CHAPTER LXXXIV

ANOTHER WHIFF

THE Bourbons, learning nothing and forgetting nothing, were now utterly dispossessed. The Legitimists had been tried; the Orleanists had been given a chance; both branches of the family had been found wanting.

Still, these faded princes and princesses, with their curtseys and their petty intrigues, continued to reign over kingdoms of shadow, the past with its memories, the future with its illusions. They looked upon a restoration as the devout pray for a Second Advent.

"There was no intention of waging war with the Republic," but only "the hope that the evils of the country will eventually drive the masses to seek a remedy for them in the restoration of the Monarchy."

August 20, 1848: . . . The Republic is universally despised, detested, and ridiculed, but no other form of Government and no Pretender is in much favour or demanded by public feeling or inclination. They hate the Republic because they are conscious that the Revolution which turned France into one has inflicted enormous evils upon them. The best chance at the present moment seems to me to be that of the Duc de Bordeaux, Henry V, not because anybody cares about *him*, for he is almost unknown in France, and what is known of him does not make him an object of interest to Frenchmen, nor (what is by no means unimportant) to Frenchwomen; but he represents a principle, and there still lingers in many parts of France, and reigns in some, a sentiment of attachment and loyaly to the elder branch and the legitimate cause . . . I was told last night by Bulwer, who is just come from Paris, a fact which, if it be true, is of great importance, namely, that there has sprung up in France a great respect for station and position.

Guizot was Royalist. His opinion of the Republic was that "this fine fabric which has risen like an exhalation will not last long." He was still loyal to the Orleanists:

London, March 5, 1848: . . . "You English bet about everything; if I was compelled to bet, I should for choice take the Duchesse d'Orléans and her sons as the most probable eventuality where everything is so uncertain."

Yet was this really backing a winner?

May 19, 1833: . . . The Duke of Orleans is here, and very well received by the Court and the world. He is good-looking, dull, has good manners and little conversation, goes everywhere, and dances all night. At the ball at Court the Queen waltzed with the two Dukes of Orleans and Brunswick.

It was idle, however, to pretend that the Royalists were united behind the House of Orleans. Louis Philippe was regarded as the acquiescent creature of two revolutions, and in Vienna he was treated as a pickpocket.

January 5, 1835: . . . Madame de Metternich is a fine, handsome woman, ill brought up, impertinent, *insouciante*, and *assez bourrue—au reste*, quick and amusing. She went to a ball at St. Aulaire's with a fine coronet of diamonds on, and when he came to receive her, he said, "*Mon Dieu, madame, quelle belle couronne vous avez sur la tête!*" "*Au moins,*" said she, "*ce n'est pas une couronne que j'ai volée.*" Instead of turning it into a joke, he made a serious affair of it, and went the next day to Metternich with a formal complaint; but Metternich said, "*Mais, mon cher, que voulez-vous? Vous voyez que j'ai épousé une femme sans éducation, je ne puis pas l'empêcher de dire de pareilles sottises, mais vous sentez bien que ce serait fort inconvénant pour moi de m'en mêler. Allons! il n'y faut plus penser,*" and so turned it off, and turned him out, by insisting on making a joke of the affair, as St. Aulaire had better have done at first.

With Louis Philippe on the throne, there had been "a great botheration" over his rival, the Duke of Bordeaux (December 7, 1843), "whether the Queen should receive him or not," visiting England, as it was announced, "without any political object or pretension, merely to amuse and inform himself."

Louis Philippe desired that "every civility should be shown him," but "his adherents" staged "a great political demonstration" which "entirely changed the nature of the case":

December 7, 1843: . . . The Prince began by a tour in the provinces, and a visit to Alton Powers, where he was very royally treated. He went to Chatsworth and Trentham to see the places, and wrote his name in the books of visitors as *Henri de France*, which might mean anything or nothing. About a week ago he arrived in London, and at the same time every Carlist in France, to the number of several hundred, flocked over to attend his Court. The town has ever since swarmed with monstrous beards of every cut and colour, and every night he receives a succession of them. A few days ago three hundred gentlemen waited on old Chateaubriand, and harangued him through the Duke de FitzJames, whom they unanimously elected as their mouthpiece. He began in these terms: 'These gentlemen who have been to render their homage *to the King of France*," &c. Soon after this ceremony was concluded, the Duc de Bordeaux came into the room, and made a speech, in which he talked of looking toward the throne of his ancestors, and if he did so, it was for the good he might do to France. Such language as this was sure to make a great sensation; it showed what the pretensions and objects of these very foolish people were and how indispensable it was that the Queen should have nothing whatever to say to him.

With Louis Philippe in exile, the Legitimists appealed to the Orleanists to withdraw their claim:

May 14, 1850: . . . I have heard this morning of a mission from Paris to Louis Philippe, and the result of it. The leaders of the Conservative party there, all except Thiers, have come to a resolution that the only chance of restoring the Monarchy is by a reconciliation of the elder and the Orleans branches, by the recognition of Henri V, and by persuading Louis Philippe and his family to accept this solution of the dynastic question. They have accordingly sent over M. Malac to Claremont to communicate their sentiments to the King. He was authorized to tell him that the Legitimists were willing to acknowledge his title and his reign, and even the benefits that France had derived from his government. The King entered into the subject

with great frankness, treating with indifference the offers which were personal to himself, saying he had no need of any recognition of his reign, of which history would bear sufficient record. He, however, acquiesced in the views of the party who sent M. Malac, and declared himself ready to agree to their terms, but he said that the women of his family would be the most strenuous opponents of such a compromise. He assembled a sort of *conseil de famille*, consisting of the Queen and the Princes (not the Duchess of Orleans), and laid before them the proposal that had been made to him. The Queen declared against it, the Princes were all for it, and finally the Queen said she would defer to the opinion of the King. He then proposed to the Ambassador to go and talk to the Duchess of Orleans, from whom the greatest obstacles were to be expected. He declined to speak to her on the subject, but said he would go and see her, which he did. She received him, talked of all other subjects, but not a word about the succession. On repeating to his Majesty what had passed, he said he would send for her and talk to her, and after having done so, he desired M. Malac to return and she would enter on the affair. He went to her again and spoke to her with great frankness, representing that the Orleans party was by far the weakest in France, and that her religion would always make the people more or less, and the clergy entirely, hostile to her. She was much startled and discomposed at hearing such language, to which she seemed not to have been accustomed; but though she did not avow it, she was not unmoved by his representations.

August 20, 1857: . . . I had never seen her before [the Duchess of Orleans]. She is very ugly but pleasing and with very good manners.

As Louis Philippe's daughter, the Queen of the Belgians was also "strongly adverse to the proposal," there was no "compact" but only "a virtual acceptance," indicating "that the bargain will be concluded." It was, however, "a consummation . . . more likely to be prevented than brought about by his death."

June 1, 1848: . . . The Duke of Bedford told me, to my great astonishment, that all the Queen's former attachment to Louis Philippe and the French Royal Family has revived in greater

force than ever; she says the marriages are not to be thought of any more. Nothing but the extraordinary good sense of Prince Albert and the boundless influence he has over her keeps her affectionate feelings under due restraint; but for him she would have made all her household go to Claremont, and when the French Royal Family have come to visit her she has received them as King and Queen, and one day one of the children went up to Louis Philippe and called him "Your Majesty," which had no doubt been done by the Queen's commands. I take for granted that they have persuaded the Queen that their ruin has been the work of Palmerston, for this is what they always say, and possibly they believe it.

"It is very surprising," writes Greville on March 25, 1848, "that as yet in no country have single master minds started forward to ride in these whirlwinds and direct the storms." Only for the moment did Paris find a man:

London, March 5, 1848: . . . In all this great drama Lamartine stands forth preëminently as the principal character; how long it may last, God only knows, but such a fortnight of greatness the world has hardly ever seen; for fame and glory with posterity it were well for him to die now. His position is something superhuman *at this moment;* the eyes of the universe are upon him, and he is not only the theme of general admiration and praise, but on him almost alone the hopes of the world are placed. He is the principal author of this Revolution; they say that his book has been a prime cause of it; and that which he has had the glory of directing, moderating, restraining. His labour has been stupendous, his eloquence wonderful. When the new government was surrounded by thousands of armed rabble, bellowing and raging for they knew not what, Lamartine contrived to appease their rage, to soften, control, and eventually master them; so great a trial of eloquence was hardly ever heard of. Then from the beginning he has exhibited undaunted courage and consummate skill, proclaiming order, peace, humanity, respect for persons and property. This improvised Cabinet, strangely composed, has evinced most curious vigour, activity, and wisdom; they have forced everybody to respect them; but Lamartine towers above them all and is the presiding genius of the new creation. He has acted like a man of honour

and of feeling too. He offered the King an escort; he wrote to Madame Guizot and told her her son was safe in England, and caused the report of this to be spread abroad that he might not be sought for; and, moreover, he sent to Guizot to say if he was not in safety where he was he might come to his house. When he first proposed the abolition of the punishment of death he was overruled; but the next day he proposed it again, and declared if his colleagues would not consent he would throw up his office, quit the concern, and they might make him if they pleased the first victim of the law they would not abolish. All this is very great in the man who the Duc de Broglie told me was so bad, "*un mauvais livre par un mauvais homme*," and consequently all France is praying for the continuation of the life and power of Lamartine; and the exiles whom he has been principally instrumental in driving from their country are all loud in praise and admiration of his humanity and his capacity.

To Greville's panegyric of Lamartine, Reeve adds the sour note, "he was never in any danger." Nor was Guizot enthusiastic.

March 6, 1848: . . . I said Lamartine had done very well. He said yes, and praised him, though not very cordially; and he added that he was a man who had always wanted to be in the first place, and had never been able to accomplish it. He had tried it in the Legitimist party, and had found Berryer; in the Conservatives, and had found him [Guizot]; and in the Opposition, where he was met by Thiers.

Reeve, it should be added, denies that Lamartine either acted with Ledru Rollin or acquired money. He remained a poor man.

Lamartine fell from power:

Stud House, May 22 and 25, 1848: . . . People go on wondering that Lamartine should be so irresolute, and that he should endure Ledru Rollin as a colleague. Madame de Lieven supplied me with the solution of this question which I dare say is the true one. She told me that Roberts the painter (who brought her away from Paris) came to her the other day and told her that the Revolution found Lamartine as well as Ledru Rollin ruined men, and that they formed a compact to feather their nests, which both have accomplished. While they have been

ostensibly (and perhaps really) the heads of different sections of the Government and the promoters of different principles, they have always been connected by a secret understanding and a common interest.

Of the Revolution, it was possible to take two views:

London, October 20, 1848: . . . Louis Blanc [a Radical] told me the Revolution had not ruined France; that the ruin was already consummated, and the Revolution only tore away the veil which concealed it.

On the other hand:

March 14, 1848: . . . In France everything is going down hill at railroad pace. This fine Revolution, which may be termed the madness of a few for the ruin of many, is already making the French people weep tears of blood. . . . They have got a government composed of men who have not the slightest idea how to govern, albeit they are men of energy, activity, and some capacity. The country is full of fear and distrust. Ruin and bankruptcy are stalking through the streets of the capital. . . . The different Ministers vie with one another in the extravagance of their several manifestoes. Louis Blanc holds a parliament of operatives, whom he feeds with soft sawder and delusive expectations, giving them for political truths all the most dangerous absurdities of his book. Garnier Pagès, in his frank *exposé* of the finances of the country, approaches to the very verge of national bankruptcy, and is evidently prepared for the next step. Carnot instructs the people to elect for their representatives (who are to be the unchecked masters of the Empire), not men of property and education, but any men who have republican ideas; and Ledru Rollin desires his agents to act in the same spirit, and with all the authority (which means despotism) that a revolutionary government always assumes it to be its right to exercise. In short, all is terror, distress, and misery, both material and moral; everybody fleeing away from the turbulent capital, and hiding what money he can collect; funds falling, everything depreciated in value, the shops unfrequented, no buyers, tranquillity still doubtfully preserved by factitious means, but the duration of which no one counts

upon. . . . All the letters that arrive here, whether they come from Legitimists, or Liberals, or Orleanists, or indifferents to all parties, tell the same tale of disgust, distress, and dread.

March 31, 1848: . . . Delane told me yesterday that Leopold saw their [*Times*] correspondent the other day, and asked him if England would give him a subsidy to assist in repelling the French and Belgian republicans who threaten his territory; and Van de Weyer told him they were in a great dilemma, as the French Government were letting loose these ruffians upon them, affording them all sorts of assistance underhand; and if the Belgian Government repelled them, it was very likely the mob and clubs at Paris would compel the Provisional Government to support them and swallow up Belgium. Everybody now thinks there must be a war somewhere, out of such immense confusion and excitement.

M. Delessert, Préfet de Police, under Louis Philippe (March 31, 1848), "gave a character of his countrymen which he said he was ashamed to give, but it was the truth. He said they were not to be governed, for they had no sense of religion or of morality, or any probity among them."

Under these circumstances, Guizot prophesied (March 6, 1848) "that there would be a great battle in the streets of Paris within a few days between the Republicans and the Communists, in which the former would prevail, because the National Guard would support the former."

In due course, there was a "great victory in Paris" and "the establishment of a strong military government."

June 30, 1848: . . . The details which reach us of the extraordinary contest which has just taken place at Paris are equally horrible and curious. Hitherto we have been struck by the absence of that ferocity which distinguished the first Revolution, and the little taste there seemed for shedding blood; but the ferocity of the people broke out upon this occasion in the most terrible examples. There was a savage rancour about this exceeding the usual virulence of civil contests; the people not only murdered, but tortured, their prisoners. Since the victory the prisoners have been executed by hundreds, and with hardly any form of trial; indeed, no trial was possible or necessary, they were rebels taken *en flagrant délit*, at once rebels and

prisoners of war. One man, when he was going to be shot, said he did not care, for he had had his revenge already, and he pulled out of his pocket twenty tongues that had been cut out. All agree that the organization, the military skill displayed, and the vast resources the insurgents possessed in the material of war, were as extraordinary as unaccountable. The preparations must have been long before made, for the houses of their principal fortifications were perforated for the purpose of communication and escape, the staircase removed, and there were telegraphic signals arranged by lights on the tops of the buildings. There certainly was a commander-in-chief who presided over the whole, but nobody knows who he was; and the Government have never yet been able to ascertain who the leaders were. Although distress and famine were the prime causes of this great struggle, it is remarkable that there was no plundering or robbery; on the contrary, they were strictly forbidden and apparently never attempted. It is the only example, so far as I know, that history records of a pitched battle in the streets of a great capital between the regular army and the armed civil power on one side, and the populace of the town militarily armed and organized also on the other, nobody knowing how the latter were organized or by whom directed. Colonel Towneley, who came from Paris last night, told me that it is believed that the old Municipal Guard, who were disbanded by the Provisional Government after the Revolution, had a great deal to do with it, but that the skill with which the positions had been chosen or fortified was perfect. Prodigies of valour seem to have been performed on both sides, and the incidents were to the last degree romantic. An Archbishop appearing as a minister of peace in the midst of the fray, and mounting the barricades to exhort the living and to bless the dying amidst the din and fury of the contest, and then perishing a martyr to his attempt to stop the effusion of blood; women mixing in the contest, carrying ammunition and supplies, daring everything, their opponents shrinking from hunting these Amazons, and at last being obliged to fire upon them in self-defence; the strange artifices employed to convey arms and cartouches. The Garde Mobile, composed of the *gamins de Paris*, signalized themselves with peculiar heroism, and it is fortunate that they were on the side of the Government instead

of on that of the people. There was one boy, not above fifteen or sixteen, a frightful little urchin, who scaled three barricades one after another and carried off the colours from each; Cavaignac embraced him and gave him the Legion of Honour from his own person, and he was carried in triumph and crowned with laurels to a great banquet of his comrades.