



L'Ingénu, histoire véritable tirée des manuscrits du P. Quesnel

VOLTAIRE

Musean Translation

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Translated by Michael Berardi

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THIS EDITION

Complete machine-assisted Musean translation made directly from the French, independently of the Plain English edition. All twenty chapters and Voltaire's three author notes are retained; Beuchot's editorial apparatus is omitted.

TRANSLATOR

Michael Berardi

THE WORK

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GAPS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The French base is Project Gutenberg's transcription of Beuchot's 1829 edition, compared with Garnier and selected same-edition page images, not a full facsimile collation. Four transcription slips are repaired against the 1829 images with recorded evidence.

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Chapter I



How the prior of Notre-Dame de la Montagne and his sister met a Huron.

One day Saint Dunstan, Irish by nationality and a saint by profession, left Ireland on a little mountain that sailed toward the coast of France, and by this conveyance arrived in the bay of Saint-Malo. Once ashore, he blessed his mountain, which bowed deeply to him and returned to Ireland by the way it had come.

Dunstan founded a little priory in those parts and named it the Priory of the Mountain, a name it still bears, as everyone knows.

On the evening of July 15, 1689, the Abbé de Kerkabon, prior of Notre-Dame de la Montagne, was walking by the sea with his sister, Mademoiselle de Kerkabon, to enjoy the cool air. The prior, already somewhat advanced in years, was a very good churchman, beloved by the men of the neighborhood, as he had once been by the women. What had chiefly earned him great esteem was that he was the only holder of a church benefice in the district who did not have to be carried to bed after dining with his fellow clerics. He knew a respectable amount of theology; and when he grew tired of reading Saint Augustine, he amused himself with Rabelais. Everyone therefore spoke well of him.

Mademoiselle de Kerkabon, who had never married, although she had very much wanted to, retained a fresh complexion at the age of forty-five. Her nature was kind and tenderhearted; she loved pleasure and was devout.

As he looked out to sea, the prior said to his sister, "Alas! This is where our poor brother embarked with our dear sister-in-law, Madame de Kerkabon, his wife, aboard the frigate *Hirondelle*, in 1669, to go and serve in Canada. If he had not been killed, we might still hope to see him again."

"Do you believe," said Mademoiselle de Kerkabon, "that our sister-in-law was eaten by the Iroquois, as we were told? Certainly, if she had not been eaten, she would have come home. I shall mourn her all my life. She was a charming woman; and our brother, who had a great deal of wit, would surely have made his fortune."

While they were both moved by these memories, they saw a small vessel entering the bay of the Rance on the tide. It carried Englishmen who had come to sell some produce of their country. They leaped ashore without looking at the prior or his sister, who was deeply offended by their lack of attention to her.

It was otherwise with a very well-built young man who sprang in a single leap over his companions' heads and landed face-to-face with the lady. He nodded to her, not being accustomed to bowing. His appearance and his dress caught the eyes of brother and sister. His head and legs were bare, his feet shod in little sandals, his head adorned with long braided hair; a short doublet fitted his slim, supple waist. His bearing was warlike and gentle. In one hand he held a small bottle of Barbados spirits, and in the other a sort of pouch containing a drinking cup and some very good ship's biscuit. He spoke quite intelligible French. He offered Mademoiselle de Kerkabon and her brother some of his Barbados spirits and drank with them; he had them drink again, all with such simplicity and natural grace that brother and sister were delighted. They offered to help him, asking who he was and where he was going. The young man replied that he did not know; that he was curious, that he had wanted to see what the coast of France looked like, that he had come, and that he would be going back.

Judging by his accent that he was not English, the prior took the liberty of asking what country he came from. "I am a Huron," the young man answered.

Astonished and enchanted to see a Huron who had shown her such courtesy, Mademoiselle de Kerkabon invited the young man to supper. He did not need to be asked twice, and all three went together to the priory of Notre-Dame de la Montagne.

The short, round lady stared at him with her little eyes wide open and said from time to time to the prior, "That tall lad has a complexion of lilies and roses! What lovely skin for a Huron!" "You are right, my sister," said the prior. She asked a hundred questions in rapid succession, and the traveler always gave an apt reply.

Word soon spread that there was a Huron at the priory. The district's best society hurried over for supper. The Abbé de Saint-Yves came with his sister, a young woman of Lower Brittany, very pretty and very well brought up. The bailiff, the tax collector, and their wives joined the supper party. They seated the stranger between Mademoiselle de Kerkabon and Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves. Everyone gazed at him in admiration; everyone spoke to him and questioned him at once. The Huron was unperturbed. He seemed to have adopted Lord Bolingbroke's motto, *Nihil admirari*. But at last, worn out by so much noise, he said quite gently, though with a little firmness, "Gentlemen, in my country people speak one at a time. How do you expect me to answer when you keep me from hearing you?" Reason always brings people to their senses for a few moments: a great silence fell. The bailiff, who always took possession of strangers in any house he happened to visit, and who was the greatest questioner in the province, opened his mouth half a foot wide and said, "Sir, what is your name?" "I have always been called the Ingénu," the Huron replied, "and they confirmed that name in England, because I always say quite candidly what I think, just as I do whatever I please."

"How, sir, if you were born a Huron, did you manage to come to England?" "Because I was taken there. The English captured me in a battle, after I had defended myself fairly well; and the English, who love bravery because they are brave themselves, and who are as honorable as we are, offered either to return me to my people or to take me to England. I chose the latter, because I am by nature passionately fond of seeing the world."

“But, sir,” said the bailiff in his imposing tone, “how could you abandon your father and mother like that?” “Because I have never known either father or mother,” the stranger said. The company was touched, and everyone repeated, “*Neither father nor mother!*” “We shall take their place,” the lady of the house said to her brother the prior. “What an engaging gentleman this Huron is!” The Ingénu thanked her with a noble and proud warmth and made her understand that he needed nothing.

“I observe, Monsieur Ingénu,” said the solemn bailiff, “that you speak better French than is fitting for a Huron.” “A Frenchman,” he said, “whom we captured in Huronia when I was very young, and of whom I grew very fond, taught me his language. I learn very quickly whatever I want to learn. When I arrived in Plymouth, I met one of your French refugees, whom you call *Huguenots*, I do not know why. He helped me make some progress in your language; and as soon as I could make myself understood, I came to see your country, because I rather like the French when they do not ask too many questions.”

Despite this little warning, the Abbé de Saint-Yves asked which of the three languages he liked best: Huron, English, or French. “Huron, unquestionably,” the Ingénu replied. “Is it possible?” cried Mademoiselle de Kerkabon. “I had always thought French the loveliest of all languages after Breton.”

Then everyone competed to ask the Ingénu how to say tobacco in Huron, and he answered *taya*; how to say eat, and he answered *essenten*. Mademoiselle de Kerkabon absolutely insisted on knowing how to say make love; he answered *trovander*[a], and maintained, not without some show of reason, that these words were quite as good as their French and English equivalents. All the guests found *trovander* very pretty.

[a] All these words are in fact Huron.

The prior, who had in his library a Huron grammar given to him by the Reverend Father Sagar Théodat, a Recollect friar and celebrated missionary, left the table for a moment to consult it. He returned fairly breathless with tenderness and joy: he had established that the Ingénu was a true Huron. There was

some debate about the multiplicity of languages, and everyone agreed that, but for the affair of the Tower of Babel, the whole world would have spoken French.

The questioning bailiff, who until then had been a little suspicious of the fellow, conceived a profound respect for him. He spoke to him more civilly than before, which the Ingénu did not notice.

Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves was very curious to know how people made love in the country of the Hurons. "By doing fine deeds," he answered, "to please people who resemble you." All the guests applauded in astonishment. Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves blushed and was delighted. Mademoiselle de Kerkabon blushed too, but she was not so delighted; she was a little piqued that the compliment had not been addressed to her. Yet she was so good a person that her affection for the Huron was not diminished in the least. With great kindness she asked how many mistresses he had had in Huronia. "I have only ever had one," the Ingénu said. "It was Mademoiselle Abacaba, my dear nurse's good friend. The reeds are no straighter, the ermine no whiter; sheep are less gentle, eagles less proud, and stags are not as swift as Abacaba was. One day she was chasing a hare in our neighborhood, some fifty leagues from our home, when an ill-bred Algonquin, who lived a hundred leagues farther off, came and took her hare. I heard of it, ran there, felled the Algonquin with a blow of my club, and brought him to my mistress's feet, bound hand and foot. Abacaba's relatives wanted to eat him, but I have never had a taste for feasts of that kind. I set him free and made him a friend. Abacaba was so touched by what I had done that she preferred me to all her suitors. She would love me still if she had not been eaten by a bear. I punished the bear; I wore its skin for a long time, but that did not console me."

As she listened, Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves felt a secret pleasure in learning that the Ingénu had had only one mistress and that Abacaba was no more; but she could not distinguish the cause of her pleasure. Everyone's eyes were fixed on the Ingénu. He was much praised for having kept his companions from eating an Algonquin.

The relentless bailiff, unable to curb his mania for questioning, at last carried his curiosity so far as to ask what religion Monsieur the Huron professed: had he chosen the Anglican religion, the Gallican, or the Huguenot? "I belong to my religion," he said, "as you belong to yours." "Alas!" cried Mademoiselle de Kerkabon. "I can see that those wretched English never even thought of having him baptized." "Oh, my God," said Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves, "how can it be that the Hurons are not Catholics? Have the reverend Jesuit fathers not converted them all?" The Ingénu assured her that in his country no one was converted; that no true Huron had ever changed his opinion, and that his language did not even have a word meaning *inconstancy*. These last words pleased Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves exceedingly.

"We shall baptize him, we shall baptize him," Mademoiselle de Kerkabon told the prior. "You shall have the honor, my dear brother. I absolutely insist on being his godmother. The Abbé de Saint-Yves will present him at the font. It will be a splendid ceremony; people will speak of it throughout Lower Brittany, and it will do us infinite credit." The whole company supported the lady of the house; all the guests cried, "We shall baptize him!" The Ingénu replied that in England people were allowed to live as they pleased. He made it clear that the proposal did not please him at all, and that the law of the Hurons was at least as good as that of the Lower Bretons. Finally, he said he was leaving the next day. They finished his bottle of Barbados spirits, and everyone went to bed.

When they had shown the Ingénu to his room, Mademoiselle de Kerkabon and her friend Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves could not resist peeping through a large keyhole to see how a Huron slept. They saw that he had spread the bed-cover on the floor and was resting in the most beautiful posture in the world.

Chapter II



The Huron, called the Ingénu, is recognized by his family.

As was his custom, the Ingénu woke with the sun, at the crowing of the cock, which in England and Huronia is called *the trumpet of the day*. He was not like fashionable society, which languishes in an idle bed until the sun has completed half its circuit, unable either to sleep or to rise, wasting so many precious hours in that state midway between life and death, and still complaining that life is too short.

He had already covered two or three leagues and killed thirty head of game with single bullets when, on his return, he found the prior of Notre-Dame de la Montagne and his discreet sister walking in their nightcaps in their little garden. He presented them with all his game; then, drawing from his shirt a sort of little talisman that he always wore around his neck, he begged them to accept it in gratitude for their kind reception. “It is the most precious thing I have,” he told them. “I was assured that I would always be happy as long as I wore this little trinket, and I give it to you so that you may always be happy.”

The prior and his sister smiled tenderly at the Ingénu’s simplicity. The gift consisted of two rather poorly executed miniature portraits, fastened together by a very greasy strap.

Mademoiselle de Kerkabon asked him whether there were painters in Huronia. “No,” said the Ingénu. “This rarity came to me from my nurse. Her husband had won it as spoils, stripping some Frenchmen from Canada who

had made war on us. That is all I ever knew about it.”

The prior studied the portraits closely. He changed color, grew agitated; his hands trembled. “By Our Lady of the Mountain!” he cried. “I believe these are the faces of my brother the captain and his wife!” After examining them with the same emotion, his sister came to the same conclusion. Both were seized with astonishment and a joy mingled with grief; both were deeply moved; both wept. Their hearts pounded; they cried out; they snatched the portraits from each other. Each took them and handed them back twenty times in a second. They devoured the portraits and the Huron with their eyes. They asked him one after the other, and both at once, where, when, and how these miniatures had come into his nurse’s hands. They pieced together the dates, counted the years since the captain’s departure; they remembered hearing that he had gone as far as the country of the Hurons and that since then they had never heard of him again.

The Ingénu had told them that he had known neither father nor mother. The prior, who was a sensible man, noticed that the Ingénu had a little beard; he knew very well that Hurons had none. “His chin is downy, so he is the son of a European. My brother and sister-in-law were never seen again after the expedition against the Hurons in 1669. My nephew must then have been a nursing infant; the Huron nurse saved his life and became a mother to him.” At last, after a hundred questions and a hundred answers, the prior and his sister concluded that the Huron was their own nephew. They embraced him with streaming tears, while the Ingénu laughed, unable to imagine that a Huron could be the nephew of a prior in Lower Brittany.

The whole company came downstairs. Monsieur de Saint-Yves, who was a great judge of faces, compared the two portraits with the Ingénu’s features. He very skillfully pointed out that he had his mother’s eyes, the forehead and nose of the late Captain de Kerkabon, and cheeks that took after both.

Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves, who had never seen either father or mother, declared that the Ingénu resembled them perfectly. They all marveled at Providence and the chain of events in this world. In short, they were so per-

suaded, so convinced of the Ingénu's parentage, that he himself consented to be the prior's nephew, saying that he would as soon have him for an uncle as anyone else.

They went to give thanks to God in the church of Notre-Dame de la Montagne, while the Huron, quite unconcerned, amused himself by drinking in the house.

The Englishmen who had brought him, and who were ready to set sail, came to tell him it was time to leave. "Apparently," he told them, "you have not found your uncles and aunts. I am staying here. Go back to Plymouth; I give you all my belongings. I need nothing more in the world, since I am the nephew of a prior." The Englishmen set sail, caring very little whether the Ingénu had relatives in Lower Brittany or not.

After the uncle, the aunt, and the company had sung the *Te Deum*; after the bailiff had once more overwhelmed the Ingénu with questions; after they had exhausted everything that astonishment, joy, and tenderness could prompt them to say, the prior of the Mountain and the Abbé de Saint-Yves resolved to have the Ingénu baptized as soon as possible. But a strapping Huron of twenty-two was not like a baby who is regenerated without knowing anything about it. He would have to be instructed, and that seemed difficult, for the Abbé de Saint-Yves assumed that a man who had not been born in France had no common sense.

The prior pointed out to the company that, although Monsieur Ingénu, his nephew, had indeed not had the good fortune to be born in Lower Brittany, he was no less intelligent for that; they could judge as much from all his answers, and nature had certainly been very generous to him on both his father's and his mother's side.

First they asked whether he had ever read a book. He said he had read Rabelais in English translation and some passages of Shakespeare that he knew by heart; that he had found these books in the possession of the captain of the ship that had brought him from America to Plymouth, and that he had been

very pleased with them. The bailiff did not fail to question him about these books. "I confess," said the Ingénu, "that I thought I could guess at some of it, and that I did not understand the rest."

Hearing this, the Abbé de Saint-Yves reflected that this was how he himself had always read, and that most people read in much the same way. "You have doubtless read the *Bible*?" he asked the Huron. "Not at all, Monsieur l'Abbé. It was not among my captain's books. I have never heard of it." "That is just like those damned English!" cried Mademoiselle de Kerkabon. "They think more of a play by Shakespeare, a plum pudding, and a bottle of rum than of the Pentateuch. And so they have never converted anyone in America. They are certainly accursed by God, and before long we shall take Jamaica and Virginia from them."

Be that as it may, they sent for the most skillful tailor in Saint-Malo to dress the Ingénu from head to foot. The company dispersed; the bailiff went off to ask his questions elsewhere. As she left, Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves turned back several times to look at the Ingénu, and he bowed to her more deeply than he had ever bowed to anyone in his life.

Before taking his leave, the bailiff presented to Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves a great lout of a son who had just left school; but she scarcely looked at him, so taken up was she with the Huron's courtesy.

Chapter III



The Huron, called the Ingénu, is converted.

The prior, reflecting that he was growing rather old and that God had sent him a nephew for his consolation, took it into his head that he might resign his benefice in the young man's favor, if he succeeded in having him baptized and admitted to holy orders.

The Ingénu had an excellent memory. The sturdy constitution of Lower Brittany, strengthened by the climate of Canada, had made his head so robust that when someone struck it, he scarcely felt the blow; and when something was engraved within it, nothing could efface it. He had never forgotten anything. His understanding was all the keener and clearer because his childhood had not been burdened with the useless things and absurdities that weigh down ours: things entered his brain without a cloud. The prior finally resolved to have him read the New *Testament*. The Ingénu devoured it with great pleasure; but knowing neither when nor in what country all the adventures related in the book had taken place, he had no doubt that the scene was set in Lower Brittany. He swore he would cut off the noses and ears of Caiaphas and Pilate if he ever met those rogues.

His uncle, delighted with these promising dispositions, soon put him in possession of the facts. He praised his zeal, but explained that it was useless, since those men had died some sixteen hundred and ninety years before. The Ingénu soon knew almost the whole book by heart. He sometimes raised diffi-

culties that greatly troubled the prior, who was often obliged to consult the Abbé de Saint-Yves. The abbé, not knowing what to answer, sent for a Jesuit from Lower Brittany to complete the Huron's conversion.

At last grace did its work. The Ingénu promised to become a Christian; he had no doubt that he must begin by being circumcised. "For," he said, "in the book you have had me read, I do not see a single person who was not. It is therefore plain that I must sacrifice my foreskin; the sooner the better." He did not hesitate. He sent for the village surgeon and asked him to perform the operation, expecting to give Mademoiselle de Kerkabon and the whole company infinite pleasure once the thing was done. The barber-surgeon, who had never yet performed this operation, informed the family, who raised a great outcry. Good Mademoiselle de Kerkabon trembled lest her nephew, who seemed both determined and brisk, perform the operation himself very clumsily, with those regrettable consequences in which ladies always take an interest out of kindness of heart.

The prior set the Huron's ideas straight. He explained that circumcision was no longer in fashion; that baptism was much gentler and more conducive to salvation; that the law of grace was not like the law of severity. The Ingénu, who had a great deal of good sense and integrity, argued, but acknowledged his error—which is rather rare in Europe among people who argue. In the end he promised to be baptized whenever they wished.

First he had to confess, and this was the greatest difficulty. The Ingénu always carried in his pocket the book his uncle had given him. He could not find a single apostle in it who had gone to confession, and this made him very stubborn. The prior silenced him by showing him, in the Epistle of Saint James the Less, those words that so distress the heretics: *Confess your sins to one another*. The Huron said no more and made his confession to a Recollect friar. When he had finished, he pulled the Recollect out of the confessional, seized his man with a powerful arm, took his place, and made him kneel before him. "Come, my friend, it says: *Confess to one another*. I have told you my sins; you will not leave here until you have told me yours." As he spoke, he pressed his broad knee against his adversary's chest. The Recollect let out howls that resounded

through the church. People rushed toward the noise and found the catechumen manhandling the monk in the name of Saint James the Less. The joy of baptizing a Huron and English Lower Breton was so great that these peculiarities were overlooked. Many theologians even thought confession unnecessary, since baptism took the place of everything.

A day was agreed upon with the bishop of Saint-Malo, who, flattered, as may well be imagined, to baptize a Huron, arrived in a splendid equipage followed by his clergy. Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves, blessing God, put on her finest dress and sent for a hairdresser from Saint-Malo so that she might shine at the ceremony. The questioning bailiff hurried over with the whole countryside. The church was magnificently adorned; but when they went to fetch the Huron and bring him to the baptismal font, he was nowhere to be found.

His uncle and aunt searched for him everywhere. They supposed he was hunting, as usual. All those invited to the celebration scoured the woods and neighboring villages: no news of the Huron.

They began to fear he had returned to England. They remembered hearing him say that he liked that country very much. The prior and his sister were convinced that no one was baptized there, and trembled for their nephew's soul. The bishop was dismayed and ready to leave; the prior and the Abbé de Saint-Yves were in despair; the bailiff questioned every passerby with his usual gravity. Mademoiselle de Kerkabon wept; Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves did not weep, but heaved deep sighs that seemed to testify to her fondness for the sacraments. They were walking sadly among the willows and reeds that border the little river Rance when they caught sight, in the middle of the river, of a tall, rather white figure with both hands crossed upon its chest. They gave a loud cry and turned away. But curiosity soon prevailing over every other consideration, they slipped quietly among the reeds; and when they were quite sure they could not be seen, they set about finding out what was going on.

Chapter IV



The Ingénu is baptized.

The prior and the abbé came running and asked the Ingénu what he was doing there. “Why, gentlemen, I am waiting to be baptized! I have been up to my neck in water for an hour, and it is not polite to leave me here freezing.”

“My dear nephew,” the prior told him tenderly, “that is not how we baptize people in Lower Brittany. Put your clothes back on and come with us.” On hearing this, Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves whispered to her companion, “Mademoiselle, do you think he will put his clothes back on so soon?”

The Huron, meanwhile, answered the prior, “You will not take me in this time as you did before. I have studied hard since then, and I am quite certain there is no other way to be baptized. Queen Candace’s[a] eunuch was baptized in a stream. I defy you to show me, in the book you gave me, that it was ever done any other way. Either I shall not be baptized at all, or I shall be baptized in the river.” In vain they explained that customs had changed. The Ingénu was stubborn, for he was both Breton and Huron. He kept coming back to Queen Candace’s eunuch; and although his aunt and Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves, who had observed him from among the willows, were entitled to tell him that he had no business citing such a man, they did nothing of the sort, so great was their discretion. The bishop came to speak to him in person, which is saying a great deal; but he achieved nothing. The Huron argued with the bishop.

[a] *N. B.* “How could Father Quesnel not have known that Candace was the name of the beautiful queens of Ethiopia, just as Pharaoh or Pharon was the title of the kings of Egypt?”

“Show me,” he said, “in the book my uncle gave me, a single man who was not baptized in a river, and I shall do anything you wish.”

The aunt, in despair, had noticed that the first time her nephew had bowed, he had bowed more deeply to Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves than to anyone else in the company; that he had not even greeted the bishop with that respect mingled with warmth that he had shown this beautiful young lady. In this great predicament, she decided to appeal to her. She begged her to use her influence to persuade the Huron to be baptized in the same way as the Bretons, not believing that her nephew could ever be a Christian if he persisted in wanting baptism in running water.

Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves blushed at the secret pleasure she felt in being entrusted with so important a mission. She approached the Ingénu modestly and, pressing his hand in a most gracious manner, said, “Will you do nothing for me?” As she spoke these words, she lowered her eyes and raised them again with a touching grace. “Ah! Anything you wish, mademoiselle, anything you command! Baptism by water, baptism by fire, baptism by blood—there is nothing I would refuse you.” Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves had the glory of achieving in two words what neither the prior’s urgings, nor the bailiff’s repeated questions, nor even the bishop’s arguments had been able to accomplish. She felt her triumph, but did not yet feel its full extent.

Baptism was administered and received with all possible decorum, magnificence, and charm. The uncle and aunt yielded to the Abbé de Saint-Yves and his sister the honor of standing with the Ingénu at the font. Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves glowed with joy at finding herself his godmother. She did not know what obligations this grand title imposed on her; she accepted the honor without knowing its fatal consequences.

As there has never been a ceremony that was not followed by a great dinner, they sat down to table on leaving the baptism. The wags of Lower Brittany said they must not baptize their wine. The prior said that wine, according to

Solomon, gladdens the heart of man. The bishop added that the patriarch Judah was to bind his ass's colt to the vine and dip his cloak in the blood of the grape; and that it was very sad that one could not do the same in Lower Brittany, to which God had denied vineyards. Everyone tried to make a witty remark about the Ingénu's baptism and pay compliments to his godmother. The bailiff, questioning as ever, asked the Huron whether he would keep his promises. "How could I break my promises," the Huron answered, "when I gave my pledge to Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves?"

The Huron grew warm; he drank many toasts to his godmother's health. "Had I been baptized by your hand," he said, "I feel that the cold water they poured on the back of my head would have burned me." The bailiff thought this too poetic, not knowing how familiar allegory is in Canada. But the godmother was exceedingly pleased.

The newly baptized young man had been given the name Hercules. The bishop of Saint-Malo kept asking who this patron saint was, of whom he had never heard. The Jesuit, who was very learned, told him that he was a saint who had performed twelve miracles. There was a thirteenth worth all the other twelve, but of which it did not befit a Jesuit to speak: he had changed fifty girls into women in a single night. A wit who happened to be there dwelt vigorously on this miracle. All the ladies lowered their eyes and judged from the Ingénu's appearance that he was worthy of the saint whose name he bore.

Chapter V



The Ingénu in love.

It must be admitted that after this baptism and this dinner, Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves passionately wished the bishop would let her share some other fine sacrament with Monsieur Hercules the Ingénu. Yet, being well brought up and very modest, she scarcely dared acknowledge her tender feelings even to herself. If a look, a word, a gesture, a thought escaped her, she wrapped it all in a veil of infinitely charming reserve. She was tender, spirited, and virtuous.

As soon as the bishop had left, the Ingénu and Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves met without having reflected that they were looking for each other. They spoke without having imagined what they would say. The Ingénu told her at once that he loved her with all his heart, and that the beautiful Abacaba, about whom he had been mad in his own country, could not compare with her. With her usual modesty, the young lady answered that he must speak as soon as possible to his uncle the prior and to his aunt, and that she, for her part, would say a few words to her dear brother, the Abbé de Saint-Yves; she hoped they would all consent.

The Ingénu replied that he needed no one's consent; that it seemed exceedingly ridiculous to go and ask other people what one ought to do; that when two parties were in agreement, they did not need a third to reconcile them. "I consult no one," he said, "when I feel like having breakfast, hunting, or sleeping. I know very well that in love it does no harm to have the consent of the per-

son you desire. But since I am in love with neither my uncle nor my aunt, they are not the people I should approach in this matter; and if you take my advice, you will do without the Abbé de Saint-Yves as well."

One may imagine that the beautiful Breton used all the delicacy of her wit to bring her Huron within the bounds of propriety. She even grew angry, and soon softened again. In the end, there is no knowing how this conversation would have ended if, as daylight faded, the abbé had not taken his sister back to his abbey. The Ingénu let his uncle and aunt go to bed, for they were rather tired after the ceremony and their long dinner. He spent part of the night composing verses in the Huron language for his beloved; for it must be understood that there is no country on earth where love has not turned lovers into poets.

The next day, after breakfast, his uncle spoke to him as follows, in the presence of Mademoiselle de Kerkabon, who was deeply moved: "Heaven be praised, my dear nephew, that you have the honor of being both a Christian and a Lower Breton! But that is not enough. I am growing rather old; my brother left only a little patch of land, which amounts to very little. I have a fine priory. If you will only become a subdeacon, as I hope you will, I shall resign my priory in your favor, and you will live very comfortably, after having been the consolation of my old age."

The Ingénu answered, "Uncle, I wish you every blessing! Live as long as you can. I do not know what it means to be a subdeacon or to resign, but anything will suit me, provided I can have Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves." "Oh, my God, nephew, what are you saying? Are you madly in love with that beautiful young lady, then?"—"Yes, uncle."—"Alas, nephew, it is impossible for you to marry her."—"It is perfectly possible, uncle; for not only did she press my hand as she left me, but she promised she would ask for my hand in marriage. And I shall certainly marry her."—"It is impossible, I tell you. She is your godmother. It is a dreadful sin for a godmother to press her godson's hand. One is not permitted to marry one's godmother; divine and human laws forbid it."—"Good God, uncle, you are making fun of me! Why should it be forbidden to marry your godmother when she is young and pretty? I saw nothing in the book you gave me saying it was wrong to marry girls who have helped people get bap-

tized. Every day I notice that an infinity of things are done here that are not in your book, while nothing it says is done at all. I confess that this astonishes and angers me. If I am deprived of the beautiful Saint-Yves on the pretext of my baptism, I warn you that I shall carry her off and have myself unbaptized."

The prior was confounded; his sister wept. "My dear brother," she said, "we must not let our nephew damn himself. Our holy father the pope can grant him a dispensation, and then he can be happy as a Christian with the woman he loves." The Ingénu embraced his aunt. "Who is this delightful man," he said, "who so kindly helps young men and women in their loves? I want to go and speak to him at once."

They explained to him what the pope was, and the Ingénu was more astonished than before. "There is not a word of all this in your book, my dear uncle. I have traveled; I know the sea. We are here on the coast of the ocean; and am I to leave Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves to ask permission to love her from a man who lives near the Mediterranean, four hundred leagues from here, and whose language I do not understand? It is incomprehensibly ridiculous. I am going this very moment to the Abbé de Saint-Yves, who lives only a league from you, and I guarantee that I shall marry my beloved today."

While he was still speaking, the bailiff came in and, as usual, asked him where he was going. "I am going to get married," said the Ingénu as he ran off; and a quarter of an hour later he was already at the home of his beautiful, dear Lower Breton, who was still asleep. "Ah, brother," Mademoiselle de Kerkabon said to the prior, "you will never make a subdeacon of our nephew."

The bailiff was very displeased by this visit, for he intended his son to marry Saint-Yves; and the son was even more foolish and more insufferable than his father.

Chapter VI



The Ingénu runs to his beloved's house and becomes furious.

Scarcely had the Ingénu arrived when, having asked an old servant where his beloved's room was, he thrust open the poorly fastened door and sprang toward the bed. Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves woke with a start and cried, "What! It is you! Ah, it is you! Stop! What are you doing?" He answered, "I am marrying you"; and indeed he would have married her, had she not struggled with all the propriety of a person of good breeding.

The Ingénu would stand no fooling; he found all these formalities exceedingly impertinent. "This is not how Mademoiselle Abacaba, my first mistress, behaved. You have no integrity. You promised to marry me, and you will not make a marriage. That is a breach of the first laws of honor. I shall teach you to keep your word and put you back on the path of virtue."

The Ingénu possessed a manly and intrepid virtue, worthy of his patron Hercules, whose name he had been given at baptism. He was about to exercise it to the full when the piercing cries of the more discreetly virtuous young lady brought the wise Abbé de Saint-Yves running, with his housekeeper, a devout old manservant, and a parish priest. This sight tempered the assailant's courage. "Oh, my God, my dear neighbor," the abbé said, "what are you doing here?" "My duty," the young man replied. "I am fulfilling my promises, which are sacred."

Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves put her clothes in order, blushing. They took the Ingénu into another room. The abbé explained the enormity of his conduct. The Ingénu defended himself by appealing to the privileges of natural law, which he understood perfectly. The abbé sought to prove that positive law must take complete precedence, and that without the agreements made among men, the law of nature would almost always be no more than natural lawlessness. "We need," he told him, "notaries, priests, witnesses, contracts, dispensations." The Ingénu answered with the reflection that savages have always made: "You must be very dishonest people, then, if you need so many precautions among yourselves."

The abbé had difficulty resolving this objection. "There are, I admit," he said, "many fickle people and rogues among us; and there would be as many among the Hurons if they were gathered together in a great city. But there are also wise, honorable, enlightened souls, and those are the men who have made the laws. The better a man is, the more he must submit to them. He sets an example to the wicked, who respect a restraint that virtue has imposed on itself."

This answer struck the Ingénu. It has already been observed that his mind was sound. They soothed him with flattering words and gave him hopes: these are the two snares in which people of both hemispheres are caught. They even brought Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves before him once she had finished dressing. Everything was conducted with the greatest propriety; but despite this decorum, the flashing eyes of Hercules the Ingénu constantly made his beloved lower hers and the company tremble.

They had the greatest difficulty sending him back to his family. Once more they had to call upon the beautiful Saint-Yves's influence; the more she felt her power over him, the more she loved him. She sent him away and was deeply distressed by it. At last, when he had gone, the abbé, who was not only Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves's much older brother but also her guardian, resolved to remove his ward from the advances of this formidable lover. He went to consult the bailiff, who, still intending his son for the abbé's sister, advised him to place the poor girl in a religious house. It was a terrible blow. A

woman with no lover would cry out in protest at being put in a convent; but a woman in love, and as virtuous as she was tender! It was enough to drive her to despair.

Back at the priory, the Ingénu recounted everything with his usual candor. He endured the same remonstrances, which had some effect on his mind and none on his senses. But the next day, when he wished to return to his beautiful beloved to reason with her about natural law and conventional law, the bailiff informed him with insulting glee that she was in a convent. "Very well!" he said. "I shall go and reason in the convent." "That cannot be," said the bailiff. He explained at great length what a convent, or a religious community, was; that the word came from the Latin *conventus*, meaning an assembly; and the Huron could not understand why he could not be admitted to the assembly. As soon as he learned that this assembly was a kind of prison where girls were kept locked away—a horrible thing, unknown among the Hurons and the English—he became as furious as his patron Hercules had been when Eurytus, king of Oechalia, no less cruel than the Abbé de Saint-Yves, refused him his beautiful daughter Iole, no less beautiful than the abbé's sister. He wanted to go and set fire to the convent, carry off his beloved, or burn himself with her. Mademoiselle de Kerkabon, terrified, abandoned more than ever all hope of seeing her nephew a subdeacon, and said through her tears that he had had the devil in him ever since he was baptized.

Chapter VII



The Ingénu repels the English.

The Ingénu, sunk in dark and profound melancholy, walked toward the seashore, his double-barreled gun on his shoulder and his great cutlass at his side, firing now and then at a bird and often tempted to fire at himself. But he still loved life because of Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves. At times he cursed his uncle, his aunt, all Lower Brittany, and his baptism; at times he blessed them, since they had brought him to know the woman he loved. He resolved to go and burn down the convent, then stopped short for fear of burning his beloved. The waves of the Channel are no more tossed by east and west winds than his heart was by so many contrary impulses.

He was striding along, not knowing where, when he heard the sound of a drum. In the distance he saw a whole crowd, half running toward the shore and the other half running away.

A thousand cries rose on every side. Curiosity and courage instantly hurled him toward the place the clamor came from; he flew there in four bounds. The militia commander, who had dined with him at the prior's, recognized him at once and ran to him with open arms. "Ah! It is the Ingénu! He will fight for us." And the militiamen, who were dying of fear, took heart and cried in their turn, "It is the Ingénu! It is the Ingénu!"

"Gentlemen," he said, "what is the matter? Why are you so frightened? Have your sweethearts been put in convents?" Then a hundred confused voices cried, "Do you not see the English landing?" "Well," the Huron replied, "they are good fellows. They have not taken my beloved from me."

The commander explained that the English were coming to plunder the abbey of the Mountain, drink his uncle's wine, and perhaps carry off Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves; that the little ship on which he had landed in Brittany had come only to reconnoiter the coast; that they were committing acts of hostility without having declared war on the king of France, and that the province lay exposed. "Ah! If that is so, they are violating natural law. Leave it to me. I lived among them for a long time; I know their language; I shall speak to them. I cannot believe they have such an evil design."

During this conversation the English squadron drew near. Off ran the Huron toward it, leaped into a small boat, reached the fleet, boarded the flagship, and asked whether it was true that they had come to ravage the country without having honorably declared war. The admiral and everyone aboard burst out laughing, gave him some punch, and sent him back.

Stung, the Ingénu thought of nothing now but fighting stoutly against his former friends for his countrymen and the prior. The neighboring gentlemen were hurrying in from every direction; he joined them. They had a few cannons; he loaded them, aimed them, and fired them one after another. The English landed; he ran at them, killed three with his own hand, and even wounded the admiral who had mocked him. His valor fired the courage of the whole militia. The English reembarked, and the entire coast rang with cries of victory: "Long live the king! Long live the Ingénu!" Everyone embraced him; everyone hurried to stanch the blood from a few slight wounds he had received. "Ah!" he said, "if Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves were here, she would put a compress on me."

The bailiff, who had hidden in his cellar during the battle, came to congratulate him like everyone else. But he was greatly surprised to hear Hercules the Ingénu say to a dozen willing young men gathered around him, "My friends, it is nothing to have freed the abbey of the Mountain. We must free a girl." All

these hotheaded youths caught fire at those few words. Already they were following him in a crowd, running toward the convent. Had the bailiff not warned the commander that very moment, had they not run after the merry band, it would have been all over. They brought the Ingénu back to his uncle and aunt, who bathed him in tears of tenderness.

“I see plainly that you will never be either a subdeacon or a prior,” his uncle told him. “You will be an officer even braver than my brother the captain, and probably just as penniless.” And Mademoiselle de Kerkabon kept weeping as she embraced him, saying, “He will get himself killed like my brother. It would be far better for him to be a subdeacon.”

During the battle the Ingénu had picked up a large purse full of guineas, which the admiral had probably dropped. He had no doubt that with this purse he could buy all Lower Brittany and, above all, make Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves a great lady. Everyone urged him to travel to Versailles to receive the reward for his services. The commander and the senior officers showered him with certificates. His uncle and aunt approved their nephew’s journey. He would certainly be presented to the king; that alone would give him immense standing in the province. These two good people added a substantial gift from their savings to the English purse. The Ingénu said to himself, “When I see the king, I shall ask him for Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves’s hand in marriage, and he certainly will not refuse me.” So he departed to the acclamations of the whole district, smothered in embraces, bathed in his aunt’s tears, blessed by his uncle, and commending himself to the beautiful Saint-Yves.

Chapter VIII



The Ingénu goes to court. He dines with Huguenots on the way.

The Ingénu took the coach toward Saumur, since no other conveyance was available then. On reaching Saumur, he was astonished to find the town almost deserted and to see several families moving away. He was told that six years earlier Saumur had held more than fifteen thousand souls, and now it held fewer than six thousand. He was sure to bring this up over supper at his inn. Several Protestants were at the table; some complained bitterly, others trembled with anger, and others wept as they said,

“... Nos dulcia linquimus arva,
Nos patriam fugimus.”

The Ingénu, who knew no Latin, asked to have these words explained. They mean: We abandon our sweet fields, we flee our homeland.

“And why are you fleeing your homeland, gentlemen?” “Because they want us to acknowledge the pope.” “And why shouldn’t you acknowledge him? Have you no godmothers you wish to marry? For I have been told that he is the one who grants permission.” “Ah, sir, this pope says he is master of the dominions of kings.” “But, gentlemen, what is your profession?” “Sir, most of us are cloth merchants and manufacturers.” “If your pope says he is master of your cloth and your factories, you are quite right not to acknowledge him; but as for kings, that is their affair. Why meddle in it?” Then a little man dressed in black spoke up and set out the company’s grievances with great learning. He spoke of

the revocation of the Edict of Nantes with such force, and lamented so movingly the fate of fifty thousand fugitive families and fifty thousand others converted by the dragoons, that the Ingénu shed tears in his turn. "How is it," he said, "that so great a king, whose glory reaches even the Hurons, deprives himself of so many hearts that would have loved him, and so many arms that would have served him?"

"Because he has been deceived, like other great kings," replied the man in black. "They have made him believe that, once he had spoken a word, everyone would think as he did; and that he could make us change our religion as his musician Lulli changes the scenery of his operas in an instant. Not only is he already losing five or six hundred thousand very useful subjects, but he is making enemies of them; and King William, who now rules England, has formed several regiments from these very Frenchmen who would have fought for their monarch.

"Such a disaster is all the more astonishing because the reigning pope, to whom Louis XIV is sacrificing a part of his people, is his declared enemy. The two have also been engaged in a violent quarrel for nine years. It has gone so far that France has at last hoped to see the yoke broken that has subjected her to this foreigner for so many centuries, and above all to stop giving him money—the prime mover of this world's affairs. So it seems plain that this great king has been deceived about his interests as well as the extent of his power, and that the magnanimity of his heart has been wounded."

The Ingénu, more and more deeply moved, asked which Frenchmen were deceiving a monarch so dear to the Hurons. "The Jesuits," they answered, "and above all Father de La Chaise, His Majesty's confessor. We must hope that God will one day punish them, and that they will be driven out as they are driving us out. Can any misfortune equal ours? Monsieur de Louvois sends Jesuits and dragoons against us on every side."

"Well then, gentlemen," replied the Ingénu, who could no longer contain himself, "I am going to Versailles to receive the reward due for my services. I shall speak to this Monsieur de Louvois; I am told he is the one who wages war from his study. I shall see the king and make the truth known to him; no one

can possibly resist that truth once he feels it. I shall soon return to marry Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves, and I invite you to the wedding.” These good people now took him for a great nobleman traveling *incognito* by coach. A few took him for the king’s fool.

At the table sat a Jesuit in disguise who served as a spy for the Reverend Father de La Chaise. He reported everything to him, and Father de La Chaise passed the information to Monsieur de Louvois. The spy wrote his letter. The Ingénu and the letter arrived at Versailles almost at the same time.

Chapter IX



The Ingénu arrives at Versailles. His reception at court.

The Ingénu alights from a “chamber pot”[a] in the kitchen courtyard. He asks the sedan-chair carriers at what hour one can see the king. The carriers laugh in his face, just as the English admiral had done. He treated them in the same fashion and beat them; they meant to return the favor, and the scene would have turned bloody had a royal bodyguard, a Breton gentleman, not come by and scattered the rabble. “Sir,” the traveler said to him, “you seem to me a worthy man. I am the nephew of the prior of Our Lady of the Mountain; I have killed Englishmen; I have come to speak to the king. Please take me to his room.” The guardsman, delighted to find a brave man from his own province who seemed unfamiliar with the ways of court, explained that one did not speak to the king in that fashion, and that one had to be presented by His Lordship de Louvois. “Well then! Take me to this Lord de Louvois, who will doubtless conduct me to His Majesty.” “It is even harder,” replied the guardsman, “to speak to His Lordship de Louvois than to His Majesty; but I shall take you to Monsieur Alexandre, chief clerk at the War Office. It is as good as speaking to the minister.” So they go to this Monsieur Alexandre, the chief clerk, but could not gain admittance: he was busy with a lady of the court, and there were orders to admit no one. “Well,” said the guardsman, “all is not lost. Let us go to Monsieur Alexandre’s chief clerk; it is as good as speaking to Monsieur Alexandre himself.”

[a] A conveyance that runs from Paris to Versailles and resembles a small covered tipcart.

The astonished Huron follows him. They remain together for half an hour in a little antechamber. "What does all this mean?" said the Ingénu. "Is everyone invisible in this country? It is far easier to fight the English in Lower Brittany than to find the people one has business with at Versailles." To relieve his boredom he told his fellow Breton about his love. But the striking of the hour called the bodyguard back to his post. They promised to meet again the next day, and the Ingénu stayed another half hour in the antechamber, dreaming of Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves and of the difficulty of speaking to kings and chief clerks.

At last the great man appeared. "Sir," the Ingénu said to him, "if I had waited to repel the English as long as you have made me wait for an audience, they would now be ravaging Lower Brittany at their leisure." These words struck the clerk. At last he said to the Breton, "What do you want?" "A reward," the other said. "Here are my credentials." He spread out all his certificates before him. The clerk read them and said that he would probably be granted permission to buy a lieutenant's commission. "What! I am to give money for having driven back the English? Pay for the right to get myself killed for you, while you sit here calmly receiving visitors? You must be joking. I want a cavalry company for nothing; I want the king to take Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves out of the convent and give her to me in marriage; I want to speak to the king on behalf of fifty thousand families I intend to restore to him. In short, I want to be useful: give me employment and advancement."

"What is your name, sir, you who speak so loudly?" "Oh, indeed!" the Ingénu retorted. "So you have not read my certificates? Is that how things are done? My name is Hercule de Kerkabon; I am baptized; I am staying at the Blue Dial, and I shall complain of you to the king." The clerk concluded, like the people of Saumur, that he was not quite sound in the head, and paid little attention to him.

That same day, the Reverend Father de La Chaise, Louis XIV's confessor, had received his spy's letter, accusing the Breton Kerkabon of favoring the Huguenots in his heart and condemning the Jesuits' conduct. Monsieur de Louvois, for his part, had received a letter from the inquisitive bailiff, who portrayed the Ingénu as a scoundrel bent on burning convents and carrying off young women.

The Ingénu, after strolling through the gardens of Versailles, where he grew bored, and supping like a Huron and a Lower Breton, had gone to bed in the sweet hope of seeing the king the next day, obtaining Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves in marriage, securing at least a cavalry company, and putting an end to the persecution of the Huguenots. He was cradling himself in these pleasing thoughts when the constabulary entered his room. They first seized his double-barreled gun and his great saber. An inventory was made of his ready money, and he was taken to the fortress built by King Charles V, son of John II, near the Rue Saint-Antoine, at the Porte des Tournelles.

What was the Ingénu's astonishment on the way? I leave you to imagine it. At first he thought it a dream. He remained in a stupor; then, suddenly seized by a fury that doubled his strength, he takes two of the men escorting him in the carriage by the throat, hurls them through the door, leaps out after them, and drags along the third, who was trying to restrain him. The effort brings him down; they bind him and lift him back into the carriage. "So this," he said, "is what one earns by driving the English out of Lower Brittany! What would you say, beautiful Saint-Yves, if you saw me in this state?"

At last they reach the lodging appointed for him. He is carried in silence into the room where he is to be confined, like a dead man borne into a graveyard. This room was already occupied by an old recluse of Port-Royal named Gordon, who had been languishing there for two years. "Here," the head of the guards told him, "I have brought you some company." At once the huge bolts were shot back across the thick door, sheathed in broad iron bars. The two prisoners were left cut off from the whole universe.

Chapter X



The Ingénu imprisoned in the Bastille with a Jansenist.

Monsieur Gordon was a hale and serene old man who knew two great things: how to bear adversity and how to comfort the unfortunate. He approached his companion with an open, compassionate air and, embracing him, said, “Whoever you may be, you who have come to share my tomb, be assured that I shall always forget myself to ease your torments in this infernal abyss into which we have been plunged. Let us adore the Providence that has brought us here, suffer in peace, and hope.” These words worked upon the Ingénu’s soul like those English drops that recall a dying man to life and make him half open his astonished eyes.

After their first courtesies, Gordon, without pressing him to explain the cause of his misfortune, inspired him, by the gentleness of his conversation and the sympathy two unhappy men feel for one another, with a desire to open his heart and lay down the burden that oppressed him. But he could not guess the reason for his misfortune: it seemed to him an effect without a cause; and good old Gordon was as astonished as he was.

“God must have great designs for you,” the Jansenist told the Huron, “since he has brought you from Lake Ontario to England and France, had you baptized in Lower Brittany, and placed you here for your salvation.” “Upon my word,” replied the Ingénu, “I think the devil alone has had a hand in my destiny. My countrymen in America would never have treated me with the barbar-

ity I am suffering here; they have no notion of it. They are called *savages*: they are rough men of honor, and the men of this country are polished scoundrels. I am certainly very surprised to have come from another world to be shut up in this one behind four bolts with a priest; but I reflect on the prodigious number of men who leave one hemisphere to get themselves killed in the other, or are shipwrecked on the way and eaten by fish. I do not see God's gracious designs for all those people."

Their dinner was brought through a hatch. The conversation turned to Providence, to royal warrants of imprisonment, and to the art of not succumbing to the misfortunes to which every man is exposed in this world. "I have been here for two years," said the old man, "with no consolation but myself and my books; I have not had a moment of ill humor."

"Ah, Monsieur Gordon!" cried the Ingénu. "Then you are not in love with your godmother? If you knew Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves as I do, you would be in despair." At these words he could not hold back his tears, and then felt a little less oppressed. "But," he said, "why do tears bring relief? It seems to me they ought to have the opposite effect." "My son, everything in us is physical," said the good old man. "Every secretion does the body good; and whatever relieves the body relieves the soul. We are the machines of Providence."

The Ingénu, who, as we have said several times, possessed a great fund of intelligence, reflected deeply on this idea, whose seed he seemed to carry within himself. Afterward he asked his companion why his machine had been behind four bolts for two years. "Through efficacious grace," replied Gordon. "I am considered a Jansenist; I knew Arnauld and Nicole; the Jesuits have persecuted us. We believe the pope is merely a bishop like any other; and that is why Father de La Chaise obtained from the king, his penitent, an order depriving me, without any judicial process, of mankind's most precious possession: liberty." "How very strange," said the Ingénu. "All the unhappy people I have met owe their unhappiness to the pope alone."

"As for your efficacious grace, I confess I understand nothing about it; but I consider it a great grace that God has let me find, in my misfortune, a man like you, who pours into my heart consolations I thought myself incapable of

feeling.”

Each day their conversation grew more interesting and instructive. The souls of the two prisoners became attached to one another. The old man knew much, and the young man wished to learn much. After a month he took up geometry; he devoured it. Gordon had him read Rohault’s physics, which was still in fashion, and he had the good sense to find nothing in it but uncertainties.

Next he read the first volume of the *Search for Truth*. This new light illuminated him. “What!” he said. “Our imagination and our senses deceive us to that degree! What! Objects do not form our ideas, and we cannot give ourselves ideas either!” When he had read the second volume, he was less pleased, and concluded that it is easier to destroy than to build.

His fellow prisoner, astonished that an ignorant young man should make a reflection possible only to practiced minds, formed a high opinion of his intelligence and grew still more attached to him.

“Your Malebranche,” the Ingénu told him one day, “seems to me to have written half his book with his reason, and the other half with his imagination and prejudices.”

A few days later Gordon asked him, “What, then, do you think of the soul, of the way we receive our ideas, of our will, of grace, of free will?” “Nothing,” the Ingénu answered. “If I thought anything, it would be that we are under the power of the eternal Being, like the stars and the elements; that he does everything in us; that we are little wheels in the immense machine of which he is the soul; that he acts through general laws, not particular intentions. That alone seems intelligible to me; all the rest is an abyss of darkness.”

“But, my son, that would make God the author of sin.” “But, Father, your efficacious grace would also make God the author of sin; for it is certain that all those denied that grace would sin, and is not whoever delivers us to evil the author of evil?”

This candor greatly embarrassed the good man. He felt that his efforts to extricate himself from this mire were vain; and he piled up so many words that seemed to have a meaning and had none—in the manner of physical premotion

—that the Ingénu pitied him. This question plainly touched on the origin of good and evil; and then poor Gordon had to review Pandora's box, the egg of Orosmade pierced by Arimane, the enmity between Typhon and Osiris, and finally original sin; and the two of them ran through this profound night without ever meeting. Yet in the end this romance of the soul turned their eyes from the contemplation of their own misery, and, by a strange enchantment, the multitude of calamities spread over the universe diminished their sense of their own sufferings. They dared not complain when everything suffered.

But in the stillness of the night, the image of the beautiful Saint-Yves effaced every thought of metaphysics and morality from her lover's mind. He would wake with his eyes wet with tears; and the old Jansenist forgot his efficacious grace, the abbé de Saint-Cyran, and Jansenius, to comfort a young man whom he believed to be in mortal sin.

After their reading, after their reasoning, they would speak again of their adventures; and after speaking of them to no purpose, they would read together or separately. The young man's mind grew stronger and stronger. In mathematics especially, he would have gone very far but for the distractions Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves caused him.

He read histories; they saddened him. The world seemed to him too wicked and too wretched. Indeed, history is nothing but a picture of crimes and misfortunes. The multitude of innocent, peaceable men always disappears on these vast stages. The characters are all depraved men of ambition. It seems that history, like tragedy, can please only when it is quickened by passions, atrocities, and great calamities; without them it languishes. Clio must be armed with a dagger, like Melpomene.

Although the history of France is full of horrors, like every other history, he nevertheless found it so revolting in its beginnings, so dry in its middle, so petty even in the time of Henry IV, always so barren of great monuments, so alien to those splendid discoveries that have brought distinction to other nations, that he had to struggle against boredom to read all these accounts of obscure calamities confined to one corner of the world.

Gordon thought as he did. Both laughed with pity whenever the sovereigns of Fezensac, Fesansaguet, and Astarac came up. Indeed, such study could be useful only to their heirs, if they had any. The glorious centuries of the Roman republic made him indifferent for a time to the rest of the earth. The spectacle of Rome, victorious and giving laws to nations, occupied his whole soul. He grew fervent as he contemplated this people, governed for seven hundred years by a passion for liberty and glory.

So passed the days, the weeks, the months; and he would have thought himself happy in this abode of despair had he not been in love.

His good heart also felt tender concern for the prior of Our Lady of the Mountain and the sensitive Mademoiselle de Kerkabon. "What will they think," he often repeated, "when they have no news of me? They will think me ungrateful." This thought tormented him; he pitied those who loved him far more than he pitied himself.

Chapter XI



How the Ingénu develops his gifts.

Reading enlarges the soul, and an enlightened friend consoles it. Our prisoner enjoyed both these blessings, which he had never suspected before. “I am tempted,” he said, “to believe in metamorphoses, for I have been changed from a brute into a man.” With a portion of his money that he was allowed to use, he assembled a choice library. His friend encouraged him to put his reflections in writing. Here is what he wrote about ancient history:

“I imagine that nations were for a long time as I was, that they acquired knowledge only very late, and that for centuries they concerned themselves solely with the passing moment, very little with the past, and never with the future. I have traveled five or six hundred leagues through Canada and found not a single monument; no one there knows anything of what his great-grandfather did. Might this not be man’s natural condition? The human race on this continent seems to me superior to that on the other. For several centuries it has enlarged its existence through the arts and knowledge. Is this because it has beards on its chins, and God has denied beards to the Americans? I do not think so, for I see that the Chinese have scarcely any beard and have cultivated the arts for more than five thousand years. Indeed, if they have more than four thousand years of annals, the nation must have been united and flourishing for more than fifty centuries.

“One thing strikes me above all in this ancient history of China: almost everything in it is plausible and natural. I admire it for containing nothing miraculous.

“Why have all the other nations given themselves fabulous origins? The old chroniclers of French history, who are not very old, derive the French from a Francus, son of Hector; the Romans claimed descent from a Phrygian, though their language contained not a single word with the least connection to the language of Phrygia; the gods had lived in Egypt for ten thousand years, and the devils in Scythia, where they had fathered the Huns. Before Thucydides I see nothing but romances like the Amadis tales, and much less entertaining. Everywhere there are apparitions, oracles, prodigies, spells, metamorphoses, dreams interpreted and determining the fate of the greatest empires and the smallest states: here animals speak, there animals are worshiped, gods are turned into men, and men into gods. Ah! If we must have fables, let them at least be emblems of truth! I love the fables of philosophers, I laugh at those of children, and I hate those of impostors.”

One day he came upon a history of the Emperor Justinian. In it he read that certain unlettered men of Constantinople had issued, in very bad Greek, an edict against the greatest commander of the age, because this hero had spoken these words in the heat of conversation: “Truth shines by its own light, and minds are not enlightened by the flames of the stake.” The unlettered men declared that this proposition was heretical, savored of heresy, and that the contrary axiom was catholic, universal, and Greek: “Minds are enlightened only by the flames of the stake, and truth cannot shine by its own light.” These linen-robed men thus condemned several of the commander’s discourses and issued an edict.

“What!” cried the Ingénu. “Edicts issued by such people!” “They are not edicts,” replied Gordon, “but counter-edicts, which everyone in Constantinople laughed at, the emperor first of all. He was a wise prince who had managed to restrict the unlettered, linen-robed men to doing good alone. He knew that these gentlemen and several other shrine-bearers had exhausted

the patience of his imperial predecessors with counter-edicts on graver matters.” “He did very well,” said the Ingénu. “Shrine-bearers must be supported and restrained.”

He wrote down many other reflections that alarmed old Gordon. “What!” he said to himself. “I have spent fifty years acquiring knowledge, and I fear I cannot attain the natural good sense of this almost savage child! I tremble to think that I have laboriously fortified prejudices; he listens only to simple nature.”

The good man had a few of those little books of criticism, those periodical pamphlets in which men incapable of producing anything disparage the works of others, in which the Visés insult the Racines, and the Faydits the Fénelons. The Ingénu looked through a few of them. “I compare them,” he said, “to certain little flies that lay their eggs in the backsides of the finest horses: that does not stop the horses from running.” The two philosophers scarcely deigned to glance at these excrements of literature.

Soon they read the elements of astronomy together; the Ingénu sent for celestial globes, and this great spectacle enchanted him. “How hard it is,” he said, “to begin to know the heavens only when I am robbed of the right to contemplate them! Jupiter and Saturn roll through those immense spaces; millions of suns light billions of worlds; and in the corner of earth where I have been cast, there are beings who deprive me, a seeing, thinking being, of all those worlds my sight could reach, and of the one in which God had me born! The light made for the whole universe is lost to me. It was not hidden from me beneath the northern skies where I spent my childhood and youth. Without you, my dear Gordon, I should be living here in nothingness.”

Chapter XII



What the Ingénu thinks of plays.

The young Ingénu resembled one of those vigorous trees that, born in barren soil, spread their roots and branches in a short time when transplanted into favorable ground; and it was extraordinary indeed that a prison should be that ground.

Among the books that occupied the two prisoners' leisure were poems, translations of Greek tragedies, and a few French plays. Verses that spoke of love brought pleasure and pain together into the Ingénu's soul. They all spoke to him of his dear Saint-Yves. The fable of the Two Pigeons pierced his heart; he was far indeed from being able to return to his dovecote.

Molière enchanted him. He taught him the ways of Paris and of humankind. "Which of his comedies do you prefer?" "*Tartuffe*, without question." "I agree with you," said Gordon. "It was a *Tartuffe* who plunged me into this dungeon, and perhaps *Tartuffes* have brought about your misfortune."

"What do you think of these Greek tragedies?" "Good for Greeks," said the Ingénu. But when he read the modern *Iphigenia*, *Phaedra*, *Andromache*, and *Athalie*, he was in raptures: he sighed, he shed tears, he knew them by heart without ever meaning to learn them.

"Read *Rodogune*," Gordon told him. "They say it is the masterpiece of the theater; the other plays that gave you so much pleasure are little enough in comparison." On the very first page, the young man said, "This is not by the same

author.” “How can you tell?” “I do not know yet; but these verses reach neither my ear nor my heart.” “Oh! The verses are nothing,” Gordon replied. The Ingénu answered, “Then why write them?”

After reading the play very attentively, with no purpose but enjoyment, he looked at his friend with dry, astonished eyes and did not know what to say. At last, pressed to give an account of what he had felt, he answered as follows: “I scarcely understood the beginning; the middle revolted me; the last scene moved me greatly, though it seems implausible. I cared about no one, and I have not remembered twenty lines—I, who remember every one when they please me.”

“Yet this play is considered the best we have.” “If so,” he replied, “perhaps it is like many people who do not deserve their positions. After all, this is a matter of taste; mine cannot yet be formed. I may be mistaken; but you know I am fairly accustomed to saying what I think, or rather what I feel. I suspect that there is often illusion, fashion, and caprice in men’s judgments. I have spoken as nature prompted me; perhaps nature is very imperfect in me, but perhaps most men also consult her too seldom.” Then he recited verses from *Iphigenia*, which filled his thoughts; and though his delivery was poor, he put such truth and tenderness into them that he made the old Jansenist weep. Next he read *Cinna*; he did not weep, but he admired it.

Chapter XIII



The beautiful Saint-Yves goes to Versailles.

While our unfortunate young man found more enlightenment than consolation; while his gifts, so long stifled, unfolded with such speed and force; while nature, perfecting herself within him, avenged him for the outrages of fortune—what had become of the prior and his good sister, and of the beautiful, secluded Saint-Yves? In the first month they were anxious, and by the third they were plunged in sorrow; false conjectures and groundless rumors alarmed them; after six months they believed him dead. At last Monsieur and Mademoiselle de Kerkabon learned, through an old letter a royal guardsman had written to Brittany, that a young man resembling the Ingénu had arrived at Versailles one evening, but had been carried off during the night, and that no one had heard of him since.

“Alas!” said Mademoiselle de Kerkabon. “Our nephew must have done something foolish and brought trouble upon himself. He is young, he is a Lower Breton; he cannot know how one ought to behave at court. My dear brother, I have never seen Versailles or Paris; here is a fine opportunity. Perhaps we shall find our poor nephew: he is our brother’s son, and it is our duty to help him. Who knows whether we may not finally succeed in making him a subdeacon, once the ardor of youth has subsided? He had a great aptitude for learning. Do you remember how he reasoned about the Old and New *Testaments*? We are responsible for his soul; we had him baptized; his dear

beloved Saint-Yves spends her days weeping. Truly, we must go to Paris. If he is hiding in one of those nasty houses of pleasure I have heard so many stories about, we shall get him out." The prior was moved by his sister's words. He went to see the bishop of Saint-Malo, who had baptized the Huron, and asked for his protection and advice. The prelate approved the journey. He gave the prior letters of recommendation to Father de La Chaise, the king's confessor, who held the foremost dignity in the kingdom; to Harlay, archbishop of Paris; and to Bossuet, bishop of Meaux.

At last the brother and sister set off; but when they reached Paris, they found themselves lost as in a vast labyrinth, without a guiding thread or a way out. Their means were modest, and every day they needed carriages to go in search of information, and they discovered nothing.

The prior called upon the Reverend Father de La Chaise; he was with Mademoiselle Du Tron and could not grant audiences to priors. He went to the archbishop's door; the prelate was closeted with the beautiful Madame de Lesdiguières on Church business. He hurried to the bishop of Meaux's country house; the bishop was examining Madame Guyon's mystical love with Mademoiselle de Mauléon. Nevertheless, he managed to gain a hearing from these two prelates; both declared that they could not concern themselves with his nephew, since he was not a subdeacon.

At last he saw the Jesuit, who received him with open arms and assured him that he had always held him in particular esteem, never having known him. He swore that the Society had always been devoted to Lower Bretons. "But," he said, "might your nephew have the misfortune to be a Huguenot?" "Certainly not, Reverend Father." "Could he be a Jansenist?" "I can assure Your Reverence that he is scarcely a Christian: we baptized him about eleven months ago." "Very good, very good; we shall look after him. Is your benefice substantial?" "Oh! A very small thing, and our nephew costs us a great deal." "Are there any Jansenists in your neighborhood? Take great care, my dear prior: they are more dangerous than Huguenots and atheists." "Reverend Father, we have

none; no one at Our Lady of the Mountain knows what Jansenism is." "So much the better. Go now; there is nothing I will not do for you." He affectionately dismissed the prior and thought no more about him.

Time passed; the prior and his good sister despaired.

Meanwhile the accursed bailiff was pressing the marriage of his great oaf of a son to the beautiful Saint-Yves, who had been brought out of the convent expressly for this purpose. She still loved her dear godson as much as she detested the husband offered to her. The affront of being put in a convent had increased her passion; the order to marry the bailiff's son brought it to its height. Regret, tenderness, and horror convulsed her soul. Love, as everyone knows, is far more ingenious and daring in a young girl than affection in an old prior and an aunt past forty-five. Besides, she had gained considerable experience in her convent through the novels she had read in secret. The beautiful Saint-Yves remembered the letter a bodyguard had written to Lower Brittany, which had been talked of throughout the province. She resolved to go to Versailles herself to make inquiries, to throw herself at the ministers' feet if her husband was in prison, as people said, and to obtain justice for him. Something secretly told her that at court a pretty girl is refused nothing; but she did not know what it cost.

Her resolution taken, she is comforted, she is calm; she no longer rebuffs her foolish suitor; she welcomes the detestable father-in-law, is affectionate to her brother, and spreads joy through the house. Then, on the day appointed for the ceremony, she leaves secretly at four in the morning with her little wedding presents and all she has been able to gather. Her arrangements were so well made that she was already more than ten leagues away when they entered her room around noon. Surprise and consternation were great. The inquisitive bailiff asked more questions that day than he had asked all week; the husband was left looking more foolish than ever. The abbé de Saint-Yves, in his anger, decided to pursue his sister. The bailiff and his son wished to accompany him. Thus destiny was conducting almost that entire corner of Lower Brittany to Paris.

The beautiful Saint-Yves had little doubt she would be followed. She was on horseback, and skillfully asked the couriers whether they had met a fat abbé, an enormous bailiff, and a young simpleton hurrying along the road to Paris. Learning on the third day that they were not far behind, she took a different route, and had skill and good fortune enough to reach Versailles while they searched for her in Paris to no purpose.

But how was she to manage at Versailles? Young, beautiful, without advice or support, unknown, exposed to every danger—how could she dare to seek out a royal guardsman? She thought of applying to a Jesuit of the lower ranks; there were Jesuits for every station in life. Just as God, they said, had given different foods to the different species of animals, he had given the king his confessor, whom all the petitioners for benefices called *the head of the Gallican Church*; next came the confessors of the princesses; the ministers had none—they were not such fools. There were Jesuits for the common household, and above all Jesuits for the chambermaids, through whom the secrets of their mistresses were learned; and this was no small employment. The beautiful Saint-Yves applied to one of these last, called Father Tout-à-tous. She confessed to him, told him her adventures, her situation, and her danger, and begged him to lodge her with some good devout woman who would shelter her from temptations.

Father Tout-à-tous took her to the wife of an officer of the royal cup service, one of his most trusted penitents. Once there, she hastened to win this woman's confidence and friendship; she inquired after the Breton guardsman and sent him a request to visit her. Learning from him that her lover had been carried off after speaking to a chief clerk, she runs to that clerk. The sight of a beautiful woman softened him, for we must admit that God created women only to tame men.

The softened pen-pusher confessed everything. "Your lover has been in the Bastille for nearly a year, and without you he might remain there all his life." The tender Saint-Yves fainted. When she had recovered her senses, the pen-pusher told her, "I have no influence to do good; all my power extends only to doing harm now and then. Take my advice: go to Monsieur de Saint-Pouange,

who does both good and harm, the cousin and favorite of His Lordship de Louvois. This minister has two souls: Monsieur de Saint-Pouange is one, Madame Dufresnoy the other; but she is not at Versailles just now. Your only course is to soften the protector I have pointed out.” The beautiful Saint-Yves, divided between a little joy and extreme sorrow, between some hope and mournful fears, pursued by her brother, adoring her lover, wiping away her tears and shedding them again, trembling, weakened, and taking courage once more, hurried to Monsieur de Saint-Pouange’s house.

Chapter XIV



The progress of the Ingénu's mind.

The Ingénu made rapid progress in knowledge, and above all in the knowledge of humanity. His mind's swift development owed almost as much to his upbringing among savages as to the temper of his soul; for, having learned nothing in childhood, he had learned no prejudices. His understanding, never bent by error, had kept all its uprightness. He saw things as they are, whereas the ideas we are given in childhood make us see them all our lives as they are not. "Your persecutors are abominable," he told his friend Gordon. "I pity you for being oppressed, but I also pity you for being a Jansenist. Every sect seems to me a rallying point for error. Tell me, are there sects in geometry?" "No, my dear child," good Gordon told him with a sigh. "All men agree on truth when it is demonstrated, but they are too divided over obscure truths." "Say rather obscure falsehoods. If there had been a single truth hidden in your heaps of arguments, endlessly rehashed for so many centuries, surely it would have been discovered, and the whole world would have agreed at least on that point. If this truth were as necessary as the sun is to the earth, it would shine as brightly. It is an absurdity, an outrage against humankind, an assault upon the infinite and supreme Being, to say: there is a truth essential to man, and God has hidden it." Everything this ignorant young man, taught by nature, said made a profound impression on the mind of the unfortunate old scholar. "Can it really be true," he cried, "that I have made myself miserable for chimeras? I am far

more certain of my misfortune than of efficacious grace. I have spent my days reasoning about the freedom of God and humankind, but I have lost my own; neither Saint Augustine nor Saint Prosper will draw me from the abyss where I lie.”

The Ingénu, giving his nature free rein, said at last, “May I speak to you with bold frankness? Those who bring persecution upon themselves for these empty disputes of the schools seem to me unwise; those who persecute seem to me monsters.”

The two prisoners were entirely agreed on the injustice of their imprisonment. “I am a hundred times more to be pitied than you,” said the Ingénu. “I was born free as the air; I had two lives, liberty and the object of my love: both are taken from me. Here we both are in irons, without knowing the reason and without being able to ask it. I lived as a Huron for twenty years; people call them barbarians because they avenge themselves on their enemies, but they have never oppressed their friends. I had scarcely set foot in France before I shed my blood for her; perhaps I saved a province, and as my reward I have been swallowed up in this tomb of the living, where I should have died of rage without you. Are there no laws in this country, then? Men are condemned without a hearing! It is not so in England. Ah! It was not the English I should have fought.” Thus his dawning philosophy could not subdue nature outraged in the first of her rights, and allowed his just anger free course.

His companion did not contradict him. Absence always increases unsatisfied love, and philosophy does not diminish it. He spoke of his dear Saint-Yves as often as of morality and metaphysics. The more his feelings were refined, the more he loved. He read a few new novels; he found few that pictured the state of his soul. He felt that his heart always went beyond what he read. “Ah!” he said. “Almost all these authors have nothing but wit and art.” At last the good Jansenist priest gradually became the confidant of his love. Before, he had known love only as a sin one admits in confession. He learned to know it as a feeling as noble as it is tender, which can elevate the soul as much as soften it, and sometimes even produce virtues. Finally, as the last marvel, a Huron was converting a Jansenist.

Chapter XV



The beautiful Saint-Yves resists delicate proposals.

The beautiful Saint-Yves, still more tenderhearted than her lover, therefore went to see Monsieur de Saint-Pouange, accompanied by the friend with whom she was staying, both of them concealed beneath their hoods. The first thing she saw at the door was her brother, the abbé de Saint-Yves, coming out. She took fright, but her devout friend reassured her. "It is precisely because someone has spoken against you that you must speak for yourself. Be sure that in this country accusers are always in the right unless you hurry to confound them. Besides, unless I am very much mistaken, your presence will have more effect than your brother's words."

Give a passionate woman in love the slightest encouragement, and she is fearless. Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves presented herself at the audience. Her youth, her charms, her tender eyes wet with a few tears drew every gaze. Each courtier of the deputy minister forgot the idol of power for a moment to contemplate the idol of beauty. Saint-Pouange had her shown into a private room; she spoke with feeling and grace. Saint-Pouange felt himself moved. She trembled; he reassured her. "Come back this evening," he told her. "Your affairs deserve thought, and we must discuss them at leisure. There are too many people here; these audiences are dispatched too quickly. I must talk with you thoroughly about everything that concerns you." Then, having praised her beauty and her feelings, he urged her to come at seven that evening.

She did not fail to appear. Her devout friend accompanied her again, but remained in the drawing room reading *The Christian Tutor*, while Saint-Pouange and the beautiful Saint-Yves were in the inner study. "Would you believe, mademoiselle," he began, "that your brother came to ask me for a lettre de cachet against you? In truth, I would sooner issue one to send him back to Lower Brittany." "Alas, monsieur, your offices must be very free with lettres de cachet, if people come from the farthest corners of the kingdom to solicit them as they would pensions. I am very far from asking for one against my brother. I have much to complain of in him, but I respect people's liberty. I ask for the liberty of a man I wish to marry, a man to whom the king owes the preservation of a province, who can serve him well, and who is the son of an officer killed in his service. What is he accused of? How could he have been treated so cruelly without a hearing?"

The deputy minister then showed her the letter from the Jesuit spy and the one from the treacherous bailiff. "What! There are such monsters on earth! And they mean to force me to marry the ridiculous son of a ridiculous, wicked man! And it is on reports like these that the fate of citizens is decided here!" She fell to her knees and, sobbing, begged for the freedom of the brave man who adored her. In this posture her charms appeared to their greatest advantage. She was so beautiful that Saint-Pouange, losing all shame, hinted that she would succeed if she began by giving him the first fruits of what she was reserving for her lover. Terrified and mortified, Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves long pretended not to understand him; he had to speak more plainly. A word at first ventured with restraint led to a stronger one, followed by another still more explicit. He offered not only to revoke the lettre de cachet, but rewards, money, honors, positions; and the more he promised, the more his desire not to be refused increased.

Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves wept, choking, half fallen back on a sofa, scarcely believing what she saw and heard. Saint-Pouange, in his turn, fell to his knees before her. He was not without attractions, and might not have frightened off a heart less firmly given elsewhere; but Saint-Yves adored her lover and believed it a dreadful crime to betray him in order to serve him. Saint-Pouange

redoubled his entreaties and promises. At last he so lost his head that he declared this was the only way to free from prison the man in whom she took so ardent and tender an interest. This strange interview dragged on. Reading her *Christian Tutor*, the pious woman in the antechamber said, "My God! What can they have been doing in there for two hours? Monseigneur de Saint-Pouange has never granted so long an audience. Perhaps he has refused the poor girl everything, since she is still begging him."

At last her companion emerged from the inner study, utterly distraught, unable to speak, reflecting deeply on the character of the great and the half-great, who so lightly sacrifice the liberty of men and the honor of women.

She did not say a word all the way home. Once at her friend's house, she burst out and told her everything. The devout woman made great signs of the cross. "My dear friend, tomorrow without fail we must consult Father Tout-à-tous, our spiritual director. He has considerable influence with Monsieur de Saint-Pouange; he hears the confessions of several maidservants in his household. He is a pious and accommodating man, who also directs ladies of rank. Put yourself in his hands; that is what I do, and it has always served me well. We poor women need a man to guide us." "Very well, then, my dear friend! Tomorrow I will go and see Father Tout-à-tous."

Chapter XVI



She consults a Jesuit.

As soon as the beautiful, desolate Saint-Yves was with her good confessor, she confided that a powerful and pleasure-loving man had offered to release from prison the man she was to marry lawfully, and that he demanded a high price for his service; that she felt a terrible revulsion at such unfaithfulness, and that, were only her own life at stake, she would sacrifice it rather than yield.

“What an abominable sinner!” Father Tout-à-tous told her. “You really ought to tell me the name of this vile man. He is certainly some Jansenist; I will denounce him to His Reverence Father de La Chaise, who will have him lodged where the dear person you are to marry is now.”

After much embarrassment and long wavering, the poor girl at last named Saint-Pouange.

“Monseigneur de Saint-Pouange!” cried the Jesuit. “Ah, my daughter, that is another matter altogether. He is a cousin of the greatest minister we have ever had, an upright man, a protector of the good cause, a good Christian. He cannot have entertained such a thought; you must have misunderstood.” “Ah, Father, I understood only too well. Whatever I do, I am lost. I can choose only between misery and shame. Either my lover must remain buried alive, or I must make myself unworthy to live. I cannot let him perish, and I cannot save him.”

Father Tout-à-tous tried to calm her with these gentle words:

“First, my daughter, never use that expression, *my lover*. There is something worldly about it that might offend God. Say *my husband*; for although he is not yet your husband, you regard him as such, and nothing could be more proper.

“Second, although he is your husband in thought and in hope, he is not so in fact. Thus you would not be committing adultery, an enormous sin that must always be avoided as far as possible.

“Third, actions carry no sinful guilt when the intention is pure, and nothing could be purer than freeing your husband.

“Fourth, you have examples from sacred antiquity that may serve wonderfully to guide your conduct. Saint Augustine relates that during the proconsulship of Septimius Acyndinus, in the year of our salvation 340, a poor man, unable to give Caesar what belonged to Caesar, was condemned to death, as is just, despite the maxim, *Where there is nothing, the king loses his rights*. A pound of gold was at issue. The condemned man had a wife in whom God had placed beauty and prudence. A rich old man promised to give the lady a pound of gold, and even more, on condition that he commit the filthy sin with her. The lady did not believe she was doing wrong by saving her husband. Saint Augustine heartily approves her generous submission. It is true that the rich old man deceived her, and perhaps her husband was hanged all the same; but she had done everything in her power to save his life.

“Be sure, my daughter, that when a Jesuit quotes Saint Augustine to you, the saint must be entirely right. I am not advising you to do anything; you are sensible. It is to be presumed that you will be of use to your husband. Monseigneur de Saint-Pouange is an honorable man; he will not deceive you. That is all I can tell you. I will pray to God for you, and I hope that everything will turn out to his greater glory.”

The beautiful Saint-Yves, no less frightened by the Jesuit’s discourse than by the deputy minister’s proposals, returned in distraction to her friend’s house. She was tempted to escape through death both the horror of leaving the lover she adored in dreadful captivity and the shame of freeing him at the cost of what she held dearest, what should belong only to that unfortunate lover.

Chapter XVII



She succumbs through virtue.

She begged her friend to kill her; but this woman, no less indulgent than the Jesuit, spoke to her still more plainly. “Alas!” she said. “Business is seldom done any other way at this court, so charming, so gallant, so renowned. The humblest posts and the highest have often been granted only at the price demanded of you. Listen, you have inspired me with friendship and trust. I will admit to you that if I had been as difficult as you are, my husband would not enjoy the little post that keeps him alive. He knows it, and far from resenting it, he sees me as his benefactress and regards himself as a creature of my making. Do you imagine that all those who have governed provinces, or even commanded armies, owed their honors and fortunes to their services alone? Some of them owe these things to their ladies, their wives. Love has solicited the dignities of war, and the post has gone to the husband of the most beautiful woman.

“Your situation has a much stronger claim on our feelings: you must restore your lover to the light of day and marry him. It is a sacred duty you have to fulfill. No one has blamed the great and beautiful ladies I am telling you about. You will be applauded; people will say you allowed yourself a weakness only through an excess of virtue.” “Ah, what virtue!” cried the beautiful Saint-Yves. “What a labyrinth of iniquities! What a country! And how I am learning to know men! A Father de La Chaise and a ridiculous bailiff have my lover put in prison; my family persecutes me; the only hand held out to me in my disaster is

there to dishonor me. One Jesuit has ruined a brave man; another Jesuit wants to ruin me. I am surrounded by nothing but traps, and I am on the brink of falling into misery. I must kill myself or speak to the king. I will throw myself at his feet as he passes on his way to Mass or the theater.”

“They will not let you approach him,” her good friend told her. “And if you had the misfortune to speak, that Louvois and the Reverend Father de La Chaise could bury you in the depths of a convent for the rest of your days.”

While this worthy person was thus deepening the perplexities of that despairing soul and driving the dagger into her heart, a special messenger arrived from Monsieur de Saint-Pouange with a letter and two beautiful pendant earrings. Saint-Yves rejected everything in tears, but her friend took charge of it.

As soon as the messenger had left, the confidante read the letter, which proposed a little supper for the two friends that evening. Saint-Yves swore she would not go. The devout woman wanted her to try on the two diamond earrings. Saint-Yves would not permit it; she struggled all day long. At last, with nothing before her eyes but her lover, defeated, swept along, not knowing where she was being led, she let herself be taken to the fatal supper. Nothing had persuaded her to adorn herself with the earrings; her confidante brought them along and fastened them on her against her will before they sat down to table. Saint-Yves was so mortified, so distraught, that she let herself be tormented; and her patron took this as a very favorable omen. Toward the end of the meal, the confidante discreetly withdrew. The patron then showed her the revocation of the *lettre de cachet*, a warrant for a substantial gratuity, and a commission to command a company, and was lavish with his promises. “Ah!” Saint-Yves told him. “How I would love you if you did not want to be loved so much!”

At last, after long resistance, after sobs, cries, and tears, weakened by the struggle, bewildered, her strength ebbing, she had to surrender. Her only recourse was to promise herself that she would think of no one but the *Ingénu* while the cruel man mercilessly enjoyed the desperate straits to which she had been reduced.

Chapter XVIII



She frees her lover and a Jansenist.

At daybreak she flew to Paris, armed with the minister's order. It is difficult to portray what passed in her heart during that journey. Imagine a virtuous and noble soul, humbled by her disgrace, intoxicated with tenderness, torn by remorse for having betrayed her lover, filled with the joy of freeing the man she adored! Her bitterness, her struggles, her success divided all her thoughts among them. She was no longer the simple girl whose provincial upbringing had narrowed her ideas. Love and misfortune had formed her. Feeling had advanced as far in her as reason had in the mind of her unfortunate lover. Girls learn to feel more readily than men learn to think. Her ordeal had taught her more than four years in a convent.

Her dress was of the utmost simplicity. She looked with horror on the finery in which she had appeared before her fatal benefactor; she had left her diamond earrings with her companion without even looking at them. Mortified and delighted, idolizing the Ingénu and hating herself, she arrived at last at the gates of

... that dreadful castle, palace of revenge,

Which often holds both crime and innocence.

When the time came to step down from the carriage, her strength failed her; she was helped out. She entered with a pounding heart, wet eyes, and a stricken face. She was shown to the governor; she tried to speak to him, but her voice

died away. She showed him her order, scarcely able to articulate a few words. The governor liked his prisoner and was very glad of his release. His heart was not hardened like those of certain honorable jailers, his colleagues, who thought only of the fees attached to the custody of their captives, founded their income on their victims, lived on the misfortunes of others, and secretly took a dreadful joy in the tears of the unhappy.

He had the prisoner brought to his apartment. The two lovers saw each other, and both fainted. The beautiful Saint-Yves lay motionless and lifeless for a long time; the other soon recovered his courage. "This is evidently your wife," the governor told him. "You had not told me you were married. I am informed that you owe your release to her generous efforts." "Ah! I am not worthy to be his wife," said the beautiful Saint-Yves in a trembling voice; and she fainted once again.

When she came to her senses, still trembling, she presented the warrant for the gratuity and the written promise of a company to command. The Ingénu, as astonished as he was moved, woke from one dream only to fall into another. "Why was I locked up here? How have you managed to get me out? Where are the monsters who cast me into this place? You are a divinity come down from heaven to my rescue."

The beautiful Saint-Yves lowered her gaze, looked at her lover, blushed, and a moment later turned away her tear-filled eyes. At last she told him everything she knew and everything she had endured, except what she would have wished to hide forever even from herself, and what anyone other than the Ingénu, more accustomed to the world and better acquainted with the ways of the court, would easily have guessed.

"Is it possible that a wretch like that bailiff had the power to rob me of my freedom? Ah! I see that men are like the vilest animals: all can do harm. But is it possible that a monk, a Jesuit who hears the king's confession, contributed as much to my misfortune as that bailiff, when I cannot even imagine on what pretext the loathsome scoundrel persecuted me? Did he pass me off as a Jansenist? And how did you remember me? I did not deserve it; I was only a savage then. What! Without advice, without help, you were able to undertake

the journey to Versailles! You appeared there, and my chains were broken! Beauty and virtue must possess an invincible charm that brings down iron gates and softens hearts of bronze!”

At the word *virtue*, the beautiful Saint-Yves broke into sobs. She did not know how virtuous she was in the crime for which she reproached herself.

Her lover continued: “Angel who broke my chains, if you had enough influence—which I still do not understand—to have justice done me, then have it done as well to an old man who first taught me to think, as you have taught me to love. Calamity united us. I love him as a father; I cannot live without either you or him.”

“I! Ask a favor of the same man who...” “Yes, I want to owe you everything, and never to owe anything to anyone but you. Write to that powerful man, shower me with your kindness, finish what you have begun, complete your miracles.” She felt that she must do everything her lover asked. She tried to write; her hand would not obey. Three times she began her letter again; three times she tore it up. At last she wrote, and the two lovers left after embracing the old martyr to efficacious grace.

The happy, desolate Saint-Yves knew the house where her brother was staying; she went there, and her lover took an apartment in the same house.

They had scarcely arrived when her protector sent her the order for good old Gordon’s release and asked her to meet him the next day. Thus her dishonor was the price of every honest and generous action she performed. She looked with loathing on this practice of selling human happiness and misery. She gave the release order to her lover and refused to meet a benefactor whom she could no longer see without dying of grief and shame. The Ingénu could tear himself away from her only to go and free a friend: he flew there. He fulfilled this duty while reflecting on the strange events of this world and admiring the courageous virtue of a young girl to whom two unhappy men owed more than life.

Chapter XIX



The Ingénu, the beautiful Saint-Yves, and their relatives are reunited.

The generous and worthy unfaithful woman was with her brother, the abbé de Saint-Yves, the good prior of Our Lady of the Mountain, and Mademoiselle de Kerkabon. All were equally astonished, but their situations and feelings were very different. The abbé de Saint-Yves wept over his wrongs at the feet of his sister, who forgave him. The prior and his tenderhearted sister wept as well, but for joy. The odious bailiff and his insufferable son did not disturb this touching scene. They had left at the first report of their enemy's release, hurrying to bury their stupidity and their fear in their province.

Stirred by a hundred different emotions, the four awaited the young man's return with the friend he was to free. The abbé de Saint-Yves did not dare raise his eyes before his sister. Good Mademoiselle de Kerkabon said, "So I shall see my dear nephew again!" "You will see him again," said the charming Saint-Yves, "but he is no longer the same man. His bearing, his tone, his ideas, his mind—everything has changed. He has become as worthy of respect as he once was naïve and a stranger to everything. He will be the honor and consolation of your family. If only I could bring happiness to mine as well!" "You are not the same either," said the prior. "What has happened to you to bring about so great a change?"

In the midst of this conversation the Ingénu arrived, holding his Jansenist by the hand. The scene now grew still more novel and moving. It began with the tender embraces of the uncle and aunt. The abbé de Saint-Yves all but knelt before the Ingénu, who was no longer naïve. The two lovers spoke to each other through glances that expressed all the feelings filling their hearts. Satisfaction and gratitude shone on his face; distress was painted in her tender, slightly bewildered eyes. Everyone was surprised that she mingled sorrow with so much joy.

Within a few moments old Gordon had become dear to the whole family. He had suffered with the young prisoner, and that was a great claim on their affection. He owed his release to the two lovers, and that alone reconciled him to love. The harshness of his former opinions was leaving his heart; he had been transformed into a man, just as the Huron had. Before supper, everyone told their adventures. The two abbés and the aunt listened like children hearing ghost stories, and like people who all felt concern at so many disasters. “Alas!” said Gordon. “There may be more than five hundred virtuous people now in the same chains that Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves has broken. Their misfortunes are unknown. There are hands enough to strike the multitude of the unhappy, and rarely one to help.” This reflection, so true, increased his tenderness and gratitude. Everything redoubled the beautiful Saint-Yves’s triumph; they admired the greatness and firmness of her soul. Their admiration was mingled with the respect one feels, despite oneself, for someone believed to have influence at court. But the abbé de Saint-Yves sometimes said, “How can my sister have managed to obtain this influence so quickly?”

They were about to sit down to a very early supper when the good friend from Versailles arrived, knowing nothing of what had happened. She came in a carriage drawn by six horses, and it is easy to see whose equipage it was. She entered with the imposing air of a person from court who has important business, barely greeted the company, and drew the beautiful Saint-Yves aside. “Why keep us waiting so long? Come with me. Here are the diamonds you forgot.” She could not say these words so softly that the Ingénu did not hear them. He saw the diamonds; the brother was dumbfounded; the uncle and aunt felt only

the amazement of simple souls who had never seen such magnificence. The young man, who had formed himself through a year of reflection, now reflected despite himself, and looked troubled for a moment. His beloved noticed it. A deathly pallor spread over her beautiful face, a shudder seized her, and she could scarcely stand. "Ah, madame," she said to her fatal friend, "you have ruined me! You are killing me!" These words pierced the Ingénu's heart, but he had already learned self-control. He did not take them up, for fear of distressing his beloved in front of her brother, but he turned as pale as she.

Distraught at the change she saw in her lover's face, Saint-Yves drew the woman out of the room into a little passage and threw the diamonds on the floor before her. "Ah! These were not what led me astray, as you know. But the man who gave them will never see me again." Her friend was picking them up as Saint-Yves added, "Let him take them back or give them to you. Go, do not make me still more ashamed of myself." At last the ambassadress went away, unable to understand the remorse she had witnessed.

The beautiful Saint-Yves, oppressed by a turmoil in her body that was stifling her, was obliged to go to bed. But to alarm no one, she said nothing of her suffering. Pleading only fatigue, she asked leave to rest, but not before reassuring the company with comforting, flattering words and casting glances at her lover that set his soul on fire.

The supper, which she was not there to enliven, was sad at first, but with that engaging sadness which gives rise to absorbing and useful conversations, so far superior to the frivolous gaiety people seek, which is usually no more than tiresome noise.

In a few words Gordon related the history of both Jansenism and Molinism, the persecutions with which one party overwhelmed the other, and the obstinacy of both. The Ingénu criticized it all and pitied men who, not content with the many quarrels kindled by their interests, create new miseries for themselves over imaginary interests and unintelligible absurdities. Gordon recounted; the other judged. Their fellow diners listened with feeling and were enlightened by a new light. They spoke of the length of our misfortunes and the brevity of life. They observed that every occupation has a vice and a danger

attached to it, and that from the prince to the lowest beggar, everything seems to accuse nature. How is it that so many men, for so little money, make themselves the persecutors, henchmen, and executioners of other men? With what inhuman indifference a man in office signs away a family's existence, and with what still more barbarous joy hirelings carry out its destruction!

"In my youth," said good old Gordon, "I knew a relative of Marshal de Marillac who, being pursued in his province for supporting that illustrious, unfortunate man, was hiding in Paris under an assumed name. He was an old man of seventy-two. His wife, who accompanied him, was about the same age. They had had a dissolute son who, at fourteen, had run away from his father's house. He became a soldier, then a deserter, and passed through every degree of debauchery and misery. At last, having assumed the name of an estate, he joined Cardinal de Richelieu's guards—for that priest, like Mazarin, had guards—and had won an exempt's baton in that company of henchmen. This adventurer was charged with arresting the old man and his wife, and carried out his task with all the harshness of a man eager to please his master. As he was leading them away, he heard these two victims lamenting the long succession of misfortunes they had endured since the cradle. Among their greatest sorrows, the father and mother counted their son's waywardness and loss. He recognized them, but took them to prison all the same, assuring them that serving His Eminence must come before everything. His Eminence rewarded his zeal.

"I have seen a spy of Father de La Chaise betray his own brother in the hope of a little benefice he never received; and I have seen him die, not of remorse, but of grief at having been deceived by the Jesuit.

"My office as confessor, which I exercised for a long time, gave me a knowledge of families' inner lives. I have scarcely seen one that was not steeped in bitterness while outwardly, covered by the mask of happiness, it seemed to swim in joy; and I have always observed that great sorrows were the fruit of our unbridled greed."

"For my part," said the Ingénu, "I think a noble, grateful, and sensitive soul can live happily; and I fully intend to enjoy unalloyed happiness with the beautiful and generous Saint-Yves. For I flatter myself," he added, turning to her

brother with a friendly smile, "that you will not refuse me as you did last year, and that I shall go about it more decently." The abbé overwhelmed him with apologies for the past and protestations of eternal devotion.

Uncle Kerkabon said it would be the finest day of his life. The good aunt, in raptures and weeping for joy, cried, "I told you that you would never be a sub-deacon! This sacrament is worth more than the other. If only God had granted me that honor! But I will be a mother to you." Then they vied with one another in praising the tender Saint-Yves.

Her lover's heart was too full of what she had done for him, and he loved her too much, for the episode of the diamonds to have made a prevailing impression on his heart. But those words he had heard only too well, *you are killing me*, still secretly frightened him and spoiled all his joy, while the praises of his beautiful beloved increased his love still more. At last they thought of nothing but her; they spoke only of the happiness these two lovers deserved. They made arrangements for everyone to live together in Paris, planned their fortunes and advancement, and surrendered to all those hopes that the faintest gleam of happiness so easily calls to life. But deep in his heart the Ingénu felt a secret misgiving that resisted this illusion. He reread those promises signed Saint-Pouange and those warrants signed Louvois. The two men were described to him as they were, or were believed to be. Everyone spoke of the ministers and the ministry with that freedom of the dinner table regarded in France as the most precious liberty one can enjoy on earth.

"If I were king of France," said the Ingénu, "here is the minister of war I would choose. I would want a man of the highest birth, because he gives orders to the nobility. I would require that he had been an officer himself, that he had risen through every rank, that he was at least a lieutenant general in the army and worthy to be a marshal of France. For must he not have served himself to know the details of the service better? And will officers not obey a military man who has distinguished himself by his courage, as they have, a hundred times more gladly than a man of the study who can at best only guess at the operations of a campaign, however clever he may be? I would not mind my minister's being generous, even if this sometimes embarrassed the keeper of my royal trea-

sure a little. I would like him to work with ease, and even to be distinguished by that gaiety of spirit belonging to a man who is master of his business, which pleases the nation so much and makes every duty less burdensome." He wanted the minister to have this character because he had always observed that such good humor is incompatible with cruelty.

That Louvois might not have been pleased with the Ingénu's wishes; his merits were of a different kind.

But while they sat at table, the unhappy girl's illness was taking a fatal turn. Her blood was inflamed, a consuming fever had declared itself; she suffered and did not complain, careful not to disturb the diners' joy.

Her brother, knowing she was not asleep, went to her bedside and was startled at her condition. Everyone hurried in; her lover came behind her brother. He was undoubtedly the most alarmed and most deeply moved of all; but he had learned to add discretion to all the happy gifts nature had lavished on him, and a quick sense of propriety was beginning to govern him.

A doctor from the neighborhood was summoned at once. He was one of those who visit their patients at a run, confuse the illness they have just seen with the one before them, and bring blind routine to a science from which all the maturity of sound and thoughtful judgment cannot remove uncertainty and danger. He redoubled the harm by hastily prescribing a remedy then in fashion. Fashion even in medicine! This mania was all too common in Paris.

The sorrowful Saint-Yves did still more than her doctor to make her illness dangerous. Her soul was killing her body. The multitude of thoughts tormenting her carried into her veins a poison more dangerous than that of the fiercest fever.

Chapter XX



The beautiful Saint-Yves dies, and what comes of it.

Another doctor was called. Instead of assisting nature and letting her act in a young person whose every organ was calling life back, this one concerned himself only with contradicting his colleague. In two days the illness became mortal. The brain, believed to be the seat of understanding, was attacked as violently as the heart, said to be the seat of the passions.

What incomprehensible mechanism has subjected the organs to feeling and thought? How does a single painful idea disturb the course of the blood? And how does the blood in its turn carry its disorders into human understanding? What is this unknown fluid, whose existence is certain, which, swifter and more active than light, flies in less than the blink of an eye through all the channels of life, produces sensations, memory, sadness or joy, reason or delirium, recalls with horror what we would like to forget, and makes a thinking animal either an object of admiration or a subject of pity and tears?

Such were good Gordon's words; and this very natural reflection, which men rarely make, took nothing from his tenderness, for he was not one of those unhappy philosophers who strive to feel nothing. He was moved by the young girl's fate like a father watching his beloved child slowly die. The abbé de Saint-Yves was in despair; the prior and his sister shed streams of tears. But who could portray her lover's state? No language has expressions equal to this extremity of grief; languages are too imperfect.

The aunt, scarcely alive herself, held the dying girl's head in her feeble arms; her brother knelt at the foot of the bed; her lover clasped her hand, bathed it in tears, and broke into sobs. He called her his benefactress, his hope, his life, half of himself, his beloved, his wife. At the word wife she sighed, looked at him with inexpressible tenderness, and suddenly gave a cry of horror. Then, in one of those intervals when exhaustion, the oppression of the senses, and suffering are suspended and leave the soul its freedom and strength, she cried, "I, your wife! Ah, dear lover, that name, that happiness, that prize were no longer meant for me. I am dying, and I deserve it. Oh, god of my heart! You whom I sacrificed to infernal demons, it is over, I am punished. Live happily." These tender, terrible words could not be understood, but they carried terror and compassion into every heart. She found the courage to explain herself. Every word made all those present shudder with astonishment, grief, and pity. All joined in detesting the powerful man who had repaired a horrible injustice only through a crime, and had forced the most honorable innocence to become his accomplice.

"What? You, guilty!" her lover told her. "No, you are not. Crime can exist only in the heart, and yours belongs to virtue and to me."

He affirmed this feeling in words that seemed to bring the beautiful Saint-Yves back to life. She felt consoled and was astonished to be loved still. Old Gordon would have condemned her in the days when he was only a Jansenist; but having become wise, he esteemed her and wept.

Amid so many tears and fears, while the danger threatening this dear girl filled every heart and all were stricken, a courier from court was announced. A courier! From whom? And why? He came on behalf of the king's confessor, for the prior of Kerkabon. It was not Father de La Chaise who was writing, but Brother Vadbled, his valet, a very important man in those days: he conveyed the reverend father's wishes to archbishops, he granted audiences, he promised benefices, he sometimes had lettres de cachet issued. He wrote to the abbé de Kerkabon "that His Reverence had been informed of his nephew's adventures, that his imprisonment had been merely a mistake, that these little misfortunes occurred frequently, that no attention should be paid to them, that in short it was proper that he, the prior, should come and present his nephew the next

day, that he should bring good old Gordon with him, that he, Brother Vadbled, would introduce them to His Reverence and to that Louvois, who would say a word to them in his antechamber.”

He added that the story of the Ingénu and his battle against the English had been told to the king, that the king would surely deign to notice him as he passed through the gallery, and might even nod to him. The letter ended by holding out the flattering hope that all the ladies at court would be eager to summon his nephew to their dressing tables, that several would say to him, “Good morning, Monsieur Ingénu,” and that he would certainly be mentioned at the king’s supper. The letter was signed, “Your affectionate Vadbled, Jesuit brother.”

The prior read the letter aloud. His furious nephew, mastering his anger for a moment, said nothing to the bearer, but turned to the companion of his misfortunes and asked what he thought of this style. Gordon answered, “So this is how men are treated like monkeys! They are beaten and made to dance.” The Ingénu, reverting to his own character, which always returns in the soul’s great upheavals, tore the letter to pieces and flung them in the courier’s face. “There is my answer.” His terrified uncle thought he saw a thunderbolt and twenty lettres de cachet falling upon him. He hurried to write and excuse as best he could what he took for a young man’s fit of temper, and what was the outburst of a great soul.

But more painful cares were taking hold of every heart. The beautiful, unfortunate Saint-Yves already felt her end approaching. She was calm, but with that dreadful calm of a nature so crushed it no longer has the strength to struggle. “Oh, my dear lover!” she said in a failing voice. “Death is punishing me for my weakness, but I die with the consolation of knowing you are free.

“I adored you as I betrayed you, and I adore you as I bid you an eternal farewell.”

She did not adorn herself with a show of firmness. She could not conceive of that wretched glory of making a few neighbors say, “She died bravely.” Who at twenty can lose her lover, her life, and what is called *honor* without regret and

anguish? She felt the full horror of her condition and made it felt through those words and those dying looks that speak with such command. In short, she wept like the others whenever she had the strength to weep.

Let others seek to praise the ostentatious deaths of those who go insensibly into destruction: that is the lot of every animal. We die as indifferently as they do only when age or illness makes us resemble them through the dullness of our organs. Whoever suffers a great loss feels great regret; if he stifles it, he carries vanity even into the arms of death.

When the fatal moment came, all those present broke into tears and cries. The Ingénu lost consciousness. Strong souls, when they are tender, feel far more violently than others. Good Gordon knew him well enough to fear that when he came to himself, he would take his own life. All weapons were removed. The unhappy young man noticed it and said to his relatives and Gordon, without weeping, without groaning, without agitation, “Do you really think there is anyone on earth with the right and the power to keep me from ending my life?” Gordon took care not to parade before him those tedious commonplaces by which people try to prove that we may not use our freedom to cease to exist when we are horribly unhappy; that we must not leave our house when we can no longer live in it; that man is on earth like a soldier at his post—as though it mattered to the Being of beings whether an assemblage of a few particles of matter was in one place or another. Powerless arguments, which firm and thoughtful despair disdains to hear, and which Cato answered only with a dagger stroke.

The Ingénu’s bleak and terrible silence, his dark eyes, his trembling lips, the shudders of his body carried into the soul of everyone watching him that mixture of compassion and terror which binds all the soul’s powers, excludes all speech, and reveals itself only in broken words. The landlady and her family had hurried in. They trembled at his despair, kept him in sight, and watched his every movement. The cold body of the beautiful Saint-Yves had already been carried to a downstairs room, far from the eyes of her lover, who seemed to be looking for her still, though he was no longer capable of seeing anything.

Amid this spectacle of death, while the body was displayed at the door of the house, while two priests beside a holy-water basin distractedly recited prayers, while passersby idly sprinkled a few drops of holy water on the coffin and others went indifferently on their way, while the relatives wept and a lover was ready to tear life from himself, Saint-Pouange arrived with the friend from Versailles.

His passing fancy, satisfied only once, had become love. The refusal of his favors had piqued him. Father de La Chaise would never have thought of coming to this house; but Saint-Pouange, with the image of the beautiful Saint-Yves before his eyes every day, burning to sate a passion that, through a single enjoyment, had driven the spur of desire deep into his heart, did not hesitate to come himself in search of a woman he might not have wanted to see three times had she come of her own accord.

He stepped down from his carriage; the first thing he saw was a coffin. He turned his eyes away with the simple disgust of a man brought up among pleasures, who thinks he should be spared any spectacle that might bring him back to contemplating human misery. He wanted to go upstairs. The woman from Versailles asked out of curiosity who was to be buried; Mademoiselle de Saint-Yves's name was spoken. At that name she turned pale and gave a dreadful cry. Saint-Pouange turned around; astonishment and grief filled his soul. Good Gordon was there, his eyes full of tears. He interrupted his sorrowful prayers to tell the courtier of the whole horrible catastrophe. He spoke with the authority that grief and virtue confer. Saint-Pouange had not been born wicked; the torrent of business and amusements had carried away his soul, which did not yet know itself. He was not approaching the old age that usually hardens ministers' hearts. He listened to Gordon with lowered eyes and wiped from them a few tears he was astonished to shed. He came to know repentance.

"I absolutely must see this extraordinary man you have told me about," he said. "He moves me almost as much as the innocent victim whose death I caused." Gordon followed him to the room where the prior, Mademoiselle de Kerkabon, the abbé de Saint-Yves, and a few neighbors were bringing the young man back to life after he had fainted again.

“I have brought you misery,” the deputy minister told him. “I will spend my life making amends.” The Ingénu’s first thought was to kill him and then kill himself. Nothing could have been more fitting; but he had no weapons and was closely watched. Saint-Pouange was not discouraged by refusals accompanied by the reproach, contempt, and horror he had deserved and that were heaped upon him. Time softens everything. Louvois at last succeeded in making an excellent officer of the Ingénu, who appeared under another name in Paris and in the armies, with the approval of all honorable people, and who was at once an intrepid warrior and philosopher.

He never spoke of this adventure without a groan, and yet his consolation lay in speaking of it. He cherished the memory of the tender Saint-Yves to the last moment of his life. The abbé de Saint-Yves and the prior each received a good benefice; good Mademoiselle de Kerkabon preferred to see her nephew with military honors rather than in the subdiaconate. The devout woman from Versailles kept the diamond earrings and received another handsome present. Father Tout-à-tous received boxes of chocolate, coffee, rock candy, and candied lemons, with the *Meditations of the Reverend Father Croiset* and *The Flower of the Saints* bound in morocco leather. Good Gordon lived with the Ingénu in the closest friendship until his death; he too received a benefice and forgot efficacious grace and concomitant concurrence forever. He adopted as his motto: *Misfortune is good for something*. How many honorable people in this world have been able to say, *Misfortune is good for nothing!*