

DU MAURIER GEORGE

THE MARTIAN: A NOVEL

George Du Maurier

The Martian: A Novel

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"BARTY JOSSELIN IS NO MORE..."

When so great a man dies, it is generally found that a tangled growth of more or less contentious literature has already gathered round his name during his lifetime. He has been so written about, so talked about, so riddled with praise or blame, that, to those who have never seen him in the flesh, he has become almost a tradition, a myth – and one runs the risk of losing all clew to his real personality.

This is especially the case with the subject of this biography – one is in danger of forgetting what manner of man he was who has so taught and touched and charmed and amused us, and so happily changed for us the current of our lives.

He has been idealized as an angel, a saint, and a demigod; he has been caricatured as a self-indulgent sensualist, a vulgar Lothario, a buffoon, a joker of practical jokes.

He was in reality the simplest, the most affectionate, and most good-natured of men, the very soul of honor, the best of husbands and fathers and friends, the most fascinating companion that ever lived, and one who kept to the last the freshness and joyous spirits of a school-boy and the heart of a child; one who never said or did an unkind thing; probably never even thought one. Generous and open-handed to a fault, slow to condemn, quick to forgive, and gifted with a power of immediately inspiring affection and keeping it forever after, such as I have never known in any one else, he grew to be (for all his quick-tempered impulsiveness) one of the gentlest and meekest and most humble-minded of men!

On me, a mere prosperous tradesman, and busy politician and man of the world, devolves the delicate and responsible task of being the first to write the life of the greatest literary genius this century has produced, *and of revealing the strange secret of that genius*, which has lighted up the darkness of these latter times as with a pillar of fire by night.

This extraordinary secret has never been revealed before to any living soul but his wife and myself. And that is *one* of my qualifications for this great labor of love.

Another is that for fifty years I have known him as never a man can quite have known his fellow-man before – that for all that time he has been more constantly and devotedly loved by me than any man can ever quite have been loved by father, son, brother, or bosom friend.

Good heavens! Barty, man and boy, Barty's wife, their children, their grandchildren, and all that ever concerned them or concerns them still – all this has been the world to me, and ever will be.

He wished me to tell the *absolute truth* about him, just as I know it; and I look upon the fulfilment of this wish of his as a sacred trust, and would sooner die any shameful death or brave any other dishonor than fail in fulfilling it to the letter.

The responsibility before the world is appalling; and also the difficulty, to a man of such training as mine. I feel already conscious that I am trying to be literary myself, to seek for turns of phrase that I should never have dared to use in talking to Barty, or even in writing to him; that I am not at my ease, in short – not *me* – but straining every nerve to be on my best behavior; and that's about the worst behavior there is.

Oh! may some kindly light, born of a life's devotion and the happy memories of half a century, lead me to mere naturalness and the use of simple homely words, even my own native telegraphese! that I may haply blunder at length into some fit form of expression which Barty himself might have approved.

One would think that any sincere person who has learnt how to spell his own language should at least be equal to such a modest achievement as this; and yet it is one of the most difficult things in the world!

My life is so full of Barty Josselin that I can hardly be said to have ever had an existence apart from his; and I can think of no easier or better way to tell Barty's history than just telling my own – from the days I first knew him – and in my own way; that is, in the best telegraphese I can manage – picking each precious word with care, just as though I were going to cable it, as soon as written, to Boston or New York, where the love of Barty Josselin shines with even a brighter and warmer glow than here, or even in France; and where the hate of him, the hideous, odious odium theologicum – the *sæva indignatio* of the Church – that once burned at so white a heat, has burnt itself out at last, and is now as though it had never been, and never could be again.

P. S. – (an after-thought):

And here, in case misfortune should happen to me before this book comes out as a volume, I wish to record my thanks to my old friend Mr. du Maurier for the readiness with which he has promised to undertake, and the conscientiousness with which he will have performed, his share of the work as editor and illustrator.

I also wish to state that it is to my beloved god-daughter, Roberta Beatrix Hay (née Josselin), that I dedicate this attempt at a biographical sketch of her illustrious father.

Robert Maurice.

Part First

"De Paris à Versailles, loo, là,
De Paris à Versailles —
Il y a de belles allées,
Vive le Roi de France!
Il y a de belles allées,
Vivent les écoliers!"

One sultry Saturday afternoon in the summer of 1847 I sat at my desk in the junior school-room, or *salle d'études des petits*, of the Institution F. Brossard, Rond-point de l'Avenue de St.-Cloud; or, as it is called now, Avenue du Bois de Boulogne – or, as it was called during the Second Empire, Avenue du Prince Impérial, or else de l'Impératrice; I'm not sure.

There is not much stability in such French names, I fancy; but their sound is charming, and always gives me the nostalgia of Paris – Royal Paris, Impérial Paris, Republican Paris!.. whatever they may call it ten or twelve years hence. Paris is always Paris, and always will be, in spite of the immortal Haussmann, both for those who love it and for those who don't.

All the four windows were open. Two of them, freely and frankly, on to the now deserted playground, admitting the fragrance of lime and syringa and lilac, and other odors of a mixed quality.

Two other windows, defended by an elaborate network of iron wire and a formidable array of spiked iron rails beyond, opened on to the Rond-point, or meeting of the cross-roads – one of which led northeast to Paris through the Arc de Triomphe; the other three through woods and fields and country lanes to such quarters of the globe as still remain. The world is wide.

In the middle of this open space a stone fountain sent up a jet of water three feet high, which fell back with a feeble splash into the basin beneath. There was comfort in the sound on such a hot day, and one listened for it half unconsciously; and tried not to hear, instead, Weber's "Invitation à la Valse," which came rippling in intermittent waves from the open window of the distant *parloir*, where Chardonnet was practising the piano.

"Tum-te-dum-tum-tum ...
Tum-te-dum-di, diddle-iddle um!"

e da capo, again and again. Chardonnet was no heaven-born musician.

Monsieur Bonzig – or "le Grand Bonzig," as he was called behind his back – sat at his table on the estrade, correcting the exercises of the eighth class (*huitième*), which he coached in Latin and French. It was the lowest class in the school; yet one learnt much in it that was of consequence; not, indeed, that Balbus built a wall – as I'm told we learn over here (a small matter to make such a fuss about, after so many years) – but that the Lord made heaven and earth in six days, and rested on the seventh.

He (Monsieur Bonzig) seemed hot and weary, as well he might, and sighed, and looked up every now and then to mop his brow and think. And as he gazed into the green and azure depths beyond the north window, his dark brown eyes quivered and vibrated from side to side through his spectacles with a queer quick tremolo, such as I have never seen in any eyes but his.

About five-and-twenty boys sat at their desks; boys of all ages between seven and fourteen – many with closely cropped hair, "à la malcontent," like nice little innocent convicts; and nearly all in blouses, mostly blue; some with their garments loosely flowing; others confined at the waist by a tricolored *ceinture de gymnastique*, so deep and stiff it almost amounted to stays.

As for the boys themselves, some were energetic and industrious – some listless and lazy and lolling, and quite languid with the heat – some fidgety and restless, on the lookout for excitement of any kind: a cab or carriage raising the dust on its way to the Bois – a water-cart laying it (there were no hydrants then); a courier bearing royal despatches, or a mounted orderly; the Passy omnibus, to or fro every ten or twelve minutes; the marchand de coco with his bell; a regiment of the line with its band; a chorus of peripatetic Orphéonistes – a swallow, a butterfly, a humblebee; a far-off balloon, oh, joy! – any sight or sound to relieve the tedium of those two mortal school-hours that dragged their weary lengths from half past one till half past three – every day but Sunday and Thursday.

(Even now I find the early afternoon a little trying to wear through without a nap, say from two to four.)

At 3.30 there would come a half-hour's interval of play, and then the class of French literature from four till dinner-time at six – a class that was more than endurable on account of the liveliness and charm of Monsieur Durosier, who journeyed all the way from the Collège de France every Saturday afternoon in June and July to tell us boys of the quatrième all about Villon and Ronsard, and Marot and Charles d'Orléans (*exceptis excipiendis*, of course), and other pleasant people who didn't deal in Greek or Latin or mathematics, and knew better than to trouble themselves overmuch about formal French grammar and niggling French prosody.

Besides, everything was pleasant on a Saturday afternoon on account of the nearness of the day of days —

"And that's the day that comes between
The Saturday and Monday"...

in France.

I had just finished translating my twenty lines of Virgil —

"Infandum, regina, jubes renovare," etc.

Oh, crimini, but it *was* hot! and how I disliked the pious Æneas! I couldn't have hated him worse if I'd been poor Dido's favorite younger brother (not mentioned by Publius Vergilius Maro, if I remember).

Palaiseau, who sat next to me, had a cold in his head, and kept sniffing in a manner that got on my nerves.

"Mouche-toi donc, animal!" I whispered; "tu me dégoûtes, à la fin!"

Palaiseau always sniffed, whether he had a cold or not.

"Taisez-vous, Maurice – ou je vous donne cent vers à copier!" said M. Bonzig, and his eyes quiveringly glittered through his glasses as he fixed me.

Palaiseau, in his brief triumph, sniffed louder.

"Palaiseau," said Monsieur Bonzig, "si vous vous serviez de votre mouchoir – hein? Je crois que cela ne gênerait personne!" (If you were to use your pocket-handkerchief – eh? I don't think it would inconvenience anybody!)

At this there was a general titter all round, which was immediately suppressed, as in a court of law; and Palaiseau reluctantly and noisily did as he was told.

In front of me that dishonest little sneak Rapaud, with a tall parapet of books before him to serve as a screen, one hand shading his eyes, and an inkless pen in the other, was scratching his copy-book with noisy earnestness, as if time were too short for all he had to write about the pious Æneas's recitative, while he surreptitiously read the *Comte de Monte Cristo*, which lay open in his lap – just at the part where the body, sewn up in a sack, was going to be hurled into the Mediterranean. I knew the page well. There was a splash of red ink on it.

It made my blood boil with virtuous indignation to watch him, and I coughed and hemmed again and again to attract his attention, for his back was nearly towards me. He heard me perfectly, but took no notice whatever, the deceitful little beast. He was to have given up *Monte Cristo* to me at half-past two, and here it was twenty minutes to three! Besides which, it was *my Monte Cristo*, bought with my own small savings, and smuggled into school by me at great risk to myself.

"Maurice!" said M. Bonzig.

"Oui, m'sieur!" said I. I will translate:

"You shall conjugate and copy out for me forty times the compoundverb, 'I cough without necessity to distract the attention of my comrade Rapaud from his Latin exercise!'"

"Moi, m'sieur?" I ask, innocently.

"Oui, vous!"

"Bien, m'sieur!"

Just then there was a clatter by the fountain, and the shrill small pipe of D'Aurigny, the youngest boy in the school, exclaimed:

"Hé! Hé! Oh là là! Le Roi qui passe!"

And we all jumped up, and stood on forms, and craned our necks to see Louis Philippe I. and his Queen drive quickly by in their big blue carriage and four, with their two blue-and-silver liveried outriders trotting in front, on their way from St.-Cloud to the Tuileries.

"Sponde! Sélancy! fermez les fenêtres, ou je vous mets tous au pain sec pour un mois!" thundered M. Bonzig, who did not approve of kings and queens – an appalling threat which appalled nobody, for when he forgot to forget he always relented; for instance, he quite forgot to insist on that formidable compound verb of mine.

Suddenly the door of the school-room flew open, and the tall, portly figure of Monsieur Brossard appeared, leading by the wrist a very fair-haired boy of thirteen or so, dressed in an Eton jacket and light blue trousers, with a white chimney-pot silk hat, which he carried in his hand – an English boy, evidently; but of an aspect so singularly agreeable one didn't need to be English one's self to warm towards him at once.

"Monsieur Bonzig, and gentlemen!" said the head master (in French, of course). "Here is the new boy; he calls himself Bartholomieu Josselin. He is English, but he knows French as well as you. I hope you will find in him a good comrade, honorable and frank and brave, and that he will find the same in you. – Maurice!" (that was me).

"Oui, m'sieur!"

"I specially recommend Josselin to you."

"Moi, m'sieur?"

"Yes, *you*; he is of your age, and one of your compatriots. Don't forget."

"Bien, m'sieur."

"And now, Josselin, take that vacant desk, which will be yours henceforth. You will find the necessary books and copy-books inside; you will be in the fifth class, under Monsieur Dumollard. You will occupy yourself with the study of Cornelius Nepos, the commentaries of Cæsar, and Xenophon's retreat of the ten thousand. Soyez diligent et attentif, mon ami; à plus tard!"

He gave the boy a friendly pat on the cheek and left the room.

Josselin walked to his desk and sat down, between d'Adhémar and Laferté, both of whom were *en cinquième*. He pulled a Cæsar out of his desk and tried to read it. He became an object of passionate interest to the whole school-room, till M. Bonzig said:

"The first who lifts his eyes from his desk to stare at '*le nouveau*' shall be *au piquet* for half an hour!" (To be *au piquet* is to stand with your back to a tree for part of the following play-time; and the play-time which was to follow would last just thirty minutes.)

Presently I looked up, in spite of piquet, and caught the new boy's eye, which was large and blue and soft, and very sad and sentimental, and looked as if he were thinking of his mammy, as I did constantly of mine during my first week at Brossard's, three years before.

Soon, however, that sad eye slowly winked at me, with an expression so droll that I all but laughed aloud.

Then its owner felt in the inner breast pocket of his Eton jacket with great care, and delicately drew forth by the tail a very fat white mouse, that seemed quite tame, and ran up his arm to his wide shirt collar, and tried to burrow there; and the boys began to interest themselves breathlessly in this engaging little quadruped.

M. Bonzig looked up again, furious; but his spectacles had grown misty from the heat and he couldn't see, and he wiped them; and meanwhile the mouse was quickly smuggled back to its former nest.

Josselin drew a large clean pocket-handkerchief from his trousers and buried his head in his desk, and there was silence.

"La! – ré, fa! – la! – ré" —

So strummed, over and over again, poor Chardonnet in his remote parlor – he was getting tired.

I have heard "L'Invitation à la Valse" many hundreds of times since then, and in many countries, but never that bar without thinking of Josselin and his little white mouse.

"Fermez votre pupitre, Josselin," said M. Bonzig, after a few minutes.

Josselin shut his desk and beamed genially at the usher.

"What book have you got there, Josselin – Cæsar or Cornelius Nepos?"

Josselin held the book with its title-page open for M. Bonzig to read.

"Are you dumb, Josselin? Can't you speak?"

Josselin tried to speak, but uttered no sound.

"Josselin, come here – opposite me."

Josselin came and stood opposite M. Bonzig and made a nice little bow.

"What have you got in your mouth, Josselin – chocolate? – barley-sugar? – caoutchouc? – or an India-rubber ball?"

Josselin shrugged his shoulders and looked pensive, but spoke never a word.

"Open quick the mouth, Josselin!"

And Monsieur Bonzig, leaning over the table, deftly put his thumb and forefinger between the boy's lips, and drew forth slowly a large white pocket-handkerchief, which seemed never to end, and threw it on the floor with solemn dignity.

The whole school-room was convulsed with laughter.

"Josselin – leave the room – you will be severely punished, as you deserve – you are a vulgar buffoon – a jo-crisse – a paltoquet, a mountebank! Go, petit polisson – go!"

The polisson picked up his pocket-handkerchief and went-quietly, with simple manly grace; and that's the first I ever saw of Barty Josselin – and it was some fifty years ago.

At 3.30 the bell sounded for the half-hour's recreation, and the boys came out to play.

Josselin was sitting alone on a bench, thoughtful, with his hand in the inner breast pocket of his Eton jacket.

M. Bonzig went straight to him, buttoned up and severe – his eyes dancing, and glancing from right to left through his spectacles; and Josselin stood up very politely.

"Sit down!" said M. Bonzig; and sat beside him, and talked to him with grim austerity for ten minutes or more, and the boy seemed very penitent and sorry.

Presently he drew forth from his pocket his white mouse, and showed it to the long usher, who looked at it with great seeming interest for a long time, and finally took it into the palm of his own hand – where it stood on its hind legs – and stroked it with his little finger.

Soon Josselin produced a small box of chocolate drops, which he opened and offered to M. Bonzig, who took one and put it in his mouth, and seemed to like it. Then they got up and walked to and fro together, and the usher put his arm round the boy's shoulder, and there was peace and good-will between them; and before they parted Josselin had intrusted his white mouse to "le grand Bonzig" – who intrusted it to Mlle. Marceline, the head lingère, a very kind and handsome person, who found for it a comfortable home in an old bonbon-box lined with blue satin, where it had a large family and fed on the best, and lived happily ever after.

But things did not go smoothly for Josselin all that Saturday afternoon. When Bonzig left, the boys gathered round "le nouveau," large and small, and asked questions. And just before the bell sounded for French literature, I saw him defending himself with his two British fists against Dugit, a big boy with whiskers, who had him by the collar and was kicking him to rights. It seems that Dugit had called him, in would-be English, "Pretty voman," and this had so offended him that he had hit the whiskered one straight in the eye.

Then French literature for the *quatrième* till six; then dinner for all – soup, boiled beef (not salt), lentils; and Gruyère cheese, quite two ounces each; then French rounders till half past seven; then lesson preparation (with *Monte Cristos* in one's lap, or *Mysteries of Paris*, or *Wandering Jews*) till nine.

Then, ding-dang-dong, and, at the sleepy usher's nod, a sleepy boy would rise and recite the perfunctory evening prayer in a dull singsong voice – beginning, "Notre Père, qui êtes aux cieux, vous dont le regard scrutateur pénètre jusque dans les replis les plus profonds de nos cœurs," etc., etc., and ending, "au nom du Père, du Fils, et du St. Esprit, ainsi soit-il!"

And then, bed – Josselin in my dormitory, but a long way off, between d'Adhémar and Laferté; while Palaiseau snorted and sniffed himself to sleep in the bed next mine, and Rapaud still tried to read the immortal works of the elder Dumas by the light of a little oil-lamp six yards off, suspended from a nail in the blank wall over the chimney-piece.

The Institution F. Brossard was a very expensive private school, just twice as expensive as the most expensive of the Parisian public schools – Ste.-Barbe, François Premier, Louis-le-Grand, etc.

These great colleges, which were good enough for the sons of Louis Philippe, were not thought good enough for me by my dear mother, who was Irish, and whose only brother had been at Eton, and was now captain in an English cavalry regiment – so she had aristocratic notions. It used to be rather an Irish failing in those days.

My father, James Maurice, also English (and a little Scotch), and by no means an aristocrat, was junior partner in the great firm of Vougeot-Conti et Cie., wine merchants, Dijon. And at Dijon I had spent much of my childhood, and been to a day school there, and led a very happy life indeed.

Then I was sent to Brossard's school, in the Avenue de St.-Cloud, Paris, where I was again very happy, and fond of (nearly) everybody, from the splendid head master and his handsome son, Monsieur Mérovée, down to Antoine and Francisque, the men-servants, and Père Jaurion, the concierge, and his wife, who sold croquets and pains d'épices and "blom-boudingues," and sucre-d'orge and nougat and pâte de guimauve; also pralines, dragées, and gray sandy cakes of chocolate a penny apiece; and gave one unlimited credit; and never dunned one, unless bribed to do so by parents, so as to impress on us small boys a proper horror of debt.

Whatever principles I have held through life on this important subject I set down to a private interview my mother had with le père et la mère Jaurion, to whom I had run in debt five francs during the horrible winter of '47-8. They made my life a hideous burden to me for a whole summer term, and I have never owed any one a penny since.

The Institution consisted of four separate buildings, or "corps de logis."

In the middle, dominating the situation, was a Greco-Roman pavilion, with a handsome Doric portico elevated ten or twelve feet above the ground, on a large, handsome terrace paved with asphalt and shaded by horse-chestnut trees. Under this noble esplanade, and ventilating themselves into it, were the kitchen and offices and pantry, and also the refectory – a long room, furnished with two

parallel tables, covered at the top by a greenish oil-cloth spotted all over with small black disks; and alongside of these tables were wooden forms for the boys to sit together at meat – "la table des grands," "la table des petits," each big enough for thirty boys and three or four masters. M. Brossard and his family breakfasted and dined apart, in their own private dining-room, close by.

In this big refectory, three times daily, at 7.30 in the morning, at noon, and at 6 P.M., boys and masters took their quotidian sustenance quite informally, without any laying of cloths or saying of grace either before or after; one ate there to live – one did not live merely to eat, at the Pension Brossard.

Breakfast consisted of a thick soup, rich in dark-hued garden produce, and a large hunk of bread – except on Thursdays, when a pat of butter was served out to each boy instead of that Spartan broth – that "brouet noir des Lacédémoniens," as we called it.

Everybody who has lived in France knows how good French butter can often be – and French bread. We triturered each our pat with rock-salt and made a round ball of it, and dug a hole in our hunk to put it in, and ate it in the play-ground with clasp-knives, making it last as long as we could.

This, and the half-holiday in the afternoon, made Thursday a day to be marked with a white stone. When you are up at five in summer, at half past five in the winter, and have had an hour and a half or two hours' preparation before your first meal at 7.30, French bread-and-butter is not a bad thing to break your fast with.

Then, from eight till twelve, class – Latin, Greek, French, English, German – and mathematics and geometry – history, geography, chemistry, physics-everything that you must get to know before you can hope to obtain your degree of Bachelor of Letters or Sciences, or be admitted to the Polytechnic School, or the Normal, or the Central, or that of Mines, or that of Roads and Bridges, or the Military School of St. Cyr, or the Naval School of the Borda. All this was fifty years ago; of course names of schools may have changed, and even the sciences themselves.

Then, at twelve, the second breakfast, meat (or salt fish on Fridays), a dish of vegetables, lentils, red or white beans, salad, potatoes, etc.; a dessert, which consisted of fruit or cheese, or a French pudding. This banquet over, a master would stand up in his place and call for silence, and read out loud the list of boys who were to be kept in during the play-hour that followed:

"À la retenue, Messieurs Maurice, Rapaud, de Villars, Jolivet, Sponde," etc. Then play till 1.30; and very good play, too; rounders, which are better and far more complicated in France than in England; "barres"; "barres traversières," as rough a game as football; fly the garter, or "la raie," etc., etc., according to the season. And then afternoon study, at the summons of that dreadful bell whose music was so sweet when it rang the hour for meals or recreation or sleep – so hideously discordant at 5.30 on a foggy December Monday morning.

Altogether eleven hours work daily and four hours play, and sleep from nine till five or half past; I find this leaves half an hour unaccounted for, so I must have made a mistake somewhere. But it all happened fifty years ago, so it's not of much consequence now.

Probably they have changed all that in France by this time, and made school life a little easier there, especially for nice little English boys – and nice little French boys too. I hope so, very much; for French boys can be as nice as any, especially at such institutions as F. Brossard's, if there are any left.

Most of my comrades, aged from seven to nineteen or twenty, were the sons of well-to-do fathers – soldiers, sailors, rentiers, owners of land, public officials, in professions or business or trade. A dozen or so were of aristocratic descent – three or four very great swells indeed; for instance, two marquises (one of whom spoke English, having an English mother); a count bearing a string of beautiful names a thousand years old, and even more – for they were constantly turning up in the Classe d'Histoire de France au moyen âge; a Belgian viscount of immense wealth and immense good-nature; and several very rich Jews, who were neither very clever nor very stupid, but, as a rule, rather popular.

Then we had a few of humble station – the son of the woman who washed for us; Jules, the natural son of a brave old caporal in the trente-septième légère (a countryman of M. Brossard's), who was not well off – so I suspect his son was taught and fed for nothing – the Brossards were very liberal; Filosel, the only child of a small retail hosier in the Rue St.-Denis (who thought no sacrifice too great to keep his son at such a first-rate private school), and others.

During the seven years I spent at Brossard's I never once heard paternal wealth (or the want of it) or paternal rank or position alluded to by master, pupil, or servant – especially never a word or an allusion that could have given a moment's umbrage to the most sensitive little only son of a well-to-do West End cheese-monger that ever got smuggled into a private suburban boarding-school kept "for the sons of gentlemen only," and was so chaffed and bullied there that his father had to take him away, and send him to Eton instead, where the "sons of gentlemen" have better manners, it seems; or even to France, where "the sons of gentlemen" have the best manners of all – or used to have before a certain 2d of December – as distinctly I remember; nous avons changé tout cela!

The head master was a famous republican, and after February, '48, was elected a "représentant du peuple" for the Dauphiné, and sat in the Chamber of Deputies – for a very short time, alas!

So I fancy that the titled and particed boys – "les nobles" – were of families that had drifted away from the lily and white flag of their loyal ancestors – from Rome and the Pope and the past.

Anyhow, none of our young nobles, when at home, seemed to live in the noble Faubourg across the river, and there were no clericals or ultramontanes among us, high or low – we were all red, white, and blue in equal and impartial combination. All this *par parenthèse*. On the asphalt terrace also, but separated from the head master's classic habitation by a small square space, was the *lingerie*, managed by Mlle. Marceline and her two subordinates, Constance and Félicité; and beneath this, le père et la mère Jaurion sold their cheap goodies, and jealously guarded the gates that secluded us from the wicked world outside – where women are, and merchants of tobacco, and cafés where you can sip the opalescent absinthe, and libraries where you can buy books more diverting than the *Adventures of Telemachus*!

On the opposite, or western, side was the gymnastic ground, enclosed in a wire fence, but free of access at all times – a place of paramount importance in all French schools, public and private.

From the doors of the refectory the general playground sloped gently down northwards to the Rond-point, where it was bounded by double gates of wood and iron that were always shut; and on each hither side of these rose an oblong dwelling of red brick, two stories high, and capable of accommodating thirty boys, sleeping or waking, at work or rest or play; for in bad weather we played indoors, or tried to, chess, draughts, backgammon, and the like – even blind-man's-buff (*Colin Maillard*) – even puss in the corner (*aux quatre coins*!).

All the class-rooms and school-rooms were on the ground-floor; above, the dormitories and masters' rooms.

These two buildings were symmetrical; one held the boys over fourteen, from the third class up to the first; the other (into the "salle d'études" of which the reader has already been admitted), the boys from the fourth down to the eighth, or lowest, form of all – just the reverse of an English school.

On either side of the play-ground were narrow strips of garden cultivated by boys whose tastes lay that way, and small arbors overgrown with convolvulus and other creepers – snug little verdant retreats, where one fed the mind on literature not sanctioned by the authorities, and smoked cigarettes of caporal, and even colored pipes, and was sick without fear of detection (*piquait son renard sans crainte d'être collé*).

Finally, behind Père Brossard's Ciceronian Villa, on the south, was a handsome garden (we called it Tusculum); a green flowery pleasaunce reserved for the head master's married daughter (Madame Germain) and her family – good people with whom we had nothing to do.

Would I could subjoin a ground-plan of the Institution F. Brossard, where Barty Josselin spent four such happy years, and was so universally and singularly popular!

Why should I take such pains about all this, and dwell so laboriously on all these minute details?

Firstly, because it all concerns Josselin and the story of his life – and I am so proud and happy to be the biographer of such a man, at his own often expressed desire, that I hardly know where to leave off and what to leave out. Also, this is quite a new trade for me, who have only dealt hitherto in foreign wines, and British party politics, and bimetallism – and can only write in telegraphese!

Secondly, because I find it such a keen personal joy to evoke and follow out, and realize to myself by means of pen and pencil, all these personal reminiscences; and with such a capital excuse for prolixity!

At the top of every page I have to pull myself together to remind myself that it is not of the Right Honorable Sir Robert Maurice, Bart., M.P., that I am telling the tale – any one can do that – but of a certain Englishman who wrote *Sardonyx*, to the everlasting joy and pride of the land of his *fathers*– and of a certain Frenchman who wrote *Berthe aux grands pieds*, and moved his *mother-country* to such delight of tears and tender laughter as it had never known before.

Dear me! the boys who lived and learnt at Brossard's school fifty years ago, and the masters who taught there (peace to their ashes!), are far more to my taste than the actual human beings among whom my dull existence of business and politics and society is mostly spent in these days. The school must have broken up somewhere about the early fifties. The stuccoed Doric dwelling was long since replaced by an important stone mansion, in a very different style of architecture – the abode of a wealthy banker – and this again, later, by a palace many stories high. The two school-houses in red brick are no more; the play-ground grew into a luxuriant garden, where a dozen very tall trees overtopped the rest; from their evident age and their position in regard to each other they must have been old friends of mine grown out of all knowledge.

I saw them only twenty years ago, from the top of a Passy omnibus, and recognized every one of them. I went from the Arc de Triomphe to Passy and back quite a dozen times, on purpose – once for each tree! It touched me to think how often the author of *Sardonyx* has stood leaning his back against one of those giants —*au piquet*!

They are now no more; and Passy omnibuses no longer ply up and down the Allée du Bois de Boulogne, which is now an avenue of palaces.

An umbrageous lane that led from the Rond-point to Chaillot (that very forgettable, and by me quite forgotten, quarter) separated the Institution F. Brossard from the Pensionnat Mélanie Jalabert – a beautiful pseudo-Gothic castle which was tenanted for a while by Prince de Carabas-Chenonceaux after Mlle. Jalabert had broken up her ladies' school in 1849.

My mother boarded and lodged there, with my little sister, in the summer of 1847. There were one or two other English lady boarders, half-pupils – much younger than my mother – indeed, they may be alive now. If they are, and this should happen to meet their eye, may I ask them to remember kindly the Irish wife of the Scotch merchant of French wines who supplied them with the innocent vintage of Mâcon (ah! who knows that innocence better than I?), and his pretty little daughter who played the piano so nicely; may I beg them also not to think it necessary to communicate with me on the subject, or, if they do, not to expect an answer?

One night Mlle. Jalabert gave a small dance, and Mérovée Brossard was invited, and also half a dozen of his favorite pupils, and a fair-haired English boy of thirteen danced with the beautiful Miss – .

They came to grief and fell together in a heap on the slippery floor; but no bones were broken, and there was much good-natured laughter at their expense. If Miss – (that was) is still among the quick, and remembers, it may interest her to know that that fair-haired English boy's name was no less than Bartholomew Josselin; and that another English boy, somewhat thick-set and stumpy, and not much to look at, held her in deep love, admiration, and awe – and has not forgotten!

If I happen to mention this, it is not with a view of tempting her into any correspondence about this little episode of bygone years, should this ever meet her eye.

The Sunday morning that followed Barty's début at Brossard's the boys went to church in the Rue de l'Église, Passy – and he with them, for he had been brought up a Roman Catholic. And I went round to Mlle. Jalabert's to see my mother and sister.

I told them all about the new boy, and they were much interested. Suddenly my mother exclaimed:

"Bartholomew Josselin? why, dear me! that must be Lord Runswick's son – Lord Runswick, who was the eldest son of the present Marquis of Whitby. He was in the 17th lancers with your uncle Charles, who was very fond of him. He left the army twenty years ago, and married Lady Selina Jobhouse – and his wife went mad. Then he fell in love with the famous Antoinette Josselin at the 'Bouffes,' and wanted so much to marry her that he tried to get a divorce; it was tried in the House of Lords, I believe; but he didn't succeed – so they – a – well – they contracted a – a *morganatic* marriage, you know; and your friend was born. And poor Lord Runswick was killed in a duel about a dog, when his son was two years old; and his mother left the stage, and – "

Just here the beautiful Miss – came in with her sister, and there was no more of Josselin's family history; and I forgot all about it for the day. For I passionately loved the beautiful Miss – ; I was just thirteen!

But next morning I said to him at breakfast, in English,

"Wasn't your father killed in a duel?"

"Yes," said Barty, looking grave.

"Wasn't he called Lord Runswick?"

"Yes," said Barty, looking graver still.

"Then why are you called Josselin?"

"Ask no questions and you'll get no lies," said Barty, looking very grave indeed – and I dropped the subject.

And here I may as well rapidly go through the well-known story of his birth and early childhood.

His father, Lord Runswick, fell desperately in love with the beautiful Antoinette Josselin after his own wife had gone hopelessly mad. He failed to obtain a divorce, naturally; Antoinette was as much in love with him, and they lived together as man and wife, and Barty was born. They were said to be the handsomest couple in Paris, and immensely popular among all who knew them, though of course society did not open its doors to la belle Madame de Ronsvic, as she was called.

She was the daughter of poor fisher-folk in Le Pollet, Dieppe. I, with Barty for a guide, have seen the lowly dwelling where her infancy and childhood were spent, and which Barty remembered well, and also such of her kin as was still alive in 1870, and felt it was good to come of such a race, humble as they were. They were physically splendid people, almost as splendid as Barty himself; and, as I was told by many who knew them well, as good to know and live with as they were good to look at – all that was easy to see – and their manners were delightful.

When Antoinette was twelve, she went to stay in Paris with her uncle and aunt, who were concierges to Prince Scorchakoff in the Rue du Faubourg St.-Honoré; next door, or next door but one, to the Élysée Bourbon, as it was called then. And there the Princess took a fancy to her, and had her carefully educated, especially in music; for the child had a charming voice and a great musical talent, besides being beautiful to the eye – gifts which her son inherited.

Then she became for three or four years a pupil at the Conservatoire, and finally went on the stage, and was soon one of the most brilliant stars of the Parisian theatre at its most brilliant period.

Then she met the handsome English lord, who was forty, and they fell in love with each other, and all happened as I have told.

In the spring of 1837 Lord Runswick was killed in a duel by Lieutenant Rondelis, of the deuxième Spahis. Antoinette's dog had jumped up to play with the lieutenant, who struck it with his cane (for he was "*en pékin*," it appears – in mufti); and Lord Runswick laid his own cane across the Frenchman's back; and next morning they fought with swords, by the Mare aux Biches, in the Bois

de Boulogne – a little secluded, sedgy pool, hardly more than six inches deep and six yards across. Barty and I have often skated there as boys.

The Englishman was run through at the first lunge, and fell dead on the spot.

A few years ago Barty met the son of the man who killed Lord Runswick – it was at the French Embassy in Albert Gate. They were introduced to each other, and M. Rondelis told Barty how his own father's life had been poisoned by sorrow and remorse at having had "la main si malheureuse" on that fatal morning by the Mare aux Biches.

Poor Antoinette, mad with grief, left the stage, and went with her little boy to live in the Pollet, near her parents. Three years later she died there, of typhus, and Barty was left an orphan and penniless; for Lord Runswick had been poor, and lived beyond his means, and died in debt.

Lord Archibald Rohan, a favorite younger brother of Runswick's (not the heir), came to Dieppe from Dover (where he was quartered with his regiment, the 7th Royal Fusileers) to see the boy, and took a fancy to him, and brought him back to Dover to show his wife, who was also French – a daughter of the old Gascon family of Lonlay-Savignac, who had gone into trade (chocolate) and become immensely rich. They (the Rohans) had been married eight years, and had as yet no children of their own. Lady Archibald was delighted with the child, who was quite beautiful. She fell in love with the little creature at the first sight of him – and fed him, on the evening of his arrival, with crumpets and buttered toast. And in return he danced "La Dieppoise" for her, and sang her a little ungrammatical ditty in praise of wine and women. It began:

"Beuvons, beuvons, beuvons donc
De ce vin le meilleur du monde ...
Beuvons, beuvons, beuvons donc
De ce vin, car il est très-bon!
Si je n'en beuvions pas,
J'aurions la pépi-e!
Ce qui me..."

I have forgotten the rest – indeed, I am not quite sure that it is fit for the drawing-room!

"Ah, mon Dieu! quel amour d'enfant! Oh! gardons-le!" cried my lady, and they kept him.

I can imagine the scene. Indeed, Lady Archibald has described it to me, and Barty remembered it well. It was his earliest English recollection, and he has loved buttered toast and crumpets ever since – as well as women and wine. And thus he was adopted by the Archibald Rohans. They got him an English governess and a pony; and in two years he went to a day school in Dover, kept by a Miss Stone, who is actually alive at present and remembers him well; and so he became quite a little English boy, but kept up his French through Lady Archibald, who was passionately devoted to him, although by this time she had a little daughter of her own, whom Barty always looked upon as his sister, and who is now dead. (She became Lord Frognal's wife – he died in 1870 – and she afterwards married Mr. Justice Robertson.)

Barty's French grandfather and grandmother came over from Dieppe once a year to see him, and were well pleased with the happy condition, of his new life; and the more Lord and Lady Archibald saw of these grandparents of his, the more pleased they were that he had become the child of their adoption. For they were first-rate people to descend from, these simple toilers of the sea; better, perhaps, *cæteris paribus*, than even the Rohans themselves.

All this early phase of little Josselin's life seems to have been singularly happy. Every year at Christmas he went with the Rohans to Castle Rohan in Yorkshire, where his English grandfather lived, the Marquis of Whitby – and where he was petted and made much of by all the members, young and old (especially female), of that very ancient family, which had originally come from Brittany in France, as the name shows; but were not millionaires, and never had been.

Often, too, they went to Paris – and in 1847 Colonel Lord Archibald sold out, and they elected to go and live there, in the Rue du Bac; and Barty was sent to the Institution F. Brossard, where he was soon destined to become the most popular boy, with boys and masters alike, that had ever been in the school (in any school, I should think), in spite of conduct that was too often the reverse of exemplary.

Indeed, even from his early boyhood he was the most extraordinarily gifted creature I have ever known, or even heard of; a kind of spontaneous humorous Crichton, to whom all things came easily – and life itself as an uncommonly good joke. During that summer term of 1847 I did not see very much of him. He was in the class below mine, and took up with Laferté and little Bussy-Rabutin, who were first-rate boys, and laughed at everything he said, and worshipped him. So did everybody else, sooner or later; indeed, it soon became evident that he was a most exceptional little person.

In the first place, his beauty was absolutely angelic, as will be readily believed by all who have known him since. The mere sight of him as a boy made people pity his father and mother for being dead!

Then he had a charming gift of singing little French and English ditties, comic or touching, with his delightful fresh young pipe, and accompanying himself quite nicely on either piano or guitar without really knowing a note of music. Then he could draw caricatures that we boys thought inimitable, much funnier than Cham's or Bertall's or Gavarni's, and collected and treasured up. I have dozens of them now – they make me laugh still, and bring back memories of which the charm is indescribable; and their pathos, to me!

And then how funny he was himself, without effort, and with a fun that never failed! He was a born buffoon of the graceful kind – more whelp or kitten than monkey – ever playing the fool, in and out of season, but somehow always *à propos*; and French boys love a boy for that more than anything else; or did, in those days.

Such very simple buffooneries as they were, too – that gave him (and us) such stupendous delight!

For instance – he is sitting at evening study between Bussy-Rabutin and Laferté; M. Bonzig is usher for the evening.

At 8.30 Bussy-Rabutin gives way; in a whisper he informs Barty that he means to take a nap ("*piquer un chien*"), with his Gradus opened before him, and his hand supporting his weary brow as though in deep study. "But," says he —

"If Bonzig finds me out (*si Bonzig me colle*), give me a gentle nudge!"

"All right!" says Barty – and off goes Bussy-Rabutin into his snooze.

8.45. – Poor fat little Laferté falls into a snooze too, after giving Barty just the same commission – to nudge him directly he's found out from the *chaire*.

8.55. – Intense silence; everybody hard at work. Even Bonzig is satisfied with the deep stillness and studious *recueillement* that brood over the scene – steady pens going – quick turning over of leaves of the Gradus ad Parnassum. Suddenly Barty sticks out his elbows and nudges both his neighbors at once, and both jump up, exclaiming, in a loud voice:

"Non, m'sieur, je n'dors pas. J'travaille."

Sensation. Even Bonzig laughs – and Barty is happy for a week.

Or else, again – a new usher, Monsieur Goupillon (from Gascony) is on duty in the school-room during afternoon school. He has a peculiar way of saying "*oê, vô!*" instead of "*oui, vous!*" to any boy who says "moi, m'sieur?" on being found fault with; and perceiving this, Barty manages to be found fault with every five minutes, and always says "moi, m'sieur?" so as to elicit the "*oê, vô!*" that gives him such delight.

At length M. Goupillon says,

"Josselin, if you force me to say '*oê, vô!*' to you once more, you shall be *à la retenue* for a week!"

"Moi, m'sieur?" says Josselin, quite innocently.

"Oê, vô!" shouts M. Goupillon, glaring with all his might, but quite unconscious that Barty has earned the threatened punishment! And again Barty is happy for a week. And so are we.

Such was Barty's humor, as a boy – mere drivel – but of such a kind that even his butts were fond of him. He would make M. Bonzig laugh in the middle of his severest penal sentences, and thus demoralize the whole school-room and set a shocking example, and be ordered *à la porte* of the *salle d'études* – an exile which was quite to his taste; for he would go straight off to the *lingerie* and entertain Mlle. Marceline and Constance and Félicité (who all three adored him) with comic songs and break-downs of his own invention, and imitations of everybody in the school. He was a born histrion – a kind of French Arthur Roberts – but very beautiful to the female eye, and also always dear to the female heart – a most delightful gift of God!

Then he was constantly being sent for when boys' friends and parents came to see them, that he might sing and play the fool and show off his tricks, and so forth. It was one of M. Mérovée's greatest delights to put him through his paces. The message "on demande Monsieur Josselin au parloir" would be brought down once or twice a week, sometimes even in class or school room, and became quite a by-word in the school; and many of the masters thought it a mistake and a pity. But Barty by no means disliked being made much of and showing off in this genial manner.

He could turn le père Brossard round his little finger, and Mérovée too. Whenever an extra holiday was to be begged for, or a favor obtained for any one, or the severity of a *pensum* mitigated, Barty was the messenger, and seldom failed.

His constitution, inherited from a long line of frugal seafaring Norman ancestors (not to mention another long line of well-fed, well-bred Yorkshire Squires), was magnificent. His spirits never failed. He could see the satellites of Jupiter with the naked eye; this was often tested by M. Dumollard, maître de mathématiques (et de cosmographie), who had a telescope, which, with a little good-will on the gazer's part, made Jupiter look as big as the moon, and its moons like stars of the first magnitude.

His sense of hearing was also exceptionally keen. He could hear a watch tick in the next room, and perceive very high sounds to which ordinary human ears are deaf (this was found out later); and when we played blind-man's-buff on a rainy day, he could, blindfolded, tell every boy he caught hold of – not by feeling him all over like the rest of us, but by the mere smell of his hair, or his hands, or his blouse! No wonder he was so much more alive than the rest of us! According to the amiable, modest, polite, delicately humorous, and even tolerant and considerate Professor Max Nordau, this perfection of the olfactory sense proclaims poor Barty a degenerate! I only wish there were a few more like him, and that I were a little more like him myself!

By-the-way, how proud young Germany must feel of its enlightened Max, and how fond of him, to be sure! Mes compliments!

But the most astounding thing of all (it seems incredible, but all the world knows it by this time, and it will be accounted for later on) is that at certain times and seasons Barty knew by an infallible instinct *where the north was*, to a point. Most of my readers will remember his extraordinary evidence as a witness in the "Rangoon" trial, and how this power was tested in open court, and how important were the issues involved, and how he refused to give any explanation of a gift so extraordinary.

It was often tried at school by blindfolding him, and turning him round and round till he was giddy, and asking him to point out where the north pole was, or the north star, and seven or eight times out of ten the answer was unerringly right. When he failed, he knew beforehand that for the time being he had lost the power, but could never say why. Little Doctor Larcher could never get over his surprise at this strange phenomenon, nor explain it, and often brought some scientific friend from Paris to test it, who was equally nonplussed.

When cross-examined, Barty would merely say: "Quelquefois je sais – quelquefois je ne sais pas – mais quand je sais, je sais, et il n'y a pas à s'y tromper!"

Indeed, on one occasion that I remember well, a very strange thing happened; he not only pointed out the north with absolute accuracy, as he stood carefully blindfolded in the gymnastic

ground, after having been turned and twisted again and again – but, still blindfolded, he vaulted the wire fence and ran round to the refectory door which served as the home at rounders, all of us following; and there he danced a surprising dance of his own invention, that he called "La Paladine," the most humorously graceful and grotesque exhibition I ever saw; and then, taking a ball out of his pocket, he shouted: "À l'amandier!" and threw the ball. Straight and swift it flew, and hit the almond-tree, which was quite twenty yards off; and after this he ran round the yard from base to base, as at "la balle au camp," till he reached the camp again.

"If ever he goes blind," said the wondering M. Mérovée, "he'll never need a dog to lead him about."

"He must have some special friend above!" said Madame Germain (Mérovée's sister, who was looking on).

Prophetic words! I have never forgotten them, nor the tear that glistened in each of her kind eyes as she spoke. She was a deeply religious and very emotional person, and loved Barty almost as if he were a child of her own.

Such women have strange intuitions.

Barty was often asked to repeat this astonishing performance before sceptical people – parents of boys, visitors, etc. – who had been told of it, and who believed he could not have been properly blindfolded; but he could never be induced to do so.

There was no mistake about the blindfolding – I helped in it myself; and he afterwards told me the whole thing was "aussi simple que bonjour" if once he felt the north – for then, with his back to the refectory door, he knew exactly the position and distance of every tree from where he was.

"It's all nonsense about my going blind and being able to do without a dog" – he added; "I should be just as helpless as any other blind man, unless I was in a place I knew as well as my own pocket – like this play-ground! Besides, *I* sha'n't go blind; nothing will ever happen to *my* eyes – they're the strongest and best in the whole school!"

He said this exultingly, dilating his nostrils and chest; and looked proudly up and around, like Ajax defying the lightning.

"But what *do* you feel when you feel the north, Barty – a kind of tingling?" I asked.

"Oh – I feel where it is – as if I'd got a mariner's compass trembling inside my stomach – and as if I wasn't afraid of anybody or anything in the world – as if I could go and have my head chopped off and not care a fig."

"Ah, well – I can't make it out – I give it up," I exclaimed.

"So do I," exclaims Barty.

"But tell me, Barty," I whispered, "*have* you – have you *really* got a – a —*special friend above?*"

"Ask no questions and you'll get no lies," said Barty, and winked at me one eye after the other – and went about his business. And I about mine.

Thus it is hardly to be wondered at that the spirit of this extraordinary boy seemed to pervade the Pension F. Brossard, almost from the day he came to the day he left it – a slender stripling over six feet high, beautiful as Apollo but, alas! without his degree, and not an incipient hair on his lip or chin!

Of course the boy had his faults. He had a tremendous appetite, and was rather greedy – so was I, for that matter – and we were good customers to la mère Jaurion; especially he, for he always had lots of pocket-money, and was fond of standing treat all round. Yet, strange to say, he had such a loathing of meat that soon by special favoritism a separate dish of eggs and milk and succulent vegetables was cooked expressly for him – a savory mess that made all our mouths water merely to see and smell it, and filled us with envy, it was so good. Aglaé the cook took care of that!

"C'était pour Monsieur Josselin!"

And of this he would eat as much as three ordinary boys could eat of anything in the world.

Then he was quick-tempered and impulsive, and in frequent fights – in which he generally came off second best; for he was fond of fighting with bigger boys than himself. Victor or vanquished, he

never bore malice – nor woke it in others, which is worse. But he would slap a face almost as soon as look at it, on rather slight provocation, I'm afraid – especially if it were an inch or two higher up than his own. And he was fond of showing off, and always wanted to throw farther and jump higher and run faster than any one else. Not, indeed, that he ever wished to *mentally* excel, or particularly admired those who did!

Also, he was apt to judge folk too much by their mere outward appearance and manner, and not very fond of dull, ugly, commonplace people – the very people, unfortunately, who were fondest of him; he really detested them, almost as much as they detest each other, in spite of many sterling qualities of the heart and head they sometimes possess. And yet he was their victim through life – for he was very soft, and never had the heart to snub the deadliest bores he ever writhed under, even undeserving ones! Like – , or – , or the Bishop of – , or Lord Justice – , or General – , or Admiral – , or the Duke of – , etc., etc.

And he very unjustly disliked people of the bourgeois type – the respectable middle class, *quorum pars magna fui*! Especially if we were very well off and successful, and thought ourselves of some consequence (as we now very often are, I beg to say), and showed it (as, I'm afraid, we sometimes do). He preferred the commonest artisan to M. Jourdain, the bourgeois gentleman, who was a very decent fellow, after all, and at least clean in his habits, and didn't use bad language or beat his wife!

Poor dear Barty! what would have become of all those priceless copyrights and royalties and what not if his old school-fellow hadn't been a man of business? And where would Barty himself have been without his wife, who came from that very class?

And his admiration for an extremely good-looking person, even of his own sex, even a scavenger or a dustman, was almost snobbish. It was like a well-bred, well-educated Englishman's frank fondness for a noble lord.

And next to physical beauty he admired great physical strength; and I sometimes think that it is to my possession of this single gift I owe some of the warm friendship I feel sure he always bore me; for though he was a strong man, and topped me by an inch or two, I was stronger still – as a cart-horse is stronger than a racer.

For his own personal appearance, of which he always took the greatest care, he had a naïve admiration that he did not disguise. His candor in this respect was comical; yet, strange to say, he was really without vanity.

When he was in the Guards he would tell you quite frankly he was "the handsomest chap in all the Household Brigade, bar three" – just as he would tell you he was twenty last birthday. And the fun of it was that the three exceptions he was good enough to make, splendid fellows as they were, seemed as satyrs to Hyperion when compared with Barty Josselin. One (F. Pepys) was three or four inches taller, it is true, being six foot seven or eight – a giant. The two others had immense whiskers, which Barty openly envied, but could not emulate – and the mustache with which he would have been quite decently endowed in time was not permitted in an infantry regiment.

To return to the Pension Brossard, and Barty the school-boy:

He adored Monsieur Mérovée because he was big and strong and handsome – not because he was one of the best fellows that ever lived. He disliked Monsieur Durosier, whom we were all so fond of, because he had a slight squint and a receding chin.

As for the Anglophobe, Monsieur Dumollard, who made no secret of his hatred and contempt for perfidious Albion...

"Dis donc, Josselin!" says Maurice, in English or French, as the case might be, "why don't you like Monsieur Dumollard? Eh? He always favors you more than any other chap in the school. I suppose you dislike him because he hates the English so, and always runs them down before you and me – and says they're all traitors and sneaks and hypocrites and bullies and cowards and liars and snobs; and we can't answer him, because he's the mathematical master!"

"Ma foi, non!" says Josselin – "c'est pas pour ça!"

"Pourquoi, alors?" says Maurice (that's me).

"C'est parce qu'il a le pied bourgeois et la jambe canaille!" says Barty. (It's because he's got common legs and vulgar feet.)

And that's about the lowest and meanest thing I ever heard him say in his life.

Also, he was not always very sympathetic, as a boy, when one was sick or sorry or out of sorts, for he had never been ill in his life, never known an ache or a pain – except once the mumps, which he seemed to thoroughly enjoy – and couldn't realize suffering of any kind, except such suffering as most school-boys all over the world are often fond of inflicting on dumb animals: this drove him frantic, and led to many a licking by bigger boys. I remember several such scenes – one especially.

One frosty morning in January, '48, just after breakfast, Jolivet trois (tertius) put a sparrow into his squirrel's cage, and the squirrel caught it in its claws, and cracked its skull like a nut and sucked its brain, while the poor bird still made a desperate struggle for life, and there was much laughter.

There was also, in consequence, a quick fight between Jolivet and Josselin; in which Barty got the worst, as usual – his foe was two years older, and quite an inch taller.

Afterwards, as the licked one sat on the edge of a small stone tank full of water and dabbed his swollen eye with a wet pocket-handkerchief, M. Dumollard, the mathematical master, made cheap fun of Britannic sentimentality about animals, and told us how the English noblesse were privileged to beat their wives with sticks no thicker than their ankles, and sell them "*au rabais*" in the horse-market of Smissfeld; and that they paid men to box each other to death on the stage of Drury Lane, and all that – deplorable things that we all know and are sorry for and ashamed, but cannot put a stop to.

The boys laughed, of course; they always did when Dumollard tried to be funny, "and many a joke had he," although his wit never degenerated into mere humor.

But they were so fond of Barty that they forgave him his insular affectation; some even helped him to dab his sore eye; among them Jolivet trois himself, who was a very good-natured chap, and very good-looking into the bargain; and he had received from Barty a sore eye too —*gallicè*, "un pochon" —*scholasticè*, "un œil au beurre noir!"

By-the-way, I fought with Jolivet once – about Æsop's fables! He said that Æsop was a lame poet of Lacedæmon – I, that Æsop was a little hunchback Armenian Jew; and I stuck to it. It was a Sunday afternoon, on the terrace by the lingerie.

He kicked as hard as he could, so I had to kick too. Mlle. Marceline ran out with Constance and Félicité and tried to separate us, and got kicked by both (unintentionally, of course). Then up came Père Jaurion and kicked *me*! And they all took Jolivet's part, and said I was in the wrong, because I was English! What did *they* know about Æsop! So we made it up, and went in Jaurion's loge and stood each other a blomboudingue on tick – and called Jaurion bad names.

"Comme c'est bête, de s'battre, hein?" said Jolivet, and I agreed with him. I don't know which of us really got the worst of it, for we hadn't disfigured each other in the least – and that's the best of kicking. Anyhow he was two years older than I, and three or four inches taller; so I'm glad, on the whole, that that small battle was interrupted.

It is really not for brag that I have lugged in this story – at least, I hope not. One never quite knows.

To go back to Barty: he was the most generous boy in the school. If I may paraphrase an old saying, he really didn't seem to know the difference betwixt tuum et meum. Everything he had, books, clothes, pocket-money – even agate marbles, those priceless possessions to a French school-boy – seemed to be also everybody else's who chose. I came across a very characteristic letter of his the other day, written from the Pension Brossard to his favorite aunt, Lady Caroline Grey (one of the Rohans), who adored him. It begins:

"My Dear Aunt Caroline, – Thank you so much for the magnifying-glass, which is not only magnifying, but magnifique. Don't trouble to send any more

gingerbread-nuts, as the boys are getting rather tired of them, especially Laferté and Bussy-Rabutin. I think we should all like some Scotch marmalade," etc., etc.

And though fond of romancing a little now and then, and embellishing a good story, he was absolutely truthful in important matters, and to be relied upon implicitly.

He seemed also to be quite without the sense of physical fear – a kind of callousness.

Such, roughly, was the boy who lived to write the *Motes in a Moonbeam* and *La quatrième Dimension* before he was thirty; and such, roughly, he remained through life, except for one thing: he grew to be the very soul of passionate and compassionate sympathy, as who doesn't feel who has ever read a page of his work, or even had speech with him for half an hour?

Whatever weaknesses he yielded to when he grew to man's estate are such as the world only too readily condones in many a famous man less tempted than Josselin was inevitably bound to be through life. Men of the Josselin type (there are not many – he stands pretty much alone) can scarcely be expected to journey from adolescence to middle age with that impeccable decorum which I – and no doubt many of my masculine readers – have found it so easy to achieve, and find it now so pleasant to remember and get credit for. Let us think of *The Footprints of Aurora*, or *Étoiles mortes*, or *Déjanire et Dalila*, or even *Les Trépassées de François Villon*!

Then let us look at Rajon's etching of Watts's portrait of him (the original is my own to look at whenever I like, and that is pretty often). And then let us not throw too many big stones, or too hard, at Barty Josselin.

Well, the summer term of 1847 wore smoothly to its close – a happy "trimestre" during which the Institution F. Brossard reached the high-water mark of its prosperity.

There were sixty boys to be taught, and six house-masters to teach them, besides a few highly paid outsiders for special classes – such as the lively M. Durosier for French literature, and M. le Professeur Martineau for the higher mathematics, and so forth; and crammers and coaches for St.-Cyr, the Polytechnic School, the École des Ponts et Chaussées.

Also fencing-masters, gymnastic masters, a Dutch master who taught us German and Italian – an Irish master with a lovely brogue who taught us English. Shall I ever forget the blessed day when ten or twelve of us were presented with an *Ivanhoe* apiece as a class-book, or how Barty and I and Bonneville (who knew English) devoured the immortal story in less than a week – to the disgust of Rapaud, who refused to believe that we could possibly know such a beastly tongue as English well enough to read an English book for mere pleasure – on our desks in play-time, or on our laps in school, *en cachette*! "Quelle sacrée pose!"

He soon mislaid his own copy, did Rapaud; just as he mislaid my *Monte Cristo* and Jolivet's illustrated *Wandering Jew* – and it was always:

"Dis donc, Maurice! – prête-moi ton *Ivanhoé*!" (with an accent on the e), whenever he had to construe his twenty lines of Valtère Scott – and what a hash he made of them!

Sometimes M. Brossard himself would come, smoking his big meerschaum, and help the English class during preparation, and put us up to a thing or two worth knowing.

"Rapaud, comment dit-on '*pouvoir*' en anglais?"

"Sais pas, m'sieur!"

"Comment, petit crétin, tu ne sais pas!"

And Rapaud would receive a *pincée tordue* – a "twisted pinch" – on the back of his arm to quicken his memory.

"Oh, là, là!" he would howl – "je n' sais pas!"

"Et toi, Maurice?"

"Ça se dit '*to be able*,' m'sieur!" I would say.

"Mais non, mon ami – tu oublies ta langue natale – ça se dit, '*to can*!' Maintenant, comment dirais-tu en anglais, '*je voudrais pouvoir*'?"

"Je dirais, '*I would like to be able*.'"

"Comment, encore! petit cancre! allons – tu es Anglais – tu sais bien que tu dirais, '*I would vill to can*'!"

Then M. Brossard turns to Barty: "A ton tour, Josselin!"

"Moi, m'sieur?" says Barty.

"Oui, toi! – comment dirais-tu, '*je pourrais vouloir*'?"

"Je dirais '*I would can to vill*,'" says Barty, quite unabashed.

"À la bonne heure! au moins tu sais ta langue, toi!" says Père Brossard, and pats him on the cheek; while Barty winks at me, the wink of successful time-serving hypocrisy, and Bonneville writhes with suppressed delight.

What lives most in my remembrance of that summer is the lovely weather we had, and the joy of the Passy swimming-bath every Thursday and Sunday from two till five or six; it comes back to me even now in heavenly dreams by night. I swim with giant side-strokes all round the Île des Cygnes between Passy and Grenelle, where the École de Natation was moored for the summer months.

Round and round the isle I go, up stream and down, and dive and float and wallow with bliss there is no telling – till the waters all dry up and disappear, and I am left wading in weeds and mud and drift and drought and desolation, and wake up shivering – and such is life.

As for Barty, he was all but amphibious, and reminded me of the seal at the Jardin des Plantes. He really seemed to spend most of the afternoon under water, coming up to breathe now and then at unexpected moments, with a stone in his mouth that he had picked up from the slimy bottom ten or twelve feet below – or a weed – or a dead mussel.

Part Second

"Laissons les regrets et les pleurs
À la vieillesse;
Jeunes, il faut cueillir les fleurs
De la jeunesse!" – Baïf.

Sometimes we spent the Sunday morning in Paris, Barty and I – in picture-galleries and museums and wax-figure shows, churches and cemeteries, and the Hôtel Cluny and the Baths of Julian the Apostate – or the Jardin des Plantes, or the Morgue, or the knackers' yards at Montfaucon – or lovely slums. Then a swim at the Bains Deligny. Then lunch at some restaurant on the Quai Voltaire, or in the Quartier Latin. Then to some café on the Boulevards, drinking our demi-tasse and our chasse-café, and smoking our cigarettes like men, and picking our teeth like gentlemen of France.

Once after lunch at Vachette's with Berquin (who was seventeen) and Bonneville (the marquis who had got an English mother), we were sitting outside the Café des Variétés, in the midst of a crowd of consommateurs, and tasting to the full the joy of being alive, when a poor woman came up with a guitar, and tried to sing "Le petit mousse noir," a song Barty knew quite well – but she couldn't sing a bit, and nobody listened.

"Allons, Josselin, chante-nous ça!" said Berquin.

And Bonneville jumped up, and took the woman's guitar from her, and forced it into Josselin's hands, while the crowd became much interested and began to applaud.

Thus encouraged, Barty, who never in all his life knew what it is to be shy, stood up and piped away like a bird; and when he had finished the story of the little black cabin-boy who sings in the maintop halliards, the applause was so tremendous that he had to stand up on a chair and sing another, and yet another.

"Écoute-moi bien, ma Fleurette!" and "Amis, la matinée est belle!" (from *La Muette de Portici*), while the pavement outside the Variétés was rendered quite impassable by the crowd that had gathered round to look and listen – and who all joined in the chorus:

"Conduis ta barque avec prudence,
Pêcheur! parle bas!
Jette tes filets en silence
Pêcheur! parle bas!
Et le roi des mers ne nous échappera pas!" (*bis*).

and the applause was deafening.

Meanwhile Bonneville and Berquin went round with the hat and gathered quite a considerable sum, in which there seemed to be almost as much silver as copper – and actually *two five-franc pieces and an English half-sovereign!* The poor woman wept with gratitude at coming into such a fortune, and insisted on kissing Barty's hand. Indeed it was a quite wonderful ovation, considering how unmistakably British was Barty's appearance, and how unpopular we were in France just then!

He had his new shiny black silk chimney-pot hat on, and his Eton jacket, with the wide shirt collar. Berquin, in a tightly fitting double-breasted brown cloth swallow-tailed coat with brass buttons, yellow nankin bell-mouthed trousers strapped over varnished boots, butter-colored gloves, a blue satin stock, and a very tall hairy hat with a wide curly brim, looked such an out-and-out young gentleman of France that we were all proud of being seen in his company – especially young de Bonneville, who was still in mourning for his father and wore a crape band round his arm, and a common cloth

cap with a leather peak, and thick blucher boots; though he was quite sixteen, and already had a little black mustache like an eyebrow, and inhaled the smoke of his cigarette without coughing and quite naturally, and ordered the waiters about just as if he already wore the uniform of the École St.-Cyr, for which he destined himself (and was not disappointed. He should be a marshal of France by now – perhaps he is).

Then we went to the Café Mulhouse on the Boulevard des Italiens (on the "*Boul. des It.*," as we called it, to be in the fashion) – that we might gaze at Señor Joaquin Eliezegui, the Spanish giant, who was eight feet high and a trifle over (or under – I forget which): he told us himself. Barty had a passion for gazing at very tall men; like Frederic the Great (or was it his Majesty's royal father?).

Then we went to the Boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle, where, in a painted wooden shed, a most beautiful Circassian slave, miraculously rescued from some abominable seraglio in Constantinople, sold pen'orths of "galette du gymnase." On her raven hair she wore a silk turban all over sequins, silver and gold, with a yashmak that fell down behind, leaving her adorable face exposed: she had an amber vest of silk, embroidered with pearls as big as walnuts, and Turkish pantalettes – what her slippers were we couldn't see, but they must have been lovely, like all the rest of her. Barty had a passion for gazing at very beautiful female faces – like his father before him.

There was a regular queue of postulants to see this heavenly Eastern houri and buy her confection, which is very like Scotch butter-cake, but not so digestible; and even more filling at the price. And three of us sat on a bench, while three times running Barty took his place in that procession – soldiers, sailors, workmen, chiffonniers, people of all sorts, women as many as men – all of them hungry for galette, but hungrier still for a good humanizing stare at a beautiful female face; and he made the slow and toilsome journey to the little wooden booth three times – and brought us each a pen'orth on each return journey; and the third time, Katidjah (such was her sweet Oriental name) leaned forward over her counter and kissed him on both cheeks, and whispered in his ear (in English – and with the accent of Stratford-atte-Bowe):

"You little *duck*! your name is *Brown*, I know!"

And he came away, his face pale with conflicting emotions, and told us!

How excited we were! Bonneville (who spoke English quite well) went for a pen'orth on his own account, and said: "My name's Brown too, Miss Katidjah!" But he didn't get a kiss.

(She soon after married a Mr. – , of – , the well-known – of – shire, in – land. She may be alive now.)

Then to the Palais Royal, to dine at the "Dîner Européen" with M. Berquin père, a famous engineer; and finally to stalls at the "Français" to see the two first acts of *Le Cid*; and this was rather an anticlimax – for we had too much "Cid" at the Institution F. Brossard already!

And then, at last, to the omnibus station in the Rue de Rivoli, whence the "Accélérées" (en correspondance avec les Constantines) started for Passy every ten minutes; and thus, up the gas-lighted Champs-Élysées, and by the Arc de Triomphe, to the Rond-point de l'Avenue de St.-Cloud; tired out, but happy – happy – happy *comme on ne l'est plus*!

Before the school broke up for the holidays there were very severe examinations – but no "distribution de prix"; we were above that kind of thing at Brossard's, just as we were above wearing a uniform or taking in day boarders.

Barty didn't come off very well in this competition; but he came off anyhow much better than I, who had failed to be "diligent and attentive" – too much *Monte Cristo*, I'm afraid.

At all events Barty got five marks for English History, because he remembered a good deal about Richard Cœur de Lion, and John, and Friar Tuck, and Robin Hood, and especially one Cedric the Saxon, a historical personage of whom the examiner (a decorated gentleman from the Collège de France) had never even heard!

And then (to the tune of "Au clair de la lune"):

"Vivent les vacances —
Denique tandèm;
Et les pénitences —
Habebunt finèm!
Les pions intraitables,
Vultu Barbarò,
S'en iront aux diables,
Gaudio nostrò."

N.B. – The accent is always on the last syllable in French Latin – and *pion* means an usher.

Barty went to Yorkshire with the Rohans, and I spent most of my holidays with my mother and sister (and the beautiful Miss –) at Mademoiselle Jalabert's, next door – coming back to school for most of my meals, and at night to sleep, with a whole dormitory to myself, and no dreadful bell at five in the morning; and so much time to spare that I never found any leisure for my holiday task, that skeleton at the feast; no more did Jules, the sergeant's son; no more did Caillard, who spent his vacation at Brossard's because his parents lived in Russia, and his "correspondant" in Paris was ill.

The only master who remained behind was Bonzig, who passed his time painting ships and sailors, in oil-colors; it was a passion with him: corvettes, brigantines, British whalers, fishing-smacks, revenue-cutters, feluccas, caïques, even Chinese junks – all was fish that came to his net. He got them all from *La France Maritime*, an illustrated periodical much in vogue at Brossard's; and also his storms and his calms, his rocks and piers and light-houses – for he had never seen the sea he was so fond of. He took us every morning to the Passy swimming-baths, and in the afternoon for long walks in Paris, and all about and around, and especially to the Musée de Marine at the Louvre, that we might gaze with him at the beautiful models of three-deckers.

He evidently pitied our forlorn condition, and told us delightful stories about seafaring life, like Mr. Clark Russell's; and how he, some day, hoped to see the ocean for himself before he died – and with his own eyes.

I really don't know how Jules and Caillard would have got through the hideous *ennui* of that idle September without him. Even I, with my mother and sister and the beautiful Miss – within such easy reach, found time hang heavily at times. One can't be always reading, even Alexandre Dumas; nor always loafing about, even in Paris, by one's self (Jules and Caillard were not allowed outside the gates without Bonzig); and beautiful English girls of eighteen, like Miss – s, don't always want a small boy dangling after them, and show it sometimes; which I thought very hard.

It was almost a relief when school began again in October, and the boys came back with their wonderful stories of the good time they had all had (especially some of the big boys, who were "en rhétorique et en philosophie") – and all the game that had fallen to their guns – wild-boars, roebucks, cerfs-dix-cors, and what not; of perilous swims in stormy seas – tremendous adventures in fishing-smacks on moonlight nights (it seemed that the moon had been at the full all through those wonderful six weeks); rides *ventre à terre* on mettlesome Arab steeds through gloomy wolf-haunted forests with charming female cousins; flirtations and "good fortunes" with beautiful but not happily married women in old mediæval castle keeps. Toujours au clair de la lune! They didn't believe each other in the least, these gay young romancers – nor expect to be believed themselves; but it was very exciting all the same; and they listened, and were listened to in turn, without a gesture of incredulity – nor even a smile! And we small boys held our tongues in reverence and awe.

When Josselin came back he had wondrous things to tell too – but so preposterous that they disbelieved him quite openly, and told him so. How in London he had seen a poor woman so tipsy in the street that she had to be carried away by two policemen on a stretcher. How he had seen brewers' dray-horses nearly six feet high at the shoulder – and one or two of them with a heavy cavalry mustache drooping from its upper lip.

How he had been presented to the Lord Mayor of London, and even shaken hands with him, in Leadenhall Market, and that his Lordship was quite plainly dressed; and how English Lord Mayors were not necessarily "hommes du monde," nor always hand in glove with Queen Victoria!

Splendide mendax!

But they forgave him all his mendacity for the sake of a new accomplishment he had brought back with him, and which beat all his others. He could actually turn a somersault backwards with all the ease and finish of a professional acrobat. How he got to do this I don't know. It must have been natural to him and he never found it out before; he was always good at gymnastics – and all things that required grace and agility more than absolute strength.

Also he brought back with him (from Leadenhall Market, no doubt) a gigantic horned owl, fairly tame – and with eyes that reminded us of le grand Bonzig's.

School began, and with it the long evenings with an hour's play by lamp-light in the warm salle d'études; and the cold lamp-lit ninety minutes' preparation on an empty stomach, after the short perfunctory morning prayer – which didn't differ much from the evening one.

Barty was still *en cinquième*, at the top! and I at the tail of the class immediately above – so near and yet so far! so I did not have many chances of improving my acquaintance with him that term; for he still stuck to Laferté and Bussy-Rabutin – they were inseparable, those three.

At mid-day play-time the weather was too cold for anything but games, which were endless in their variety and excitement; it would take a chapter to describe them.

It is a mistake to think that French school-boys are (or were) worse off than ours in this. I will not say that any one French game is quite so good as cricket or football for a permanency. But I remember a great many that are very nearly so.

Indeed, French rounders (*la balle au camp*) seems to me the best game that ever was – on account of the quick rush and struggle of the fielders to get home when an inside boy is hit between the bases, lest he should pick the ball up in time to hit one of them with it before the camp is reached; in which case there is a most exciting scrimmage for the ball, etc., etc.

Barty was good at all games, especially *la balle au camp*. I used to envy the graceful, easy way he threw the ball – so quick and straight it seemed to have no curve at all in its trajectory: and how it bounded off the boy it nearly always hit between the shoulders!

At evening, play in the school-room, besides draughts and chess and backgammon; M. Bonzig, when *de service*, would tell us thrilling stories, with "la suite au prochain numéro" when the bell rang at 7.30; a long series that lasted through the winter of '47-'48. *Le Tueur de Daims*, *Le Lac Ontario*, *Le Dernier des Mohicans*, *Les Pionniers*, *La Prairie* – by one Fénimore Coupère; all of which he had read in M. Defauconpret's admirable translations. I have read some of them in their native American since then, myself. I loved them always – but they seemed to lack some of the terror, the freshness, and the charm his fluent utterance and solemn nasal voice put into them as he sat and smoked his endless cigarettes with his back against the big stone stove, and his eyes dancing sideways through his glasses. Never did that "ding-dang-dong" sound more hateful than when le grand Bonzig was telling the tale of Bas-de-cuir's doings, from his innocent youth to his noble and pathetic death by sunset, with his ever-faithful and still-serviceable but no longer deadly rifle (the friend of sixty years) lying across his knees. I quote from memory; what a gun that was!

Then on Thursdays, long walks, two by two, in Paris, with Bonzig or Dumollard; or else in the Bois to play rounders or prisoners' base in a clearing, or skate on the Mare aux Biches, which was always so hard to find in the dense thicket ... poor Lord Runswick! *He* found it once too often!

La Mare d'Auteuil was too deep, and too popular with "la flotte de Passy," as we called the Passy voyous, big and small, who came there in their hundreds – to slide and pick up quarrels with well-dressed and respectable school-boys. Liberté – égalité – fraternité! ou la mort! Vive la république! (This, by-the-way, applies to the winter that came *next*.)

So time wore on with us gently; through the short vacation at New-year's day till the 23d or 24th of February, when the Revolution broke out, and Louis Philippe premier had to fly for his life. It was a very troublous time, and the school for a whole week was in a state of quite heavenly demoralization! Ten times a day, or in the dead of night, the drum would beat *le rappel* or *la générale*. A warm wet wind was blowing – the most violent wind I can remember that was not an absolute gale. It didn't rain, but the clouds hurried across the sky all day long, and the tops of the trees tried to bend themselves in two; and their leafless boughs and black broken twigs littered the deserted playground – for we all sat on the parapet of the terrace by the lingerie; boys and servants, le père et la mère Jaurion, Mlle. Marceline and the rest, looking towards Paris – all feeling bound to each other by a common danger, like wild beasts in a flood. Dear me! I'm out of breath from sheer pleasure in the remembrance.

One night we had to sleep on the floor for fear of stray bullets; and that was a fearful joy never to be forgotten – it almost kept us awake! Peering out of the school-room windows at dusk, we saw great fires, three or four at a time. Suburban retreats of the over-wealthy, in full conflagration; and all day the rattle of distant musketry and the boom of cannon a long way off, near Montmartre and Montfaucon, kept us alive.

Most of the boys went home, and some of them never came back – and from that day the school began to slowly decline. Père Brossard – an ancient "Brigand de la Loire," as the republicans of his youth were called – was elected a representative of his native town at the Chamber of Deputies; and possibly that did the school more harm than good – ne sutor ultra crepidam! as he was so fond of impressing on *us*!

However, we went on pretty much as usual through spring and summer – with occasional alarms (which we loved), and beatings of *le rappel*– till the July insurrection broke out.

My mother and sister had left Mlle. Jalabert's, and now lived with my father near the Boulevard Montmartre. And when the fighting was at its height they came to fetch me home, and invited Barty, for the Rohans were away from Paris. So home we walked, quite leisurely, on a lovely peaceful summer evening, while the muskets rattled and the cannons roared round us, but at a proper distance; women picking linen for lint and chatting genially the while at shop doors and porter's lodge-gates; and a piquet of soldiers at the corner of every street, who felt us all over for hidden cartridges before they let us through; it was all entrancing! The subtle scent of gunpowder was in the air – the most suggestive smell there can be. Even now, here in England, the night of the fifth of November never comes round but I am pleasantly reminded of the days when I was "en pleine révolution" in the streets of Paris with my father and mother, and Barty and my little sister – and genial *piou-pious* made such a conscientious examination of our garments. Nothing brings back the past like a sound or a smell – even those of a penny squib!

Every now and then a litter borne by soldiers came by, on which lay a dead or wounded officer. And then one's laugh died suddenly out, and one felt one's self face to face with the horrors that were going on.

Barty shared my bed, and we lay awake talking half the night; dreadful as it all was, one couldn't help being jolly! Every ten minutes the sentinel on duty in the court-yard below would sententiously intone:

"Sentinelles, prenez-garde à vous!" And other sentinels would repeat the cry till it died away in the distance, like an echo.

And all next day, or the day after – or else the day after that, when the long rattle of the musketry had left off – we heard at intervals the "feu de peloton" in a field behind the church of St.-Vincent de Paul, and knew that at every discharge a dozen poor devils of insurgents, caught red-handed, fell dead in a pool of blood!

I need hardly say that before three days were over the irrepressible Barty had made a complete conquest of my small family. My sister (I hasten to say this) has loved him as a brother ever since;

and as long as my parents lived, and wherever they made their home, that home has ever been his – and he has been their son – almost their eldest born, though he was younger than I by seven months.

Things have been reversed, however, for now thirty years and more; and his has ever been the home for me, and his people have been my people, and ever will be – and the God of his worship mine!

What children and grandchildren of my own could ever be to me as these of Barty Josselin's?

"Ce sacré Josselin – il avait tous les talents!"

And the happiest of these gifts, and not the least important, was the gift he had of imparting to his offspring all that was most brilliant and amiable and attractive in himself, and leaving in them unimpaired all that was strongest and best in the woman I loved as well as he did, and have loved as long – and have grown to look upon as belonging to the highest female type that can be; for doubtless the Creator, in His infinite wisdom, might have created a better and a nicer woman than Mrs. Barty Josselin that was to be, had He thought fit to do so; but doubtless also He never did.

Alas! the worst of us is that the best of us are those that want the longest knowing to find it out.

My kind-hearted but cold-mannered and undemonstrative Scotch father, evangelical, a total abstainer, with a horror of tobacco – surely the austere dealer in French wines that ever was – a puritanical hater of bar sinisters, and profligacy, and Rome, and rank, and the army, and especially the stage – he always lumped them together more or less – a despiser of all things French, except their wines, which he never drank himself – remained devoted to Barty till the day of his death; and so with my dear genial mother, whose heart yet always yearned towards serious boys who worked hard at school and college, and passed brilliant examinations, and got scholarships and fellowships in England, and state sinecures in France, and married early, and let their mothers choose their wives for them, and train up their children in the way they should go. She had lived so long in France that she was Frencher than the French themselves.

And they both loved good music – Mozart, Bach, Beethoven – and were almost priggish in their contempt for anything of a lighter kind; especially with a lightness English or French! It was only the musical lightness of Germany they could endure at all! But whether in Paris or London, enter Barty Josselin, idle school-boy, or dandy dissipated guardsman, and fashionable man about town, or bohemian art student; and Bach, lebewohl! good-bye, Beethoven! bonsoir le bon Mozart! all was changed: and welcome, instead, the last comic song from the Château des Fleurs, or Evans's in Covent Garden; the latest patriotic or sentimental ditty by Loïsa Puget, or Frédéric Bérat, or Eliza Cook, or Mr. Henry Russell.

And then, what would Barty like for breakfast, dinner, supper after the play, and which of all those burgundies would do Barty good without giving him a headache next morning? and where was Barty to have his smoke? – in the library, of course. "Light the fire in the library, Mary; and Mr. Bob [that was me] can smoke there, too, instead of going outside," etc., etc., etc. It is small wonder that he grew a bit selfish at times.

Though I was a little joyous now and then, it is quite without a shadow of bitterness or envy that I write all this. I have lived for fifty years under the charm of that genial, unconscious, irresistible tyranny; and, unlike my dear parents, I have lived to read and know Barty Josselin, nor merely to see and hear and love him for himself alone.

Indeed, it was quite impossible to know Barty at all intimately and not do whatever he wanted you to do. Whatever he wanted, he wanted so intensely, and at once; and he had such a droll and engaging way of expressing that hurry and intensity, and especially of expressing his gratitude and delight when what he wanted was what he got – that you could not for the life of you hold your own! Tout vient à qui ne sait pas attendre!

Besides which, every now and then, if things didn't go quite as he wished, he would fly into comic rages, and become quite violent and intractable for at least five minutes, and for quite five

minutes more he would silently sulk. And then, just as suddenly, he would forget all about it, and become once more the genial, affectionate, and caressing creature he always was.

But this is going ahead too fast! revenons. At the examinations this year Barty was almost brilliant, and I was hopeless as usual; my only consolation being that after the holidays we should at last be in the same class together, *en quatrième*, and all through this hopelessness of mine!

Laferté was told by his father that he might invite two of his school-fellows to their country-house for the vacation, so he asked Josselin and Bussy-Rabutin. But Bussy couldn't go – and, to my delight, I went instead.

That ride all through the sweet August night, the three of us on the impériale of the five-horsed diligence, just behind the conductor and the driver – and freedom, and a full moon, or nearly so – and a tremendous saucisson de Lyon (à l'ail, bound in silver paper) – and petits pains – and six bottles of bière de Mars – and cigarettes ad libitum, which of course we made ourselves!

The Lafertés lived in the Department of La Sarthe, in a delightful country-house, with a large garden sloping down to a transparent stream, which had willows and alders and poplars all along its both banks, and a beautiful country beyond.

Outside the grounds (where there were the old brick walls, all overgrown with peaches and pears and apricots, of some forgotten mediæval convent) was a large farm; and close by, a water-mill that never stopped.

A road, with thick hedge-rows on either side, led to a small and very pretty town called La Tremblaye, three miles off. And hard by the garden gates began the big forest of that name: one heard the stags calling, and the owls hooting, and the fox giving tongue as it hunted the hares at night. There might have been wolves and wild-boars. I like to think so very much.

M. Laferté was a man of about fifty – entre les deux âges; a retired maître de forges, or iron-master, or else the son of one: I forget which. He had a charming wife and two pretty little daughters, Jeanne et Marie, aged fourteen and twelve.

He seldom moved from his country home, which was called "Le Gué des Aulnes," except to go shooting in the forest; for he was a great sportsman and cared for little else. He was of gigantic stature – six foot six or seven, and looked taller still, as he had a very small head and high shoulders. He was not an Adonis, and could only see out of one eye – the other (the left one, fortunately) was fixed as if it were made of glass – perhaps it was – and this gave him a stern and rather forbidding expression of face.

He had just been elected Mayor of La Tremblaye, beating the Comte de la Tremblaye by many votes. The Comte was a royalist and not popular. The republican M. Laferté (who was immensely charitable and very just) was very popular indeed, in spite of a morose and gloomy manner. He could even be violent at times, and then he was terrible to see and hear. Of course his wife and daughters were gentleness itself, and so was his son, and everybody who came into contact with him. *Si vis pacem, para bellum*, as Père Brossard used to impress upon us.

It was the strangest country household I have ever seen, in France or anywhere else. They were evidently very well off, yet they preferred to eat their mid-day meal in the kitchen, which was immense; and so was the mid-day meal – and of a succulency!..

An old wolf-hound always lay by the huge log fire; often with two or three fidgety cats fighting for the soft places on him and making him growl; five or six other dogs, non-sporting, were always about at meal-time.

The servants – three or four peasant women who waited on us – talked all the time; and were *tutoyées* by the family. Farm-laborers came in and discussed agricultural matters, manures, etc., quite informally, squeezing their bonnets de coton in their hands. The postman sat by the fire and drank a glass of cider and smoked his pipe up the chimney while the letters were read – most of them out loud – and were commented upon by everybody in the most friendly spirit. All this made the meal last a long time.

M. Laferté always wore his blouse – except in the evening, and then he wore a brown woollen vareuse, or jersey; unless there were guests, when he wore his Sunday morning best. He nearly always spoke like a peasant, although he was really a decently educated man – or should have been.

His old mother, who was of good family and eighty years of age, lived in a quite humble cottage in a small street in La Tremblaye, with two little peasant girls to wait on her; and the La Tremblayes, with whom M. Laferté was not on speaking terms, were always coming into the village to see her and bring her fruit and flowers and game. She was a most accomplished old lady, and an excellent musician, and had known Monsieur de Lafayette.

We breakfasted with her when we alighted from the diligence at six in the morning; and she took such a fancy to Barty that her own grandson was almost forgotten. He sang to her, and she sang to him, and showed him autograph letters of Lafayette, and a lock of her hair when she was seventeen, and old-fashioned miniatures of her father and mother, Monsieur and Madame de something I've quite forgotten.

M. Laferté kept a pack of bassets (a kind of bow-legged beagle), and went shooting with them every day in the forest, wet or dry; sometimes we three boys with him. He lent us guns – an old single-barrelled flint-lock cavalry musket or carbine fell to my share; and I knew happiness such as I had never known yet.

Barty was evidently not meant for a sportsman. On a very warm August morning, as he and I squatted "à l'affût" at the end of a long straight ditch outside a thicket which the bassets were hunting, we saw a hare running full tilt at us along the ditch, and we both fired together. The hare shrieked, and turned a big somersault and fell on its back and kicked convulsively – its legs still galloping – and its face and neck were covered with blood; and, to my astonishment, Barty became quite hysterical with grief at what we had done. It's the only time I ever saw him cry.

"*Caïn! Caïn! qu'as-tu fait de ton frère?*" he shrieked again and again, in a high voice, like a small child's – like the hare's.

I calmed him down and promised I wouldn't tell, and he recovered himself and bagged the game – but he never came out shooting with us again! So I inherited his gun, which was double-barrelled.

Barty's accomplishments soon became the principal recreation of the Laferté ladies; and even M. Laferté himself would start for the forest an hour or two later or come back an hour sooner to make Barty go through his bag of tricks. He would have an arm-chair brought out on the lawn after breakfast and light his short black pipe and settle the programme himself.

First, "*le saut périlleux*" – the somersault backwards – over and over again, at intervals of two or three minutes, so as to give himself time for thought and chuckles, while he smoked his pipe in silent stodgy jubilation.

Then, two or three songs – they would be stopped, if M. Laferté didn't like them, after the first verse, and another one started instead; and if it pleased him, it was encored two or three times.

Then, pen and ink and paper were brought, and a small table and a kitchen chair, and Barty had to draw caricatures, of which M. Laferté chose the subject.

"Maintenant, fais-moi le profil de mon vieil ami M. Bonzig, que j' n' connais pas, que j' n'ai jamais vu, mais q' j'aime beaucoup." (Now do me the side face of my old friend M. Bonzig, whom I don't know, but am very fond of.)

And so on for twenty minutes.

Then Barty had to be blindfolded and twisted round and round, and point out the north – when he felt up to it.

Then a pause for reflection.

Then: "Dis-moi qué'q' chose en anglais."

"How do you do very well hey diddle-diddle Chichester church in Chichester church-yard!" says Barty.

"Qué'q' ça veut dire?"

"Il s'agit d'une église et d'un cimetière!" says Barty – rather sadly, with a wink at me.

"C'est pas gai! Qué vilaine langue, hein? J' suis joliment content que j' sais pas l'anglais, moi!" (It's not lively! What a beastly language, eh? I'm precious glad *I* don't know English.)

Then: "Démontre-moi un problème de géométrie."

Barty would then do a simple problem out of Legendre (the French Euclid), and M. Laferté would look on with deep interest and admiration, but evidently no comprehension whatever. Then he would take the pen himself, and draw a shapeless figure, with A's and B's and C's and D's stuck all over it in impossible places, and quite at hazard, and say:

"Démontre-moi que $A + B$ est plus grand que $C + D$." It was mere idiotic nonsense, and he didn't know better!

But Barty would manage to demonstrate it all the same, and M. Laferté would sigh deeply, and exclaim, "C'est joliment beau, la géométrie!"

Then: "Danse!"

And Barty danced "la Paladine," and did Scotch reels and Irish jigs and break-downs of his own invention, amidst roars of laughter from all the family.

Finally the gentlemen of the party went down to the river for a swim – and old Laferté would sit on the bank and smoke his brûle-gueule, and throw carefully selected stones for Barty to dive after – and feel he'd scored off Barty when the proper stone wasn't found, and roar in his triumph. After which he would go and pick the finest peach he could find, and peel it with his pocket-knife very neatly, and when Barty was dressed, present it to him with a kindly look in both eyes at once.

"Mange-moi ça – ça t' fera du bien!"

Then, suddenly: "Pourquoi q' tu n'aimes pas la chasse? t'as pas peur, j'espère!" (Why don't you like shooting? you're not afraid, I hope!)

"Sais pas," said Josselin; "don't like killing things, I suppose."

So Barty became quite indispensable to the happiness and comfort of Père Polyphème, as he called him, as well as of his amiable family.

On the 1st of September there was a grand breakfast in honor of the partridges (not in the kitchen this time), and many guests were invited; and Barty had to sing and talk and play the fool all through breakfast; and got very tipsy, and had to be put to bed for the rest of the day. It was no fault of his, and Madame Laferté declared that "ces messieurs" ought to be ashamed of themselves, and watched over Barty like a mother. He has often declared he was never quite the same after that debauch – and couldn't feel the north for a month.

The house was soon full of guests, and Barty and I slept in M. Laferté's bedroom – his wife in a room adjoining.

Every morning old Polyphemus would wake us up by roaring out:

"Hé! ma femme!"

"Voilà, voilà, mon ami!" from the next room.

"Viens vite panser mon cautère!"

And in came Madame L. in her dressing-gown, and dressed a blister he wore on his big arm.

Then: "Café!"

And coffee came, and he drank it in bed.

Then: "Pipe!"

And his pipe was brought and filled, and he lit it.

Then: "Josselin!"

"Oui, M'sieur Laferté."

"Tire moi une gamme."

"Dorémifasollasido – Dosilasolfamirédo!" sang Josselin, up and down, in beautiful tune, with his fresh bird-like soprano.

"Ah! q' ça fait du bien!" says M. L.; then a pause, and puffs of smoke and grunts and sighs of satisfaction.

"Josselin?"

"Oui, M'sieur Laferté!"

"La brune Thérèse!"

And Josselin would sing about the dark-haired Thérèse – three verses.

"Tu as changé la fin du second couplet – tu as dit '*des comtesses*' au lieu de dire '*des duchesses*' – recommence!" (You changed the end of the second verse – you said "countesses" instead of "duchesses" – begin again.)

And Barty would re-sing it, as desired, and bring in the duchesses.

"Maintenant, 'Colin, disait Lisette!"

And Barty would sing that charming little song, most charmingly:

"Colin,' disait Lisette,
'Je voudrais passer l'eau!
Mais je suis trop pauvrete
Pour payer le bateau!
"Entrez, entrez, ma belle!
Entrez, entrez toujours!
Et vogue la nacelle
Qui porte mes amours!"

And old L. would smoke and listen with an air of heavenly beatitude almost pathetic.

"Elle était bien gentille, Lisette – n'est-ce pas, petiot? – recommence!" (She was very nice, Lisette; wasn't she, sonny? – being again!)

"Now both get up and wash and go to breakfast. Come here, Josselin – you see this little silver dagger" (producing it from under his pillow). "It's rather pointy, but not at all dangerous. My mother gave it me when I was just your age – to cut books with; it's for you. Allons, file! [cut along] no thanks! – but look here – are you coming with us à la chasse to-day?"

"Non, M. Laferté!"

"Pourquoi? – t'as pas peur, j'espère!"

"Sais pas. J' n'aime pas les choses mortes – ça saigne – et ça n' sent pas bon – ça m'fait mal au cœur." (Don't know. I'm not fond of dead things. They bleed – and they don't smell nice – it makes me sick.)

And two or three times a day would Barty receive some costly token of this queer old giant's affection, till he got quite unhappy about it. He feared he was despoiling the House of Laferté of all its treasures in silver and gold; but he soothed his troubled conscience later on by giving them all away to favorite boys and masters at Brossard's – especially M. Bonzig, who had taken charge of his white mouse (and her family, now quite grown up – children and grandchildren and all) when Mlle. Marceline went for her fortnight's holiday. Indeed, he had made a beautiful cage for them out of wood and wire, with little pasteboard manglers (which they nibbled away).

Well, the men of the party and young Laferté and I would go off with the dogs and keepers into the forest – and Barty would pick filberts and fruit with Jeanne and Marie, and eat them with bread-and-butter and jam and *cernaux* (unripe walnuts mixed with salt and water and verjuice – quite the nicest thing in the world). Then he would find his way into the heart of the forest, which he loved – and where he had scraped up a warm friendship with some charcoal-burners, whose huts were near an old yellow-watered pond, very brackish and stagnant and deep, and full of leeches and water-spiders. It was in the densest part of the forest, where the trees were so tall and leafy that the sun never fell on it, even at noon. The charcoal-burners told him that in '93 a young de la Tremblaye was taken there

at sunset to be hanged on a giant oak-tree – but he talked so agreeably and was so pleasant all round that they relented, and sent for bread and wine and cider and made a night of it, and didn't hang him till dawn next day; after which they tied a stone to his ankles and dropped him into the pond, which was called "the pond of the respite" ever since; and his young wife, Claire Élisabeth, drowned herself there the week after, and their bones lie at the bottom to this very day.

And, ghastly to relate, the ringleader in this horrible tragedy was a beautiful young woman, a daughter of the people, it seems – one Séraphine Doucet, whom the young viscount had betrayed before marriage – *le droit du seigneur!* – and but for whom he would have been let off after that festive night. Ten or fifteen years later, smitten with incurable remorse, she hanged herself on the very branch of the very tree where they had strung up her noble lover; and still walks round the pond at night, wringing her hands and wailing. It's a sad story – let us hope it isn't true.

Barty Josselin evidently had this pond in his mind when he wrote in "*Âmes en peine*":

Sous la berge hantée
L'eau morne croupit —
Sous la sombre futaie
Le renard glapit,
Et le cerf-dix-cors brame, et les daims viennent boire à l'Étang du Répit.
"Lâchez-moi, Loupgaroux!"

Que sinistre est la mare
Quand tombe la nuit;
La chouette s'effare —
Le blaireau s'enfuit!
L'on y sent que les morts se réveillent – qu'une ombre sans nom vous poursuit.
"Lâchez-moi, Loup-garoux!"

Forêt! forêt! what a magic there is in that little French dissyllable! Morne forêt! Is it the lost "s," and the heavy "^" that makes up for it, which lend such a mysterious and gloomy fascination?

Forest! that sounds rather tame – almost cheerful! If *we* want a forest dream we have to go so far back for it, and dream of Robin Hood and his merrie men! and even then Epping forces itself into our dream – and even Chingford, where there was never a were-wolf within the memory of man. Give us at least the *virgin* forest, in some far Guyana or Brazil – or even the forest primeval —

"... where the murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand like druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar" —

that we may dream of scalp-hunting Mingoës, and grizzly-bears, and moose, and buffalo, and the beloved Bas-de-cuir with that magic rifle of his, that so seldom missed its mark and never got out of repair.

"Prom'nons nous dans les bois
Pendant que le loup n'y est pas..."

That's the first song I ever heard. Céline used to sing it, my nurse – who was very lovely, though she had a cast in her eye and wore a black cap, and cotton in her ears, and was pitted with the smallpox. It was in Burgundy, which was rich in forests, with plenty of wolves in them, and wild-boars too – and that was only a hundred years ago, when that I was a little tiny boy. It's just an old nursery rhyme to lull children to sleep with, or set them dancing – *pas aut' chose* – but there's a deal of Old France in it!

There I go again – digressing as usual and quoting poetry and trying to be literary and all that! *C'est plus fort que moi...*

One beautiful evening after dinner we went, the whole lot of us, fishing for crayfish in the meadows beyond the home farm.

As we set about waiting for the crayfish to assemble round the bits of dead frog that served for bait and were tied to the wire scales (which were left in the water), a procession of cows came past us from the farm. One of them had a wound in her flank – a large tumor.

"It's the bull who did that," said Marie. "*Il est très méchant!*"

Presently the bull appeared, following the herd in sulky dignity. We all got up and crossed the stream on a narrow plank – all but Josselin, who remained sitting on a camp-stool.

"Josselin! Josselin! *venez donc! il est très mauvais, le taureau!*"

Barty didn't move.

The bull came by; and suddenly, seeing him, walked straight to within a yard of him – and stared at him for five minutes at least, lashing its tail. Barty didn't stir. Our hearts were in our mouths!

Then the big brindled brute turned quietly round with a friendly snort and went after the cows – and Barty got up and made it a courtly farewell salute, saying, "*Bon voyage – au plaisir!*"

After which he joined the rest of us across the stream, and came in for a good scolding and much passionate admiration from the ladies, and huggings and tears of relief from Madame Laferté.

"I knew well he wouldn't be afraid!" said M. Laferté; "they are all like that, those English – *le sang-froid du diable! nom d'un Vellington!* It is we who were afraid – we are not so brave as the little Josselin! plucky little Josselin! But why did you not come with us? Temerity is not valor, Josselin!"

"Because I wanted to show off [*faire le fanfaron*]!" said Barty, with extreme simplicity.

"Ah, diable! Anyhow, it was brave of you to sit still when he came and looked at you in the white of the eyes! it was just the right thing to do; *ces Anglais! je n'en reviens pas! à quatorze ans! hein, ma femme?*"

"Pardi!" said Barty, "I was in such a blue funk [*j'avais une venette si bleue*] that I couldn't have moved a finger to save my life!"

At this, old Polyphemus went into a Homeric peal of laughter.

"*Ces Anglais! what originals – they tell you the real truth at any cost [ils vous disent la vraie vérité, coûte que coûte]!*" and his affection for Barty seemed to increase, if possible, from that evening.

Now this was Barty all over – all through life. He always gave himself away with a liberality quite uncalled for – so he ought to have some allowances made for that reckless and impulsive indiscretion which caused him to be so popular in general society, but got him into so many awkward scrapes in after-life, and made him such mean enemies, and gave his friends so much anxiety and distress.

(And here I think it right to apologize for so much translating of such a well-known language as French; I feel quite like another Ollendorf – who must have been a German, by-the-way – but M. Laferté's grammar and accent would sometimes have puzzled Ollendorf himself!)

Towards the close of September, M. Laferté took it into his head to make a tour of provincial visits *en famille*. He had never done such a thing before, and I really believe it was all to show off Barty to his friends and relations.

It was the happiest time I ever had, and shines out by itself in that already so unforgettably delightful vacation.

We went in a large charabancs drawn by two stout horses, starting at six in the morning, and driving right through the Forest of la Tremblaye; and just ahead of us, to show us the way, M. Laferté driving himself in an old cabriolet, with Josselin (from whom he refused to be parted) by his side, singing or talking, according to order, or cracking jokes; we could hear the big laugh of Polyphemus!

We travelled very leisurely; I forget whether we ever changed horses or not – but we got over a good deal of ground. We put up at the country houses of friends and relations of the Lafertés; and visited old historical castles and mediæval ruins – Châteaudun and others – and fished in beautiful pellucid tributaries of the Loire – shot over "des chiens anglais" – danced half the night with charming people – wandered in lovely parks and woods, and beautiful old formal gardens with fishponds, terraces, statues, marble fountains; charmilles, pelouses, quinconces; and all the flowers and all the fruits of France! And the sun shone every day and all day long – and in one's dreams all night.

And the peasants in that happy country of the Loire spoke the most beautiful French, and had the most beautiful manners in the world. They're famous for it.

It all seems like a fairy tale.

If being made much of, and petted and patted and admired and wondered at, make up the sum of human bliss, Barty came in for as full a share of felicity during that festive week as should last an ordinary mortal for a twelvemonth. *Figaro qu'à, Figaro là*, from morning till night in three departments of France!

But he didn't seem to care very much about it all; he would have been far happier singing and tumbling and romancing away to his charbonniers by the pond in the Forest of la Tremblaye. He declared he was never quite himself unless he could feel the north for at least an hour or two every day, and all night long in his sleep – and that he should never feel the north again – that it was gone forever; that he had drunk it all away at that fatal breakfast – and it made him lonely to wake up in the middle of the night and not know which way he lay! "dépaycé," as he called it – "désorienté – perdu!"

And laughing, he would add, "Ayez pitié d'un pauvre orphelin!"

Then back to Le Gué des Aulnes. And one evening, after a good supper at Grandmaman Laferté's, the diligence de Paris came jingling and rumbling through the main street of La Tremblaye, flashing right and left its two big lamps, red and blue. And we three boys, after the most grateful and affectionate farewells, packed ourselves into the coupé, which had been retained for us, and rumbled back to Paris through the night.

There was quite a crowd to see us off. Not only Lafertés, but others – all sorts and conditions of men, women, and children – and among them three or four of Barty's charcoal-burning friends; one of whom, an old man with magnificent black eyes and an immense beard, that would have been white if he hadn't been a charcoal-burner, kissed Barty on both cheeks, and gave him a huge bag full of some kind of forest berry that is good to eat; also a young cuckoo (which Barty restored to liberty an hour later); also a dormouse and a large green lizard; also, in a little pasteboard box, a gigantic pale green caterpillar four inches long and thicker than your thumb, with a row of shiny blue stars in relief all along each side of its back – the most beautiful thing of the kind you ever saw.

"Pioche bien ta géométrie, mon bon petit Josselin! c'est la plus belle science au monde, crois-moi!" said M. Laferté to Barty, and gave him the hug of a grizzly-bear; and to me he gave a terrific hand-squeeze, and a beautiful double-barrelled gun by Lefauchaux, for which I felt too supremely grateful to find suitable thanks. I have it now, but I have long given up killing things with it.

I had grown immensely fond of this colossal old "bourru bienfaisant," as he was called in La Tremblaye, and believe that all his moroseness and brutality were put on, to hide one of the warmest, simplest, and tenderest hearts in the world.

Before dawn Barty woke up with such a start that he woke me:

"Enfin! ça y est! quelle chance!" he exclaimed.

"Quoi, quoi, quoi?" said I, quacking like a duck.

"Le nord – c'est revenu – it's just ahead of us – a little to the left!"

We were nearing Paris.

And thus ended the proudest and happiest time I ever had in my life. Indeed I almost had an adventure on my own account — *une bonne fortune*, as it was called at Brossard's by boys hardly older than myself. I did not brag of it, however, when I got back to school.

It was at "Les Laiteries," or "Les Poteries," or "Les Crucheries," or some such place, the charming abode of Monsieur et Madame Péliçon — only their name wasn't Péliçon, or anything like it. At dinner I sat next to a Miss —, who was very tall and wore blond side ringlets. I think she must have been the English governess.

We talked very much together, in English; and after dinner we walked in the garden together by starlight arm in arm, and she was so kind and genial to me in English that I felt quite chivalrous and romantic, and ready to do doughty deeds for her sake.

Then, at M. Péliçon's request, all the company assembled in a group for evening prayer, under a spreading chestnut-tree on the lawn: the prayer sounded very much like the morning or evening prayer at Brossard's, except that the Almighty was addressed as "toi" instead of "vous"; it began:

"Notre Père qui es aux cieux — toi dont le regard scrutateur pénètre jusque dans les replis les plus profonds de nos cœurs" — and ended, "Ainsi soit-il!"

The night was very dark, and I stood close to Miss —, who stood as it seemed with her hands somewhere behind her back. I was so grateful to her for having talked to me so nicely, and so fond of her for being English, that the impulse seized me to steal my hand into hers — and her hand met mine with a gentle squeeze which I returned; but soon the pressure of her hand increased, and by the time M. le Curé had got to "au nom du Père" the pressure of her hand had become an agony — a thing to make one shriek!

"Ainsi soit-il!" said M. le Curé, and the little group broke up, and Miss — walked quietly indoors with her arm around Madame Péliçon's waist, and without even wishing me good-night — and my hand was being squeezed worse than ever.

"Ah ha! Lequel de nous deux est volé, petit coquin?" hissed an angry male voice in my ear — (which of us two is sold, you little rascal?).

And I found my hand in that of Monsieur Péliçon, whose name was something else — and I couldn't make it out, nor why he was so angry. It has dawned upon me since that each of us took the other's hand by mistake for that of the English governess!

All this is beastly and cynical and French, and I apologize for it — but it's true.

October!

It was a black Monday for me when school began again after that ideal vacation. The skies they were ashen and sober, and the leaves they were crisped and sere. But anyhow I was still *en quatrième*, and Barty was in it too — and we sat next to each other in "L'étude des grands."

There was only one étude now; only half the boys came back, and the pavillon des petits was shut up, study, class-rooms, dormitories, and all — except that two masters slept there still.

Eight or ten small boys were put in a small school-room in the same house as ours, and had a small dormitory to themselves, with M. Bonzig to superintend them.

I made up my mind that I would no longer be a *cancre* and a *crétin*, but work hard and do my little best, so that I might keep up with Barty and pass into the *troisième* with him, and then into *Rhétorique* (seconde), and then into *Philosophie* (première) — that we might do our humanities and take our degree together — our "*Bachot*," which is short for *Baccalauréat-ès-lettres*. Most especially did I love Monsieur Durosier's class of French Literature — for which Mérovée always rang the bell himself.

My mother and sister were still at Ste.-Adresse, Hâvre, with my father; so I spent my first Sunday that term at the Archibald Rohans', in the Rue du Bac.

I had often seen them at Brossard's, when they came to see Barty, but had never been at their house before.

They were very charming people.

Lord Archibald was dressing when we got there that Sunday morning, and we sat with him while he shaved – in an immense dressing-room where there were half a dozen towel-horses with about thirty pairs of newly ironed trousers on them instead of towels, and quite thirty pairs of shiny boots on trees were ranged along the wall. James, an impeccable English valet, waited on "his lordship," and never spoke unless spoken to.

"Hullo, Barty! Who's your friend?"

"Bob Maurice, Uncle Archie."

And Uncle Archie shook hands with me most cordially.

"And how's the north pole this morning?"

"Nicely, thanks, Uncle Archie."

Lord Archibald was a very tall and handsome man, about fifty – very droll and full of anecdote; he had stories to tell about everything in the room.

For instance, how Major Welsh of the 10th Hussars had given him that pair of Wellingtons, which fitted him better than any boots Hoby ever made him to measure; they were too tight for poor Welsh, who was a head shorter than himself.

How Kerlewis made him that frock-coat fifteen years ago, and it wasn't threadbare yet, and fitted him as well as ever – for he hadn't changed his weight for thirty years, etc.

How that pair of braces had been made by "my lady" out of a pair of garters she wore on the day they were married.

And then he told us how to keep trousers from bagging at the knees, and how cloth coats should be ironed, and how often – and how to fold an umbrella.

It suddenly occurs to me that perhaps these little anecdotes may not be so amusing to the general reader as they were to me when he told them, so I won't tell any more. Indeed, I have often noticed that things look sometimes rather dull in print that were so surprisingly witty when said in spontaneous talk a great many years ago!

Then we went to breakfast with my lady and Daphne, their charming little daughter – Barty's sister, as he called her – "m'amour" – and who spoke both French and English equally well.

But we didn't breakfast at once, ravenous as we boys were, for Lady Archibald took a sudden dislike to Lord A.'s cravat, which, it seems, he had never worn before. It was in brown satin, and Lady A. declared that Loulou (so she called him) never looked "*en beauté*" with a brown cravat; and there was quite a little quarrel between husband and wife on the subject – so that he had to go back to his dressing-room and put on a blue one.

At breakfast he talked about French soldiers of the line, and their marching kit (as it would be called now), quite earnestly, and, as it seemed to me, very sensibly – though he went through little mimicries that made his wife scream with laughter, and me too; and in the middle of breakfast Barty sang "Le Chant du Départ" as well as he could for laughing:

"La victoire en chantant nous ouvre la carrière!
La liberté-é gui-i-de nos pas" ...

while Lord A. went through an expressive pantomime of an overladen foot-soldier up and down the room, in time to the music. The only person who didn't laugh was James – which I thought ungenial.

Then Lady A. had *her* innings, and sang "Rule Britannia, Britannia rule de vaves" – and declared it was far more ridiculous really than the "Chant du Départ," and she made it seem so, for she went through a pantomime too. She was a most delightful person, and spoke English quite well when she chose; and seemed as fond of Barty as if he were her own and only son – and so did Lord Archibald. She would say:

"Quel dommage qu'on ne peut pas avoir des cromptettes [crumpets]! Barty les aime tant! n'est-ce pas, mon chou, tu aimes bien les cromptettes? voici venir du buttered toast – c'est toujours ça!"

And, "Mon Dieu, comme il a bonne mine, ce cher Barty – n'est-ce pas, mon amour, que tu as bonne mine? regarde-toi dans la glace."

And, "Si nous allions à l'Hippodrome cette après-midi voir la belle écuyère Madame Richard? Barty adore les jolies femmes, comme son oncle! n'est-ce pas, méchant petit Barty, que tu adores les jolies femmes? et tu n'as jamais vu Madame Richard? Tu m'en diras des nouvelles! et vous, mon ami [this to me], est-ce que vous adorez aussi les jolies femmes?"

"Ô oui," says Daphne, "allons voir M^{me} Richard; it'll be *such* fun! oh, bully!"

So after breakfast we went for a walk, and to a café on the Quai d'Orsay, and then to the Hippodrome, and saw the beautiful écuyère in graceful feats of la haute école, and lost our hearts – especially Lord Archibald, though him she knew; for she kissed her hand to him, and he his to her.

Then we dined at the Palais Royal, and afterwards went to the Café des Aveugles, an underground coffee-house near the Café de la Rotonde, and where blind men made instrumental music; and we had a capital evening.

I have met in my time more intellectual people, perhaps, than the Archibald Rohans – but never people more amiable, or with kinder, simpler manners, or who made one feel more quickly and thoroughly at home – and the more I got to know them, the more I grew to like them; and their fondness for each other and Daphne, and for Barty too, was quite touching; as was his for them. So the winter sped happily till February, when a sad thing happened.

I had spent Sunday with my mother and sister, who now lived on the ground-floor of 108 Champs Élysées.

I slept there that Sunday night, and walked back to school next morning. To my surprise, as I got to a large field through which a diagonal footpath led to Père Jaurion's lodge, I saw five or six boys sitting on the terrace parapet with their legs dangling outside. They should have been in class, by rights. They watched me cross the field, but made no sign.

"What on earth *can* be the matter?" thought I.

The cordon was pulled, and I came on a group of boys all stiff and silent.

"Qu'est-ce que vous avez donc, tous?" I asked.

"Le Père Brossard est mort!" said De Villars.

Poor M. Brossard had died of apoplexy on the previous afternoon. He had run to catch the Passy omnibus directly after lunch, and had fallen down in a fit and died immediately.

"Il est tombé du haut mal" – as they expressed it.

His son Mérovée and his daughter Madame Germain were distracted. The whole of that day was spent by the boys in a strange, unnatural state of *désœuvrement* and suppressed excitement for which no outlet was possible. The meals, especially, were all but unbearable. One was ashamed of having an appetite, and yet one had – almost keener than usual, if I may judge by myself – and for some undiscovered reason the food was better than on other Mondays!

Next morning we all went up in sorrowful procession to kiss our poor dear head-master's cold forehead as he lay dead in his bed, with sprigs of boxwood on his pillow, and above his head a jar of holy water with which we sprinkled him. He looked very serene and majestic, but it was a harrowing ceremony. Mérovée stood by with swollen eyes and deathly pale – incarnate grief.

On Wednesday afternoon M. Brossard was buried in the Cimetière de Passy, a tremendous crowd following the hearse; the boys and masters just behind Mérovée and M. Germain, the chief male mourners. The women walked in another separate procession behind.

Béranger and Alphonse Karr were present among the notabilities, and speeches were made over his open grave, for he was a very distinguished man.

And, tragical to relate, that evening in the study Barty and I fell out, and it led to a stand-up fight next day.

There was no preparation that evening; he and I sat side by side reading out of a book by Châteaubriand – either *Atala*, or *René* or *Les Natchez*, I forget which. I have never seen either since.

The study was hushed; M. Dumollard was *de service* as *maître d'études*, although there was no attempt to do anything but sadly read improving books.

If I remember aright, René, a very sentimental young Frenchman, who had loved the wrong person not wisely, but too well (a very wrong person indeed, in his case), emigrated to North America, and there he met a beautiful Indian maiden, one Atala, of the Natchez tribe, who had rosy heels and was charming, and whose entire skin was probably a warm dark red, although this is not insisted upon. She also had a brother, whose name was Outogamiz.

Well, René loved Atala, Atala loved René, and they were married; and Outogamiz went through some ceremony besides, which made him blood brother and bosom friend to René – a bond which involved certain obligatory rites and duties and self-sacrifices.

Atala died and was buried. René died and was buried also; and every day, as in duty bound, poor Outogamiz went and pricked a vein and bled over René's tomb, till he died himself of exhaustion before he was many weeks older. I quote entirely from memory.

This simple story was told in very touching and beautiful language, by no means telegraphese, and Barty and I were deeply affected by it.

"I say, Bob!" Barty whispered to me, with a break in his voice, "some day I'll marry your sister, and we'll all go off to America together, and she'll die, and I'll die, and you shall bleed yourself to death on my tomb!"

"No," said I, after a moment's thought. "No – look here! I'll marry *your* sister, and I'll die, and *you* shall bleed over *my* tomb!"

Then, after a pause:

"I haven't got a sister, as you know quite well – and if I had she wouldn't be for *you*!" says Barty.

"Why not?"

"Because you're not good-looking enough!" says Barty.

At this, just for fun, I gave him a nudge in the wind with my elbow – and he gave me a "twisted pinch" on the arm – and I kicked him on the ankle, but so much harder than I intended that it hurt him, and he gave me a tremendous box on the ear, and we set to fighting like a couple of wild-cats, without even getting up, to the scandal of the whole study and the indignant disgust of M. Dumollard, who separated us, and read us a pretty lecture:

"Voilà bien les Anglais! – rien n'est sacré pour eux, pas même la mort! rien que les chiens et les chevaux." (Nothing, not even death, is sacred to Englishmen – nothing but dogs and horses.)

When we went up to bed the head-boy of the school – a first-rate boy called d'Orthez, and Berquin (another first-rate boy), who had each a bedroom to himself, came into the dormitory and took up the quarrel, and discussed what should be done. Both of us were English – ergo, both of us ought to box away the insult with our fists; so "they set a combat us between, to fecht it in the dawning" – that is, just after breakfast, in the school-room.

I went to bed very unhappy, and so, I think, did Barty.

Next morning at six, just after the morning prayer, M. Mérovée came into the school-room and made us a most straightforward, manly, and affecting speech; in which he told us he meant to keep on the school, and thanked us, boys and masters, for our sympathy.

We were all moved to our very depths – and sat at our work solemn and sorrowful all through that lamp-lit hour and a half; we hardly dared to cough, and never looked up from our desks.

Then 7.30 – ding-dang-dong and breakfast. Thursday – bread-and-butter morning!

I felt hungry and greedy and very sad, and disinclined to fight. Barty and I had sat turned away from each other, and made no attempt at reconciliation.

We all went to the réfectoire: it was raining fast. I made my ball of salt and butter, and put it in a hole in my hunk of bread, and ran back to the study, where I locked these treasures in my desk.

The study soon filled with boys: no masters ever came there during that half-hour; they generally smoked and read their newspapers in the gymnastic ground, or else in their own rooms when it was wet outside.

D'Orthez and Berquin moved one or two desks and forms out of the way so as make a ring – l'arène, as they called it – with comfortable seats all round. Small boys stood on forms and window-sills eating their bread-and-butter with a tremendous relish.

"Dites donc, vous autres," says Bonneville, the wit of the school, who was in very high spirits; "it's like the Roman Empire during the decadence – '*panem et circenses*'!"

"What's that, *circenses*? what does it mean?" says Rapaud, with his mouth full.

"Why, *butter*, you idiot! Didn't you know *that*?" says Bonneville.

Barty and I stood opposite each other; at his sides as seconds were d'Orthez and Berquin; at mine, Jolivet trois (the only Jolivet now left in the school) and big du Tertre-Jouan (the young marquis who wasn't Bonneville).

We began to spar at each other in as knowing and English a way as we knew how – keeping a very respectful distance indeed, and trying to bear ourselves as scientifically as we could, with a keen expression of the eye.

When I looked into Barty's face I felt that nothing on earth would ever make me hit such a face as that – whatever he might do to mine. My blood wasn't up; besides, I was a coarse-grained, thick-set, bullet-headed little chap with no nerves to speak of, and didn't mind punishment the least bit. No more did Barty, for that matter, though he was the most highly wrought creature that ever lived.

At length they all got impatient, and d'Orthez said:

"Allez donc, godems – ce n'est pas un quadrille! Nous n'sommes pas à La Salle Valentino!"

And Barty was pushed from behind so roughly that he came at me, all his science to the winds and slogging like a French boy; and I, quite without meaning to, in the hurry, hit out just as he fell over me, and we both rolled together over Jolivet's foot – Barty on top (he was taller, though not heavier, than I); and I saw the blood flow from his nose down his lip and chin, and some of it fell on my blouse.

Says Barty to me, in English, as we lay struggling on the dusty floor:

"Look here, it's no good. I *can't* fight to-day; poor Mérovée, you know. Let's make it up!"

"All right!" says I. So up we got and shook hands, Barty saying, with mock dignity:

"Messieurs, le sang a coulé; l'honneur britannique est sauf;" and the combat was over.

"Cristi! J'ai joliment faim!" says Barty, mopping his nose with his handkerchief. "I left my crust on the bench outside the réfectoire. I wish one of you fellows would get it for me."

"Rapaud finished your crust [ta miche] while you were fighting," says Jolivet. "I saw him."

Says Rapaud: "Ah, Dame, it was getting prettily wet, your crust, and I was prettily hungry too; and I thought you didn't want it, naturally."

I then produced *my* crust and cut it in two, butter and all, and gave Barty half, and we sat very happily side by side, and breakfasted together in peace and amity. I never felt happier or hungrier.

"Cristi, comme ils se sont bien battus," says little Vaissière to little Cormenu. "As-tu vu? Josselin a saigné tout plein sur la blouse à Maurice." (How well they fought! Josselin bled all over Maurice's blouse!)

Then says Josselin, in French, turning to me with that delightful jolly smile that always reminded one of the sun breaking through a mist:

"I would sooner bleed on your blouse than on your tomb." (J'aime mieux saigner sur ta blouse que sur ta tombe.)

So ended the only quarrel we ever had.

Part Third

"Que ne puis-je aller où s'en vont les roses,
Et n'attendre pas
Ces regrets navrants que la fin des choses
Nous garde ici-bas!" – Anon.

Barty worked very hard, and so did I – for *me*! Horace – Homer – Æschylus – Plato – etc., etc., etc., etc., etc., and all there was to learn in that French school-boy's encyclopædia – "Le Manuel du Baccalauréat"; a very thick book in very small print. And I came to the conclusion that it is good to work hard: it makes one enjoy food and play and sleep so keenly – and Thursday afternoons.

The school was all the pleasanter for having fewer boys; we got more intimate with each other, and with the masters too. During the winter M. Bonzig told us capital stories — *Modeste Mignon*, by Balzac — *Le Chevalier de Maison-rouge*, by A. Dumas père – etc., etc.

In the summer the Passy swimming-bath was more delightful than ever. Both winter and summer we passionately fenced with a pupil (un prévôt) of the famous M. Bonnet, and did gymnastics with M. Louis, the gymnastic master of the Collège Charlemagne – the finest man I ever saw – a gigantic dwarf six feet high, all made up of lumps of sinew and muscles, like...

Also, we were taught equitation at the riding-school in the Rue Duphot.

On Saturday nights Barty would draw a lovely female profile, with a beautiful big black eye, in pen and ink, and carefully shade it; especially the hair, which was always as the raven's wing! And on Sunday morning he and I used to walk together to 108 Champs Élysées and enter the rez-de-chaussée (where my mother and sister lived) by the window, before my mother was up. Then Barty took out his lovely female pen-and-ink profile to gaze at, and rolled himself a cigarette and lit it, and lay back on the sofa, and made my sister play her lightest music – "La pluie de Perles," by Osborne – and "Indiana," a beautiful valse by Marcailhou – and thus combine three or four perfect blisses in one happy quart d'heure.

Then my mother would appear, and we would have breakfast – after which Barty and I would depart by the window as we had come, and go and do our bit of Boulevard and Palais Royal. Then to the Rue du Bac for another breakfast with the Rohans; and then, "*au petit bonheur*"; that is, trusting to Providence for whatever turned up. The programme didn't vary very much: either I dined with him at the Rohans', or he with me at 108. Then, back to Brossard's at ten – tired and happy.

One Sunday I remember well we stayed in school, for old Josselin the fisherman came to see us there – Barty's grandfather, now a widower; and M. Mérovée asked him to lunch with us, and go to the baths in the afternoon.

Imagine old Bonzig's delight in this "*vieux loup de mer*," as he called him! That was a happy day for the old fisherman also; I shall never forget his surprise at M. Dumollard's telescope – and how clever he was on the subject.

He came to the baths, and admired and criticised the good swimming of the boys – especially Barty's, which was really remarkable. I don't believe he could swim a stroke himself.

Then we went and dined together at Lord Archibald's, in the Rue du Bac – "Mon Colonel," as the old fisherman always called him. He was a very humorous and intelligent person, this fisher, though nearer eighty than seventy; very big, and of a singularly picturesque appearance – for he had not *endimanché* himself in the least; and very clean. A splendid old man; oddly enough, somewhat Semitic of aspect – as though he had just come from a miraculous draught of fishes in the Sea of Galilee, out of a cartoon by Raphael!

I recollect admiring how easily and pleasantly everything went during dinner, and all through the perfection of this ancient sea-toiler's breeding in all essentials.

Of course the poor all over the world are less nice in their habits than the rich, and less correct in their grammar and accent, and narrower in their views of life; but in every other respect there seemed little to choose between Josselins and Rohans and Lonlay-Savignacs; and indeed, according to Lord Archibald, the best manners were to be found at these two opposite poles – or even wider still. He would have it that Royalty and chimney-sweeps were the best-bred people all over the world – because there was no possible mistake about their social status.

I felt a little indignant – after all, Lady Archibald was built out of chocolate, for all her Lonlay and her Savignac! just as I was built out of Beaune and Chambertin.

I'm afraid I shall be looked upon as a snob and a traitor to my class if I say that I have at last come to be of the same opinion myself. That is, if absolute simplicity, and the absence of all possible temptation to try and seem an inch higher up than we really are – But there! this is a very delicate question, about which I don't care a straw; and there are such exceptions, and so many, to confirm any such rule!

Anyhow, I saw how Barty *couldn't help* having the manners we all so loved him for. After dinner Lady Archibald showed old Josselin some of Barty's lovely female profiles – a sight that affected him strangely. He would have it that they were all exact portraits of his beloved Antoinette, Barty's mother.

They were certainly singularly like each other, these little chefs-d'œuvre of Barty's, and singularly handsome – an ideal type of his own; and the old grandfather was allowed his choice, and touchingly grateful at being presented with such treasures.

The scene made a great impression on me.

So spent itself that year – a happy year that had no history – except for one little incident that I will tell because it concerns Barty, and illustrates him.

One beautiful Sunday morning the yellow omnibus was waiting for some of us as we dawdled about in the school-room, titivating; the masters nowhere, as usual on a Sunday morning; and some of the boys began to sing in chorus a not very edifying *chanson*, which they did not "Bowdlerize," about a holy Capuchin friar; it began (if I remember rightly):

"C'était un Capucin, oui bien, un père Capucin,
 Qui confessait trois filles —
 Itou, itou, itou, là là là!
 Qui confessait trois filles
 Au fond de son jardin —
 Oui bien —
 Au fond de son jardin!
 Il dit à la plus jeune —

Itou, itou, itou, là là là!
 Il dit à la plus jeune...
 'Vous reviendrez demain!'
 Etc, etc., etc.

I have quite forgotten the rest.

Now this little song, which begins so innocently, like a sweet old idyl of mediæval France – "*un écho du temps passé*" – seems to have been a somewhat Rabelaisian ditty; by no means proper singing for a Sunday morning in a boys' school. But boys will be boys, even in France; and the famous "*esprit Gaulois*" was somewhat precocious in the forties, I suppose. Perhaps it is now, if it still exists (which I doubt – the dirt remains, but all the fun seems to have evaporated).

Suddenly M. Dumollard bursts into the room in his violent sneaky way, pale with rage, and says:
"Je vais gifler tous ceux qui ont chanté" (I'll box the ears of every boy who sang).

So he puts all in a row and begins:

"Rubinel, sur votre parole d'honneur, avez-vous chanté?"

"Non, m'sieur!"

"Caillard, avez-vous chanté?"

"Non, m'sieur!"

"Lipmann, avez-vous chanté?"

"Non, m'sieur!"

"Maurice, avez-vous chanté?"

"Non, m'sieur" (which, for a wonder, was true, for I happened not to know either the words or the tune).

"Josselin, avez-vous chanté?"

"*Oui, m'sieur!*"

And down went Barty his full length on the floor, from a tremendous open-handed box on the ear. Dumollard was a very Herculean person – though by no means gigantic.

Barty got up and made Dumollard a polite little bow, and walked out of the room.

"Vous êtes tous consignés!" says M. Dumollard – and the omnibus went away empty, and we spent all that Sunday morning as best we might.

In the afternoon we went out walking in the Bois. Dumollard had recovered his serenity and came with us; for he was *de service* that day.

Says Lipmann to him:

"Josselin drapes himself in his English dignity – he sulks like Achilles and walks by himself."

"Josselin is at least a *man*," says Dumollard. "He tells the truth, and doesn't know fear – and I'm sorry he's English!"

And later, at the Mare d'Auteuil, he put out his hand to Barty and said:

"Let's make it up, Josselin – au moins vous avez du cœur, vous. Promettez-moi que vous ne chanterez plus cette sale histoire de Capucin!"

Josselin took the usher's hand, and smiled his open, toothy smile, and said:

"Pas le dimanche matin toujours – quand c'est vous qui serez de service, M. Dumollard!" (Anyhow not Sunday morning when *you're* on duty, Mr. D.)

And Mr. D. left off running down the English in public after that – except to say that they *couldn't* be simple and natural if they tried; and that they affected a ridiculous accent when they spoke French – not Josselin and Maurice, but all the others he had ever met. As if plain French, which had been good enough for William the Conqueror, wasn't good enough for the subjects of her Britannic Majesty to-day!

The only event of any importance in Barty's life that year was his first communion, which he took with several others of about his own age. An event that did not seem to make much impression on him – nothing seemed to make much impression on Barty Josselin when he was very young. He was just a lively, irresponsible, irrepressible human animal – always in perfect health and exuberant spirits, with an immense appetite for food and fun and frolic; like a squirrel, a collie pup, or a kitten.

Père Bonamy, the priest who confirmed him, was fonder of the boy than of any one, boy or girl, that he had ever prepared for communion, and could hardly speak of him with decent gravity, on account of his extraordinary confessions – all of which were concocted in the depths of Barty's imagination for the sole purpose of making the kind old curé laugh; and the kind old curé was just as fond of laughing as was Barty of playing the fool, in and out of season. I wonder if he always thought himself bound to respect the secrets of the confessional in Barty's case!

And Barty would sing to him – even in the confessional:

"Stabat mater dolorosa
Juxta crucem lachrymose
Dum pendebat filius" ...

in a voice so sweet and innocent and pathetic that it would almost bring the tears to the good old curé's eyelash.

"Ah! ma chère Mamzelle Marceline!" he would say – "au moins s'ils étaient tous comme ce petit Josselin! ça irait comme sur des roulettes! Il est innocent comme un jeune veau, ce mioche anglais! Il a le bon Dieu dans le cœur!"

"Et une boussole dans l'estomac!" said Mlle. Marceline.

I don't think he was quite so *innocent* as all that, perhaps – but no young beast of the field was ever more *harmless*.

That year the examinations were good all round; even *I* did not disgrace myself, and Barty was brilliant. But there were no delightful holidays for me to record. Barty went to Yorkshire, and I remained in Paris with my mother.

There is only one thing more worth mentioning that year.

My father had inherited from *his* father a system of shorthand, which he called *Blaze* – I don't know why! *His* father had learnt it of a Dutch Jew.

It is, I think, the best kind of cipher ever invented (I have taken interest in these things and studied them). It is very difficult to learn, but I learnt it as a child – and it was of immense use to me at lectures we used to attend at the Sorbonne and Collège de France.

Barty was very anxious to know it, and after some trouble I obtained my father's permission to impart this calligraphic crypt to Barty, on condition he should swear on his honor never to reveal it: and this he did.

With his extraordinary quickness and the perseverance he always had when he wished a thing very much, he made himself a complete master of this occult science before he left school, two or three years later: it took *me* seven years – beginning when I was four! It does equally well for French or English, and it played an important part in Barty's career. My sister knew it, but imperfectly; my mother not at all – for all she tried so hard and was so persevering; it must be learnt young. As far as I am aware, no one else knows it in England or France – or even the world – although it is such a useful invention; quite a marvel of simple ingenuity when one has mastered the symbols, which certainly take a long time and a deal of hard work.

Barty and I got to talk it on our fingers as rapidly as ordinary speech and with the slightest possible gestures: this was *his* improvement.

Barty came back from his holidays full of Whitby, and its sailors and whalers, and fishermen and cobbles and cliffs – all of which had evidently had an immense attraction for him. He was always fond of that class; possibly also some vague atavistic sympathy for the toilers of the sea lay dormant in his blood like an inherited memory.

And he brought back many tokens of these good people's regard – two formidable clasp-knives (for each of which he had to pay the giver one farthing in current coin of the realm); spirit-flasks, leather bottles, jet ornaments; woollen jerseys and comforters knitted for him by their wives and daughters; fossil ammonites and coprolites; a couple of young sea-gulls to add to his menagerie; and many old English marine ditties, which he had to sing to M. Bonzig with his now cracked voice, and then translate into French. Indeed, Bonzig and Barty became inseparable companions during the Thursday promenade, on the strength of their common interest in ships and the sea; and Barty never wearied of describing the place he loved, nor Bonzig of listening and commenting.

"Ah! mon cher! ce que je donnerais, moi, pour voir le retour d'un baleinier à Ouittebé! Quelle 'marine' ça ferait! hein? avec la grande falaise, et la bonne petite église en haut, près de la Vieille Abbaye – et les toits rouges qui fument, et les trois jetées en pierre, et le vieux pont-levis – et toute

cette grouille de mariniers avec leurs femmes et leurs enfants – et ces braves filles qui attendent le retour du bien-aimé! nom d'un nom! dire que vous avez vu tout ça, vous – qui n'avez pas encore seize ans ... quelle chance!.. dites – qu'est-ce que ça veut bien dire, ce

'Ouïle mé sekile rô!'

Chantez-moi ça encore une fois!"

And Barty, whose voice was breaking, would raucously sing him the good old ditty for the sixth time:

"Weel may the keel row, the keel row, the keel row,
Weel may the keel row
That brings my laddie home!"

which he would find rather difficult to render literally into colloquial seafaring French!
He translated it thus:

"Vogue la carène,
Vogue la carène
Qui me ramène
Mon bien aimé!"

"Ah! vous verrez," says Bonzig – "vous verrez, aux prochaines vacances de Pâques – je ferai un si joli tableau de tout ça! avec la brume du soir qui tombe, vous savez – et le soleil qui disparaît – et la marée qui monte et la lune qui se lève à l'horizon! et les mouettes et les goëlands – et les bruyères lointaines – et le vieux manoir seigneurial de votre grand-père ... c'est bien ça, n'est-ce pas?"

"Oui, oui, M'sieur Bonzig – vous y êtes, en plein!"

And the good usher in his excitement would light himself a cigarette of caporal, and inhale the smoke as if it were a sea-breeze, and exhale it like a regular sou'-wester! and sing:

"Ouïle – mé – sekile rô,
Tat brinn my laddé ôme!"

Barty also brought back with him the complete poetical works of Byron and Thomas Moore, the gift of his noble grandfather, who adored these two bards to the exclusion of all other bards that ever wrote in English. And during that year we both got to know them, possibly as well as Lord Whitby himself. Especially "Don Juan," in which we grew to be as word-perfect as in *Polyeucte*, *Le Misanthrope*, *Athalie*, *Philoctète*, *Le Lutrín*, the first six books of the *Æneid* and the *Iliad*, the *Ars Poetica*, and the *Art Poétique* (Boileau).

Every line of these has gone out of my head – long ago, alas! But I could still stand a pretty severe examination in the now all-but-forgotten English epic – from Dan to Beersheba – I mean from "I want a hero" to "The phantom of her frolic grace, Fitz-Fulke!"

Barty, however, remembered everything – what he ought to, and what he ought not! He had the most astounding memory: wax to receive and marble to retain; also a wonderful facility for writing verse, mostly comic, both in English and French. Greek and Latin verse were not taught us at Brossard's, for good French reasons, into which I will not enter now.

We also grew very fond of Lamartine and Victor Hugo, quite openly – and of De Musset under the rose.

"C'était dans la nuit brune
Sur le clocher jauni,
La lune,
Comme un point sur son i!"

(not for the young person).

I have a vague but pleasant impression of that year. Its weathers, its changing seasons, its severe frosts, with Sunday skatings on the dangerous canals, St.-Ouen and De l'Ourcq; its genial spring, all convolvulus and gobéas, and early almond blossom and later horse-chestnut spikes, and more lime and syringa than ever; its warm soft summer and the ever-delightful school of natation by the Isle of Swans.

This particular temptation led us into trouble. We would rise before dawn, Barty and Jolivet and I, and let ourselves over the wall and run the two miles, and get a heavenly swim and a promise of silence for a franc apiece; and run back again and jump into bed a few minutes before the five-o'clock bell rang the réveillé.

But we did this once too often – for M. Dumollard had been looking at Venus with his telescope (I *think* it was Venus) one morning before sunrise, and spied us out *en flagrant délit*; perhaps with that very telescope. Anyhow, he pounced on us when we came back. And our punishment would have been extremely harsh but for Barty, who turned it all into a joke.

After breakfast M. Mérovée pronounced a very severe sentence on us under the acacia. I forget what it was – but his manner was very short and dignified, and he walked away very stiffly towards the door of the étude. Barty ran after him without noise, and just touching his shoulders with the tips of his fingers, cleared him at a bound from behind, as one clears a post.

M. Mérovée, in a *real* rage this time, forgot his dignity, and pursued him all over the school – through open windows and back again – into his own garden (Tusculum) – over trellis railings – all along the top of a wall – and finally, quite blown out, sat down on the edge of the tank: the whole school was in fits by this time, even M. Dumollard – and at last Mérovée began to laugh too. So the thing had to be forgiven – but only that once!

Once also, that year, but in the winter, a great compliment was paid to la perfide Albion in the persons of MM. Josselin et Maurice, which I cannot help recording with a little complacency.

On a Thursday walk in the Bois de Boulogne a boy called out "À bas Dumollard!" in a falsetto squeak. Dumollard, who was on duty that walk, was furious, of course – but he couldn't identify the boy by the sound of his voice. He made his complaint to M. Mérovée – and next morning, after prayers, Mérovée came into the school-room, and told us he should go the round of the boys there and then, and ask each boy separately to own up if it were he who had uttered the seditious cry.

"And mind you!" he said – "you are all and each of you on your 'word of honor' —*l'étude entière!*"

So round he went, from boy to boy, deliberately fixing each boy with his eye, and severely asking – "Est-ce toi?" "Est-ce toi?" "Est-ce toi?" etc., and waiting very deliberately indeed for the answer, and even asking for it again if it were not given in a firm and audible voice. And the answer was always, "Non, m'sieur, ce n'est pas moi!"

But when he came to each of *us* (Josselin and me) he just mumbled his "Est-ce toi?" in a quite perfunctory voice, and didn't even wait for the answer!

When he got to the last boy of all, who said "Non, m'sieur," like all the rest, he left the room, saying, tragically (and, as I thought, rather theatrically for *him*):

"Je m'en vais le cœur navré – il y a un lâche parmi vous!" (My heart is harrowed – there's a coward among you.)

There was an awkward silence for a few moments.

Presently Rapaud got up and went out. We all knew that Rapaud was the delinquent – he had bragged about it so – overnight in the dormitory. He went straight to M. Mérovée and confessed, stating that he did not like to be put on his word of honor before the whole school. I forget whether he was punished or not, or how. He had to make his apologies to M. Dumollard, of course.

To put the whole school on its word of honor was thought a very severe measure, coming as it did from the head master in person. "La parole d'honneur" was held to be very sacred between boy and boy, and even between boy and head master. The boy who broke it was always "mis à la quarantaine" (sent to Coventry) by the rest of the school.

"I wonder why he let off Josselin and Maurice so easily?" said Jolivet, at breakfast.

"Parce qu'il aime les Anglais, ma foi!" said M. Dumollard – "affaire de goût!"

"Ma foi, il n'a pas tort!" said M. Bonzig.

Dumollard looked askance at Bonzig (between whom and himself not much love was lost) and walked off, jauntily twirling his mustache, and whistling a few bars of a very ungainly melody, to which the words ran:

"Non! jamais en France,
Jamais Anglais ne règnera!"

As if we wanted to, good heavens!

(By-the-way, I suddenly remember that both Berquin and d'Orthez were let off as easily as Josselin and I. But they were eighteen or nineteen, and "en Philosophie," the highest class in the school – and very first-rate boys indeed. It's only fair that I should add this.)

By-the-way, also, M. Dumollard took it into his head to persecute me because once I refused to fetch and carry for him and be his "moricaud," or black slave (as du Tertre-Jouan called it): a mean and petty persecution which lasted two years, and somewhat embitters my memory of those happy days. It was always "Maurice au piquet pour une heure!" ... "Maurice à la retenue!" ... "Maurice privé de bain!" ... "Maurice consigné dimanche prochain!" ... for the slightest possible offence. But I forgive him freely.

First, because he is probably dead, and "de mortibus nil desperandum!" as Rapaud once said – and for saying which he received a "twisted pinch" from Mérovée Brossard himself.

Secondly, because he made chemistry, cosmography, and physics so pleasant – and even reconciled me at last to the differential and integral calculus (but never Barty!).

He could be rather snobbish at times, which was not a common French fault in the forties – we didn't even know what to call it.

For instance, he was fond of bragging to us boys about the golden splendors of his Sunday dissipation, and his grand acquaintances, even in class. He would even interrupt himself in the middle of an equation at the blackboard to do so.

"You mustn't imagine to yourselves, messieurs, that because I teach you boys science at the Pension Brossard, and take you out walking on Thursday afternoons, and all that, that I do not associate *avec des gens du monde*! Last night, for example, I was dining at the Café de Paris with a very intimate friend of mine – he's a marquis – and when the bill was brought, what do you think it came to? you give it up?" (vous donnez votre langue aux chats?). "Well, it came to fifty-seven francs, fifty centimes! We tossed up who should pay – et, ma foi, le sort a favorisé M. le Marquis!"

To this there was nothing to say; so none of us said anything, except du Tertre-Jouan, *our* marquis (No. 2), who said, in his sulky, insolent, peasantlike manner:

"Et comment q'ça s'appelle, vot' marquis?" (What does it call itself, your marquis?)

Upon which M. Dumollard turns very red ("pique un soleil"), and says:

"Monsieur le Marquis Paul – François – Victor du Tertre-Jouan de Haultcastel de St.-Paterne, vous êtes un paltoquet et un rustre!.."

And goes back to his equations.

Du Tertre-Jouan was nearly six feet high, and afraid of nobody – a kind of clodhopping young rustic Hercules, and had proved his mettle quite recently – when a brutal usher, whom I will call Monsieur Boulot (though his real name was Patachou), a Méridional with a horrible divergent squint, made poor Rapaud go down on his knees in the classe de géographie ancienne, and slapped him violently on the face twice running – a way he had with Rapaud.

It happened like this. It was a kind of penitential class for dunces during play-time. M. Boulot drew in chalk an outline of ancient Greece on the blackboard, and under it he wrote —

"Timeo Danaos, et dona ferentes!"

"Rapaud, translate me that line of Virgil!" says Boulot.

"J'estime les Danois et leurs dents de fer!" says poor Rapaud (I esteem the Danish and their iron teeth). And we all laughed. For which he underwent the brutal slapping.

The window was ajar, and outside I saw du Tertre-Jouan, Jolivet, and Berquin, listening and peeping through. Suddenly the window bursts wide open, and du Tertre-Jouan vaults the sill, gets between Boulot and his victim, and says:

"Le troisième coup fait feu, vous savez! touchez-y encore, à ce moutard, et j'vous assomme sur place!" (Touch him again, that kid, and I'll break your head where you stand!).

There was an awful row, of course – and du Tertre-Jouan had to make a public apology to M. Boulot, who disappeared from the school the very same day; and Tertre-Jouan would have been canonized by us all, but that he was so deplorably dull and narrow-minded, and suspected of being a royalist in disguise. He was an orphan and very rich, and didn't fash himself about examinations. He left school that year without taking any degree – and I don't know what became of him.

This year also Barty conceived a tender passion for Mlle. Marceline.

It was after the mumps, which we both had together in a double-bedded infirmerie next to the lingerie – a place where it was a pleasure to be ill; for she was in and out all day, and told us all that was going on, and gave us nice drinks and tisanes of her own making – and laughed at all Barty's jokes, and some of mine! and wore the most coquettish caps ever seen.

Besides, she was an uncommonly good-looking woman – a tall blonde with beautiful teeth, and wonderfully genial, good-humored, and lively – an ideal nurse, but a terrible postponer of cures! Lord Archibald quite fell in love with her.

"C'est moi qui voudrais bien avoir les oreillons ici!" he said to her. "Je retarderais ma convalescence autant que possible!"

"Comme il sait bien le français, votre oncle – et comme il est poli!" said Marceline to the convalescent Barty, who was in no hurry to get well either!

When we did get well again, Barty would spend much of his play-time fetching and carrying for Mlle. Marceline – even getting Dumollard's socks for her to darn – and talking to her by the hour as he sat by her pleasant window, out of which one could see the Arch of Triumph, which so triumphantly dominated Paris and its suburbs, and does so still – no Eiffel Tower can kill that arch!

I, being less precocious, did not begin my passion for Mlle. Marceline till next year, just as Bonneville and Jolivet trois were getting over theirs. Nous avons tous passé par là!

What a fresh and kind and jolly woman she was, to be sure! I wonder none of the masters married her. Perhaps they did! Let us hope it wasn't M. Dumollard!

It is such a pleasure to recall every incident of this epoch of my life and Barty's that I should like to go through our joint lives day by day, hour by hour, microscopically – to describe every book we read, every game we played, every *pensum* (*i. e.*, imposition) we performed; every lark we were punished for – every meal we ate. But space forbids this self-indulgence, and other considerations make it unadvisable – so I will resist the temptation.

La pension Brossard! How often have we both talked of it, Barty and I, as middle-aged men; in the billiard-room of the Marathoneum, let us say, sitting together on a comfortable couch, with tea and cigarettes – and always in French whispers! we could only talk of Brossard's in French.

"Te rappelles-tu l'habit neuf de Berquin, et son chapeau haute-forme?"

"Te souviens-tu de la vieille chatte angora du père Jaurion?" etc., etc., etc.

Idiotic reminiscences! as charming to revive as any old song with words of little meaning that meant so much when one was four – five – six years old! before one knew even how to spell them!

"Paille à Dine – paille à Chine —
Paille à Suzette et Martine —
Bon lit à la Dumaine!"

Céline, my nurse, used to sing this – and I never knew what it meant; nor do I now! But it was charming indeed.

Even now I dream that I go back to school, to get coached by Dumollard in a little more algebra. I wander about the playground; but all the boys are new, and don't even know my name; and silent, sad, and ugly, every one! Again Dumollard persecutes me. And in the middle of it I reflect that, after all, he is a person of no importance whatever, and that I am a member of the British Parliament – a baronet – a millionaire – and one of her Majesty's Privy Councillors! and that M. Dumollard must be singularly "out of it," even for a Frenchman, not to be aware of this.

"If he only knew!" says I to myself, says I – in my dream.

Besides, can't the man see with his own eyes that I'm grown up, and big enough to tuck him under my left arm, and spank him just as if he were a little naughty boy – confound the brute!

Then, suddenly:

"Maurice, au piquet pour une heure!"

"Moi, m'sieur?"

"Oui, vous!"

"Pourquoi, m'sieur!"

"Parce que ça me plaît!"

And I wake – and could almost weep to find how old I am!

And Barty Josselin is no more – oh! my God!.. and his dear wife survived him just twenty-four hours!

Behold us both "en Philosophie!"

And Barty the head boy of the school, though not the oldest – and the brilliant show-boy of the class.

Just before Easter (1851) he and I and Rapaud and Laferté and Jolivet trois (who was nineteen) and Palaiseau and Bussy-Rabutin went up for our "bachot" at the Sorbonne.

We sat in a kind of big musty school-room with about thirty other boys from other schools and colleges. There we sat side by side from ten till twelve at long desks, and had a long piece of Latin dictated to us, with the punctuation in French: "un point – point et virgule – deux points – point d'exclamation – guillemets – ouvrez la parenthèse," etc., etc. – monotonous details that enervate one at such a moment!

Then we set to work with our dictionaries and wrote out a translation according to our lights – a *pion* walking about and watching us narrowly for cribs, in case we should happen to have one for this particular extract, which was most unlikely.

Barty's nose bled, I remember – and this made him nervous.

Then we went and lunched at the Café de l'Odéon, on the best omelet we had ever tasted.

"Te rappelles-tu cette omelette?" said poor Barty to me only last Christmas as ever was!

Then we went back with our hearts in our mouths to find if we had qualified ourselves by our "version écrite" for the oral examination that comes after, and which is so easy to pass – the examiners having lunched themselves into good-nature.

There we stood panting, some fifty boys and masters, in a small, whitewashed room like a prison. An official comes in and puts the list of candidates in a frame on the wall, and we crane our necks over each other's shoulders.

And, lo! Barty is plucked —*collé!* and I have passed, and actually Rapaud – and no one else from Brossard's!

An old man – a parent or grandparent probably of some unsuccessful candidate – bursts into tears and exclaims,

"Oh! qué malheur – qué malheur!"

A shabby, tall, pallid youth, in the uniform of the Collège Ste.-Barbe, rushes down the stone stair's shrieking,

"Ça pue l'injustice, ici!"

One hears him all over the place: terrible heartburns and tragic disappointments in the beginning of life resulted from failure in this first step – a failure which disqualified one for all the little government appointments so dear to the heart of the frugal French parent. "Mille francs par an! c'est le Pactole!"

Barty took his defeat pretty easily – he put it all down to his nose bleeding – and seemed so pleased at my success, and my dear mother's delight in it, that he was soon quite consoled; he was always like that.

To M. Mérovée, Barty's failure was as great a disappointment as it was a painful surprise.

"Try again Josselin! Don't leave here till you have passed. If you are content to fail in this, at the very outset of your career, you will never succeed in anything through life! Stay with us as my guest till you can go up again, and again if necessary. *Do*, my dear child – it will make me so happy! I shall feel it as a proof that you reciprocate in some degree the warm friendship I have always borne you – in common with everybody in the school! Je t'en prie, mon garçon!"

Then he went to the Rohans and tried to persuade them. But Lord Archibald didn't care much about Bachots, nor his wife either. They were going back to live in England, besides; and Barty was going into the Guards.

I left school also – with a mixture of hope and elation, and yet the most poignant regret.

I can hardly find words to express the gratitude and affection I felt for Mérovée Brossard when I bade him farewell.

Except his father before him, he was the best and finest Frenchman I ever knew. There is nothing invidious in my saying this, and in this way. I merely speak of the Brossards, father and son, as Frenchmen in this connection, because their admirable qualities of heart and mind were so essentially French; they would have done equal honor to any country in the world.

I corresponded with him regularly for a few years, and so did Barty; and then our letters grew fewer and farther between, and finally left off altogether – as nearly always happens in such cases, I think. And I never saw him again; for when he broke up the school he went to his own province in the southeast, and lived there till twenty years ago, when he died – unmarried, I believe.

Then there was Monsieur Bonzig, and Mlle. Marceline, and others – and three or four boys with whom both Barty and I were on terms of warm and intimate friendship. None of these boys that I know of have risen to any world-wide fame; and, oddly enough, none of them have ever given sign of life to Barty Josselin, who is just as famous in France for his French literary work as on this side of the Channel for all he has done in English. He towers just as much there as here; and this double eminence now dominates the entire globe, and we are beginning at last to realize everywhere that this bright luminary in our firmament is no planet, like Mars or Jupiter, but, like Sirius, a sun.

Yet never a line from an old comrade in that school where he lived for four years and was so strangely popular – and which he so filled with his extraordinary personality!

So much for Barty Josselin's school life and mine. I fear I may have dwelt on them at too great a length. No period of time has ever been for me so bright and happy as those seven years I spent at the Institution F. Brossard – especially the four years I spent there with Barty Josselin. The older I get, the more I love to recall the trivial little incidents that made for us both the sum of existence in those happy days.

La chasse aux souvenirs d'enfance! what better sport can there be, or more bloodless, at my time of life?

And all the lonely pathetic pains and pleasures of it, now that *he* is gone!

The winter twilight has just set in – "betwixt dog and wolf." I wander alone (but for Barty's old mastiff, who follows me willy-nilly) in the woods and lanes that surround Marsfield on the Thames, the picturesque abode of the Josselins.

Darker and darker it grows. I no longer make out the familiar trees and hedges, and forget how cold it is and how dreary.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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