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FRENCH PATRIOTISM IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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FRENCH PATRIOTISM
IN THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY
(1814—1833)

TRACED IN CONTEMPORARY TEXTS

BY

H. F. STEWART

AND

PAUL DESJARDINS

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EDITORS' NOTE

The idea of this compilation suggested itself to two friends, anxious to further friendship between their two countries, at the height of the common military effort, in 1917. *Approved by the Syndics of the University Press in October of that year, the work was put in hand at once, and, although a series of accidents has prevented its publication until* 1923, *it was practically finished in* 1920. *Hence, to our loss, we could not benefit by the contemporaneous investigations conducted at the Sorbonne by Professor A. Aulard resulting in a memorable volume,* Le patriotisme français de la Renaissance à la Révolution (*Paris, Chiron,* 1921), *than which we could desire no better introduction to our own. Among other works and documents of recent publication by which we would willingly have profited mention must at least be made of the* Lettres inédites du maréchal Bugeaud (*Paris, Émile Paul,* 1923) *with their vivid illustrations of military patriotism between* 1814 *and* 1830.

We take this opportunity of expressing our grateful thanks to the various owners of copyright pieces who have so readily given us leave to use their property; and in particular to Madame la Marquise d'Osmond, who allowed us to consult the MS. *of the* Mémoires *of Madame de Boigne while the new and trustworthy edition, now published in completion, was still in the press.*

H. F. S.
P. D.

January, 1923.

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PREFACE

THIS is not a book of Golden Deeds, as its title may seem to suggest, and although its pages contain more than one heroic passage from the tremendous conflict out of which the Republic came to birth. Nor is it a book of edification. Our object is not "to adorn a moral or to point a tale," but to explain a phenomenon.

The outburst of patriotism which from 1914 to 1918 was the wonder of the world, and indeed of France herself, is something which invites enquiry, and is not sufficiently accounted for by the events of those five bitter years alone. We believe that the calm acceptance of the challenge of war, the long patience of Verdun, the miraculous recovery of 1918 (to take but three instances of a score which might be quoted) disclose a temper different from that of France at some other times, and a patriotism different in some ways from that of other nations. It is marked by an absence of fanaticism and a steadiness which we do not naturally associate with the passion familiar to students of European history as the *furia francese*, by an atoning power which resolved internal discord, by an imperturbable resourcefulness and pursuit of high ideals, which do not spring from an impulsive instinct but are the fruit of long reflection. In order to determine its character and discover its origin we must go back at least a hundred years, to the men who saw or took part in the birth of modern France, and beyond them to the conditions which differentiate France from other lands, and induce a love of country which has features rarely found elsewhere.

The evidence of eyewitnesses, which forms the body of the book, will not be intelligible without a brief review of the various factors and circumstances which have gone to produce the sentiment and the results in respect of which we appeal to them. So we must consider, first the permanent, and then the variable conditions, which have

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made France what she is, and determined the development of her patriotic sentiment.

We begin with the physical character and geographical position of France, which mark it out from the rest of Europe. It is a land of infinite variety, generous and self-sufficing, which supplies its children with the means of life and demands a filial recognition of its bounty. This was felt in the Middle Ages. "C'est un païs tres doulz pour demourer," sings Eustache Deschamps[1] in 1380; and before Deschamps, in the *Chanson de Roland*, if Spain is great, France is kind, "la dolce France," France is blessed, "France l'assolude"; and even to the Burgundian foe, she is still "la tres belle." "Douce" and "belle" are indeed constant epithets.

But the gifts of abundance, though freely bestowed, must be sought. The soil is not, like certain favoured regions, flowing with milk and honey. It must be tilled and tended. The labour and its reward breed love and attachment. And when the labourer lifts his eyes from field and furrow to look about him, he finds much to satisfy them. It is a beautiful and generous land, as its children are not slow to recognize. The geographers and economists have been busy measuring and appraising it, revealing its great natural resources. And Taine, the critic and artist, contrasts, rather to its advantage, the subtle charm of a true French landscape with the severe majesty of the North and the voluptuous beauty of the South[2]. But long before Taine and the men of science, the variety and sweetness of the land, its kindness to those who cultivate it were felt and sung by André Chénier[3], and still earlier proclaimed in sober but eloquent prose by Montchrestien and the Marquis de Mirabeau[4]. In a word it is a lovable land

[1] *Ballade* cccxxiv. *Œuvres*, t. III, p. 20 (Soc. anc. textes fr.).
[2] Cf. *La Fontaine et ses fables*, p. 4.
[3] "France! ô belle contrée, ô terre généreuse,
Que les Dieux complaisants formaient pour être heureuse."
Hymne à la Justice.
[4] Cf. A. de Montchrestien, *Traicté de l'œconomie politique* (1615); Marquis de Mirabeau, *L'Ami des Hommes, Traité de la Population* (1756).

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towards which the exile turns with longing, and not only the exile, but the Frenchman abroad on pleasure or on business. "Tournez toudis le bec pardevers France," is the counsel of Deschamps. "Je me pourmene seul sur la rive Latine, La France regrettant...," cries Du Bellay; France is indeed the main theme of his *Regrets*.

And the inhabitants are ever loth to leave it. There has never been a great stream of emigration; the colonies are political settlements *à la romaine* rather than voluntary transplantations.

This love of the land is certainly a form of patriotism, sedentary, static. And it tends to assume a regional character. No province, be it never so wild and niggardly, but is dearly cherished by those who dwell or have dwelt in it. The thoughts of the wanderer and the dispossessed turn with tenderness and longing to the distant and deserted hearth. It is home, full of the memory of friends and kinsmen, "le séjour qu'ont bâti mes aïeux[1]"; a curse is laid upon homeless vagabonds.

This static patriotism is not peculiar to France, though it is there developed in an unusual degree. It is the sentiment of Odysseus making for Ithaca after many voyages—of Aeneas, whose heart is in the old home while he is seeking the new. The English colonist feels it for the old country; the American is moved by this instinct to visit the birthplace of his forefathers. All who have gone forth from settled homes to seek fortune respond to its call. Analysis reveals in French patriotism other elements beside this.

This land, which deserves to be tended, claims to be protected. It has need. Open on two sides to piracy and invasion overseas, with a coast-line of 1551 miles, and at one very vulnerable point, the north-east, having no natural barrier against the foe, France should always be alert. And on the frontier at least due vigilance is shewn.

[1] Cf. Lamartine, "Milly ou la terre natale," *Harmonies*, III. 2; "La Vigne et la Maison" (1857).

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A tale that went the round in 1912 may be cited in order to illustrate this.

Our readers will remember the tension which stretched European nerves at the close of that year. One November night (the 26th) an over-zealous gendarme of the Canton of Arracourt (Meurthe-et-Moselle) misread a telegram ordering a surprise and partial mobilization for manœuvre purposes as an order for general mobilization. At midnight the drum beat and the tocsin rang in the 12 villages of the canton. Within an hour the reservists were on the march to join their regiments, and by 7 next morning, long before the scheduled hour, the astonished authorities of Nancy and Lunéville were confronted by groups of patriotic peasants, who had sprung to arms without staying to reason why—loth to leave their homes but eager to answer the call of their country[1].

When invasion comes, the real thing and not the false alarm, the French do not suffer it tamely. Moved by a feeling of resentment like that of a son against the insulter of his mother, or of a householder against a house-breaker, they confront the aggressor and thrust or try to thrust him out. The Huns are repulsed by a crowd of civilians led by clerks at Orleans, at Troyes, at Paris. The Arabs, who had made an easy prey of Spain, creep back, broken by Charles Martel at Poitiers. The imperial troops are driven across the frontier again and again. The long hold of the English is loosened at the last by a peasant girl of even lowlier birth than S. Geneviève. So it was in 1792, in 1814; so in 1870—without effect indeed, but not without spiritual triumph in the splendid verse of Victor Hugo. So it has been in the anxious but undefeated struggle of yesterday.

This war against the invader is not war for war's sake, for the benefit of a class or an individual. It is not royal or imperial, but national, republican, according to the etymology of the word—not imposed from above, but spontaneous, of the people. The warning is "La patrie en danger"; the slogan is "Boutez-le dehors," popular as the

[1] Cf. the journal *Excelsior* for November 28 and 29, 1912.

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act which it evokes. The modern instrument is the Franc-tireur, and all know how potent is his effect upon the professional soldier. Clausewitz was right in ascribing a French origin to the *guerre absolue*, i.e. the war of a people as distinguished from war waged by professional soldiers. He was wrong in dating it from the Revolution. The Hundred Years' War awoke it, as the last of our texts declares.

There is another consequence of the geographical position of France at the *carrefour* of Western Europe, the market-place of the Mediterranean. Different races meet there, not only in shock and conflict, but to blend and mingle.

France, ever since her beginning, has been enriched and fertilized by immigration, hostile or friendly, from the North and from the South. This fact has not always been clearly understood in all its bearings even by the French themselves. What has been always clearly seen is the diversity of the elements in the nation, and what has been emphasized is their apparent antagonism. The fact of this diversity and the idea of the antagonism are vigorously stated by P.-L. Courier in one of our extracts[1]. When historians were led to seek an explanation of the fact in the idea, they wrongly regarded the hostility as permanent and irreconcilable. They found the explanation in the conquest of Gaul by the Franks, resulting in a struggle during thirteen centuries between two rival races which have never assimilated. This explanation, which had been offered by two aristocrats, Comte de Boulainvilliers (1727), Comte de Montlosier (1814), in justification of a privileged class, was accepted by Augustin Thierry[2] in the name of the *bourgeoisie* and regarded by him as a scientific fact. But the truth is that these distinct and hostile elements have drawn together and merged one in the other by a process slow indeed, but most effectual. France as it appears to-day is the patient silent work of Frenchmen, compounded of Frank and Gaul, like one of its own cathedrals, touched and retouched, here rebuilt and there restored by successive

[1] *Vide infra*, § 64 (*b*). [2] *Vide infra*, § 65.

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generations. This the historians came to see. It was revealed in a flash to Michelet, as he says, by the Three Days of July[1]. And this real truth, this ultimate fact is due to the receptive character of the French and to the geographical position of their land.

This receptivity, this power of assimilation, has consequences in other spheres besides the merely ethnic. It accounts for the attitude of France towards things spiritual. As different races meet and blend on French soil, so aspects of the Truth are there collected and win acceptance, either successively or simultaneously. Contrast the countries which embrace without compromise or modification one sole aspect of the Truth—Spain which is entirely Catholic, Prussia which is entirely Lutheran. France holding the unreformed and reformed religions in equilibrium (until disturbed by violence under royal decree) preserved her liberty, her freshness of judgment, and so attained to the slow flower of moderation.

We pass from the permanent and physical conditions to the variable factors which have determined the development of patriotism in France throughout the successive stages of her history.

The Middle Ages reveal four "moments" which, if not entirely distinct, are separable in thought.

First of all there is FEUDALISM, of which the characteristic feature is the personal relation between the vassal and his lord. The act of homage was not the hiring out of oneself for a definite employment or for a prescribed term, but the unrestricted, unconditioned surrender of the person to meet emergencies as often and for as long as need was. It bound the vassal in conscience and mind and will to complete submission and self-sacrifice, and the lord to unceasing and loyal energy of guardianship and sustenance, awakening on the one hand what Nicole calls "la disposition intérieure d'assujetissement[2]," and on the other the protective instinct of the stronger party.

[1] *Vide infra*, § 77. [2] Cf. *Des moyens de conserver la paix...*, xi.

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Failure on either side to fulfil the terms of the bargain begets mistrust and revolt.

Patriotism of the nineteenth century is not ignorant of this ancient feudal devotion to the person of the Prince; a loyal soldier cannot brook an insult to his master[1]. And when the State, having succeeded to the Prince as the source of supreme command, has need of service, it gets it unconditioned.

The second "moment" of mediaeval patriotism is furnished by the TOWN, "la bonne ville," with its peace-loving industrial population, whose object was to protect and foster commerce which would have prospered ill in the war-laden atmosphere surrounding the feudal castle. War, it is true, does not disappear from view, but it is regarded and used by the citizens as a means of securing peace and freedom. For the town is jealous of its rights, duly confirmed by seal and charter; it guards them with wall and gate; it sounds the tocsin from the belfry tower as often as they are threatened. The citizens are equal. They form guilds, "amitiés," deliberative bodies, elective and self-governing. This free and independent, fraternal citizenship is reflected in the greater nation. "La France," says Michelet, "est une amitié."

But over feudal lord and free town stands the KING. In forming modern patriotism, royal prerogative played a part which cannot be overlooked. The king of France is the sovereign lord on whom converge all the attributes of lesser lords, as their domains are ultimately merged in his. But more; he is the great justiciar, the arbiter of disputes between the communes and their feudal masters. His word is law. "Si veut le roy, si veut la loy." He is easy of access to all his lieges; impartial, but always ready to hear the cause of the poor; lord of a land which boasts to be the home of justice, "où justice est gardée," where it is administered in his sole name, but not despotically, for he has his "plaids" and his "conseils." The formula of the king's pleasure, "le bon plaisir du roi," is a later six-

[1] *Vide infra*, p. 210 (Davout).

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teenth century invention. The ideal of the just king finds fulfilment in the noble figure of S. Louis, and it lived on as a superstition long after kings had ceased to be just.

With the royal prerogative of justice is closely associated the idea of the monarch's divine origin. He is the anointed of the Lord, as truly as were Saul and David, and this truth is recalled at each succession by the splendid ceremony at Reims. From his consecration grace and power descend upon him, and therewith, the inalienable right to the religious devotion of his people. This religious character, these heaven-sent qualities remained attached to the sovereign power when the monarchy itself had crumbled into dust, and they were sincerely and passionately ascribed to the Republic.

But above all the king is sole of his kind—unique, and a source of unification. He can bear no rival, nor the sequestration of any part of his realm from his possession. His court and government, which in early days followed him as he moved about the kingdom, tend more and more to fix themselves, and him with them, in the Ile de France, at Paris; he becomes "le roy qui est à Paris." He is the centre of unity and through him France wins a sense of unity. Louis XI kept this object steadily before him, and the good townsfolk with whom he dealt so high-handedly forgave him much on this account. Once again the king anticipates the Republic. The royal unity is the true source of the "one and indivisible" unity which was a central tenet of the Revolution. Danton, who affirmed it in the teeth of attempts at separation and federation, was in fact carrying on the monarchical tradition of the house of Capet, and the existence of the tradition explains the swiftness and vigour with which patriotism responded to his call.

This unity moreover is temporal as well as spatial. The king never dies, the throne is never vacant. The story of France weaves itself, without break or seam, into and around the long roll of her kings. The country knew and

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desired, even to the very eve of the Revolution, no other garment. It was that which suited her; it was the gift of God. This permanence of the throne is a main cause of the conservatism which, in spite of passages of violent and sudden change, is a marked feature of the French character.

The patriotism of the Middle Ages was further deeply affected by the moral and spiritual ideals which are the peculiar glory of CHRISTIANITY. A religion which claims to be universal cannot, consistently, produce or promote a limited, national patriotism. Rather it threatens to break it up and merge it in a general brotherhood wherein is neither Greek or barbarian, bond or free. But Christian principles are very capable of application to the national life and to the patriotism without which that life cannot healthily exist. And by their beneficent action mediaeval patriotism was rendered humane and spiritual.

Humane: the Frenchman felt in an especial degree that his citizenship extended beyond the borders of his native land. He belonged to Christendom. He was at constant war with his neighbours, but he did not call them the enemy. He was loth to bestow that term on those in whose company he had gone forth to do battle against the heathen. He reserved it for the common adversary of mankind, the devil. He never forgot that the human beings whom he slew without remorse, but also without hate, were, if they had been baptized, souls purchased by the Blood of Christ, "celui qui mourut en croix pour nos péchés." Accordingly, peace between Christians seemed a thing supremely to be desired;

> Je voulsisse que la guerre cessast
> Entre les gens d'une religion
> De la chrestienne foy,

says Eustace Deschamps[1].

And this Christian humanity is an abiding characteristic. France may have seemingly renounced allegiance to the great Teacher of Love, but His lessons were too deeply

[1] *Ballade* ccclx. *Œuvres*, t. III, p. 96.

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planted to be lightly effaced. The Frenchman throughout history is, as a general rule, humane, not easily provoked. In the fourteenth century Deschamps taught that the conquered must be treated with compassion, "Car vaincus est homs en adversité[1]."

Joan of Arc gets off her war-horse to minister to a dying Englishman. Rabelais, who in many passages reflects the natural hardness of the times, puts into the mouth of Gargantua a harangue to the vanquished which breathes a civilized kindness of uncommon beauty. The "Courtoisie de Metz" in 1553, when Francis of Guise tended a crowd of sick and wounded enemies, passed into a proverb. In a word, Daunou spoke no more than truth when in his *Considérations sur le procès de Louis XVI*, he cried, "il ne faut pas ensauvager les mœurs d'un peuple qui a été jusqu'ici doux, juste, humain, sensible, et qui sous ce rapport est sans doute fort bien comme il est." Many anecdotes of the wars in Spain and Russia, after France had refused to listen to Daunou's pleading, support the claim to which Hugo gives expression in the famous line, recalling and outdoing the chivalry of Sidney at Zutphen: "Donne-lui tout de même à boire[2]."

Christianity humanized patriotism everywhere, and especially, we believe, in France. But it rendered a still more precious service. It gave the nation a goal and an object outside itself, an interest other than personal, a universal task in which other nations collaborate, but in which France felt that she had a peculiar responsibility. She was the eldest daughter of the church and the chosen champion of its Head, called upon to carry out the will of God and to establish His kingdom. This, the mediaeval Frenchman was convinced, his country had always striven loyally to do. But, although a daughter, she was of age, not an unreasoning infant, and, while not insensible to spiritual guidance, she was by no means prepared to submit herself

[1] *Ballade* ccclx. *Œuvres*, t. III, p. 133.
[2] *Légende des Siècles*, I, 353.

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blindly to ecclesiastical government. Louis IX, saint though he was, rejects it vigorously[1].

It is the Christian conscience, confirmed and enlightened by faith, but not surrendered into priestly hands, that pronounces judgment upon general as upon individual conduct. When Roland claims that his men have right on their side[2]; when the French bishops, before giving communion to the crusaders and sending them to the assault of Constantinople in the name of God, explain that their cause and quarrel are just[3], it is plain that right and wrong are being measured by no merely selfish or even national standards. The intelligent submission to a higher law, the readiness to lose the national in the general interest, the quest of the partial by and through that of the absolute good—this is Christianity's gift to mediaeval France, and it is the most precious of all. Its value may be seen by considering a race which, like Prussia, has not gone through the mediaeval phase, has not washed in the waters of Christian humility, has set up its State as an object of worship. One French king, it is true, did allow himself to be set up as an idol, and claim, in fact if not by word, to be the State. But the real object of national reverence is not Louis XIV, but Joan of Arc, the incarnation of Christian patriotism—innocent, daring, and unselfish.

The modern period, 1494–1800, brought about a complete change in the national ideal, determined by the following causes: the decay of the nobility, the rise of the *tiers état*, and the development of a political theory—the balance of power.

Throughout this period the noble steadily sinks. When his wings were clipped he became a mere parasite, a burden on the land, for he could engage in hardly any kind of useful work without "dérogation." Personal property began to replace real property as the measure of wealth; and upon this shifting of the centre of economic gravity there

[1] Cf. Joinville, *Histoire de Saint Louis*, ed. Wailly, pp. 61–64, 669–675.
[2] *Chanson de Roland*, 1015.
[3] "La bataille estoit droituriere," *Robers de Clari*, ed. Riant, p. 57.

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followed a distinct cooling in the devotion of the French to the soil of their land.

The rise of the *bourgeoisie*, which followed or accompanied the decay of the *noblesse*, brought about a further and an interesting change of values. In feudal times, as we have seen, the concrete representative of the country was the king, the great landowner. He was the reality; the people was but an idea. Silently and gradually the two change places. The people become the reality, and the king the idea. This change was bound to come when the hopes and ambitions formed in the guilds and associations of the free town began to spread to the State, and France became a great commune.

A notable impulse in this direction was given by the unwise action of the king in waging war for dynastic, not for national purposes, e.g. the War of Devolution (1688), the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714). The reward was foreign invasion and therewith an awakening of the nation's conscience to the sense of its own importance. "Les choses du roi sont devenues violemment les nôtres... c'est la nation qui doit se sauver elle-même[1]," writes Fénelon from Cambrai, before whose gates the hostile army was ranged.

Lastly, the development of the theory of the balance of power brought France into the full current of European politics and conflict. The avowed object of the theory was to prevent any attempt at universal dominion on the part of any one monarch, and to secure a general state of peace and equilibrium. But the Treaties of Westphalia (1648), in which this principle was for the first time consecrated, did not by any means secure peace; rather the result was a long series of political wars in which one party sought to exceed and the others to maintain the limits which the common interests of Europe prescribed. In these wars France played a conspicuous part, first with the intention of curbing the ambitions of the House of Austria, then in the endeavour of making good similar claims on her own

[1] Letter to the Duc de Chevreuse, August 4, 1710.

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account, and latterly in the hope of restoring the balance which had been so ruinously disturbed.

The effect of these new and important conditions upon French patriotic feeling was immense and far-reaching. It underwent a profound transformation, not at first in the mind of the masses, but in the minds of those who interpret obscure popular emotions and guide the popular conscience. Patriotism from being an instinct becomes a matter of reflection and takes on an intellectual colour.

The foregoing analysis of the variable conditions which attended the growth of France during the mediaeval period, would apply with almost equal force to any other country of Christian, feudal Europe—to Great Britain, for instance, bating the repeated invasions and the miracle of the Maid of Orleans. But at this point a new phenomenon arises, peculiar to France and putting her in a category apart.

At the close of the fifteenth century France was tempted to turn her attention away from every other quarter and to look deliberately towards the Mediterranean, coming into close and admiring contact with Italy and through Italy with the whole of classical antiquity.

Doubtless the mind of the people was already prepared for and predisposed to this movement. Thus in the thirteenth century the discourses put by Jehan de Meung into the mouth of Reason and Nature, proclaim the sovereignty of Reason, and anticipate the classical equation: "Reason = Nature = Truth." But, for the spread of the doctrine of which Jehan de Meung is in some sort the herald, a double movement, emancipatory and educative, was necessary. The bonds which tied men down to their province and to their local customs had to be relaxed; and their minds required enlargement and enlightenment.

The former process was notably assisted by the unification of the kingdom under Louis XI and by the creation of that spirit of citizenship to which reference has already been made. The latter was accomplished swiftly and surely by the printed book. Through it the distant past became

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a living reality, and the influence of Greek and Latin classics quickened the instinctive love of Reason. For the introduction of that influence the Renaissance printers are responsible. Once the reign of Reason was established, it was inevitable that patriotism should put away its instinctive, childish mood and should think and act with mature reflection, establishing itself by argument in the heart and conscience of a reasoning and reasonable people.

The rise of this new sentiment—for it was nothing less—is accompanied by a phenomenon which betrays a characteristic of the French nation quite as remarkable as its capacity for Reason. We mean its astonishing forgetfulness. The French are forgetful of their past to the point of ingratitude. The Lethe in which they have bathed has washed away the memory of past benefits as well as of past sins. Ancient France simply disappeared. At the end of the sixteenth century the whole volume of early national poetry, including the immortal *Chanson de Roland*, was quietly and deliberately relegated to oblivion, not to return until the Romantic revival. It is not as if the French were ignorant of their former glory, or had nothing to remind them of it. The great cathedrals were there, living monuments of a splendid history, daily used for purposes of national festival and commemoration. The whole vast field of national antiquities lay open to the view; yet poets who lacked neither learning nor patriotism, like Ronsard and Chapelain, conceal both when they aspire to write a national epic, or employ them without feeling or conveying conviction. It is not at the ancestral hearth that they kindle their imagination. Neither they nor their readers are really stirred by the roll of former French heroism. The examples to which they point are not drawn from their own tradition. That tradition they do indeed continue, but they are not inspired by it.

This conscious disloyalty to the past is incomprehensible to Englishmen. It is missed or slurred by writers, French or English, who speak of a French traditional patriotism, handed on from one generation to another.

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The fact is that Reason ruined the authority not only of the School but of ancestral tradition. The sole tradition to which the seventeenth century does homage is that of ancient Greece and Rome. The result is patriotism of an antique mould.

We have already observed its first beginnings, when the Renaissance brought the remote past close to hand. Reading fired imagination and prompted the desire for nobler thoughts and acts than the times seemed capable of calling forth. Models were chosen from antiquity and men set themselves to copy them. Plutarch especially, in Amyot's translation, furnished heroic types in the *Vies des hommes illustres* (1569). Patriotism made a great effort to rise to their level and put on buskins for the purpose, becoming somewhat theatrical and affected. Sentiment was stiffened by philosophy—the philosophy of the Stoics. The civics of Cicero in the *Dream of Scipio* declared that devotion to his Republic was a thing commanded and blessed by God. Lucan and Tacitus added the further notion that fidelity to the State and to Liberty was its own reward and could dispense with temporal success or public recognition. Heroic, Catonian patriotism, drawn from these sources and stamped with their mark, runs a long and unbroken course through two full centuries, appearing unmistakably in the utterances of a Vergniaud, a Madame Roland, and a Camille Desmoulins.

The question arises, how was it that this Roman patriotism, the fruit of the Renaissance, lasted right down to the Revolution? The answer is: First, through the agency of the class-room. Boys at school, until the time of the Oratorians and Port-Royal, were not taught the history of their own country, but the deeds and words of Roman republicans and of the Lacedaemonians[1].

[1] In this connexion it is interesting to note, in a little volume published in 1664, the *Apophtegmes des anciens tirez de Plutarque, etc.*, by Perrot D'Ablancourt, a description of the patriotic chant of the Spartans which contains the germ of the *Marseillaise*, or at least suggests the disposition of its verses.

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Secondly, by means of the heroic drama, of which the action was almost exclusively taken from classical antiquity. Corneille had indeed an intuition of the effect which could be produced by a national subject, and he utters a splendid prophecy of his country's greatness through the lips of Attila[1]; but his *Horace*, the most telling representation in literature of patriotism, of the immolation of an individual to the State, defines and justifies patriotic duty without any reference to France. And although the play is full of patriotism, the word "patrie" is only used three times—"pays," "état," "public" are the terms which recur again and again. So Polyeucte proclaims:

"Je dois ma vie au Prince, au public, à l'État."

The successors of Corneille—Voltaire, La Harpe, etc.—speak the same language.

These notions and sentiments were especially fostered by the great magistrates, who sought in antiquity the inspiration of their lives and the norm of their conduct—Michel de l'Hospital, Etienne de la Boétie, the De Thous, father and son, Pibrac, Paul de Foix, Pierre Pithou, Guillaume Du Vair, Estienne Pasquier. The voice of these magistrates rings clear and manly, and through it sound the accents of the new patriotism, somewhat abstract and emphatic, but none the less lofty and moving. And with the magistrates must be ranged the scholars and men of letters: Balzac, Chapelain, Voiture.

What were the occasions when this patriotism found expression? As often as the royal power exceeded its proper limits, or failed, or was suspended. For instance, between 1589 and 1598, when the party of the "politiques," adherents of the throne, reasonable, and republican in the old sense of the word, rejected the foreign and fanatical tyranny of the League and rallied popular feeling to the standard of Henry of Navarre. Or again in 1715, when Louis XIV died and D'Aguesseau, pronouncing his pane-

[1] *Attila*, Act i, Sc. 2.

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gyric before the Parlement, founds the dead king's claim to immortality, not on the glory of his reign but on his efforts to govern well. The praise bestowed on him for this serves as introduction to the magnificent description of patriotism which gives its name to this the last and greatest of the great Chancellor's *Mercuriales*[1].

Or yet again, whenever the eighteenth century magistrates stood up against royal or papal arrogation, fiscal or ecclesiastical injustice, their attitude and their utterance were prompted by memories of ancient Rome. They were hailed as Romans and conscript Fathers—"voilà de vrais Romains et les pères de la patrie[2]"—and they did not deny the impeachment. Their "remonstrances" had, in the ears of contemporaries, the authentic tribunitial accent. They tacitly accepted the attributes and the style of the Senate; they claimed to form one united body representing the nation—"le Sénat de la Nation." In a word, as often as the support of the crown in seeing justice done was withdrawn from them, they found themselves with their feet resting on the tradition of republican Rome as the rock from which they were hewn.

This antique patriotism has certain clearly-marked characteristics. It is impersonal, i.e. it lacks the element of personal loyalty which was so strong a feature of feudal sentiment. Gradually and almost imperceptibly the person of the monarch recedes and his place is taken by the State. The great names of "public," "état," "nation," "patrie," creep in beside that of king as proper objects of allegiance.

[1] Cf. *L'Amour de la Patrie: 19e Mercuriale prononcée à la Saint Martin*, 1715 (*Œuvres*, p. 226 f.). The leading phrases deserve to be quoted: "Serons-nous réduits à chercher l'amour de la patrie dans les États populaires, et peut-être dans les ruines de l'ancienne Rome? ...Ne diroit-on pas que ce soit une plante étrangère dans les monarchies, qui ne croisse heureusement et qui ne fasse goûter ses fruits précieux que dans les républiques? Là chaque citoyen s'accoutume de bonne heure, et presque en naissant, à regarder la fortune de l'État comme sa fortune particulière. Cette egalité parfaite, et cette espèce de fraternité civile qui ne fait de tous les citoyens que comme une seule famille, les intéresse tous également aux biens et aux maux de leur patrie."

[2] Cf. Barbier, *Journal*, II, 296.

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This process, which took long to formulate and did not crystallize until the Revolution, is already at work in the case of Fouquet, who was condemned in 1664, not for treason to the king but for treason to the State. Thus even while absolutism was at its height, republican feeling was forming in silence.

Secondly, this patriotism is essentially Ciceronian and utopist, looking back with affectionate regret to an imaginary golden age, and forward with steady hope to its recovery; peaceable, though jealous of its slowly-conquered rights and ready to defend them. The Harangue put into the mouth of D'Aubray by Pierre Pithou in the *Satire Ménippée* supplies the norm; a letter of Voiture on Cardinal Richelieu develops it: "Les plus nobles et les plus anciennes conquestes sont celles des cœurs et des affections...il y a moins de grandeur et de veritable gloire à defaire cent mille hommes qu'à en mettre vingt millions à leur aise et en seureté[1]."

Richelieu indeed in this matter deserves all the praise that Voiture could give him. With rare sagacity, skilfully moulding popular opinion to his own ends through the men of letters whom he attached to his person, he encouraged a reflective patriotism which does honour to him, to them, and to those who put their lessons into practice. At once generous and temperate, loyal and sensible, it supplied Europe with an effective counterpoise to the exalted and extravagant dreams of the House of Austria. The decade from 1631 (which includes the letter of Voiture quoted above), when Balzac published *Le Prince*, to 1640, when Corneille presented *Horace*, is perhaps the richest in all history in examples of a theory of patriotism at once conservative and unselfish, conscious of obligation to one's self and one's neighbours. Balzac has a vision of a France "necessaire à toute l'Europe," "mettant des barrieres à la violence," "le commun pays des estrangers affligez[2]."

[1] *Lettre* lxxiv, December 24, 1636.
[2] Cf. *Le Prince*, chs. xxi, xxix.

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These writers already conceive of France playing her part as the great dissuader from wars of conquest. They are also keenly conscious of the obligation which binds together successive generations. Thus Balzac writes: "Le peuple a payé beaucoup, mais ç'a esté sa rançon qu'il a payée, et nous ne pouvions acheter trop cherement la delivrance de nostre pays." And Voiture, the elegant poet of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, is moved by the victory over Spain at Corbie to lift up his voice and bless the great Cardinal who wrought the deliverance of his country. "Toutes les grandes choses coustent beaucoup: les grands efforts abbattent, et les puissans remedes affoiblissent. Mais si l'on doit regarder les Estats comme immortels, et y considerer les commoditez à venir comme presentes, contons combien cet homme que l'on dit qui a ruiné la France, luy a épargné de millions," etc.[1]

It were easy to multiply instances of deliberate readines to sacrifice self for the good of the nation. We content ourselves with two. Here is Chapelain, infuriated by the Spanish menace to Paris in September, 1636, three months before the *Cid*, using words which anticipate the play upon which he was to exercise his critical acumen:

"Je puis estre martir de ma patrie, et rendray de bon cœur pour son salut le sang et la vie que j'ay eu d'elle[2]." Here is Balzac, five years earlier, proclaiming that the private citizen who is entrusted with no civil or military charge, can and must render service by standing steady. "Il faut produire quelque acte de nostre joye, s'il n'est plus temps de rendre des preuves de nostre courage, et tesmoigner que nous aimons l'Estat, si nous n'avons esté capables de le servir[3]." It is the last word of loyalty and common-sense.

But the very mood which these liegemen of Richelieu strove to discourage was assumed by Louis XIV, whose connexion with Spain by blood and marriage fostered a Spanish pride and prompted a Spanish ambition. Pretensions which the Frenchmen of 1630–1636 had re-

[1] *Lettre* lxxiv. [2] *Lettres*, I, 115. [3] *Le Prince*, ch. i.

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jected were openly renewed by the French king. He aimed at universal sovereignty and his aim was recognized and scouted by all Europe. But the country did not follow him, and remained in sullen opposition. His own son, the Duc du Maine, in June, 1709, writes to Madame de Maintenon lamenting the loss of the people's love, due precisely to the ambitious projects with which the king was credited, and imploring her support in the endeavour to prove them unreal. "C'est le cœur des Français pour leur maître qu'il faut que le Roi fasse revenir.... Comme tout ce peuple a cru être sacrifié au désir immodéré qu'avoit son roi d'étendre ses frontières...il faut commencer nécessairement par saper cette fausse et détestable idée[1]." But the depth of the difference between the mind of the people and prince, so clearly perceived by Du Maine, did not declare itself openly until the War of the Spanish Succession, when the interests of the Bourbon bent on establishing a dynasty appeared in conflict with the interests of his subjects who above all things needed peace. Up till then his warlike adventures had been watched in silence and almost with unconcern.

With the death of Louis XIV in 1715 we enter on a period of eighty years rich in original ideas and burning to realize them—the core of the French eighteenth century—which has a special importance for our subject. It will indeed be found to contain in germ the patriotism of the Revolution and of the nineteenth century. We have already spoken of a "static" patriotism (p. vii). To the new patriotism may be applied the term "dynamic" inasmuch as it is no longer a conservative instinct, protecting what is, but a principle of innovation, impelling men to bring new things into being, to execute the decrees of the mind and will.

At first sight there would seem to be little connexion between the peaceful native of Artois who, in a book entitled *Le Patriote artésien* (1761), expends his patriotic zeal on the cultivation of the beetroot whereby his province may

[1] Cf. *Saint-Simon*, ed. Boislisle, t. XVII, append. x, pp. 598 *sqq*.

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more exceedingly prosper, and the "Volontaire patriote" of 1792, the apostle of Revolution, armed with the Rights of Man. But the elements of both are the same, although the flashpoint is different. Both are concerned with the future rather than with the past; they are not merely preservers and defenders of existing things, but innovators and reformers, thinking less of the land of their fathers than of the heritage into which their descendants will enter and which must be prepared for them. The two types have further this in common that they contemplate for the society which they seek to serve, a destiny more than merely selfish. France claims and rightly claims the service of her children; but has not France herself a service to render? The question, *à quoi bon une France?* requires an answer which will carry conviction and awaken sympathy in all classes at home and abroad.

The mental and spiritual movement of the century follows a line as varied as a mountain road, and it admits of many apparently inconsistent judgments. On some levels sheer, unrelieved conservatism seems to prevail, e.g. in the army, even among thoughtful and liberal-minded soldiers[1]. But generally speaking, the circumstances of the time favoured a slackening of the old militant patriotism.

During all the years between Denain (1712) and Valmy (1792), the French knew neither the sting of invasion nor, save for such brilliant episodes as Fontenoy and Port-Mahon, the intoxication of victory. Great deeds were being done abroad, in India and in Canada, by Dupleix and Montcalm; but the home-country had no eyes for them. Few cared or tried to awaken the silent string. Choiseul indeed did, and with surprising results. In 1762 he called for voluntary subscriptions to furnish ships of the line for the king. Then "it rained vessels from all corners of his Majesty's kingdom[2]." The occasion was marked by an effusion, *Du Patriotisme,* by the poet Colardeau. Three

[1] Cf. Camille Rousset, *le Comte de Gisors*, p. 316; Rathery, *le Comte de Plélo*, p. 262.
[2] *Correspondance de Grimm*, Feb. 1, 1762.

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years later, in 1765, amid the bitter reproaches against herself and her leaders for the humiliating failure of the Seven Years' War, France broke into wild applause over the commonplaces of De Belloy's patriotic play, *Le Siège de Calais*, and forthwith, reproved by good taste, blushed for having applauded. "Cette pièce tire tout son mérite du zèle patriotique"..."C'est un médiocre ouvrage," are the comments of Grimm and of Bachaumont.

The national pride did not rekindle until the War of American Independence, and then in a new and unexpected form. France became aware of a duty laid upon her other than that of self-preservation, of a spiritual mission which was to give the key to her temporal policy. A patriotism no longer conservative but aggressive and reforming is set in motion, and that ten years before the awakening of the mighty force which shook the world.

The American war was the occasion of the first appearance of this new patriotism; it did not create it. And when we look for the hands that fashioned it we find but one agent—the spirit of criticism, to which reference has already been made—busily breaking to pieces the old tribal deity in a process suggestive rather of the destruction of a former truth than of the birth of a fresh one. In the first place the century begins to be ashamed of its idol and its exclusive and narrow cult. The French open their windows and find that their tall dwelling looks out upon a wide prospect. They begin comparisons, looking at themselves with a sarcastic eye and through foreign glasses (cf. the *Lettres persanes* and its numerous progeny). National pride is either dead or dumb. At best it is regarded as provincial and ridiculous. Voltaire and his friends have their infatuations but they are for peoples and countries other than their own; England first, then China and America. Doubtless this fashion is partly ironical, partly a manifestation of the search for novelty which is the mark of aging civilizations (cf. the praise of the Germans by Tacitus). But there is also in the French society of 1730–1750 a desire to supply home deficiencies by foreign qualities. And

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this desire is not frivolous, but denotes a mood modest, respectful, or at least intelligent.

This habit of self-depreciation, which distinguishes but does not disfigure the Frenchman of the mid-eighteenth century, has a marked effect upon patriotism. The writings of this date, especially those which reflect genuine feeling, such as letters and memoirs, prove that the word *patrie* has no longer currency in France. To the question, What is a patriot? the answer is that none can tell nor even expect to learn. In 1751 Duclos asks "Que manque-t-il aux françois pour être patriotes?[1]" In 1756 Madame d'Épinay writes to Tronchin, speaking of her own son: "Je l'entends me demander ce que c'est que citoyen et patrie, et je me garderai bien de l'envoyer faire cette question dans le monde. On lui riroit au nez; on lui diroit qu'en France il n'y a jamais eu et ne peut y avoir ni l'un ni l'autre[2]." *A propos* of a dissertation by the Abbé Coyer on *la Patrie*, Grimm remarks: "M. l'Abbé Coyer est fort étonné et fort fâché que nous ne prononcions point le mot *patrie*. Sachez donc, lui dirais-je volontiers, mauvais gré aux orphelins de ne pas prononcer les mots de *père* et *mère*. Nous n'employons pas le mot de *patrie*, parce qu'il n'y en a plus, pour parler avec justesse. Il faut donc continuer à dire que nous servons *le roi* et *l'état*, et non pas la patrie[3]." In 1766 Delille expresses thus his pained surprise at the false enthusiasm evoked by the *Siège de Calais*: "Si je voyois une nation autrefois si estimée, tomber dans l'avilissement d'applaudir l'amour de la Patrie sur les théâtres, et le laisser éteindre au fond du cœur...je gémirois sur le sort de cette nation, surtout si j'en étois citoyen." And this confession leads the thoughtful Président Rolland, two years later, to look for a plan of education able to bring about among his fellow countrymen "cette *révolution*... faire renaître l'amour de la patrie[4]."

[1] *Considérations sur les Mœurs*, I.
[2] *Œuvres*, ed. Challemel-Lacour, t. II, p. 123.
[3] *Correspondance littéraire*, Dec. 15, 1754 (ed. Tourneux, t. II, p. 445).
[4] *Compte rendu aux chambres assemblées*, etc., 13 Mai, 1768. *Recueil de* 1783, p. 24, where the text of Delille is quoted in a note.

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Comparison with other nations, ancient and modern, led the French to ascribe their lack of patriotism to their want of political liberty. The connexion had already been noted by La Bruyère—"Il n'y a point de patrie dans le despotique[1]"—and by Fénelon. It was sadly admitted, as we have heard, by D'Aguesseau in his *Mercuriale* of November, 1715. And now it is the conclusion to which Montesquieu comes after his historical survey. Voltaire accepts it and explains it as follows in his *Pensées sur le Gouvernement* (1752): "Un républicain est toujours plus attaché à sa patrie qu'un sujet à la sienne, par la raison qu'on aime mieux son bien que celui de son maître." In the *Dictionnaire philosophique* he expresses himself more forcibly: "Quand ceux qui possèdent, comme moi, des champs, des maisons, s'assemblent pour leurs intérêts communs, j'ai ma voix dans cette assemblée; je suis une partie du tout, une partie de la communauté, une partie de la souveraineté; voilà ma patrie[2]." So, by the middle of the century it was generally recognized that the true patriot, i.e. he who subordinates his private interests to those of the State, must be a member of the State.

Country and liberty are two unattainable ideas, indissolubly connected in the minds of Louis XV's subjects as often as they looked back to the republics of Greece and Rome or across the Channel to the free monarchy of England; *patrie* and *liberté* are two inseparable terms in the hymns of victory with which the succeeding generation greeted the ultimate realization of those ideas. The theory of 1760 prepared the experience of 1792, and the experience confirmed the theory.

Thus it was not in his looking-glass that the Frenchman growing into citizenship found the ideal picture of a patriot. That idea was lofty and in its presence he felt himself small and feeble and unworthy. By it he measured his political leaders and their helpers, and all who failed to reach the standard of strenuous and unselfish service stood con-

[1] *Du Souverain ou de la république*, 4.
[2] *Dict. phil.* art. "Patrie."

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demned, from the highest minister to the meanest civil servant. Want of patriotism, that universal failing, was particularly hateful in those who had undertaken solemn engagements toward the State. It was a betrayal of trust.

Valuable evidence of this state of mind is supplied by the correspondence, recently published, of an officer who fought and wrote during the Seven Years' War[1]. When this M. de Mopinot says, as he frequently does: "Je suis patriote," and his friend describes herself as "citoyenne," this means that they thereby claim the right to criticize the conduct of public affairs. "Il semble que chaque particulier de la nation se soit donné le mot pour coopérer à son anéantissement. L'état-major est immense, mais je ne le vois jamais que dormir, jouer et manger; s'ils montent à cheval c'est pour éviter les coups....Je tremble et suis furieux d'être avec tant de lâches qui sont mes supérieurs de grade et de nom....Oui, chère amie, j'ai la honte d'être humilié, attristé, de voir l'État si mal servi et la nation si avilie....Je crie contre la nation, parce que je suis Français[1]."

This murmur of contempt continues to gather strength until the final explosion. At the beginning of the reign of Louis XVI there was a momentary respite, a flash of hope, but the movement of patriotic indignation soon begins again with renewed force. The *Mémoires secrets* ascribed to Bachaumont contain a letter written in May, 1700, to M. Hector, "chef d'escadre, commandant de la marine, à Brest." After a tribute paid to the brave sailors Du Couëdic and d'Estaing comes the following passage: "Que ne pourrois-je pas vous dire de votre vieux d'Orvilliers, dont l'âme pusillanime s'amuse à pleurer son fils, mince sujet, quand il a une patrie à défendre et son honneur à venger...d'un Chambertaud, qui implore la protection du fort de la Couchée, sous la batterie duquel il fit tirer 45 coups de canon de retraite, afin de conserver les trumeaux de sa chambre; d'un Roquefeuille, qui fuit à toutes voiles

[1] Jean Lemoine, *Sous Louis le Bien-Aimé. Correspondance amoureuse et militaire d'un officier pendant la Guerre de Sept Ans* (Paris, Calmann-Lévy, s.d.), p. 400 f.

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devant un côtier de sa force, et cela à la vue de tous les habitans d'une ville...? Que ces exemples et mille autres servent une fois à déprimer votre morgue, et à vous inspirer le vrai courage. C'est l'objet de cette lettre *patriotique.*"

If the reader will ponder these passages and bear in mind that the title of patriot or citizen borne by a Vauban, a d'Argenson, a Turgot, is bestowed on men who never flattered their government nor their country, who were free with their criticism of existing abuses and who sacrificed themselves in the endeavour to redress them, he will appreciate the singular character which patriotic feeling assumed in the eighteenth century and continued to wear during the nineteenth. It is not official, imposed from above, but rather rebellious, inspired by, and inspiring, opposition. Now at this time the only opposition to authority was wielded by a class, independent and disinterested, but capricious and wilful—the nobles. La Fayette, writing to Washington in October, 1787, speaks of "l'esprit d'opposition et de patriotisme...répandu dans la première classe de la nation." But it must be noted that the patriotic reformers, even nobles or soldiers, touched in their youth by the reflections of Louis XIV's glory, are one and all deliberately critical of *le grand monarque* and his policy of splendour. It does not appeal to them; it is out of date, "gothic," purely destructive, and therefore contemptible in the eyes of men whose business, like the beaver's, is to build. For it is the day of a new science—the science of economics—which is to teach men first to produce wealth and then to distribute it through the country.

"Enrichissons la France" is the watchword of the patriots, and the means to this end (discovered by the *physiocrates*[1]) is the development of all the resources of the land. Thus the Marquis de Mirabeau, a physiocrat, in his *Traité de la population* (1756) which is a kind of French Georgics, shews that the true national policy would be not to win new territory from the foreigner, but to reclaim

[1] The economists who believed that wealth consisted in the development of natural sources were called *physiocrates*.

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