appears that many prisoners have been taken.

—So much the worse !

—Wherefore, so much the worse, do not these men deserve to be punished for their conduct ?

—If they punished the real offenders at least !

—And who are the real offenders, father Poutré ?

My father rose abruptly from his seat, and I perceived that he could no longer command his temper, I was very anxious, for a man such as D...., although a great rascal, was powerful at that time. D.... had his eyes fixed upon him !

—The truly guilty parties, said he, are those who sell and deliver up their fellow countrymen, their brethren. . . .

—But of whom are you speaking of, father Poutré ? Who delivers up his brethren ? Is that addressed to me ? You look angry. . . . I certainly would not speak a word to injure you, but when we have to deal with all the scoundrels who have risen in arms against the government. . . . it appears to me that we can well say all that we know.

It is probable that if D. . . . could have supposed that my father was acquainted with the motive of his visit, he would not have been so cutting in his remarks ; but how could he imagine that at such an hour his motive could have been known and the alarm given.

I read in my father's eyes, and judged by the looks cast upon D. . . . that he was horribly tempted to send him spinning in the direction of the road, and if he had not known the nature of his mission, I have not the slightest doubt but that he would have done it. He answered then with an effort to appear calm :

—It is unjust to call *scoundrels* men who have only been deceived ; and I consider as infinitely more despicable those who. . . .

—Those who punish ?

—Those who hunt them down, replied my father, choking with rage. See here, D. . . . when we see, at this hour, a bird of ill omen such as you, we know what that means. If you imagine to impose upon me with that innocent face of yours you are greatly mistaken. I know what you are about as well as you do, and what vexes me is that by worming my secrets out of me you are endeavoring to arrest two instead of one. I have known you for a long time past D. . . .

—Well then, let us perform our duty. I wish it had been done by any other than me, continued he, resuming his hypocritical mien, for that man was an incarnate hypocrite ;—but since I have been chosen, I must act.

—No hypocrisy, said my father, you seek Félix, well ! just go back as you came ; he is not here. . . . And if you are afraid on your way back, a thing frequent with you, sing “I have found the hare's form,” it will save you from trembling when you hear the fall of a leaf. And now, away, for I am no longer disposed to endure in my house your face of a volunteer's valet. Félix is not here, so away.

—Pierre Poutré, here is a *warrant* which I must execute : and as Mr. M. . . . is informed that Félix is here, for he is aware of it, it is useless to deny it, father Poutré : I must search for him, because I must find him.

—Very well, search !

—Better save yourself from that disagreeable necessity. Wherefore deny it ? Félix arrived here yesterday. We know what is going on you may be sure ! Why force me to look all over the house, and ferret about every corner ?

—My father grasped D. . . . by the arm with such a force that he turned pale in the face, and said :

—No more words, do you hear ! When I say that Félix is not here, that means that such is the fact. I am not one of your sort to lie and then conceal myself ! You know the story about Charles B. . . . none know it ! Therefore take

heed! Practise your infamous calling, and quickly begone. If I was of your calibre, I would denounce you but I can not think of such dirty work. You will at last find yourself in the place where you are sending the others to, you rogue. Now on with your search!

—Well then, father Poutré, said D...., reassuming his most hypocritical air I know that you are unable to tell a falsehood....

—None of your base adulation, the story of Charles B.... has elicited them from you in order to force me to say nothing about that matter.... Neither your meanness nor your flattery can engage me to keep silent. If I resembled you, you would not be here to-day. You have a duty to fulfill! Fulfill it, and be off!

—If you give me your word that Félix is not here, father Poutré, I will be satisfied....

—Search, coward! Leave me alone with your advances! I do not wish to be indebted to you even in the appearance of any regard.

D.... took his way to the stairs leading above, darting a venomous look at my father. For myself, curiosity had detained me until daylight began to appear. A man could be seen at a distance of 200 paces. I therefore remained crouching by the door for fear he should see me from above. When he came down, in one bound I was behind the outbuildings which hid me from his view, and took my flight towards the thirty acres, (*les trente*.)

I reached the woods without being seen. And took possession of a sugar cabin. I prepared a good hiding place at a short distance by collecting several heaps of bushes, but I regretted that I had forgotten my axe. I nevertheless picked up some dead wood, lighted up a good fire in the cabin, then I did what generally happens to those who are obliged to hide; I began to think of the past, of the present, of the future, of my former quiet life, of my present situation..... how long it might last.... would I pass the winter in that hut?.... Would I be discovered? Should it be so, what would be done of me?.... Would it not be better for me to go to the United-States?.... Then my disappointments, the want of arms, my useless journey to Lacolle, Côte's treachery, all were passing in my mind, and then I exclaimed: "Ah! if I go to the United States, beware, Mr. runaway general."

With all that, time hung heavily on my hands, it is a wearisome thing to be talking to one's self. Then in the afternoon I felt that I could have eaten something, and I regretted that I had not brought some provisions with me, my ideas might perhaps have been more cheerfull. There is but little to eat in the woods in the middle of November, and ready cooked hares and partridges are not likely to fall into one's mouth! Towards the evening it appeared to me that my stomach was ten feet deep.

Now I began to consider it high time to think of eating at any rate. If nothing comes, I will go to the house. It is no luxury to sleep in a sugar cabin, which means to roast on one side and freeze on the other, besides nothing cools the fire like an empty stomach. Ah you d—d D.... if I had you what a *steak* I would cut out of you!!

While I was meditating on the means of procuring provisions before the night, I heard a voice at a distance which reached me through the trees. I jumped up and was on my feet as if set in motion by springs. I ran out of the shanty, but, of course, could see nothing. "Fool, said I, that voice is six or seven acres distant, and you imagine that you can see from whom it comes." I returned to my shanty without having made up my mind whether I should answer. It was probable that they were looking for me to supply me with something to eat ; my father having most certainly thought of the most needful. On the other hand it was also possible that it might be D . . . or some other ferret of his sort hunting after me ! If such was the case, I ought not to remain in the cabin where they would most certainly find me. I went out and hid myself behind the heap of bushes which I had piled up in the morning. From my hiding place, I looked about through the woods and fancied that I heard two men speaking. This simple fact caused me to reflect and to ask of myself how it was that my father had entrusted another man with our secret ? The voices approaching I slipped under the branches, and waited. After a few minutes, I distinctly heard an unknown voice speaking of me.

Where the devil has he gone to, said the voice. We have opened many a sugar shanty and not a trace of a human being. He must however. . . . Oh ! oh ! here is another cabin. Let us examine it. I was hardly 50 feet distant from the cabin ; I could hear distinctly but see nothing. Having opened the door, the same voice said : "Nothing here either." But suddenly I heard my father's voice saying to the other : Ah ! ah ! there has been a fire here, the ashes are hot, he cannot be far from this spot. They both left the cabin and my father said : he is certainly not far off, here is a man's track, quite fresh. As he spoke the last words I sprung up suddenly, scattering about me the branches which covered me and walked up to them.

—A fine nest for a patriot, said my father, who carried a small trunk under his arm. I suppose that the patriot would willingly eat an englishman by this time.

—I would willingly eat three, answered I . . . I am as hungry as hell.

—We have been looking after you for more than two hours.— You have gone very far !

—Since I must hide, it is as good to do it well at once.

—Here do not let us talk, but eat, replied my father, opening the valise which displayed to my sight a magnificent piece of pork with six inches of fat, with bread and a bottle of the *comforter*. The table was soon laid out and the dinner soon swallowed. While I was devouring instead of eating, my father said :

—I assure you that I have fixed that brute of D . . . last night.

—I know it, I have heard it all.

—What, you were not gone !

—I stood at the gable end door, I could see him full in the face, and could hear everything.

—I frankly own that I cannot comprehend how I managed to master myself, and not twist his neck off. I fancied I could have twisted it like that of a chicken.

.. I was really anxious, for you have not been very prudent. You have said

things which might well be turned against you. It is already bad enough that one should be in trouble !

—True, true ; but how can a man keep cool when a rascal of that sort is trying to make one commit himself ! I have heard at noon that several patriots have already been arrested. I believe that you are better here than in their clutches. It appears that many threats of burning the property have been proffered ; it would not surprise me to see many english bonfires very soon.

—Provided that they do not begin with our place.

—Well, if they begin with us, we shall have to endure it. But now I think it would be perhaps as well to be on our guard. A bonfire is very soon set alight.

—It is prudent to be on the alert, father, but it is far more necessary to be prudent in what we say, and you was far from being so last night ! Do but think... if you were arrested, whilst I cannot show myself... where would you be, and what would become of the family ?

—Do not fear, I will take care in future, and will not get into a passion. Ah ! D... you rascal you...

—There, do you see, if you saw that scoundrel pass this way, you would cut him to pieces.

—Yes, that is certain ; but in the village, or at home, I will be prudent, and keep my temper, or if not it will only be inwardly. Do not be uneasy.

Do you know that you have chosen the best corner and nook for your hiding place. You can see at a good distance off ; in two bounds you can tumble down the hill and get sufficiently far off to laugh at a ball ; you have made a nest of bushes requiring a good dog to find you out ; you are as comfortable as circumstances will permit. In future we will not let you starve. You have provisions for three days. I cannot come too often, it would raise suspicion.

—We will return and Baptiste will fetch you to night blankets and an axe so that you may work at something and keep yourself warm, instead of standing idle before the fire. You shall probably have time to lay in a good store for the winter, so amuse yourself, keep a good look out, and think of your *sweethearts*.

A propos I might as well send you a gun also. You might kill here and there a partridge or a hare for your dessert.

—Farewell ! father, said I, extending my hand, if anything extraordinary should happen let me know.

I found myself alone once more, and in spite of myself had to revert to my thoughts. About nine o'clock as near as I could judge, a song struck my ear through the woods. As it could proceed from no one but Baptiste, I advanced in the direction of the voice, and took a part of his load. He had brought with him a buffalo robe, a pillow, a fowling piece, an axe, a pipe and tobacco, bread, some linen and clothes ; in short he carried the load of a man and a half. He informed me of the arrest of some friends, the treatment which they had to endure from the volunteers, and the threats of burning the houses of the patriots.

—Do try, Baptiste, to cause some of them to pass this way ; they shall pay for the others, I'll warrant. We then bid one another good night and he left me to the solitude of the forest.

I had often heard of the charms of the forest, of a rural life, of the happiness of loneliness ; I had even read some fine passages on that subject ; but I invite all those who write such nonsense to try the life in the woods, with a sugar shanty for a lodging, at the later end of a Canadian autumn, I am confident that they will quickly be cured of the poetry of the majestic forest and of the solitude which it affords.

I remained four days alone, and then I received a visit from my father. His house had been searched, and the seekers appeared to believe that I was not far off. More than two hundred prisoners had already been arrested, and those who were dragged in jail by the volunteers were literally treated with greater brutality than dogs.

—I shall have to remain here for a long time yet, said I to my father.

—That is very likely. But do not be disheartened. If we find no means of keeping you out of prison, well, you will go to the United States. I will return in eight days. I am so closely watched that I must keep within doors. You will know me when I come again by three knocks struck against the trees at equal intervals, repeated from time to time. Farewell.

These eight days appeared to me as long as six weeks, although I chopped almost enough of wood to winter a whole family. Nothing could disturb me as my conversation was purely inwardly.

On the eighth day I began to listen attentively as soon as it was dusk ; but in spite of my attention nothing could be heard. About nine I returned to my cabin tolerably disheartened. I knew that nothing would have prevented my father, unless some thing had happened, to come at the appointed time, or to send some one else in his place. That delay meant either imprisonment or severe illness without any doubt. I did not close my eyes during the whole of that night. The next morning I had not the courage to set to work. I had the presentiment of a misfortune. At twelve nobody had come, I was feverish with anxiety, and I had thoughts of risking everything to find out whether any thing unusual had happened at home. Between four and five no one had appeared. I instinctively directed my steps towards the belt of the forest which led to a hill from whose summit the country around could be seen as far as one league around. The stars were shining when I arrived there, but to my horror I saw before me, three buildings on fire at a pretty great distance from one another. It could not possibly be the effect of mere accidents. The government had then commenced to use severity, and not content with ordinary justice was creating one to suit the purposes, passions and hatred of our enemies.

The infliction of such a penalty was as stupid as it was mischievous. When the proprietors were already confined in gaol, to be tried by exceptional tribunals, it was an atrocious barbarity to deprive their families of their sole asylum. Such atrocities were perpetrated at the time of the severe winters of Canada ! To hold the wives and children responsible for the father's guilt, was no longer a punishment, but a vengeance. Such outrages were unworthy of a great nation. National hatred, local party rivalries, had a greater share in these atrocities than any other motive. The country at that time was governed by the faction at whose head was

placed the Attorney General Ogden, and that faction had no other object in view than that of oppressing by every possible means, under the pretence of punishing all that was Canadian. The repression was out of all proportion with the fault.

Twelve executions, and in less than fourteen months more than 400 buildings burnt to the ground by order of the authorities, besides the illegal sentences of the Courts-Martial, afford a sufficient ground for appreciating to its full value the rampant adulation of those who dared to tell England : "Your government is just."

The British troops are compelled to retreat at St. Denis, owing to the inconceivable stupidity of their Colonel. Twelve days after they return to the attack, when resistance had entirely ceased, and they burn one quarter of the village ! Upon whose information ? On that of the traitors of the place who thus avenged their personal wrongs by pointing out the properties to be destroyed by fire. To destroy by fire in the heat of the battle is easily conceivable, it is often required by circumstances, permitted by the laws of war ; the enemy must be dislodged, the positions which he might retake must be destroyed. But to turn back for the sake of burning a few houses in cool blood, because we have been beaten, is the act of brigands : that is a cowardly action which the sole pressure, probably, of provincial hatred could induce a British army to commit. However, I know that the British Officers have often deplored the excesses which they were compelled to commit ; I know that they were ashamed to serve with the volunteers, on account of their bragging and brutality towards women and children, and of the pains which they took of sheltering themselves behind the troops when they could do so. A great number of the fires were caused by the delations of the rabble in the large villages, for the sake of plunder. Many innocent men were punished owing to the personal hatred of the whole class of traitors to whom the government gave importance to, and despised at the same time, in order to obtain the greatest possible number of delations.

That destruction of property was so odious, that even in 1847 it was understood that the persons who had been wantonly ruined and for the only pleasure of doing harm should be indemnified. The Draper ministry proposed a bill of indemnity, but as all those who had been condemned by Court-Martial, a court which had been declared illegal even in England, were denied the benefit of the law, the liberal party opposed Mr. Draper's bill, who fearing a defeat, abandoned the measure.

In 1849, the liberal party having returned to power, took up Mr. Draper's bill. The elections in 1848 had in almost every County turned upon the indemnity bill. The country demanded it, and the liberal party strongly upbraided Mr. Draper and his colleagues for *having made exceptions*. When Mr. Lafontaine rose to power, the country thought that justice would be done, and the unfortunate persons who had been ruined hoped for better days.

After ten months of expectation, ten months of smiles and promises from the *liberal* government ; after numerous public meetings in which the Draper ministry was censured without mercy by the liberal party for the exceptions contained in his bill,—quite a natural thing as it was said, it was a tory ministry which could



entertain no sympathy for the Canadians,—the session is opened, and the indemnity bill is among the first introduced. The battle is engaged.

Mr. Blake, the Attorney general at the time, delivers a magnificent speech of five hours in support of the measure ; he rails with the most terrible force at the tories ; he confounds Sir Allan McNab with his eloquence, crushes him under his sarcasms ; he maintains before the house of Parliament that the real rebels against the laws and authority are the tories and not the victims of 1837. . . . . then, suddenly, the whole of that eloquence is nothing more than a spent ball, a bomb-shell exploded in the air. The tory faction which had exhausted its rage upon a man of straw burnt in the streets, *frightens* at last Mr. Lafontaine ; Mr. Boulton forces the ministry to adopt his amendments previously rejected, and the whole ends in a measure *less liberal* than that proposed by the Draper ministry.

The *liberal* ministry had increased the number of exceptions made by the tory ministry, instead of reducing them. These liberals who were thought to sympathise so deeply with the sufferings of their own countrymen ruined without mercy, were giving less than Mr. Draper. They had obliged him to withdraw his measure, because he did not give enough, and they gave much less still ! The liberal party had opposed Mr. Draper's bill on the ground that it sanctioned in point of fact by its exceptions, the decisions of the Courts-Martial, and the law voted by the LIBERAL party did exactly the same thing !! And it went even farther, since it excepted from the benefit of the law, those who had been transported to Bermuda. Mr. Draper's bill contained no such exception !! After so many fine speeches at the hustings, after so many meetings in which the Draper ministry had been denounced with such energy, after so many protestations and promises, they granted to the country a bill which caused it to regret that of the Draper ministry ! Vapouring and promises before they became ministers, weakness and incapacity when arrived into port ! How exactly all the *liberal* ministries of Canada have copied one another !!

But would the mass of those *entitled* to an indemnity be at least compensated with justice ? Would they be honestly paid ? That was what the country was looking for, that was what it had the right to expect from a *liberal* ministry so strong in its attacks against the Draper ministry which they called tory ! Well, there again, the interested parties were doomed to a cruel and bitter disappointment. Not only did the law make odious distinctions, but in the mode of payment, it was guilty of an infamy, which *we*, the interested parties have refused to believe up to the very last moment. Instead of enacting that the persons who had been maliciously and stupidly ruined should be paid *in toto*, it contained this disposition, so utterly devoid of the most simple common sense, that the interested parties should be paid with debentures !!

What could be the effects of this foolish enactment ?

A very striking example in point was notwithstanding before their eyes. The debentures issued in aid of the sufferers by the Quebec fire became due at comparatively short terms, and were selling at 20 per cent discount. Debentures at one year's date had been issued in 1848, to supply the immediate wants of the government, and these debentures were selling at 5 per cent discount. But they

enacted that the victims of the volunteers' brutality should be paid in debentures at 20 years date, bearing an interest of six per cent !! The liberals, *our friends, our protectors*, had refused Mr. Draper's bill for the purpose only of providing us with one which was *much worse still*.

To-day oblivion has passed over all these events ! To-day the men who betrayed us then, fill the highest offices in the country, live upon a past which they consider as very glorious and we, as infamous. Who has profited by that famous indemnity, about which so much has been said ? Was it those for the benefit of whom it was intended ? Not in the least ; so far as the greatest number of them is concerned ! Those who have derived any profit from it were the speculators, the usurers ; those who wherever there is a penny to be made out of the poor, are always ready to take it, not by actual robbing, I admit, but by obtaining it by means of falsehoods, of false representations as to its real value, by taking possession of it by false pretences ; by those in fact so justly called *the eaters of christians*.

DEBENTURES PAYABLE AT TWENTY YEARS DATE !!! And nearly all those who were to be indemnified were *poor individuals* who were waiting for that money to build a cottage, or even for the purpose of obtaining for themselves and families the bread so long wanted ! The great majority of the claims were under fifty pounds ! That amount represented at the utmost an income of three pounds. Was there the slightest appearance of common sense in pretending that the holders would not sell their debentures and be satisfied to draw the interest from the government ? Was it worth one's while to go out of the way to look after 6, 9 or 12 dollars of interest ? What amount of relief could such a small amount afford to a family ? At that time they had the impudence to pretend to benefit the poor, and by that very system they were most positively injuring them !

He who was entitled to £500 received an interest of £30 from the government. Such an amount was at least an appreciable income ; and a debenture of £500 had a realizing value, representing nearly its nominal worth. There was a pretty good chance of selling it at par, or at a small discount, because it was worth while purchasing, or *be kept on hand if we could not obtain a fair price*. But a debenture of \$100, \$50. What was its worth ? Hardly 50 per cent. below its nominal value ! All that was said at the time, it was repeated over and over again by the members and the papers of the opposition. They were not listened to, and they carried the measure, being as deaf to the dictates of common sense, as to their sworn pledges, since, after denouncing so strongly the Draper ministry, they gave us a worse law than his !!! The consequence of the pusillanimity of 49 was that a great number of debentures, *those of the poor*, were sold at a discount of 70 per cent ! Those who really were in want of an indemnity, received nothing or nearly so ; those who were benefitted by the measure were precisely those for whom it was not intended ! !

The 100,000 pounds voted then have hardly produced 30,000 pounds for the relief of the victims, but the *eaters of christians* made a fortune ! The government therefore actually pays about 20 per cent. on the sums which he has in reality paid to the victims of 37 and 38. For the 6000 pounds of interest which are

actually paid by government to the actual holders of the debentures represent, *as far as concerns the victims of the rebellion*, only the 30,000 pounds which the victims have received. Under the pretence of indemnifying the sufferers, they had presented the speculators on the poor victim's bread with a handsome donation of about 60,000 pounds.

Such is the manner in which common sense, duty, good faith, justice and the sufferers have been outraged ! !

All the ministerial papers and the opposition itself, admitted at the time that the government could have carried a complete and just measure. . But they attempted to flatter the tory party by yielding something to pacify its anger. It was for that purpose that the Bermuda exiles were excepted and that exception, led to that still more odious one of paying Dr. Nelson, though a Bermuda exile himself, to reward him for his base slanders against Mr. Papineau and giving nothing to the others. It is for that reason that they have sanctioned the decisions of the Courts-Martial ! And what was the end of all that weakness, that absolute want of energy and of calculation ? The burning of the House of Parliament *because they had given even too much ! !*

This is what they gained by flattering their enemies, by sacrificing duty to party interests.

If any body pretends that such was not the object of the ministry at that time, it is easy to be convinced of the truth of the accusation which I bring forward against them, "that of having attempted to flatter the tories" by perusing the speech delivered by Mr. Gagy, in the House, on the 27th of February, 1849, of which I here give an extract :

" The ministers by adopting this amendment (that of Mr. Boulton)—at least such as I understand it,—have declared that they accepted the decisions of the Court-Martial *as good and valid*. With such a decision, it is evident that the ministry has advanced *one* step, I will even say *twenty* steps towards us ; that it has tried *in fact to bring about a reconciliation* with the tories, by its declaration that all those who had been condemned by the Court-Martial should have no share of the indemnity granted by the House. Does that not imply that those who were sentenced by the Court-Martial were guilty ? and now, inasmuch as these Courts-Martial had in our eyes a right of jurisdiction in this matter, we must support the ministry who admits the truth of this opinion.

" Why is it that the ministry did not oppose the amendment to its resolutions brought forward by the Hon. member for the County of Norfolk, (Mr. Boulton), that amendment by which he blames, he *dishonours* men who have sacrificed their own selves, who have dedicated themselves to the welfare and to the happiness of their countrymen ?

" THE TIME IS NEAR AT HAND WHEN YOUR FELLOW CITIZENS WILL CAUSE YOU TO BLUSH WITH SHAME AT THE REMEMBRANCE OF SUCH BASENESS !

" I cannot be reproached with having sacrificed any one on this occasion ; it will be perceived that I am consistent with my principles. But there are men who can be reproached with having *consented to sacrifice* those among their countrymen who have taken a part in the rebellion, it is true, but who have atoned for their guilty conduct, their imprudent acts, by a long exile and by confiscations which have brought misery and sorrow to their families.

" Had I had anything to do in this matter, I would have preferred on this day to share in their shame than to register here, as you do, a vote which will in fact

*render valid the judgments of the exceptional courts which has condemned them. I am happy to say that their condemnation by this House is an act for which I am in no way responsible ! It is an act of which the ministers have consented to be responsible for ! It is therefore an act which brings me nearer to them, or rather which brings them far nearer to us ! I will therefore vote for the ministry, because by their vote, they agree with us in admitting that the Courts-Martial were lawfully constituted !"*

Here was then a tory of old standing who complimented the liberal ministry of that time, for sacrificing the rights of his countrymen ! Who is happy himself to see that the ministers are *making advances* to the tories, and who, as he says, cannot refuse to vote most heartily with the ministry who has the baseness to sacrifice the rights of the Canadians !

That lesson was not even understood !

When we used to see the ministry receiving lessons of liberalism from Mr. Papineau, it could be a matter of surprise to no one, each stood on his own ground. But to see a *liberal* ministry receiving lessons of liberalism from Mr. Gagy !! made us realize in the country, how much the liberals were fallen, how much they renounced the past. When Belzebub commended the good angels it became evident that their wings had been clipped ! The fact was that the liberals were giving the kiss of peace to the tories in Mr. Gagy's person ! ' He most assuredly did not approve of what Mr. Papineau wanted ! That kiss of peace brought forth its fruits a short time after, when the liberals allied themselves to Sir Allan McNab, the idol of the incendiaries of 49 !!

Since that period we have ever seen the liberals constantly leaning toward toryism, and abandon more and more the traditions which in former days had formed the basis of their political creed. Formerly the distinctive quality of our political men was their personal disinterestedness ; now egotism, ambition, the necessity of remaining a minister are such that falsehood, corruption and on a celebrated occasion, the mockery of the oath of office, have become the best means of holding office. Formerly honour was the main spring of our men in office ; at present it is party interest, an interest which resolves itself invariably in the sordid cupidity of its members.

Formerly it was necessary, in order to become the political leader of the people of Lower-Canada, to be possessed of the highest moral and intellectual qualities ; to-day, to remain a minister, we are truly inclined to believe that one must have never possessed any of these qualifications, and even without any of them, people fancy themselves still made of the same materials out of which ministries are built.

I hope that my readers will forgive this digression for the sake of the importance of the subject.

The reader will remember that I have left off my narrative at the moment when I could see from the outskirts of the forest the burning of several buildings round the country.

I returned to my cabin irresolute and completely discouraged. That spirit of revenge foreboded nothing good for myself. Nothing then was left for me but to

leave for the United-States, for I could not make up my mind to winter in the forest ; I had enough of the language of trees !

I was reflecting since a long time on my situation, when I heard the knocks promised. I ran to the place from whence they proceeded, and in a few minutes after found myself face to face with one of my friends.

—Where is my father, inquired I ?

—He sends me in his place. He is so closely watched, that he was informed to-day that his property would be burnt if he did not reveal your hiding place. That threat has fired his temper. He told the colonel that he was not the man who would deliver up his own child, even if he knew his place of abode, and that if they chose to burn he would beg half an hour's notice. The colonel considered that reply as an insult. Your father told him that all the colonels in the world would never force him to dishonour his name, thereupon the colonel replied that he would send down men to burn his place to-morrow.

Your father bids me to tell you to set out for the States. You have enough of money with you ; if his property is destroyed, he says that he can rebuild it with his savings and requests that you be not anxious on his account.

—My brave father ! I will not allow them to ruin you in that manner, I replied. Let us away at once, I return with you.

—But you shall be arrested. . . . .

—Certainly. But since I alone have been guilty of folly, I will not allow my father to suffer the consequences, I will deliver myself up.

I started in consequence, in spite of all the remonstrances of my friend, and arrived at the house that night at half past eleven o'clock.

—You here, Félix ! and wherefore come you ?

—Father, I could never forgive myself for being the cause of your property being burnt down. I drew the wine, and I must drink it. To see you ruined at your age ! Ah ! I will never permit it. The moment they govern the country like savages, a man of honour can no longer remain in concealment. You have never approved of the movement, therefore it is unjust that the punishment should fall upon you.

—Félix, houses and barns can be rebuilt, but a man's life, when once taken, all is over ! A damage can be repaired, but a head falls for ever. Spare your father one of the greatest afflictions which can fall to his lot in his old age. It is yet time, save thyself and cross the frontiers.

—Father, I run no risk by giving myself up, and come what may, I will get off. I will first save your property, and then find the means of saving myself. Fear nothing for me, I will be as safe in prison as if I were in the United-States. The English have beaten us, but I will be revenged on them without exposing my life. I have always said that a Canadian was cleverer than an Englishman, and I am determined to prove it. I will therefore go to gaol, but will come out of it you may be sure ; and I will laugh at them to their very faces over the bargain, without being discovered by any of them.

My father looked at me fixedly to see if I was really in my senses, and replied :

—Hark ye, Félix, what is the use of that nonsense ? the time for laughing is

past when one's head is in jeopardy. After all you have done you cannot expect a pardon . . .

—And I have made up my mind not to sue for pardon either. I have a sure way of saving myself without injuring any body, and I shall be saved. If I cross over to the United-States your property is destroyed to-morrow; if I stay it is safe and I will get off with a few months of imprisonment; there can be no hesitation and I will surrender. All I ask of you is to keep yourself perfectly easy on my account, for my plan is infallible.

—Tell me at least what is your plan.

—No, that would spoil every thing. And now what is said, is said and as an honest man has but one word, I will stick to it. I remain here and give myself up. In this way I will be back with you sooner than if I went to the United-States.

I spoke with such assurance that my father half convinced, replied :

—I do not understand you; but since you are so sure of success I will not insist any longer. Only, remember, that it is better for a man to lose his head than his honour.

I apprehended his idea and replied :

—Fear nothing on that score; on your honour and mine I swear that I will not put you to shame.

And now let us go to bed; it is as well to pass the night in bed as at the guard house. Ah! I will sleep better here than in the woods. Nothing eases the mind like a settled and final decision.

I really did sleep as soundly as I did before the day on which Côte gave me my mission. Besides, after sleeping during the cold nights of autumn before the fire of a sugar shanty, wrapped up in a buffalo robe, with a few disjointed boards for a bed, and after leading that life during a fortnight, it is extraordinary how comfortable we find a bed.

It was rather late when my father awoke me. He tried for the last time to persuade me that I could yet make my escape, that my plans might perhaps fail through some unforeseen circumstances; that I was exchanging the certain for the uncertain; that when once in prison I would no longer be able to control the events at my will; that I possibly might not be able to execute the plan which I had adopted. . . . . But I told him that I was resolved, that my plan depended on me alone, that nothing could make it fail but my own want of energy, and that on that score I had no risk to encounter.

Well, said he, do as you wish, but be prudent and cautious.

We partook of our breakfast rather quietly, my father a little anxious, and I as calm and composed as if I was assisting at a marriage contract.

About ten o'clock, I put together some wearing apparel, and informed my father that I was going to the village.

—I will drive you there, said he. I know the colonel, and who knows but that he may perhaps be kindly disposed. Yet I do think that he dislikes you very much.

One hour after we arrived at the village of St. Johns. We called upon the Colonel to whom I said as soon as I saw him : " I have sinned against the govern-

ment. I acknowledge my fault and deliver myself up into your hands. Do with me as you please."

The Colonel was a friend to my father, but at that unfortunate period, political reasons or necessities had a great deal more weight than personal friendship.

The Colonel did not speak to me, but my hands were tied behind my back. I have not the slightest doubt but that he might have released me if he had chosen. He certainly possessed the confidence of the government, and it is possible that the latter would not have disowned him, if he had set me at liberty, after due examination. But I was known long before our rising as a wrong headed fellow and a refractory spirit who was in need of a good lesson.

When my father saw me thus tied up, he said :

—Let me tell you, said he, that matters begin to look very ugly. They hate you more than I thought. It would have been much better for you to have crossed to the other side of the lines. All of you young men, are wrong in not listening to those who have more experience than yourselves. I feel my heart shrinking as if a great misfortune was to befall me.

Do not be uneasy, I replied. When once into gaol, I know what I have to do, and I shall return to you, perhaps quicker than you imagine.

—Please to God, it may be so.

He then gave me some advice, and left me to return home and console the family.

I slept at St. Johns on that night. I did not sleep there as well as on the previous night, for one cannot sleep very well with hands tied behind the back and the floor for a bed. The next day no one interrogated me, and at once I was sent by railway to Montreal with some other prisoners, escorted by a picket of volunteers. We arrived at four o'clock, and were conducted towards the gaol. The streets were in an awful state, our feet were covered with liquid mud. As soon as the rabble saw the escort with prisoners, they formed into groups and threw stones and mud at us. The insults and yells of that crowd were dreadful. These rascals so cowardly before men able to stand before them, were now brutal and daring before men who could not defend themselves. The volunteers were formed in two lines on each side of our little band, and had to push back the crowd which did not spare them the stones and mud more than they did to us, for the missiles were thrown at all hazards and they obtained their full share of them.

At five we at last arrived before the walls of the gaol. The crowd redoubled its yells and projectiles, and we entered the court in all haste. Some of the prisoners were literally so covered with mud from head to foot as to make it very difficult to recognize them.

When we arrived at the gaol our names were entered in a register, and I was conducted to the fourth story, in that part called the chapel. It forms that elevation over the roof, which is still to be seen over the north-east wing of the gaol. At that time it was nothing but a vast garret, without any partitions, where I met with a great number of my friends.

I candidly confess that when I crossed the threshold of the prison that moment was a hard one for me. It is useless for me to say that I knew but the name of a gaol

and that I had not the slightest idea of the life within its precincts. When I found myself in those dark passages, with a man who conducted me, carrying a bunch of large keys ; when I saw those walls which defied violence, those cells occupied by friendly faces ; the narrow space in which they were confined ; the dismal appearance of the building and no less lugubrious air of the gaolers, I realized that guilty or not, a man could not be tranquil in such a place unless he was one of those brutish natures which Providence sends us now and then, and throws in the midst of society in order to inspire it with the horror of crime.

I was conducted as I have said to the fourth story where I met with several friends and acquaintances. I did not find the expression of their countenances in harmony with the horror with which their terrible lodging inspired me. The expression of nearly the whole of them was that of resignation, some even had lost nothing of their gaiety. Their appearance contrasted so much with my horror that I experienced a painful surprise, and that I answered with marked slowness to the questions addressed to me from all sides.

All these people, some of whom were reserved to such a terrible vengeance, were bidding me welcome with eagerness, as if the addition of one companion could add any comfort to the general misfortune. Man is made thus ; a new victim is the cause of tears to those outside and of smiles to those within.

More than 500 prisoners were confined when I was imprisoned. All had passed through the same oppression of the heart under which I was then laboring, and several of them said : “ Oh bah ! you will do like us, you will make up your mind to it also ; after all they will not hang us all ! Well, we are prepared for the worst, but each of us hopes that the bad number will not fall to his lot. In two days you will be like us, resolved to meet death with courage if it comes, preserving at the same time the hope of escaping.

I perceived however that several of the prisoners looked upon the future with gloomy forebodings, and that the calmness of some of them was only due more to their belief in the absence of proofs against them than to their hopes in the indulgence of their judges. Those who knew that the proofs of their participation in the rebellion could be easily obtained were far from being hopeful, and some of the officials who regularly visited the prison used to insinuate that those who would give information, would be treated with indulgence, whilst the guilty would be treated with severity.

Considerable offers were even made, but no traitors could be found, and all the crown evidence came from outside.

On the 19th of December, the day appointed for the execution of Cardinal and Duquet arrived. Although we were all prepared for that tragical event, its effect was terrible amongst us. The awful reality was there before our eyes. Two esteemed friends were torn from us to satisfy party vengeance, for it was absurd to say that our foolish rising had in the least endangered the British domination. Each of us individually felt struck in the same degree as if we had been brothers by blood and not merely so by a community of ideas and opinions.

Two men irreproachable in their personal conduct, universally esteemed, having



been led astray rather than guilty, were to suffer the penalty of real criminals, of thieves, of assassins.

England, in all its power, was awarding the punishment of death, to men at the worst guilty, of a simple riot, and treating like brigands men who, the riots of 38 excepted, had never failed. The modern idea of the inviolability of the human life in political offences, (murder excepted,) could not find its way in the minds of our enemies, prejudiced as they were by unreasonable fears, out of proportion with the dangers which they had encountered. Of course, I speak of the leaders of the government at that time, and of the influential men of the tory party who were aiming at nothing but vengeance, and who believed, to a certain extent that they beheaded a whole nation by executing a few individuals.

There is so little of *real criminality* in an attempt at rebellion, that we have seen the English government obliged since that epoch to rehabilitate its victims under the pressure of public opinion, and to accept for its principal advisers, the very men who would have been hanged without mercy if they could have been arrested. Executions for purely political purposes are therefore, in whatever light we view them, real murders, unjustifiable cruelties, since the government who is guilty of them is MORE DISHONoured THAN ITS VICTIMS. Who is the man who does not to-day look upon Cardinal, Duquet, de Lorimier, Henderlang, Narbonne, Nicolas, Daunais, Hamelin, Robert, Decoigne and the two Sanguinets as victims of party hatred, like martyrs in fact, since they have sacrificed their lives to their convictions.

Shall not the real author of these murders, Attorney general Ogden be execrated by the Canadian public, while monuments of sympathy and of national sorrow shall be dedicated to his victims ?

When our two friends were taken from our midst to accomplish their sacrifice, the interior of the prison offered a most solemn scene. The dismal and hollow sound of the trap door of the scaffold when it dropped, resounded in our hearts as if each of us had been struck in his own existence. We all looked upon that execution as the forerunner of what was perhaps in store for us, and it was generally believed in the prison that the number of executions would be considerable.

I was thinking since some time of executing the plan which I had formed and which I had not revealed to my father.

After the execution of Cardinal and Duquet, I saw clearly that I would share the same fate ; for I was certain that heavier charges could be proved against me than had been proved against them. Seeing that the sentence had been so soon executed, I became aware that I could not escape but by executing my plan, and I consulted on that subject one of my companions, named B  chard : he was an old farmer of L'Acadie, of about fifty years of age, of the highest respectability and upon whose discretion I could rely with full confidence.

On the evening of the execution, being alone with him, while the prisoners were walking about silently, speaking in whispers, for the murder of our friends had struck us with stupefaction, I said to him :

—I believe, my dear B  chard, that we have a fair chance of following our poor friends, and go by the same road.

—I frankly admit that such is my opinion also. The government is revenging itself, and since it is determined upon it, it will take as complete a vengeance as possible. I really do not know what demon conducts the affairs in these times.

—You have a better chance of escaping than me, you have not sworn in 3000 men, and especially you have not told your secrets to every body.

—True, said Béchard, but one may have smaller chances than you and still have a very fair one of being hanged.

—You think then that it is all over with me ?

—To tell you the truth,—we are men and able to bear it,—I am surprized that they did not begin with you.

—The devil, you are not consolatory !

It is better to believe the worst, and come back to the better, than to flatter one's self foolishly and finally fall into the worst.

—True, and since the execution of our two friends, I am confident that it is all over with me. That makes me see all in black, do you see ! But there might be one way . . . . .

—A way to do what ?

—To save my head.

—Hum ! I doubt it.

—Tell me, Béchard, you are much older than I, have you ever heard that a madman had ever been hanged ?

—No, never ; but we are not mad, I hope.

—Certainly not, but we can pretend to be so.

—Are you raving, exclaimed Béchard in utter amazement, pretend to be mad ! Who has ever heard of such an idea ? You cannot voluntarily lose your senses more than you can regain them when lost. In short, you can no more make a fool out of a wise man, than a wise man out of a fool ! Pretend to be insane ! Ah ! it is not as easy as you suppose. For half an hour it may pass, but for weeks, for months ! Bah ! it is impossible. No man can play such a part. How can you help laughing only, for that is the characteristic sign of insanity. If you forget for once to keep up a serious countenance, you are lost ! Oh ! you may give it up ! The very idea is perfect madness.

—My dear fellow, I will personate insanity, and will practice every possible act of extravagance, and will never laugh. Hear me ! I am done for (*flambe*) as we say in good Canadian parlance. They cannot hang me twice for discovering my trick, if they do find it out. Therefore I will run the risk. I have thought of it for a long time, and I believe that when a good way of saving one's life is found, it is worth one's while to try it. You can therefore be prepared to see me raving mad by to-morrow.

—I certainly do not wish to oppose your idea, replied Béchard, but I have no confidence in your attempt. If you succeed so much the better, for I consider that you save your head. But I cannot believe that you will remain several months without laughing ! At all events when you feel that you are about to give way to laughter, think of the rope, perhaps that will have the effect of rendering you quite serious.

—Well then, at nine to-morrow I will be insane, and really so, of that you may be sure of, and possibly I may be more insane than a real madman! But mind you, take care of yourself and do not betray me! You at least must look as if you really thought me mad!

—As far as that goes, make your mind easy. The moment the thing is understood, I will aid you as much as I can; for, frankly, you have no other means of saving yourself but that one.

The next morning about nine, while speaking with a few prisoners, I uttered a shrill cry, then fell at full length upon the floor, and imitated the motions and contortions of a person in a fit of epilepsy. I struck my head against the floor, shook convulsively, gnashed my teeth at the risk of dislocating my jaw bones, in short I firmly established the belief that I had fallen in an epileptic fit. The emotion of my two hundred companions was great. As we all slept on the floor nobody had the idea of putting me on a bed, and they left me for some time struggling in convulsions. They had formed a ring around me, and I could hear them discussing the incident.—But nobody knew that he fell into fits!—He fell from his height backward!—He must have hurt himself!—Have you heard the cry he uttered? I was almost afraid of it.—Poor fellow, it is a pity, for he has a very good head.—Bah! it is not such a great pity, if he is to meet with the same fate as the others!—We must at least do something for him, said another. The idea struck them to wash my face with salt water. At that moment, I did not think of the effect that it would produce. I let them have their own way, though I struggled a little less than I had done before.

But when they applied the salt water over my forehead with a cloth,—and the application was not made drop by drop,—the water was pouring,—I suddenly felt the same sensation as if a cat's claws were tearing my eyes out. The salt water was taking effect. The others were continuing their application with the best intentions in the world, my eyes were on fire, and I could not show symptoms of feeling any pain. They continued for sometime their remedy and my eyes were smarting horribly. I was obliged to endure my pains with patience under the penalty of betraying myself, and I resolved to try some other means the next time.

At last, I pretended to be thoroughly worn out, my limbs appeared more flexible, and I began to rub my eyes as if recovering my senses. I had found the time very long, with my eyes full of salt water.

I remained for a good hour perfectly calm, as if recovering my strength by degrees, but in reality to gain time to find out by what way I might begin to show my insanity.

Suddenly, I rose, walked majestically backwards and forwards; then suddenly uttering a frightful yell, I cried out with all my might: "Clear the way, here comes the governor;" and I rushed forward at double quick time. I brutally knocked down those who did not get out of the way in time, and in that manner I reached the extremity of the chapel. Arrived there I struck the door with terrible force, then turned back and continued my walk uttering the same yell. But this time, everybody having taken refuge along the walls, I was obliged, to get at them, to cross from side to side, crying out at the same time: "Get out of the

way," in the most furious manner. Those who did not make room quickly, were knocked over without mercy. I made desperate charges at them, and their surprise, or their conviction that I was really insane, prevented their resistance and permitted me to tumble them over with the greatest facility. All the prisoners were staring at me with eyes starting from their sockets, and unable to find out the meaning of what they saw.

I walked up and down the passage five or six times, attacking every one indiscriminately, with such force that the prisoners did not know where to find shelter. I cut all sorts of capers and gambols, I galoped several times up and down the room, neighing all the time like a colt ; immediately after, I started in pursuit of some of the prisoners, and caught hold of one whom I tripped over. Uttering then a savage yell, I attempted to strangle him. He at once cried out for help with all his might. The other prisoners were struck with fear at that moment, and did really believe that I was about to kill him. Several of them laid hold of me, and when I perceived that six or seven men were about to seize me, I permitted them to do so, I let go my man, and allowed them without any resistance to lead me to the other end of the chapel. When they saw that I offered no resistance, they relaxed their hold by degrees. But just at that time when they the least expected it, I violently stretched out my arms, with such suddenness and force, that three of them were thrown to the ground. They were so astonished that they let me go, and before they could again lay hold of me, I sprung backwards and stood on my guard. Two of them attempted to regain their hold of me, I knocked them down with two blows and seeing that the others hesitated, I fell upon them with such fury that they ran off to the right and left. Being master of the field, I gave orders to the effect that nobody should look at me, because the governor was about to dress, and I quietly and slowly resumed my walk.

At that moment one of the turnkeys entered the chapel. I immediately flew at him, crying out " thief," laid hold of him, and made him fly about in all directions. He attempted to defend himself, but with a blow on the shoulder, I threw him down at a distance of ten feet. He got up quite stunned, and rushed at me partly through fear and partly through a sense of his duty, but I caught hold of him by the waist, lifted him and pitched him in the door way. He groaned ! Had it been an ordinary house door, he certainly would have passed through it ; but prison doors are strong, and the poor devil howled piteously. Some of the prisoners remarked : " He will kill him, that's certain." The turnkey ordered the prisoners to tie me up ; but they told him that I was laboring under an attack of furious insanity, that I had already knocked down several of them, that I could thrash ten men through the strength which madness gave me ; that it would be much better to soothe than to irritate me. . . . . in short they said so much that the turnkey became quite cool and said : " Confound that maniac, I really did believe that my last hour was at hand. We cannot keep such an animal here." I ordered at that moment to turn out the *thief*. Seeing them hesitate, I uttered a savage yell, and one of my comrades remarked to the turnkey : " You see very well that he is mad, do as he desires, or he will be the death of us." The turnkey made up his mind to be turned out, as soon as the door closed over him, I told the prisoners that I would

reward them generously for turning out that thief. I continued to talk quietly, but so foolishly and ridiculously that my fellow-captives laughed most heartily.

Twelve o'clock having just struck, Béchard offered me to dine with him. I accepted his offer at once, took his arm, and with marks of the greatest cordiality, I dined with him. I kept myself quiet until four o'clock, when I thought proper to fall into another fit of epilepsy, and to exhibit the most terrible contortions. They attempted to have recourse to salt water, but I had not forgotten how my eyes had been burnt in the morning to allow them to try that game over again. As soon as I saw the cup within my reach, I threw it at twenty feet from me with a slap from my hand, and continued my spasmodic starts, striking at the same time my head against the floor with such force that those present were struck with horror. Five or six of them attempted to hold me, but I sent them to the right and left, either with my arms or feet with such force as to astonish them. One of them returned with salt water, but I was determined not to allow one single drop to touch my face. Instead of a cup they approached with a cloth thoroughly imbibed with the brine. As the individual was approaching me carelessly, I seized hold of the cloth and threw it in his face. The brine having touched his eyes caused him to utter an awful curse. A hearty laugh took possession of all parties present in which I could not help to join, but I soon altered my laugh into a permanent grimace. However as they were all under the impression that the salt and water had been beneficial to me in the morning, they called for more, but the person who attempted to administer the remedy, placed the cup and the cloth into the hands of another, saying : " You go yourself, I have done with him."

One of the prisoners approached me cautiously, in order to throw the brine over my head. As soon as I found him within a fair distance, and at the moment when the cloth was approaching my face, I struck him on the nose most violently, as if in a fit of convulsions. He walked off to stop the bleeding. Seeing that my fit did not cease, they resolved to hold me, in order to prevent me from injuring myself. Several of the prisoners laid hold of my hands, but I squeezed theirs with such force that they yelled out ; some of the others whom I seized by the arm found out that I had literally sent my fingers through their flesh. None of those returned to the charge. I caught another one between my arms, and throwing him over me, I pressed him so tightly that he turned blue in the face : I was breaking his neck. Two men attempted to open my arms, but they could only lift us both from the ground without opening them. I held my left wrist with my right hand, and it was really impossible to open my hand. The one I held had barely the strength to call for help. At last, by another pretended convulsive fit I opened my arms, and he got up exclaiming : " Let him kill himself if he pleases, that cursed madman, I have enough of him. His arms are made of iron !" My fit lasted at least twenty-five minutes. I was in a heavy perspiration. I pretended to be exhausted and allowed my arms to drop gently to the ground. Béchard placed a folded coat under my head and during the space of half an hour I listened to what was said about me.

I perceived that they were all persuaded that my epileptic fits were real, and that nobody had the slightest doubt of my imposition. The most convincing proof in their eyes was the extraordinary strength which I displayed. None of the in-

mates of the prison knew that I was possessed of more strength than the generality of mankind, and they attributed to my attack of epilepsy or insanity what in reality was only due to my muscular strength.

I heard them say about me : “ None but an epileptic or a madman can be as strong as that.”

I became convinced that my stratagem was succeeding admirably. After listening for a length of time, I got up suddenly and pretended to assault the circle around me, but Béchard having come forward to meet me, I thought that it would be better to allow them to believe that some one, at least, had a certain control over me, and I became quite calm. I offered him my hand, bowed to him with reverence, showed him the greatest respect and taking him by the arm I walked about with him. I showed my teeth and fists to all those who attempted to approach us, and they all kept themselves at a respectful distance. I remained quiet and composed until night.

On the following days I continued to have my fits of epilepsy at nine in the morning and at four in the afternoon regularly ; and during the intervals I committed all kinds of imaginable acts of madness.

I used to open the windows, shake the stove pipe, run about the room like a race horse ; I sold by auction farms, houses, and played the turnkeys all sorts of tricks.

The reports of the latter brought up the gaoler to ascertain what was the matter. I offered him my hand quietly, and he stretched out his own, I made his bones crack under the strength of my grasp, and he uttered an exclamation which elicited laughter from all present ; I then assumed such a stupid air that he was convinced that I did not know what I was about. He was a man of six feet in height at least, and rather strongly built. I placed my hands over his shoulders, and staring at him fixedly, I shook him a little, and seeing that he offered no resistance, I seized him by the waist and lifted him at two feet from the floor at arms length. I saw that he too was convinced of my strength. I replaced him on the floor with a polite bow. He then said to the other prisoners : “ It is difficult to keep that man here if his insanity continues. I will let the Sheriff know of it.” He then told them to take care not to irritate me, for, said he : “ he might be terribly dangerous with the strength which he shows ; he has lifted me up like a child.

Five days passed in that way, and on the evening of the fifth, finding myself alone with Béchard, I resumed my usual looks of a man in his senses and said :

—Well, Béchard, do you think that I can play off the maniac well enough ?

I have never seen such an expression of deep surprise on the countenance of a man as that which was depicted on Béchard's features.

—How ! cried he, starting up suddenly, you are not mad ?

—No more so than I was last week ! But do not speak so loud, or you will betray me.

—Oh ! but honestly now ! Is it possible that you are in your senses ?

—But have you really believed that I was mad ?

—Good God, yes ! Fit for Bedlam ! Worse than all the madmen put together.

I have never seen anything to equal it !

—How do you like the way I make them dance ?

—Bécard's eyes were still wide open.

—It is but too true ! said he, for he is in his senses ! But for all that many of the prisoners have wished you to the devil. The gaoler has told me that he could not keep you. But look ye, it is useless, I cannot think that you are not out of your senses !

—But I had told you that I would go mad !

—I know it, good God, but how could I imagine that a man in his senses could imitate the madman in such a manner ? When you became so mad, I believed that the Almighty had punished you for such a thought, and deprived you of your reason. I would have sworn to your madness with my hand in the fire. Now ! really, are you not mad ?

—Certainly not ! All that I do, is preconcerted, all that I say is arranged in my mind ! Ah ! I hit hard, do I not ?

—Damnation ! you maul them most unmercifully. It is that which has convinced me of your madness ! The idea of knocking people over in that manner ! You spare nobody whether friends or not.

—Excepting you, Bécard !

—True, I had not taken any notice of the fact. I thought that being great friends, you recognized me better than the others, that's all. But tell me, how the devil can you help laughing ? For me, I did not laugh, because I was too sorry to see you in such a condition ; but you, when you see them staring at you, and running away like a flock of sheep pursued by a wolf ?

—Ah ! there lies my greatest torture ! But when I feel too much inclined to mirth, I put to myself the question whether I would laugh if I saw myself with the white cap on my head and the rope round my neck ; as soon as that idea has taken hold of my mind, I become furious, and the inclination to laugh disappears completely. Well then, you find that I play the madman well !

—Oh ! yes, as well as if you had never done anything else in your life time. You may continue ! Your chances are good. If I could do as much, I would give all my lands.

—But now, Bécard, that you know all, take care of yourself. Be on your guard, for the least thing can cause me to be discovered.

—Oh ! make your mind easy on that score, I will help you as much as I can.

The next day, Dr. Arnoldi, senior, made his appearance in the chapel of the prison. It was on the sixth day of my madness. He examined me attentively, felt my pulse and looked into my eyes ; but I took care to remain quiet. He asked me several questions, but I did not answer. He questioned the prisoners who related the details of my mad pranks. I kept my eyes fastened upon him, but did not utter one single word. He called one of the gaolers named Lamirante, told him that he would send me some medicine, and gave him instructions to make me take it. After that he asked me one other question to which I did not answer, but continued to look at him fixedly. The old man appeared to understand nothing at all about the matter.

About two hours afterwards, Lamirante came in with a large bowl containing

one pint at least, of a blackish liquid. "Here, my madman," said he, "take that coffee."

I took the cup, walked off at a short distance, and at the time when nobody was looking at me, I emptied the potion in the leg of my boot. I then returned towards Lamirante, pretending that I was drinking. When I found myself near him, I showed him the empty cup and let it fall down at his feet shattered to pieces.

—Never mind, said Lamirante, you have enough in your body to keep you quiet, my maniac ! and he walked off.

The doctor's visit made me reflect a good deal on my position. "He will find me out, thought I. The old rogue looks at me as if he suspected something. He is incessantly feeling my pulse. If he comes back again, I will help him to a dish of my own cooking.

I spoke to Béchard on the subject.

—Do you think the old gentleman can find me out by feeling my pulse ?

—I think not. Some madmen have a very regular pulse.

—He looks at me in a droll way at all events, the old curmudgeon !

—Oh bah ! if you continue as you have begun, you will run no risk whatever. Nobody can help considering you as mad.

—I did not like to try any of my nonsense this morning, because I was afraid that he might suspect something. After all a physician ought to know something about that, perhaps a little more than the whole of you at all events ! But if the old man returns to-morrow, I will give him a shaking like the others. He must not be more easily let off than my friends. Try and be present, and when you come to his rescue, I will stop but not before. Until then I will shake him like an old pair of mittens. As he is very lean and long he cannot make much resistance !

—That's right, give him a bit of a shaking, but do not injure him too much. The old fellow talks pretty big sometimes. You remember how he used to call us rebels and d..d rebels about ten days ago. . . . Choke him as near as possible.

—Well, that's all right, since you are of my own opinion he shall swallow the pill.

At three quarters past eight the next morning the old doctor arrived. It struck me that his face was still longer and more snappish than usual. "Wait a bit, thought I, that face of yours will grow longer bye and bye." The old man went, as usual, to look in every corner, and then approached me accompanied by Lamirante. He felt my pulse for a considerable time, looked at me fixedly, dropped my wrist, looked into my eyes a second time, felt my pulse again, and asked of Lamirante whether I had taken the medicine.

—Yes, was the reply, I gave it to him myself.

—Had it any effect.

—Not the slightest.

—He is worse than a horse, was his remark. Well we will give him another stronger dose. I will send it in a short time.

Then the Doctor felt my pulse over again, pressed his fingers tightly against it as if to count its pulsations with more accuracy, and stared me in the face as if he wanted to read my inward thoughts.



Suddenly I shook my arm to oblige him to drop my wrist, uttered my usual deep groan, caught the old man between my arms, and made him jump two or three times, then laying myself down on the back at full length, and squeezing him to suffocation, I shook him from right to left as if he had been but a child, I handled him like a flail striking the floor with his boots. He offered but little resistance, but cried piteously : Help! Help!! murder!! For God's sake take me away! Perceiving that he could speak so well, I passed my right arm around his neck, and held it with all my might. The old man was silent of course, but I could hear him groan. Two or three of the prisoners attempted to open my arms but without success. I held fast. Béchard being satisfied that the punishment was sufficient, came to the rescue. I pretended to be exhausted, allowed him to remove my right arm, with which I held the old man by the neck, dropped my left arm against the floor, and Béchard laying hold of the old Doctor by the waist put him on his legs again. He was as red as a cherry. It took him more than half a minute to recover himself. The prisoners were laughing in their sleeves. Lamirande pretended to be in despair and exclaimed. " Good God, I thought that he would have choked you! When he is in one of these fits, he can tear ten men to pieces."

—But you never told me that he fell into epileptic fits! gasped the Doctor half suffocated.

—Bah! replied Lamirande, he has two of these fits every day.

—Oh! the devil! said the old man, turning on his heels muttering something between his teeth and I have never seen him since!! he had enough of my fits!

I was obliged to invent new proofs of folly every day. I could not make up my mind to appear like one of those stupid madmen who always do the same thing over again. Since I was playing the fool, I was determined that my insanity should be diversified.

Therefore I had one day the mania of fishing, and held a line and rod for hours together without moving. The rod was generally a walking stick or any thing else. Another day, I took to field sports. I killed bears, elephants; making the most infernal noise during my expeditions.

Early in the morning, I used to boil some water to say my mass. I took four of the prisoners for my acolytes, I allowed them \$10 a month, and before the mass, I walked round the room, and a dish-cloth in hand I sprinkled the faces of the prisoners with my boiling holy water. During the mass I delivered a sermon or published marriage bans; I always took care to marry the curate of the parish, which was the cause of more merriment than all the rest; I would predict the end of the world, announce the advent of the antichrist, of the seven headed beast, I saw the last judgement, I would kill the devil so that we might have no hell; I would answer to deputations of angels who came to present me with thanks on behalf of the Holy Virgin. The prisoners were roaring with laughter at my nonsense.

I quarrelled with them very often. Some of them used to tease me a good deal and sometimes would be punished by me with severe blows. I was far from deriving pleasure in so doing, but if I had spared them, my insanity might have appeared

to be but a mere sham. I therefore punished them as conscientiously as I could.

A few days after the second and last visit from the doctor, I established myself in the capacity of an auctioneer, and commenced my sales with men of war and arms, which I sold regularly, and often my sales amounted to upwards of \$100,000 daily.

Another day I would hire men as lumberers. I used to give fifty and even one hundred dollars a day. I had entered the gaol with a few hundred dollars. I therefore would give twenty dollars to one, thirty to another, and Béchard collected and returned to me all the money I had expended. By that process my purse was never empty.

It would be fastidious to describe all the mad pranks which I invented daily. There is one of them however, which I practised two or three times during the latter days of my stay, which greatly contributed to my dismissal. One day I began to plumb the stove. No sooner had I applied the plumb line, that I became furious against the stupid fools who had put up the stove so badly. It will fall down, cried I, that's sure, it is all on one side. I took a stick of wood and placed it under one of the legs, and then tried the plummet once more. It was worse of course. I placed another stick. The hind part of the stove was higher by eight inches than the front. The prisoners attempted to interfere. I grasped the poker and brandished my weapon in such a manner as to convince them that it was better not to meddle with my business. But the stove was not perpendicular. I brought another stick of wood and placed it under the third leg of the stove. The fourth leg stood in the air. I applied my plumb line once more, and slightly pushing the stove with my knee it fell on one side. It was filled with fire. Great was the alarm ! The keepers were sent for ! They arrived, the smoke blinded everybody, a part of the stove pipe had fallen down ; the soot was flying about ; the floor was on fire ; it was impossible to handle the stove which was red hot ; they threw water upon the floor and stove, which was left on the side until it became cooler. The keepers were furious. The gaolor tried to interfere and to lecture me about it. I answered by abusing him most unmercifully ; I accused him of having resolved to burn the gaol and the prisoners with it ; that the stove had been set up all on one side on purpose, that it had fallen down in attempting to set it to rights ; that if it had been right, I would not have touched it ; that he was paid by the government to burn us alive, that after all it would be quicker work in the end than to hang two hundred men. . . . . in short I told them everything that came into my mind.

What could he say to a madman ? Besides, the gaolor as well as the keepers were afraid of me, having all experienced my strength. He went away muttering between his teeth, and ordering that the other prisoners should prevent me from touching the stove. One of them told him : it is not so easy as you imagine." Well, replied he, rather brutally, we will tie him up ! " Ah ! you want to tie me up, you great beast, said I furiously, well wait a little !" and with a yell I flew at him. But he was near the door, and I was still far off ; so in two or three bounds he was out and bolted the door after him. I made some noise but soon cooled down, as my fists could do but little execution against a prison door.

This act of madness caused a great deal of excitement, on account of the danger of fire incurred.

Two days afterwards, I was ordered to appear before a sort of court of inquiry. Attorney-General Ogden examined me. Messrs P. E. Leclerc, Delisle and a few officers appeared to me to sit as judges. They tried to obtain a deposition from me against a certain Frs. Ranger. I knew enough of him to get him hanged, but thanks to my insanity, I could laugh at the Attorney-General and at the judges.

A dozen of questions were put to me, but I answered the greatest nonsense imaginable. Mr. Ogden insisted to continue the examination. Mr. Delisle pretended that it was evidently impossible to get anything out of me. Mr. Leclerc was of the same opinion. To cut every thing short, I threw myself on the floor as if in a violent epileptic fit. The judges made their exit in the twinkling of an eye.

My feigned convulsions lasted about ten minutes, after which they placed me on a pallet. I had not slept on anything but the bare floor since a long time, I fell asleep and I was left there until four o'clock. At that time some one tried to awake me, I did not stir and pretended to be fast asleep. They shook me as roughly as they could, but I continued to sleep. At last they left me alone, and I began to congratulate myself on my stratagem, when I felt suddenly as if one hundred thousand pins were pricking my nose. . . . they had applied a bottle of hart's horn to my nose. That had never entered into my programme, and I was forced to sneeze. I was conducted back to the chapel, and had not the pleasure of sleeping that night on a mattress.

Ten days or so after that event I was again brought down below. This time it was for the purpose of examining me on my own acts of rebellion. At the very first question, I took a book and commenced to write, making up the accounts of the judges in order to pay them, and give them their discharge. I told them that they were both lazy and good for nothing, only fit to rob the Queen's money; that I would inform her of the fact, and that I would dismiss them to begin with. I laughed in their face at each question that was put to me, telling them that if they considered themselves as my judges they were greatly mistaken, that I did not care one straw for them and all their equals, and that I insisted on their going away. They were obliged to dismiss me, for I never uttered one word of common sense.

A second attempt at examination was attended with the like success, as a matter of course. Instead of appearing as the accused, I turned upon them as the accuser, and told them many a truth very plainly to their face. After which I fell into one of my fits.

Mr. Delisle and Leclerc declared then that it was useless to attempt to get anything out of me, that I was too insane to be kept in prison. They really took pity on me in good earnest. I heard them one day expressing the opinion that my folly would only increase in prison, whilst I might have a chance of recovering in the midst of my family and with their attendance.

I resolved to avail myself of their good dispositions and to appear worse than ever, in order to convince them that my insanity was greatly aggravated by close

confinement. I thrashed my comrades unmercifully, I broke the window glasses, I perpetrated the most prodigious feats of extravagance, I refused to eat, but would steal some bread and eat it by stealth.

One day, while the stove was red hot, I seized the occasion to apply the plummet, and consequently to throw it over on the floor. Of course, there was a great uproar ; smoke, soot and ashes were flying about in all directions ; buckets of water thrown on the floor to prevent it from taking on fire . . . . the gaolor comes up : attempts to remonstrate, but at the sight of my two fists, he scampered off without sound of trumpet or at least of drum. The keepers having set up the stove, I complimented them on their skill, remarking that this time at least, they had set it up more sensibly than they had ever done before. " Had you always placed it in that manner, you would not have given me so much trouble about it, said I."

—Hold your tongue, you fool, was it not put up in the same way ?

—A fool ! You call me a fool ! Ah well, wait a bit, I will let you see what it is to be a fool !

I caught him by the waist and pushed him, or rather threw him so violently against his comrade that they both fell over. They were soon on their legs again, as you can imagine. But a well directed blow with my fist between the two eyes knocked one of them down, and I grasped the other by the throat as if intending to choke him. Béchard came to his rescue, and as soon as he spoke, I became quite pacified. Béchard's power over me, was always a matter of surprise to all the other prisoners. He was the only man in the prison who held any command over me. In spite of their best endeavors, none of the other prisoners could obtain the slightest control over me, but on a word from Béchard I became quiet at once.

Béchard told the keepers that it was a shame to lose their temper with a poor madman, and they went away rather dissatisfied with me.

A few days after, one of the keepers told Béchard that it was seriously spoken of discharging me, because I was found dangerous. The gaolor insisted strongly on my removal, because he thought that sooner or later the confounded madman would kill somebody, for he had the strength of two horses instead of that of one man.

Béchard informed me of the fact. I, of course, commenced a general row, and in the afternoon the stove took a fancy to fall on one side.

The gaolor came up this time in a fury with ropes, threatening to tie me up. Instead of flying in a passion as usual, I took the cords, passed them round my wrists and placed the ends into his hands to make the knots. This disarmed him, and he unfastened the cords saying : " This poor fellow must positively leave this place."

On the following day, Messrs Delisle and Leclerc came to the prison and examined me. They left me fully persuaded that I was totally bereft of my reason, and that it was impossible to make anything out of me.

Two days later, on a saturday, a priest conducted by one of the keepers approached me.

—Here, sir, is the madman and the greatest one I have seen yet, most assured-

ly. Do not irritate him, for in his state of insanity, your cloth would not be respected for any length of time, I have already passed through his clutches, and it is no joke.

Such a visit appeared to me suspicious, it struck me that they were laying a trap for me, and that the priest was only sent to see how I would behave towards him. He addressed me a few friendly words, and I conversed with him for some time, taking care to drop here and there in the midst of the conversation, some absurd piece of nonsense to bewilder him. I then took a chair to sit down and took him on my knees rather unceremoniously. When I held him there, I spoke such absurd nonsense that after leaving me, he was convinced, as well as the others, that my poor head was completely and for ever deranged.

Messrs Leclerc and Delisle had been so pressing upon the governor, that they had obtained an order for my release. They came to me on the Monday (what a date) to inform me that I could be off. I was struck with the idea that if I left at once, something might be suspected, and that it would be better to be on my guard.

I therefore answered that it was not my intention to leave at all, because the Queen would be dissatisfied if I left her service without due warning.

These gentlemen assured me that I could go away at once and that they would be answerable for all that might happen.

I positively refused.

My baggage was brought down and they attempted to turn me out. It was about nine in the morning. They tried with three, four, and even five men, but I made a most desperate resistance. I held fast to everything, and when I laid hold of something with my hands, it was impossible to move me one inch. Several of the soldiers on guard were sent for without success. I slipped through their fingers like an eel, and after several fruitless attempts they determined to draw off my attention during one hour or two. I waited and walked about the passages of the gaol, and after a few hours I was conducted to the door and invited to take a walk outside. I refused a second time, intimating that I would not quit Her Majesty's service. Suddenly five men seized me and pushed me forward as far as the door. As soon as I arrived there, I placed my hands against the frame and drove them back most furiously.

—What a devil of a man, exclaimed the gaolor !

They tried it again, but I pretended to become furious and they made no further attempts.

The sensible men were beginning to be more embarrassed than the madman.

It was getting late and I was still in gaol. Several means of taking me by surprise were resorted to but all failed. At last, towards four in the afternoon, Mr. Leclerc, if I mistake not, had the idea of showing me a bottle of brandy, promising me a glass if I would go out. I went out immediately and had one glass. But I was still in the court, and whenever they induced me to go towards the door, I offered resistance. Somebody therefore went outside of the door of the court and showed me the bottle. I made no further resistance and walked out of the court.

The door was closed immediately. I made a dash at it, but I was told through the wicket : " Ah ! you may be off, we have had enough of you."

I therefore found myself in St. Mary street at liberty, and with my pardon in my pocket, Mr. Delisle having pinned it inside in the morning. I thought that my heart would burst with joy. However, they were observing me from the wicket, and it became necessary not to betray myself. Although we were still in the month of April, and that ice was still to be found in the streets, I took off my boots, and walked barefooted in the direction of the city, carrying my boots and baggage on my back.

I went straight to the old market on Jacques-Cartier square, and took up my quarters at Gerald's Hotel.

I personated the madman as when in gaol. I called for liquor and treated everybody. In the course of about two hours, having had drinks to the amount of ten shillings without paying, I was told that if I wanted more, I must pay for what had previously been given. I did not answer, but taking a cigar on the counter and a \$10 bill from my pocket, I folded it, applied it to the gas-burner and lighted my cigar. Then throwing carelessly the bill on the counter, I went out in the yard, but remained near a window to see what would take place.

The bar-keeper seeing a paper looking like a bank note, unfolded it and discovered that it was a ten dollar note. It was hardly burnt. He showed it to several persons, telling them the circumstances, and asking who I was. Nobody knew me nor from whence I had come. Only they perceived that I was mad, and the act of lighting my cigar with a ten dollar note was a sufficient proof in their eyes.

At that very moment I returned, (it might have been about eleven o'clock at the time), and seeing a large number of persons in the hotel I ordered a supper for thirty persons.

My order created a great deal of surprise, but I repeated it with such an air that all objections ceased. A table was in consequence spread out for thirty persons, and I invited everybody without distinction. Several of the parties present found that I talked very sensibly, and could not conceive how I could act so foolishly and yet exhibit such sense in what I said. We conversed gayly during the supper, and all retired to their beds. I paid the expenses and followed the others. The next morning about ten, after a hearty breakfast, I left for Laprairie where I dined. After dinner, I followed the railway track on my way to St. Johns. But after walking for nearly five miles, I met, at the head of a picket of volunteers, captain Richard McGinnis, who knew me, and who naturally mistook me for a deserter from the common gaol. He obliged me to follow him back to Laprairie. I took particular care to persuade him that I was not recovered from my insanity. After a while, I made a movement which indicated that I carried a paper in my waistcoat pocket. It was immediately taken from me, but the paper was found out to contain the Governor's pardon which Mr. Delisle had pinned to my waistcoat.

Captain McGinnis, after perusing the document, was obliged to release me and I took the road to my father's house, where I arrived at last at midnight.

It will easily be believed that I knocked at the door with eagerness. A few moments after I heard my father's voice inquiring :

—Who is there ?

—It is I.

—Who are you ?

—Félix.

—Félix ! he is in gaol !

—T'is I, father, I was set at liberty yesterday ! The door was opened at last, but my father unfastened the bolts to see to whom he was speaking to and not to admit his son.

I threw myself into his arms, exclaiming :

—I had told you that I would come back !

—Good God ! T'is you ! But how comes it ? I have been told that you were sentenced to death !

—Ah ! but they have not been able to try me even !

—Well then ! since it is really you, I will commence by calling up every one. "Come now, all of you, Félix has just returned, come and see him." In an instant the whole family was on foot and they could hardly believe their own eyes. A shower of questions were asked of me.—How did you get off ?—Since when ?—How is it that you come so late ?—Are you hungry ?

—Hungry ! Oh yes ! that is my ailment.

—Oh ! then, said my father, we will begin by the little drop, and the women will spread the cloth.

—So you had heard that I was to have been hanged !

—Yes, no later than last Sunday ; and I felt that I had done wrong in listening to you.

—But then did you not think of my plan for obtaining my liberty ?

—Bah ! I have always said that it was a piece of folly which you had taken in your head, that you had told that only to prevent me from regretting that you had delivered yourself up. But now, you can tell us by what means you have made good your escape !

—Father, not more than ten days after my entrance in the gaol, I pretended to be insane, and to have epileptic fits ; I had fits twice a day, and I have played the part of a madman so well, that they all believed me to be really so, and I have obtained my pardon at last, here it is ; and I held out the paper to him.

—What, you have been released under the belief that you were insane ?

—On account of that reason solely. I was more insane than a madman.

—But is it possible that you can have played the madman during such a long time without being discovered ?

—Just as you say. Had I not played the madman I would have been hanged long ago ! I was one of the most deeply compromised !

—Well then, let us thank God, said my father, and kneeling, the whole family offered a prayer of thanksgiving.

I sat down to table, and was obliged to narrate all my mad freaks while in prison from beginning to end. All hearts were disposed to mirth, as one may believe, and they laughed even to tears at the circumstantial recital of my acts of madness. The treatment which old Dr. Arnoldi had received at my hands, the

ingenious manner by which I restored the stove to a perpendicular, my sales by auction, my refusals to leave, my obstinate resistance, my readiness to follow a man who showed me a bottle to allure me, all these were told over and over again several times, without wearying the patience of my listeners, although I repeated the same things ten times over again. I was really looked upon as one *escaped from the gallows*, for the newsmongers had spread the rumour of my impending execution.

Useless to say that the conversation was kept up until a late hour, and the rising sun was illuminating the eastern skies when we retired.

The news of my return and of its real cause spread in a few hours over the parish and vicinity. I had many friends. During several days my father's house was constantly filled with men who were anxious to learn from my own lips the details of my insanity, and I was obliged to repeat to satiety, at least to myself, all that I had done, said or thought during my imprisonment.

I returned by degrees to my old pursuits, cured of all revolutionary ideas, and without the slightest inclination to begin again.

I was convinced that in politics as well as in other things, legal means, though the longest, are the safest, and that exceptional cases excepted, the proverb truly says : " That more is done by kindness than by violence !"

One month or so after my exit from gaol, some business brought me back to Montreal. I there met with Mr. Delisle in the street. He recognized me at once. I did not feel quite easy, for it was impossible for me to plead insanity, and my imposition was known to every one. He addressed a few words to me and invited, me to call at his residence between five or six in the afternoon.

There was certainly nothing in his tone indicating the slightest hostile intention but his invitation made me feel a kind of giddiness. Why had he invited me to call at his residence ? What could he want of me ? Mr. Delisle was precisely the man who could have been chosen to examine me and to verify the state of my mind, and see whether I had not obtained my release through an imposition ? Had anybody spoken ill of me to him or to the authorities ? Was it their intention to be revenged on me for my imposition ? As a madman they were naturally obliged to release me, but when they had proofs that my madness was nothing but an imposition, could they not dismiss the past and sue again for judgment ? They could not try a madman, but as my reason had never deserted me, none of my faults were forgiven, and the false pretence under which I had been discharged, could in reality but show them in a worse light.

The truth was that I had imposed upon the authorities, and that in the disposition in which they were at that time, they might perhaps feel disposed to make an example. My pardon had been granted out of mere pity, but if the truth had been found out, I would have got something very different. The truth was known now ; we had enjoyed at St. Johns some pretty hearty jokes at the expense of the officials whom I had duped ; it appeared therefore to me that the whole affair might end in accordance with the proverb : " He will be best off who laughs last ;" and that did not exactly suit me.

If they had invited me for the purpose of imprisoning me, it became evident that



I would not get off this time ! I regretted that I had not continued to be insane for two or three months longer.

I reproached myself with having made known my stratagem too hastily. I found myself compromised without any possibility of defending myself.

On the other hand, something was telling me that since they had once before taken pity on me they might perhaps do so again. There could be no crime in attempting to save one's head by an innocent stratagem in itself. The trick had been well played, and after all it was but fair. I had blinded even the practised eye of a doctor. They could not with any show of reason be revenged upon me for having deceived them. Such a supposition appeared to me too mean. To imprison me a second time after granting my pardon, could no longer be considered as a punishment but an odious act of barbarity.

Beseiged thus by fears and by the gloomy prospects of the future, I reached Mr. Delisle's residence about half past five o'clock. I felt very uneasy and a sort of a choking sensation.

Mr. Delisle was at dinner with fifteen or sixteen of his friends. I was immediately ushered into the dining room. Mr. Delisle shook my hand cordially and made me take a seat at the table.

I was confounded at the sight of so many persons, at the glare of the lights, at the splendid manner in which the table was set, to which I was unaccustomed, especially at the sight of the persons present, whose countenances coupled with my prison reminiscences, appeared to me as of bad omen. I was invited to a glass of wine, a few minutes after to a second, while the conversation was limited to in-different topics.

"Now," said I to myself, "they want to make me tipsy in order to make me speak. I must be on my guard !" The general conversation continued, and one of my neighbors asked me to take a glass of wine with him. He filled my glass, but, after drinking his health, I merely touched it with my lips, then I looked at him to give him to understand that I was on my guard, and would not allow myself to be led into drunkenness.

A quarter of an hour after I had sat down at table, Mr. Delisle turning towards me, said with a smile :

—Now then, Poutré, you have shown a great deal of wit for a *madman*, you must tell us all about it. I have brought all these gentlemen together to hear the story from your own lips.

I was still under the persuasion that he was laying a trap for me, and I was not only embarrassed, but I looked as if I was so. Mr. Delisle perceived it, and said :

—Do not be afraid. I have not asked you to call on me for the purpose of submitting you to an interrogatory, but you must consider yourself here as one of my friends. What is spoken at my table, goes no further. You have played an admirable trick, and we have no ill feeling towards you for it. You have obtained your pardon, so there is an end of it, therefore, fear nothing, and tell us the whole thing as fearlessly as if you were with your father, your family or your friends. Everything you will here say is sacred.

These kind words caused my choaking sensation to disappear in a moment, and I answered :

—Very well, since it is so, I will tell you the whole matter quite willingly. Frankly I sat here very uneasy. At present I have no fears.

Then I narrated from begin to end all my inventions to blind every one as to the real state of my mind.

I amused them during three long hours and was no longer afraid to drink wine, and it was certainly worth drinking, for I had *seldom or never* tasted anything like it.

We all passed a gay evening, and once rid of my uneasiness, I took my full share in the general amusement.

It was near midnight when we left.

On the following day I returned to my father's house whom I informed of my invitation, my uneasiness and of my pleasure during the evening. This incident was the subject of conversation for several days, after which I returned to my former avocations and agricultural pursuits, but I continued to watch with eagerness the political events of the day.

