

LINES,

WRITTEN OFF NEUTRAL BAY, PORT JACKSON, DURING A CALM.
BY R. K. EWING.

O, what a scene is this! So peaceful all,
And wrapp'd in such a glorious blaze of light,
It seemeth as a place ideal might
Hath built; where soft, unheard, the footsteps fall
Of Fancy, as she walks amidst her own
Creations. Wide spread around, the spacious
Water-glow, like a molten silver throne;
Where Love doth sit, 'midst all things, precious.

Sately the hills hedge in the radiant deep,
A gleam of verdure gilds their tops on high,
And 'neath the splendours of a cloudless sky,
The forests on their bosom seem to sleep;
The scatter'd houses, dazzling, fair appear
White-clouded jaspers 'midst the sun-sick green,
The distant city, too, doth gaily rear
In glittering silence, to behold the scene.

A thousand bays on every side surround,
And golden beaches drowsed with shining heat;
The Winds, to see the silent glories meet,
Stand hush'd in wonder on the heights around;
The very ships, made amorous by the sight,
Seem but to kiss the spot on which they rest;
And sparkling birds stay sudden in their flight,
Like Angels at the islands of the blest.

Hark! Now old Neptune's sons in labour joined,
Pour forth the full-mouth'd chorus of their song,
And as it sweeps the burnished plain along
Leaves awful stillness o'er the scene behind;
These new-made circles widening to the shore
Appear tomb marks, where Discord hath been laid;
The glassy drops which leave yon boatman's oar,
Seem like the tears which Peace for joy hath shed.

Spirit of Peace! who reign'st in airy space,
And thine's triumphant in thy car of gold—
O, would that thou for ever should'st behold
Thy reflex spirit all pervade this place;
Light up the path of the receding year,
And from her ashes animate anew
One that shall live in Time's concordant sphere,
Replete with blessings which the past ne'er knew.

- 1.—*La Pairie dans ses Rapports avec la situation Politique son Principe, ses Ressources, son Avenir.* Par M. CHARLES DUVEYRIER. 8vo. PARIS: 1842.
- 2.—*Lettres Politiques.* Par M. CHARLES DUVEYRIER. 8vo. PARIS: 1843.

[FROM THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.]

THERE are several causes which make the political writings produced at the present time in France, an instructive study to intelligent observers in all countries of Europe.

In the first place, there is much truth in the boast of French writers, that France marches in the van of the European movement. The fact is not necessarily of the highly complimentary character with which those writers generally choose to invest it. Movement is not always progress; and progress itself may be in a downward as well as an upward direction. To be foremost in the road which all are travelling, is not of necessity the most honorable position; but it is a position pre-eminently interesting to those who follow. And such, in the present period of the world's history, is the situation of France. The two strongest tendencies of the world in these times are towards Democracy and Revolution; meaning by Democracy—social equality, under whatever form of government; and by Revolution, a general demolition of old institutions and opinions, without reference to its being effected peaceably or violently. In this twofold career France is the furthest advanced of the European nations. The feelings of her people are nearly as democratic as in the United States; the passion for equality almost as strong. Her institutions indeed infringe upon that equality, by limiting to a narrow class the privilege of electing, or being elected to the Chamber of Deputies. But even these privileges are not hereditary, and carry with them no direct accession of personal rank. In the eye of the law, and in that of private society, there is less difference between man and man than in any other country in Europe. The other European nations are steadily following in the direction of that social equality which, as far as regards the male sex, France has in a great measure realized. That England is undergoing this change as rapidly as the rest, has long been clear to every Englishman who knows anything more of the world he lives in than the forms of it. These forms, indeed, subsist with less alteration than in some other countries; but where are the feelings which gave meaning to them? Not the intelligent mechanic only, but the stupidest clown, at heart thinks himself as good as a nobleman; or rather (what is not exactly equivalent) thinks that a nobleman is no better than he; and there are a good many things which indicate that the nobleman himself secretly thinks much the same.

Not less is France ahead of the rest of Europe, in what may properly and independently of the specific consequences flowing from it, be called Revolution. Other nations are gradually taking down their old institutions: France, by the sacrifice of a generation, made a clean sweep of hers; and left herself a fair stage, clear of rubbish, for beginning to build anew. France has had her Revolution; has cleansed her Augean stable. She has completed the business of mere destruction; and has come into direct contact with the positive, practical question of the Art of Politics—what is to be done for the governed? Other nations, and England more than any, are in the middle of their Revolution. The most energetic minds are still occupied in thinking, less of benefits to be attained, than of nuisances to be abated; and every question of things to be done, is entangled with questions of things which have first to be undone; or of things which must not be undone, lest worse should follow.

Constitutional Government—Government in which the support of a majority in a representative assembly is necessary to office—has only had a real existence in France since 1830;

and in this short period it has rivalled the worst corruption of the English rotten boroughs. Bribery, indeed, in its coarser forms is comparatively unknown; because the electors are in a rank of life which commands hypocrisy. But a majority of the electors in a majority of the electoral colleges, is not too numerous a body to be bought; and bought it is, by distributing all public employments among the electors and their protégés; and by succumbing to the pretensions of every locally influential class interest; or rather, the nominal government is but their instrument—they are not so much bought, as they are themselves the governing body, and claim to themselves in this shape the profits of power. Their position is not that of the voters in our small boroughs; it more resembles that of the borough holders. The gratification of their cupidity is the condition they are able to impose on any set of men whom they permit to be a Ministry.

When a place, great or small, becomes vacant, what happens? Of the four hundred and fifty deputies who are *au courant* of every thing, because they have the right to penetrate each day and every hour into the *bureau* of the ministry, there are twenty or thirty who begin the siege. Their tactics are simple: They say to the Minister, "You will appoint such and such a relation or an elector of mine, or I withdraw my support." What can the Minister do? He temporises; opposes one set of pretensions and demands to another; gives hopes to all, and puts off his decision until some new vacancy occurs, to give the hope of an equivalent to the unsuccessful applicants. Happy the Departments, like that of the navy, of *l'enregistrement et les domaines*, of the army, where the modes of admission and of promotion have been fixed beforehand by general rules! And even there what latitude is allowed to favour; and in the Execution, too often, what contempt of justice! Favour is the moral ulcer, the chronic malady of the government. The delegates of the *bourgeoisie* finding the privileged class swept away, instead of abolishing privileges, seized on them for themselves; and the electors, instead of being indignant and finding fault with their deputies for usurping the privilege of the greater offices, found it simpler and more advantageous to possess themselves of the smaller.

What else could be expected? There are but 200,000 electors, and 130,000 places (without reckoning the army) in the gift of the government. Again:

The grand distributor of favors now-a-days, is the electoral body; which takes up the attention of its representatives solely with interests of locality and relationship, and circumscribes their hopes of re-election in an infinity of circles so different one from another, so changing, so personal, that there is no Minister who can take in hand a great enterprise of public utility with assurance of success; witness M. Mole with the question of railways; M. Guizot with the customs union; M. Cunin-Gridaine with the sugar laws, &c., &c.

With the keen sense which the author every where shows of this great evil, by which the sacrifices that France has made to obtain good government, are to so great a degree stultified and rendered abortive, it may appear strange that he should not contend for a change in the constitution of the legislature. Such, however, is not his expedient. We know not whether it is conviction or policy which prevents him from being a Parliamentary Reformer; whether an enlargement of the basis of the representative system appears to him, in the present condition of France, not desirable, or merely not attainable. For whatever reason, he affirms that agitation for this purpose does no good, and only interferes mischievously with what he upholds as the true corrective of the present vicious mode of government;—the formation of an enlightened public opinion. He maintains that petty and selfish interests predominate in the government only because there are no recognised principles on which it can be conducted in any other manner: That the public mind is uninformed, and has no fixed opinion on any subject connected with government, except the constitution of it: That without clear and definite views, diffused and rooted among the public, on the chief practical questions of government, there is nothing to restrain petty intrigues and cabals, or to support an honest Minister in resistance to the unjustifiable pretensions of classes and coteries. That the men at the head of the government would be glad to have such a support; that they are better than the system they administer, and that it is not willingly that they succumb to it—he assumes as a thing of course. We cannot doubt that he has reason to do so. It is not credible that men who are among the most instructed and enlightened in France, who have enlarged the domain of thought, as well as contributed largely to the diffusion of its results; that philosophers like Guizot, Villemain, Duchatel, would not gladly wash their hands of *turpitudes* as lowering to the personal dignity, as discreditable to the integrity of those involved in them. They are men with convictions, and who wish their convictions to prevail; and it cannot be agreeable to them to be dependent, not on the steady adherence of a powerful party pledged to their opinions, but on their success in bargaining for the local influence of *notabilité de clocher*—the oracles of this and that distant and backward *arrondissement*. From this position M. Duveyrier seeks to relieve them. It is ideas, he says, that are wanted; principles of government capable of inspiring attachment, and stirring the imagination; principles sufficiently practical, and at the same time sufficiently commanding and generous, to rally a large mass of opinion around them. "Vous n'avez," he says to M. Guizot—

Vous n'avez devant vous aucun de ces événements irrémédiables, aucune de ces positions fatales, qu'il ne soit pas dans la volonté de l'homme de transformer . . . Redoutez les petites choses, les petits moyens, ennoblissez les débats, posez des principes dont la France soit fière, et toutes ces questions dont on vous menace, loin d'augmenter vos embarras, viendront à votre aide, et vous offriront, pour la consolidation du cabinet, un appui inespéré.

Mais je prévois votre réponse; ce que vous me demandez, c'est une politique grand, généreuse, Française! Eh! que deviendrait-elle, mon Dieu! au milieu des intérêts ardents des localités, de l'égoïsme individuel, des intrigues, des cabales de l'amour propre?

Je le reconnais; ces exigences secondaires sont aujourd'hui toutes puissantes; elles frappent les regards! Ce sont les étoiles qui brillent au ciel la nuit, quand elles y régissent seules. Mais n'oubliez pas que leur éclat pâlit aux approches du jour, et qu'à place où elles sont encore l'œil les cherche vainement quand le soleil a jeté dans l'espace sa chaleur et sa clarté.

This doctrine, that the moral evils of the present political system of France arise from an intellectual cause—from the absence of convictions in the public mind—is dwelt upon by the author with a persistency and iteration for which the periodical form of the *Lettres* afforded great advantages. In a letter to

M. Chambolle, an opposition deputy, and editor of a leading opposition journal, he combats the idea, that any peculiar baseness is imputable to the electoral class. The press and the public, he says, are not at all more immaculate. The very men who job their electoral influence for places for their sons, are men of honour in their private concerns.

Politics, say they, have changed their aspect; men's minds are calmed; affairs are no longer in the critical state in which grand principles, strong passions, great public interests, come into play—of what consequence is it that the candidate is a trifle more or a trifle less with the opposition? it makes but the difference of a few words more or less on one or the other side. Frankly, when one finds the statesmen most opposed to each other declaring that they would govern in very much the same manner, has not the elector a right to treat questions of persons with indifference, and to transfer to his own private interest the degree of solicitude which he would otherwise have granted to those questions?

But this is terrible! the constitution is perverted in its first principles; the very meaning of a representative government is one in which the sincere opinions of the country are, above all, represented.—Most true. But what if the country has no opinions? That is an incident the constitution has not provided for. Do not wonder, then, if numbers of people are led away by this naïf calculation:—Here is one candidate who is for the good of the country, and another who is for the good of the country and for mine also; I should be a fool to hesitate.

Accordingly, so far as a determinate public opinion does exist, questions are decided, and the government conducted not by this shameful appeal to personal and local interests, but on grounds which, right or wrong, are the least of a public character.

There have existed, since 1830, two different kinds of politics. The one which may be termed constitutional politics, (la politique constituante,) was directed to founding the constitution, developing it, and defending it against the attacks of parties and the repugnances of Europe.

The other, which may be called the politics of business, (la politique des affaires,) aimed at protecting and encouraging the interests and labours of society, in the arts, the sciences, religion, military and diplomatic organization, internal administration, commerce, agriculture, and manufactures.

In the former branch, in constitutional or organic politics, the government has proceeded on fixed and determinate principles; and has accordingly been able to carry the Chambers with it, by large and certain majorities.

Unhappily it is not so with the politics of business. Statesmen have not yet any programme for that department, any system of government specially applicable to it. Accordingly as soon as the existence of the monarchy is no longer threatened, the fundamental principles of the constitution no longer in question, what do we behold? The government becomes feeble, uncertain, embarrassed; its majority breaks up into an infinity of minute fractions. . . . Time has resolved most of the questions of constitutional politics which were stirred up internally and externally by the establishment of the new government; and the politics of business have now, in France and in Europe, assumed the ascendant. But there is not yet in France any system of government in matters of business. The opposition, in this respect, is not more advanced than the majority. . . . Were the cabinet overthrown, its successors would encounter the same attacks and the same embarrassments, and would have even less strength to overcome them; for they would not (like the present ministry) come into office to repair faults, and save the country from a dangerous *entraînement*; no important situation would connect itself with their ministerial existence.

Once suppose any general principles of government in the business department, and the situation is changed. If the principles are accepted by the most eminent minds of all sections of the majority, one of two things must happen; either the ministry will adopt them, and will, in that case, owe its safety to them; or it will disdain them, and the system will become an instrument of opposition, from which will issue sooner or later a durable cabinet.

Such, at bottom, is the true political situation of the country; its difficulties and its exigencies. The greatest service which could now be rendered to the nation, would be to introduce into the midst of its affairs, so languid, thorny, and complex, a general system of government, capable of overthrowing the intrigues and petty passions of the coteries which have succeeded the factions of former days; and of introducing into discussions a new public interest, sufficiently considerable to impose on rival industries and rival localities, union and agreement.

Twelve years of parliamentary omnipotence have proved this task to be above the strength of the Chamber of Deputies. The greatest of the embarrassments arise from its own composition. It is not from that Chamber that we can expect a remedy.

M. Duveyrier's first pamphlet (from which this extract is taken) was on the Chamber of Peers; being an attempt to persuade that body to consider as theirs the task which the Chamber of Deputies appeared to have abandoned. The circumstances which, in his opinion, mark out the less popular branch of the French legislature, for the office of introducing matured and systematic principles of government into the public affairs of France, are first, its independence of the partial and local interests of constituencies, and secondly, the composition of its *personnel*.

The Chamber of Peers, even when hereditary, was a body of a very different character from the House of Lords. It consisted indeed, for the most part, like that assembly, of the wealthiest landed proprietors; but, in England, to represent these is to represent the principal power in the state; while, in France, "the monarchy of the middle class"—wealth, as such, has but little political power, and landed wealth rather less than even Commercial; the Chamber of Peers, therefore, was a body of exceedingly small importance. Once, and once only, for a short period, the accidental coincidence between its tendencies and those of public opinion, invested it with a popularity not its own; when, with the caution inherent in a body of old and rich men, it withstood the counter-revolutionary madness of Charles X., which at last cost him his throne. He swamped it by a large creation, and it relapsed into insignificance. In 1831, its destruction, in its pristine character, was completed by the abolition of its hereditary privilege. But, in losing this, it received what in our author's view was far more than an equivalent. In ceasing to represent the remains of what had once been powerful, the *noblesse* and *la grande propriété*, it became the representative of an existing power—of one of the leading influences in society as at present constituted.

The King names the Peers for life; but he is only em-

powered to name them from certain enumerated classes or "categories," consisting chiefly (members of the Institute being almost the sole exception) of persons who have served the state for a certain number of years; either in the Chamber of Deputies, or as functionaries in the different departments of the government. The peerage, therefore, is naturally composed of the most eminent public servants—those who combine talents with experience; and it represents a class of great importance in existing society—the administrative body.

Every people comprises, and probably will always comprise, two societies, an *administration* and a *public*; the one of which the general interest is the supreme law, where positions are not hereditary, but the principle is that of classing its members according to their merit, and rewarding them according to their works; and where the moderation of salaries is compensated by their fixity, and especially by honor and consideration. The other, composed of landed proprietors, of capitalists, of masters and workmen, among whom the supreme law is that of inheritance, the principal rule of conduct is personal interest, competition and struggle the favorite elements.

These two societies serve mutually as a counterpoise; they continually act and react upon one another. The public tends to introduce into the administration the stimulus naturally wanting to it, the principle of emulation. The administration, conformably to its appointed purpose, tends to introduce more and more into the mass of the public, elements of order and forethought. In this twofold direction, the administration and the public have rendered, and do render daily to each other, reciprocal services.—(*La Patrie*, p. 12.)

The Chamber of Deputies, (he proceeds to say,) represents the public and its tendencies. The Chamber of Peers represents, or from its constitution is fitted to represent, those who are or have been public functionaries: whose appointed duty and occupation it has been to look at questions from the point of view not of any mere local or sectional, but of the general interest; and who have the judgement and knowledge resulting from labor and experience. To a body like this, it naturally belongs to take the initiative in all legislation, not of a constitutional or organic character. If, in the natural course of things, well-considered views of policy are anywhere to be looked for, it must be among such a body. To no other acceptance can such views, when originating elsewhere, be so appropriately submitted—through no other organ so fitly introduced into the laws.

We shall not enter into the considerations by which the author attempts to impress upon the Peers this elevated view of their function in the commonwealth. On a new body, starting fresh as a senate, those considerations might have influence. But the senate of France is not a new body. It set out on the discredited foundation of the old hereditary chamber; and its change of character only takes place gradually, as the members die off. To redeem a lost position is more difficult than to create a new one. The new members, joining a body of no weight, become accustomed to political insignificance; they have mostly passed the age of enterprise; and the Peerage is considered little else than an honorable retirement for the invalids of the public service. M. Duveyrier's suggestion has made some impression upon the public; it has gained him the public ear, and launched his doctrines into discussion; but we do not find that the conduct of the Peers has been at all affected by it. Energy is precisely that quality which, if men have it not of themselves, cannot be breathed into them by other people's advice and exhortations. There are involved, however, in this speculation, some ideas of a more general character; not unworthy of the attention of those who concern themselves about the social changes which the future must produce.

There are, we believe, few real thinkers, of whatever party, who have not reflected with some anxiety upon the views which have become current of late; respecting the irresistible tendency of modern society towards democracy. The sure, and now no longer slow, advance, by which the classes hitherto in the ascendant are merging into the common mass, and all other forces giving way before the power of mere numbers, is well calculated to inspire uneasiness; even in those to whom democracy *per se* presents nothing alarming. It is not the uncontrolled ascendancy of popular power, but of any power, which is formidable. There is no one power in society, or capable of being constituted in it, of which the influences do not become mischievous as soon as it reigns uncontrolled—as soon as it becomes exempted from any necessity of being in the right, by being able to make its mere will prevail, without the condition of a previous struggle. To render its ascendancy safe, it must be fitted with correctives and counteractives, possessing the qualities opposite to its characteristic defects. Now, the defects to which the government of numbers, whether in the pure American, or in the mixed English form, is most liable, are precisely those of a public, as compared with an administration. Want of appreciation of distant objects and remote consequences; where an object is desired, want both of an adequate sense of practical difficulties, and of the sagacity necessary for eluding them; disregard of traditions, and of maxims sanctioned by experience; an undervaluing of the importance of fixed rules, when immediate purposes require a departure from them—these are among the acknowledged dangers of popular government; and there is the still greater, though less recognised, danger, of being ruled by a spirit of suspicious and intolerant mediocrity. Taking these things into consideration, and also the progressive decline of the existing checks and counterpoises, and the little probability there is that the influence of mere wealth, still less of birth, will be sufficient hereafter to restrain the tendencies of the growing power, by mere passive resistance; we do not think that a nation whose historical *antécédens* give it any choice, could select a fitter basis upon which to ground the counterbalancing power in the State, than the principle of the French Upper House. The defects of Representative Assemblies are, in substance, those of unskilled politicians. The mode of raising a power most competent to their correction, would be an organization and combination of the skilled. History affords the example of a government carried on for centuries with the greatest consistency of purpose, and the highest skill and talent, ever realised in public affairs; and it was constituted on this very principle. The Roman Senate was a Senate for life; composed of all who had filled high offices in the State, and were not disqualified by a public note of disgrace. The faults of the Roman policy were in its ends; which, however, were those of all the States of the ancient world.

Its choice of means was consummate. This government, and others distantly approaching to it, have given to aristocracy all the credit which it has obtained for constancy and wisdom. A Senate of some such description, composed of persons no longer young, and whose reputation is already gained, will necessarily lean to the Conservative side; but not with the blind, merely instinctive, spirit of conservatism, generated by mere wealth or social importance, unearned by previous labor. Such a body would secure a due hearing and a reasonable regard for precedent and established rule. It would disarm jealousy by its freedom from any class interest; and while it never could become the really predominant power in the State, still, since its position would be the consequence of recognised merit and actual services to the public, it would have as much personal influence, and excite as little hostility, as is compatible with resisting in any degree the tendencies of the really strongest power.

There is another class of considerations connected with Representative Governments, to which we shall also briefly advert. In proportion as it has been better understood what legislation is, and the unity of plan as well as maturity of deliberation which are essential to it, thinking persons have asked themselves the question—Whether a popular body of 658 or 459 members, not specially educated for the purpose, having served no apprenticeship, and undergone no examination, and who transact business in the forms and very much in the spirit of a debating society, can have as its peculiarly appropriate office to make laws? Whether that is not a work certain to be spoiled by putting such a superfluous number of hands upon it? Whether it is not essentially a business for one, or a very small number, of most carefully prepared and selected individuals? And whether the proper office of a Representative body, (in addition to controlling the public expenditure, and deciding who shall hold office), be not that of *discussing* all national interests; of giving expression to the wishes and feelings of the country: and granting or withholding its consent to the laws which others make, rather than of themselves framing, or even altering them? The law of this and most other nations is already such a chaos, that the quality of what is yearly added, does not materially affect the general mass; but in a country possessed of a real Code or Digest, and desirous of retaining that advantage, who could think without dismay of its being tampered with at the will of a body like the House of Commons, or the Chamber of Deputies? Imperfect as is the French Code, the inconveniences arising from this cause are already strongly felt; and they afford an additional inducement for associating with the popular body a skilled Senate, or Council of Legislation, which, whatever might be its special constitution must be grounded upon some form of the principle which we have now considered.

M. Duveyrier does not often return, except in the way of incidental allusion, to his idea respecting the Peers; but the conception of the administration, or corps of public functionaries, as the social element to which France must look for improvements in her political system, is carried through the whole series of Pamphlets; and he attempts to avail himself of every side-current of opinion to steer into this harbour. This is especially seen in his Letter to the Duke de Nemours, on *The State and Prospects of Aristocracy in France*. According to this Letter, there is now a distinct acknowledged tendency in the French mind towards aristocracy; a tendency hailed by some, dreaded and rejected by others, but denied by no one. "The best and sincerest thinkers cannot see without alarm the narrow interval which separates the two forces between which the government is divided." Experience proves, that "when the popular and the royal power stand singly opposed to one another, a struggle commences, and one inevitably overpowers the other. Men ask themselves, were some unforeseen circumstance to rekindle the conflict, on which side would be the victory, and whether a Republic or an Absolute Monarchy is most to be dreaded? And a Republic is not considered as the most imminent nor the most formidable danger. The wisdom of the King, men say, has fortified the regal power; but the precautions by which the popular power has attempted to ensure its control, have turned to its confusion. The *bourgeoisie* only uses its influence to break up, by intrigue, cabinets which only maintain themselves by the distribution of favors. Thus lowered in its own esteem, and in that of others, what salutary restraint can it impose upon the executive power, which the interest of the ministers lies in extending perpetually? France, therefore, marches by a sort of fatality towards Despotism. But after Despotism come revolutions, and in revolutions dynasties disappear."

Not only on these political, but also on moral grounds, M. Duveyrier contends for the necessity of intermediate ranks, and a third power interposed between the Royal and the Popular. We give these passages in his own words:—

La plaie que tout le monde signale, dont tout le monde souffre n'est-elle pas ce nivellement hors de nature, qui prétend s'imposer à toutes les situations, à toutes les intelligences, à tous les intérêts; cette personnalité brutale, ce démon de l'envie, cet amour effréné de soi-même, qui s'empare de tout—familles, cités, industries?

No degree of jealousy of natural superiorities, he continues, can prevent them from existing; talents, riches, even historical descent, are still instruments of power; but the social arrangements not being such as to make these powers available for public uses, they work only for the personal ends of the possessors.

Et pourquoi s'en étonner? Quand la grandeur et l'utilité des œuvres ne suffisent plus pour enrichir, pour ennoblir celui qui les produit, quand on refuse les égards les plus légitimes aux dévouemens, à la gloire, aux services publics, pourquoi s'étonner que le talent se rende à lui-même l'hommage qu'on lui refuse, et qu'il tourne en vil métier les plus sublimes professions?

On a crue fonder le règne de l'égalité; vaine erreur! L'aristocratie n'est plus, mais le monde est plein d'aristocrates. Tout la différence, c'est que les privilégiés sont déshonorés; qu'ils ne forment plus corps qu'il n'existe plus entre eux de point d'honneur. Ils sont toujours au dessus de la foule; ils peuvent plus qu'elle; mais à cette supériorité d'influence n'est attachée la pratique d'aucune vertu, ni désintéressement, ni bravoure, ni magnificence, aucune obligation morale, aucun service patriotique. La conscience d'une supériorité de nature et de droits est toujours la même; le niveau n'a passé que sur les devoirs.

These arguments for an Aristocracy have not so much novelty or originality, as the views which our author promulgates respecting the mode of supplying the desideratum. An aris-

toocracy, he says, can never be constituted but on the basis of a public function. Even the feudal nobility "originated in the diversity of certain military functions, and in the relations of subordination which arose between them. Dukes were commanders of armies; Marquises were guardians of the frontiers; Counts, governors of provinces; the Barons were the principal officers attached to the person of the Monarch; Chevaliers were inferior officers. Most of these functions were originally personal, and the nobility which they conferred was so too." Nor was the title ever, during the vigour of the institution, dissevered in the minds of men from the duties which it imposed.

"*Noblesse oblige!*" Such was the first lesson inculcated upon the heir of the title. He was considered to be under the obligation of all generous sentiments, of magnificence, of intrepidity; so universal was the opinion that the title was only the sign of a function, and the privileges conferred by it the just reward of public services, of duties from which the *titulaire* could not withdraw himself without meanness and dishonor."

But although feudal dignities, as he justly says, were originally symbols of services, he treats with deserved contempt the idea, that any useful end could be answered by merely creating from the ranks of personal merit, after the foolish example of Napoleon, Dukes, Counts, and Barons.

The question is not about ennobling men by distributing among them the titles of public functions which for the last eight or ten centuries have ceased to exist. The question is of ennobling the functions and public employments of modern times; of raising them gradually to such a degree of honor, that their denominations may become, for future ages, real titles of nobility.

The nobility, then, which we have now to create, is *la noblesse gouvernementale*; and, to say the truth, there has never existed any other. If there be understood by aristocracy a body of individuals distinguished by titles and designations to which are not attached any attributes of government, be assured that the nobility meant is a nobility in its decline. At its origin, or in the time of its greatest eminence, every aristocracy governs. What requires to be ennobled now, is office, power, public trusts. We should desire to see the idea become general, that every one who takes a share in the government of his country is bound to show more virtue, more patriotism, more greatness of soul than the vulgar. This was already the spirit of the old noblesse. In the time of its splendour, there was one sort of people who might postpone the interest of the state to that of their families; there were others for whom it was a perpetual duty to sacrifice their families to the state. The former, when the enemy invaded their native soil might without dishonor avoid the danger, shut themselves up in their houses, preserve themselves for their wives and children—these were the *bourgeois* and the "vilains, taillables et corvéables;" but the others were obliged to quit everything, wives, children, lands and manors, and rush to meet the enemy—these were the nobles, who owed to their country the impost of blood.—(*Lettres Politiques*, i. 69-84.)

We are thus brought back, by a rather circuitous course, to our author's idea respecting the class of public functionaries, as the only material from which a distinguished class,—a new Aristocracy,—can arise. Does he propose, then, to make them an aristocracy? An aristocracy, according to him, cannot be made. It must make itself. The Judicial Order, the *noblesse de robe*, made itself an aristocracy by its own conduct. The new aristocracy must do the same. He asks no privileges for it; least of all, any hereditary privilege. He aims at investing the class with the various conditions necessary to make them deserve, and, by deserving, obtain, the respect and consideration of the public.

Fixity, in the first place. Nothing is more adverse to the influence which the administrator should possess over his *administrés*, than those frequent changes of residence, which permit only a very small number to familiarize themselves with the special wants of their localities, and to acquire the confidence of the public.

Responsibility, in the second place. The excessive centralization which keeps in the hands of the Ministers (who alone are responsible) the decision of even the simplest questions, and the distribution of even the most trifling employments, takes away from official station its consideration and its authority. The influence which every *employé* in the lower grades is able to exercise through some deputy, so as to frustrate the just *surveillance* of his superiors, relaxes the ties of official connexion, and is a discouragement to zeal. How can you expect earnestness and self-devotion from a functionary who can neither protect talent, nor repress insolence, nor cashier laziness and incapacity?

As a third condition, he insists on the necessity of increasing the salaries of public offices; and doubtless not without reason. It is well known that French governments are as parsimonious in remunerating their *employés*, as prodigal in augmenting the number.

To this, and other considerations connected with the same subject, our author returns in the first letter of the second volume; one of those in which he expresses his opinion with greatest freedom on the system of government now prevailing in France. The principle established by the Revolution, the equal admissibility of all to public employment, has become, he says, merely nominal; for "since the revolution of July two important classes have ceased to furnish their quota to public offices; the great proprietors and the non-proprietors."

On the one hand, the political services required from most of the functionaries of the administration, the extra-official aid expected from them in the management of elections and the formation of majorities, have gradually diminished the consideration attached to public employments; and have driven away from them the *grand propriétaires*, the inheritors of illustrious names or considerable fortunes.

On the other hand, the excessive reduction of salaries has rendered it more and more impossible for persons who have no patrimony, to hold any public function of importance. The absence of any examination or *concours* for admission into most civil offices, and the influence exercised over the Ministers (the distributors of place) by the deputies and the electoral colleges, have banished, even from the smallest and obscurest public employment, that numerous class from which the Republic and the Empire had drawn so many of their most brilliant ornaments.

What is now remaining of the great effort of Napoleon to honor genius and public services, and to create for them positions equal to the loftiest stations of the European noblesse? Where is now that national proverb, which then prevailed as a truth, through every branch of the public administration—that the lowest conscript carried in his knapsack the Baton of a Marshal of France? . . . The great positions created by the Empire exist merely in memory. The class which the Restoration did not create, but which it encouraged—to which it gave the greatest share in the