

put off until a general pacification. He was promised indemnity for Avignon, Bologna, Ferrara, and Ravenna; the ancient supremacy and pecuniary contributions of the Gallican church, and the restoration of certain religious orders, both in France and Italy; but notwithstanding his own representations, and the activity of his Cardinal Caprara, nothing was decided, though nothing was refused.

By some means or other he was become perfectly acquainted with the crimes and vices of most of our public functionaries. Talleyrand was surprised, when Cardinal Caprara explained to him the reason why the Pope refused to admit some persons to his presence; and why he wished others even not to be of the party, when he accepted of the invitations of Buonaparte and his wife to their private societies. Many are, however, of opinion, that Talleyrand, from malignity or revenge, often heightened and confirmed his Holiness's aversion. This was at least once the case, with regard to De Lalande. When Duroc inquired the cause of the Pope's displeasure against this astronomer, and hinted that it would be very agreeable to the Emperor, were his Holiness to permit him the honour of prostrating himself, he was answered, that men of talents and learning would always be welcome to approach his person; that he pitied the errors, and prayed for the conversion, of this savant, but was neither displeased nor offended with him. Talleyrand, when informed of the Pope's answer, accused Cardinal Caprara of having misinterpreted his master's communications; and this prelate, in his turn, censured our minister's bad memory.

You must have read, that this De Lalande is regarded in France as the first astronomer of Europe, and hailed as the high priest of atheism; he is said to be the author of a shocking blasphemous work, called "The Bible of a People who acknowledge no God." He implored the ferocious Robespierre to honour the heavens, by bestowing on a new planet, pretended to be discovered, his *ci-devant* Christian name, Maximilian. In a letter of congratulation to Buonaparte, on the occasion of his present elevation, he also implored him to honour the God of the Christians, by styling himself Jesus Christ the First, Emperor of the French, instead of Napoleon the First. But it was not his known impiety that made Talleyrand wish to exclude him from insulting with his presence a Christian Pontiff. In the summer of 1799, when the minister was in a momentary disgrace, De Lalande was at the head of those who imputed to his treachery, corruption, and machinations, all the evils France then suffered, both from external enemies and internal factions. If Talleyrand has justly been reproached for soon forgetting good offices and services done him, nobody ever denied that he has the best recollection in the world of offences or attacks, and that he is as revengeful as unforgiving.

The only one of our great men, whom Pius VII. remained obdurate and inflexible in not receiving, was the senator and minister of police, Fouché. As his Holiness was not so particular with regard to other persons, who, like Fouché, were both apostate priests, and regicide subjects, the following is reported to be the cause of his aversion and obduracy.

In November 1793, the remains of a wretch of the name of Challiers, justly called, for his atrocities, the Marat of Lyons, were ordered by Fouché, then a representative of the people, in that city, to be produced and publicly worshipped; and under his particular auspices, a grand fete was performed to the memory of this republican martyr, who had been executed as an assassin. As part of this impious ceremony, an ass covered with a Bishop's vestments, having on his head a mitre, and the volumes of holy writ tied to his tail, paraded the streets. The remains of Challiers were then burnt; and the ashes distributed among his adorers; while the books were also consumed, and the ashes scattered in the wind. Fouché proposed, after giving the ass some water to drink in a sacred chalice, to terminate the festivity of the day by murdering all the prisoners, amounting to seven thousand five hundred; but a sudden storm prevented the execution of this diabolical proposition, and dispersed the sacrilegious congregation.

LETTER XX.

Paris, August, 1805.

MY LORD,

Though all the Buonapartes were great favourites with Pius VII., Madame Lætitia, their mother, had a visible preference. In her apartments he seemed most pleased to meet the family parties, as they were called; because to them, except the Buonapartes, none but a few select favourites were invited; a distinction as much wished for and envied as any other court honour. After the Pope had fixed the evening he would appear among them, Duroc made out a list, under the dictates of Napoleon, of the chosen few destined to partake of the blessing of his Holiness's presence; this list was merely pro forma, or as a compliment, laid before him; and after his tacit approbation, the individuals were informed, from the first chamberlain's office, that they would be honoured with admittance at such an hour, to such a company, and in such an apartment. The dress in which they were to appear was also prescribed. The parties usually met at 6 o'clock in the evening: on the Pope's entrance, all persons of both sexes kneeled to receive his blessing. Tea, ice, liquors, and confectionary, were then served. In the place of honour were three elevated elbow chairs, and his Holiness was seated between the Emperor and Empress, and seldom spoke to any one, to whom Napoleon did not previously address the word. The exploits of Buonaparte, particularly his campaigns in Egypt, were the chief subjects of conversation. Before eight o'clock the Pope always retired; distributing his blessing to the kneeling audience, as on his entrance. When he was gone, card tables were brought in, and play was permitted. Duroc received his master's orders, how to distribute the places at the different tables; what games were to be played, and the amount of the stakes to be staked. These were usually trifling and small, compared to what is daily risked in our fashionable circles.

Often, after the Pope had returned to his own rooms, Madame Lætitia Buonaparte was admitted to assist at his private prayers. This lady, whose intrigues and gallantry are proverbial in Corsica, has, now that she is old, as is

generally the case, turned devotee; and is surrounded by hypocrites and impostors, who, under the mask of sanctity, deceive and plunder her. Her anti-chambers are always full of priests: and her closet and bed-room are crowded with relics, which she collected during her journey to Italy last year. She might, if she chose, establish a Catholic museum, and furnish it with a more curious collection in its kind, than any of our other museums contain. Of all the saints in our calendar, there is not one, of any notoriety, who has supplied her with a finger, a toe, or some other part; or with a piece of a shirt, a handkerchief, a sandal, or a winding-sheet. Even a bit of a pair of breeches, said to have belonged to St. Mathurin, whom many think was a sans-culotte, obtains her adoration on certain occasions. As none of her children have yet arrived at the same height of faith as herself, she has, in her will, bequeathed to the Pope all her relics, together with eight hundred and seventy-nine prayer-books, and four hundred and forty-six bibles, either in manuscript or of different editions. Her favourite breviary, used only on great solemnities, was presented to her by Cardinal Maury at Rome, and belonged, as it is said, formerly to St. Francois, whose commentary, written with his own hand, fills the margins; though many, who with me adore him as a saint, doubt whether he could either read or write.

Not long ago she made, as she thought, an exceedingly valuable acquisition. A priest arrived direct from the holy city of Jerusalem, well recommended by the inhabitants of the convents there, with whom he pretended to have passed his youth. After prostrating himself before the Pope, he waited on Madame Lætitia Buonaparte. He told her that he had brought with him from Syria the famous relic, the shoulder bone of St. John the Baptist; but that being in want of money for his voyage, he borrowed upon it, from a Grecian bishop in Montenegro, two hundred Louis d'ors. This sum, and one hundred Louis d'ors besides, was immediately given him; and within three months, for a large sum in addition to those advanced, this precious relic was in Madame Lætitia's possession.

Notwithstanding this lady's care, not to engage in her service any person of either sex, who cannot produce, not a certificate of *civisme* from the municipality, as was formerly the case, but a certificate of Christianity, and a billet of confession signed by the curate of the parish, she had often been robbed, and the robbers had made particularly free with those relics which were set in gold or in diamonds. She accused her daughter, the Princess Borghese, who often rallies the devotion of her mamma, and who is more an amateur of the living than of the dead, of having played her these tricks. The Princess informed Napoleon of her mother's losses, as well as of her own innocence, and asked him to apply to the police to find out the thief, who no doubt was one of the pious rogues who almost devoured their mother.

On the next day Napoleon invited Madame Lætitia to dinner, and Fouché had orders to make a strict search, during her absence, among the persons composing her household. Though he on this occasion did not find what he was looking for, he made a discovery, which very much mortified Madame Lætitia.

Her first chambermaid, Rosina Gaglioli, possessed both her esteem and confidence, and had been sent for purposely from Ajaccio in Corsica, on account of her general renown for great piety, and a report that she was an exclusive favourite with the Virgin Mary, by whose intercession she had even performed, it was said, some miracles; such as restoring stolen goods, runaway cattle, lost children, and procuring prizes in the lottery. Rosina was as religious as her mistress; and, as she had no means to procure them otherwise, she determined to partake of her lady's, by cutting off a small part of each relic, of Madame Lætitia's principal saints. These precious morceaux she placed in a box, upon which she kneeled to say her prayers during the day; and which, for a mortification, served her as a pillow during the night. Upon each of these sacred bits she had affixed a label, with the name of the saint it belonged to, which occasioned the disclosure.

When Madame Lætitia heard of this pious theft, she insisted on having the culprit immediately and severely punished; and though the Princess Borghese, as the innocent cause of poor Rosina's misfortune, interfered, and Rosina herself promised never more to plunder saints, she was without mercy turned away; and even denied money sufficient to carry her back to Corsica. Had she made free with Madame Lætitia's plate or wardrobe, there is no doubt but that she had been forgiven; but to presume to share with her those sacred supports on her way to paradise was a more unpardonable act, with a devotee, than to steal from a lover the portrait of an adored mistress.

In the meantime the police was on the alert, to discover the person whom they suspected of having stolen the relics for the diamonds, and not the diamonds for the relics. Among our fashionable and new saints, surprising as you may think it, Madame de Genlis holds a distinguished place; and she too is an amateur, and collector of relics in proportion to her means; and with her were found those missed by Madame Lætitia. Being asked to give up the name of him from whom she had purchased them, the mentioned Abbe Saladin, the pretended priest from Jerusalem. He in his turn was questioned, and by his answers gave rise to suspicion that he himself was the thief. The person of whom he pretended to have bought them was not to be found, nor was any one of such a description remembered to have been seen any where. On being carried to prison, he claimed the protection of Madame Lætitia, and produced a letter, in which this lady had promised him a bishopric either in France or in Italy. When she was informed of his situation, she applied to her son Napoleon for his liberty; urging, that a priest, who from Jerusalem had brought with him to Europe such an extraordinary relic as the shoulder of St. John, could not be culpable.

Abbe Saladin had been examined by Real; who concluded, from the accent and perfection with which he spoke the French language, that he was some French adventurer, who had imposed on the credulity and superstition of Madame Lætitia; and therefore threatened him with the rack if he

did not confess the truth. He continued however in his story, and was going to be released upon an order from the Emperor, when a gens-d'armes recognized him, as a person who eight years before had, under the name of Lanoué, been condemned for theft and forgery to the galleys; from whence he had made his escape. Finding himself discovered, he avowed every thing. He said he had served in Egypt, in the guides of Buonaparte, but deserted to the Turks, and turned Mussulman, but afterwards returned to the bosom of the church at Jerusalem. There he persuaded the friars, that he had been a priest, and obtained the certificates which introduced him to the Pope, and to the Emperor's mother; from whom he had received twelve thousand livres, 500*l.* for part of the jaw-bone of a whale, which he had sold her for the shoulder bone of a saint. As the police believes the certificates he has produced to be also forged, he is detained in prison, until an answer arrives from our consul in Syria.

Madame Lætitia did not resign without tears the relic he had sold her; and there is reason to believe that many other pieces of her collections worshipped by her as remains of saints, are equally genuine as this shoulder bone of St. John.

FROM A LONDON PAPER.

BEDFORD ASSIZES.—SEDUCTION.

THE REV. ROBERT WOODWARD against THOMAS WALTON.

This was an action brought by a parent against the seducer of his child, and the jet of the action was, that he had been deprived of her services, and the comforts derivable from her being chaste and virtuous.

Mr. Serjeant Sellon stated the case to the Jury, and observed it was extraordinary, but very true, that although the criminal intercourse between the plaintiff's daughter and the defendant had continued for a considerable time, he was not prepared to prove, by any other witness than the girl herself, that they were ever together.

Sarah Woodward stated, that she was 24 years old, and the eldest daughter of the plaintiff, and that on account of the distressed situations of her parents, she acted as servant to the family; and that after finishing her work she employed the rest of the day in making lace, and her father kept a day-school, for the purpose of supporting her parents. In the year 1803, they came to reside at the Vicarage-house, in Harrold, of which her father is Vicar, and the first Sunday she went to Church she saw the defendant, who fixed his eyes upon her very much, but that for more than two years she never spoke to him; that on the 11th of February, 1805, about six o'clock in the morning, he came to her father's house and knocked at the door; she opened it, when he asked if her father was up, and upon being told he was not, the defendant proceeded to take improper liberties, and she got rid of him, however, by saying, that her father was coming down stairs. On the next morning at the same hour he came again, when she yielded to him, and a criminal intercourse took place between them, which continued to the month of November following: after which he never came again. In the course of these interviews, which were always about day-break in the morning, the defendant informed her of the circuitous route he had taken to come to her father's, in order to avoid being seen by any person. In the month of February, 1806, she thought she was pregnant, but made no preparation for such an event, nor did she communicate her suspicions to any part of her family; but on the 25th of February, in the morning, she felt herself very unwell, but continued doing the household work till about ten at night, when she delivered herself of a female child in the school-room, having no person with her to afford the least assistance; that she was afterwards carried up stairs to bed, and the child wrapped up in an apron and laid by her; that Sarah Crouch, who resided at the back of her father's house, was sent for, and brought some cloaths to dress the child in, and that the child died in twelve days after.

On her cross-examination, she said she was positive he was the father of the child; that she did not know she was with child till near the time of her delivery; that she never told her mother and sisters, and that they never suspected her to be so; that her father was a very distressed man, and that until the last six months they had no bed in the house; there was very little furniture in the Vicarage-house, it having been given away, and that she, her child, and her sisters, lay upon a flock mattress on the floor. She said her father, as soon as she was able to get up, called a meeting of the inhabitants of Harrold, at the Wheatsheaf public house, in order to explain to the defendant and others the business, and that at this meeting she charged the defendant with being the father.

Mr. Wilson, for the defendant, commented with great ingenuity on the evidence of Sarah Woodward, and of the total impossibility of the truth of her story. He undertook to give all the proof that any innocent man could give to such a charge; but direct contradiction was out of his power, unless he could be permitted to examine the defendant himself.

Several witnesses were then called to prove the defendant was not an early riser, and that whenever he went out in the morning he went to his farm, the direct reverse of the road to the plaintiff's house; and one of the witnesses was called to prove the absence of the defendant in Norfolk at the time stated by the plaintiff's daughter to be the supposed time when he was the father of the child.

The Jury consulted together about five minutes, and brought in a verdict for the plaintiff—Damages 1*l.*

The trial lasted seven hours, and the Court was uncommonly crowded. The plaintiff is said to be a clergyman of the most humane character, though too frequently the dupe of the pretended poor; and although his living is 200*l.* per annum, he cannot resist the importunity of any person pretending to be distressed, and has actually given away all his furniture, and lately the shoes off his feet, and left himself without the common necessities of life. The daughter is a very delicate girl, and appeared to be very ill.