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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1790.

[Whole No. 167.]

ACCOUNT of M. DE LA TOUR,

Late Painter to the King of France, of the Royal Academy of Painting at Paris, of that of Sciences, Belles Lettres, and Arts, at Amiens, &c. &c.

M. DE LA TOUR was born at St. Quentin, in 1705. His active genius displayed itself at an early period, and the margins of all his school books were embellished with the effusions of his youthful fancy. Frequent floggings, however, rewarded the striking caricatures of his pedagogue, which appeared conspicuous in various places. On his leaving school, his father suffered him to pursue the bent of his inclinations, and placed him with a master, who taught him the first rudiments of his art.

Here he made no small progress, but was much more improved by a journey to the Netherlands, where he had an opportunity of studying the *chefs-d'œuvres* of the Flemish School. Cambray was at that time the seat of a negotiation which employed the ministers of many powers. The portraits of several of these were painted by the young LA TOUR, with such success, that the English Ambassador prevailed on him to accompany him to London, where he received the most flattering encouragement.

On his return to France, an extreme irritability of the nervous system forbidding him the use of oil-colours, he was obliged to confine himself to crayons, a mode of painting, to which it is difficult to give any degree of force. The obstacles he had hence to encounter served but to animate his zeal; and he sought every means of perfecting his art, by the constant study of design; to which he added those of geometry, physics, and even philosophy, which he rendered subservient to his grand object, painting. The fruits of his profound study gave a new merit to his enchanting crayons; and whilst his lively and agreeable conversation alleviated the irksomeness of sitting confined to a particular posture; the features of the mind became imprinted on the canvass, as well as those of the countenance.

Admitted in the royal academy of painting at the age of thirty three, it was not long before he was called to court. His free and independent spirit, however, led him to refuse what most as eagerly coveted. At length he submitted to the monarch's commands. The place in which Louis XV. chose to sit for his picture, was a tower surrounded with windows. "What am I to do in this lantern!" said la Tour: "painting requires a single passage for the light."—"I have chosen this retired place," answered the king, "that we may not be interrupted."—"I did not know, Sir," replied the painter, "that a king of France was not master of his own house."

Louis XV. was much amused with the original sallies of la Tour, who sometimes carried them pretty far, as may be conceived from the following anecdote. Being sent for to Versailles, to paint the portrait of Madame de Pompadour, he answered furiously, "Tell Madame the Marchioness, that I do not run about the town to paint." Some friends representing to him the impropriety of such a message, he promised to go to Versailles on a certain day, provided no one were permitted to interrupt him. On his arrival he repeated the condition, requesting leave to consider himself at home, that he might paint at his ease. This being granted, he took off his buckles, garters and neckcloth; hung his wig upon a girandole; and put on a silk cap, which he had in his pocket. In this dishabille he began his work, when presently the king entered. "Did you not promise me, Madame," said the painter, rising and taking off his cap, "that we should not be interrupted?" The king, laughing at his appearance and rebuke, pressed him to go on. "It is impossible for me to obey your majesty," answered he: "I will return when the Marchioness is alone." With this he took up his buckles, garters, neckcloth and perriwig, and went into the next room to dress himself, muttering as he went, that he did not like to be interrupted. The favorite of the king yielded to the painter's caprice, and the portrait was finished. It was a full length, as large as life, afterwards exhibited at the Louvre, and perhaps the greatest work of the kind ever executed.

M. de la Tour painted all the royal family; and both court and city crowded to his closet. But amongst his numerous performances, those which are the fruits of esteem or friendship, are easily distinguishable. In them art seems to have surpassed itself. We cannot here avoid particularizing the portrait of M. de la Commaune; in which it is apparent that the philosopher was deaf.

With an agreeable talent for conversation, just taste, a memory stored with extensive knowledge, and an excellent heart, he could not be destitute of friends. His house was resorted to by the most distinguished artists, philosophers, and literati, in the capital. Favored by the sovereign, and by the heir apparent, he was devoid of pride, and had the modesty twice to refuse the order of St. Michael.

In his private character, M. de la Tour was an useful member of society, generous and humane. The desire of making others happy was his predominant, or rather sole passion. Gratitude published, in spite of him, his continual acts of benevolence, and his door was continually surrounded by the needy. It is not easy to distinguish the truly unfortunate from those whom idleness reduces to want, when both equally appeal to our benevolence; and he would rather give to those who abused unsuspecting charity, than hazard the refusing succour to the really deserving. Even if he had found one whom he had but just relieved returning to entreat his assistance, he would suppose that he had new wants, and again afford him aid.

Amongst the useful establishments to which M. de la Tour turned his thoughts, painting, the source of his fame, and in a great measure of his fortune, particularly claimed his attention: he gave four hundred guineas to found an annual prize for the best piece of linear and aerial perspective alternately, to be adjudged by the academy of Paris. Persuaded too of the benefits of good morals, and useful arts, he founded an annual prize of twenty guineas, to be distributed by the academy of Amiens to the most worthy action, or most useful discovery in the arts. He also founded and endowed two establishments; one for the support of indigent children; the other, an asylum for distressed age; and at St. Quentin, a free school for drawing.

Having enjoyed all the pleasures attached to celebrity in the capital, M. de la Tour at length retired to the place of his nativity, to enjoy the purer ones of rendering his fellow-creatures happy. His entrance into St. Quentin resembled a triumph; and to this the benefactor of mankind has surely a far better claim than the conqueror, whose path is marked with horror and desolation. Here, at the age of eighty-four, he finished his career.—May all, whom fortune favors with her gifts, stimulated by his example, make as good a use of them!

FROM THE PORTSMOUTH, (N. H.) SPY.

[THE following beautiful LINES, wrote on the death of Miss M—— L——n, and Miss L—— L——n, twins, late of Exeter, cannot but be pleasing to our fair readers, especially to those, whose hearts of "thousand strings" vibrate at the tale of distress.]

BY A GENTLEMAN IN THIS TOWN.

TWO beautiful flow'rets on one stem,
In one fair garden grew,
Smil'd at th' invigorating beam,
And sipp'd the foist'ring dew.

Not woodbines thro' the fragrant air,
Did balmy scents disclose,
The lily was not half so fair,
Nor half so sweet the rose.

Each eye beheld the matchless pair,
With admiration mov'd
And wonder'd how they grew so fair—
They wonder'd—prais'd and lov'd.

But ah! one lovely flow'r declines!
How languishing it lies?
(What art can frustrate heav'n's designs!)
It droops—it fades—it dies!

Farewell, (sweet heav'nly plant! Ah, say,
How will thy partner mourn!
Snatch'd from thy lov'd embrace away,
Ah! never to return!

But see, the tender sympathy
Pervades the widow'd flow'r!
The lonely mourner, left by thee,
Pants for the final hour!

It comes! adieu, sweet flow'rs, adieu!
Forgive these streaming eyes,
I see you, wrapt from mortal view,
Now blooming in the skies!

VIENNA, August 30.

ON the 7th inst. in conformity to the intentions of the late Field Marshal Laudon, 20 carriages filled with plans and manuscripts, were brought from Huntersdorf to the war-office. They consist principally of plans of fortresses, of sieges and battles, executed in a superior style, enriched with historical observations on many passages of the memoirs on the Austrian military. The greater part of these works were by the Marshal.

M A Y E N C E, August 28.

An insurrection lately took place here, in which the cockade was worn. As soon as the landgrave of Darmstadt was informed of it, he sent six hundred soldiers to the assistance of the elector, who restored order. This insurrection is supposed to have taken place in consequence of the infliction of some French travellers in Germany. The French appear now desirous of overturning every constitution in Europe.

O S T E N D, September 3.

Vandernoot's Crusade against Limburg has failed. The peasants which he had collected together, from the different districts, to the amount of 40,000, entered the Province. A body of 15,000 Limbourgers, and part of the Imperial troops, retired till they got the enemy into a convenient situation between Huy and Liege, they then made the attack and entirely routed the Patriots, and pursued them to the gates of Liege, where they were refused admittance, in consequence of the agreement made between the Liegeois and Leopold; great numbers were therefore killed—report says 7000. Three or four hundred of the prisoners, who were undisciplined soldiers, and therefore considered as mere rebels, were hung, among whom were about 30 Capuchins, and 80 Priests.—This action took place the 23d.

The committee of this town received this intelligence officially, in a bulletin from the States of Flanders, in which they say that such another action will put an end to the religion and liberty of the country, and invite all those who have any regard for either, to come forward and exert themselves.

Sixty-nine waggons with wounded peasants, arrived at Louvain, and 50 more at Brussels, there being no room for them at Namur. The number carried in them we know not.

This intelligence is also confirmed to us by another letter, which mentions that most of the monks in the different convents of Linsbourg are confined on suspicion of being concerned in fomenting these disturbances.

L I L L O [Dutch Brabant] Sept. 20.

A proclamation from Baron d'Aspre the Austrian deputy commandant, under the direction of the Governor General has appeared, requiring every parish and community to furnish one man in ten armed: every parish to furnish a waggon with provisions for one week, in order to repel the attacks of a similar expedition among the

Brabanters. All the volunteers to receive one schelling a day, and to be at liberty to return home at the end of a week, upon giving three days notice for a substitute to arrive.

This proclamation had nearly excited some clamour against this early exercise of the Austrian prerogative; and the emissaries of the Congress in the Province fomented it at much as possible. It was complained of that they demanded too peremptorily what ought to have been requested with moderation; but a softening interpretation of the Edict, being immediately published by the Commissaries, the contents of it were cheerfully complied with, and such vigorous measures taken, that 16,000 Limbourgers are now under arms, all firmly resolved to contest the passage of the Brabanters to the last: the remembrance of the horrors committed by the latter at Herve are heightened by the late pillage of the towns of Esneux and Honti, and the resentment of the Limbourgers is proportionate. They have besides received a reinforcement of Bamberg troops from the army in the country of Namur, which Baron de Beaulieu has spared them; having raised the camp of Naloment and another advanced station, in order to detach those troops for that more important station. They have now numerous bodies of peasantry intermixed with troops, who line the Banks of the Meuse and the smaller rivers of Ourte and Vefce, in order to prevent an irruption.

The Comte de Gontreuil, who is indefatigable in his arrangements, has taken station near Chence to observe the motions of the Belgians.

The last accounts from Luxemburg have raised the desponding spirits of the Limbourgeois and the Austrians; they advise the arrival, on the 4th inst. of 600 Wurtzburghers and 400 horses, with 400 of Bender's regiment from Friburg; and they positively expect the advanced column of the grand army by the end of the month: the Comte de Braun, General of Artillery, who is to command the whole army, is expected in a few days, and there are no longer any doubts of the march of the rest of the troops. Application has been made to various of the circles for the passage of 40,000 men.

The Austrian relations of the late affairs, which the Belgic details have so much boasted of, differ as usual; the former relate their whole loss in the close attack, so vaunted by General Schoenfeld, to amount to 17 men only.

They have published a list of the cannon and ammunition taken from the Patriots: One of the pieces was a gift of the ladies of Bruges, another was from the gentlemen of the same town, and a third was an offering from the town of Malines; the inscription of *pro constitutione* engraved on them, is perhaps, as applicable in the Imperialists hands as in their own.

The abode of Brussels is now become more dangerous than ever for the true lovers of justice and freedom; the outrages committed on those who have alone professed and practised those sentiments, are carried to the very utmost extent of horror. A relation of the atrocities committed last week with impunity, must assuredly open the eyes of every one to the true principles of the present Belgic administration. Some wretches of the volunteer company of Chasseurs, who have always been prostituted to the aristocracy, on Monday evening last, fell upon a young man of another company, as he was passing the Hotel d'Angleterre, and put him to death with repeated strokes of their fabres. This unfortunate youth incapable of making any resistance, having his right arm in a sling from a wound he had received in the Patriotic army, where he made the late expedition of forty days, had no other fault than that of being a true patriot, and not coinciding in the justice of all the measures of the present government: he thus fell a cruel sacrifice to the vengeance denounced by these wretches upon many others. Besides, the same evening they found another victim, and if there could be any aggravation to such atrocious crimes, it was that of putting a semblance of judicial proceedings on this second offence. They took also her young man to the guard house, and there in that supposed sanctuary they cut him to pieces with the same barbarity. But this is not all the horror! The hypocritical and blood thirsty priestcraft, far from denouncing vengeance on such guilt, gave it a sanction, by denying the mangled carcases of these two unhappy youths the accustomed tribute of a consecrated