

Janet Gordon . . . Of Revolutions

Quelling revolutions has long been the obligation of great nations. And when a nation lacks an uprising at home, it often extends its obligation to involve quelling any accessible revolutions occurring at the time.

This neighborly attitude is most prevalent following an era of revolts. So it was during the enlightened nineteenth century. All of the great powers of that century were well aware of the horrors of revolution and they felt disposed to direct their friendly assistance toward France.

For it seemed only yesterday that the gay Parisians had become somewhat incensed at the caprices of their legitimate rulers. The great powers also recalled how the Paris populace had deliberated and finally decided to lower the guillotine upon the neck of their legitimate king, Louis XVI and his dainty queen, Marie Antoinette.

After Louis' mishap, it took only a half-hearted coup d'etat to seat Napoleon I upon the French throne. A refreshing interlude of general war was instigated by Napoleon followed before Europe was again able to concern herself with revolutions.

Then, a coalition to combat future local uprisings was to be formed. In 1820, Russia, Prussia and Austria signed the Troppau Protocol in which they pledged themselves to intervene (by armed force if necessary!) in any state rent by a menacing revolt and to restore the legitimate government to power if it had been overthrown.

That insolent isle, Great Britain, refused to have anything to do with this document. "We do not want Cossacks bivouacked on Piccadilly Circus," was the popular English sentiment. And so the Britishers helped their own rebels assert the Monroe Doctrine. Despite the absence of American and British signatures, the Troppau Protocol was a brilliant success as a means of combating liberalism and maintaining the status quo.

All Europe would now certainly be kept calmly conservative: all Europe, that is, with the exception of the Frenchmen and their women. After the stimulating Napoleonic

ic Era, the French could not help but be bored with the static government of Louis Philippe and his bourgeois bureaucrats. Louis had shown some promising qualities in 1830 when he had slipped the throne of France out from beneath Charles V's dignity. At the sound of the muskets that had heralded Charles' exit from Paris, the unprepared Protocols had begun trembling as if they had heard their butlers whistling the Marseillaise.

And when the news of a new French Revolution reached St. Petersburg, Nicholas I had cried, "Saddle your horses, gentlemen; France is in revolution again." But even with such an uproarious ascent, Louis Philippe, the "citizen king," was unable to satisfy his subjects.

In 1848, therefore, a revolution occurred in France. Paris was gay once again, for the nephew of Napoleon the Great (if legitimate) was emperor. Napoleon III, in order to assure his subjects freedom from boredom, attempted to emulate his uncle. He immediately destroyed the French Republic and shouted, "The Empire is Peace."

Napoleon's motto was a bit disheartening to his countrymen. But the industrial boom that began in 1850 and lasted for a decade seem to be somewhat of a compensation for peace.

And later, Napoleon was considerate enough to involve his nation in the Crimean and Italian Wars which brought sufficient excitement and profit to his people to keep them from desiring any action at home.

But Napoleon's Mexican and Franco-Prussian Wars failed to be so entertaining and the Legislative Assembly deposed Emperor Napoleon III.

Two Jules (Favre and Ferry) and Leon Gambetta proclaimed the existence of the Third Republic of France on September 4, 1870. Peace threatened to reign in France once again.

The legitimate government enthusiasts mourned with the fiery French for the better days. But, happily, peace cannot endure in a nation forever. And, too, since France was quiet for the moment, the interventionists could console themselves by trekking with the shepherd to fresh woods and pastures new.

A Few Foreign Phrases . . .

By CONNIE BERRY

Have you ever noticed how many people are inclined to throw foreign phrases about in their conversations? Somehow, I instinctively distrust this kind of person.

Perhaps my dislike for another language is just another result of growing old. I remember, when I was very young, I was impressed by a distinguished gentleman in our town, Colonel Breakaday Berry, who had lived several months in Mexico and could speak Spanish fluently.

This fact alone made him very distinguished, for none of the other inhabitants in our town had ever been out of the state. But he was also the mayor.

Whenever any episode of any importance occurred, Colonel Berry was always appointed to give the speech. Most of his talks were about Mexico.

I would sit enthralled listening

to Colonel Berry talk about the beautiful Mexican "sencillos, dressed in their colorful hacendados. He would talk at great lengths about the gay Spanish siestas with the music and dancing, the gallantry of the Mexican pesos and the costumes of the romantic caballos.

Whenever he was asked his opinion of any extraordinary affair, Colonel Berry would exclaim, "Unos dos tres!", and then dramatically walk on. If the event was an extra extraordinary, Colonel Berry might even say, "Unos dos tres manana!" which would leave the bystanders breathless.

Unos dos tres soon became the byword at any great event, but we commoners could never get the nerve to say anything as forceful as unos dos tres y manana.

Then one day a rumor was spread about town that someone was planning to run away with all the bank's money. The Town Council asked Colonel Berry about this rumor, but he just looked scornfully around the room and muttered, "Unos dos tres!", and, without saying another word, stalked out of the room. This answer greatly relieved us all.

The next day Colonel Berry and the bank's money were discovered missing. Some detectives were called in, but the only thing they discovered was that unos dos tres did not have the profound meaning that we had thought it did. Colonel Berry had been merely counting mentally the money he had planned to take.

I carried iron capsules (or as more commonly known, Lextron Ferrous Pulvules) with me at all times, and popped one into my mouth whenever I passed a park fountain, sprinkling system or fire hydrant. My blood count, by the way, improved by leaps, platelets and lymphocytes.

I used to take long, satisfying draughts of cod-liver oil which I kept in a fifth bottle of whiskey so none of my friends would sense anything amiss and chide me about it.

I came to know so much about vitamins and foods, in fact, that I was appointed assistant dietician in the student union my first year of college.

It was very deflating to know that my greatest triumph in life was caused indirectly by my elder sister. I was so furious that I almost told the whole world about her secret birthmark.

The contest was fierce and unrelenting, but I finally did outgrow Michelle Denise by the time I was a senior in high school. By that time she was a junior in college, and I had the most joyful visions of her going, through her last year in old hand-me-downs, while I entered the University as elegantly dressed as Corinna going a-Maying (although I really doubt if Corinna did go a-Maying in Bermuda shorts and argyle knee socks, to say nothing of a white beer-drinking cap.)

That would teach her to give me her old broken shoe laces, when she knew that I wore loafers anyway. I began ruining my clothes on purpose. I made it a point to sit so my skirts would develop wrinkles in them. Then I pressed the wrinkles in with a steam iron when I got home. Was that fun!

Worse yet, I would swallow vital books and eyes when no one was looking. My diabolical scheme was paying off, and I was at the zenith of my glory.

But you might know, Michelle Denise, who could not stand to see even her own sister derive pleasure from life, played true to her perfidious nature and got married. Her husband was a football player with a head as empty as an after-game stadium, although he did have nice dimples.

I am already receiving hand-me-down aprons, cookie cutters and grocery lists. Michelle Denise now has a small daughter, which means that my first child will have second-hand diapers, safety pins and teething rings.

There seems to be absolutely no way out of life's vicious circle, parallelogram, rhombus or what-have-you. I believe that I must have been predestined to be a victim of my sister's will.

Even when I go to heaven I am sure that the pious St. Peter will greet me with, "Oh, so you're Michelle Denise's sister. Gad, what a card. Keeps us laughing all day. Heh, heh."

Then I will stare him in the eye, and say with all the animosity I can muster, "Heh, heh."

He will reply, "Yes, like you say, heh heh. Oh, by the way, old sport, we bought your sister a new halo from Montgomery Ward's, beings that we thought you would want to wear her old one." And I say, old sport, do come up for a spot of celestial omnibus some time, won't you?"

Then he will drive away in his zither, and I will be left sitting in my sister's old tattered cloud with the inevitably missing buttons, sadly meditating on eternity.

Griselda Morton . . . Meditation On Eternity

People have always told me that I should be glad to have an elder sister to pave life's thorny way for me, but I would like them to know that this situation is more than one big bed of Penstemon frutescens.

Michelle Denise, like the Grecian Urn, had fair attitude and Attic shape, but all I had was attic clothes. Everything was hand-me-down from my scuffed brown loafers with a hole in the right sole to my scarlet and cream. "Let's go north," University of Nebraska football pennant.

What's more, I even had a second-hand personality, whereas Michelle Denise, was talented, gay and vivacious.

She tossed off witticisms with the ease of a cocker spaniel shaking out rain drops from his coat (or maybe it would be easier for a fox terrier), and I am expected to be equally clever. Actually, I am about as witty as a sack of potatoes practicing Bach inventions, but what I lack in this virtue, however, I have always been able to compensate for with perseverance.

I used to spend hours sewing spontaneous remarks on the hems of handkerchiefs and printing wise proverbs on the soles of my shoes with indelible ink. When someone asked my opinion on a philosophical point, I merely had to take off my shoe, demurely place it in my lap and profoundly reply, "A stitch in time saves nine."

They would be stunned by my intellect.

It was quite difficult to tell an entire joke, as the procedure would involve an intricate system of shoe switchings, handkerchief flippings and even one or two watch-band twistings.

I usually confined my wit, therefore, to short, hilarious retorts. (My most successful seemed to be, "Go on, Big Red, you just kill me," although the equally riotous, "I'll chalk one up for you, you killer-diller, you," always gained its rightful share of chuckles.)

As an advancement of my system, I took up smoking. What could be a more ideal medium than cigarettes? I prepared them beforehand and then snapped them out during conversational pauses.

As I grew in intellect, I began to incorporate foreign phrases into my repertoire. (You have no idea how effective "et tu, Brute, could be at the proper intervals, or consider the excellence of a coquettishly intoned, "habeas campus.")

Once I made a mistake and read, "Lucky Strike Means Fine Tobacco." Everyone laughed though, so maybe it wasn't such a noticeable flop after all.

In the same way that she forced me into smoking, Michelle Denise unknowingly but unerringly shaped my whole career. When I was little my new Easter bonnet was her old one, discarded because of a torn bow.

Because of the hand-me-down principle involved, I gradually developed a complex as jagged as the broken zipper on my first pair of slacks.

My mother, who had also had an elder sister, used to tell me that someday I might become bigger than Michelle Denise, and then she would have to wear my clothes.

This seemed very logical to me, since I always had had a shape more substantial than the Prickly Pear (even at five o'clock in the morning), while Michelle Denise was slender and infinitely lovely. Knowing that I had to grow in height only, I studied all possible measures of gaining on her.

They Shall Hunger No More . . .

The fact that La Rochefoucauld is a one-book man is sufficient to make him suspect in the eyes of those who want both quantity and quality and who scorn the dilettante. The "Maxims" are isolated sentences, which read easily and contain no recalcitrant allusions.

Their author spent his life as a courtier and a frequenter of salons. All these facts combine to confirm the casual reader in his opinion that La Rochefoucauld was a casual writer.

This is not so. La Rochefoucauld lived his book thoroughly before it existed even in his mind. From his early youth until the age of fifty, he was being prepared by experience for authorship. It was a long and painful schooling, with the heart and mind of man the only textbook.

This is not an easy text to comprehend, nor does its comprehension necessarily bring the student either happiness or success. Certainly, La Rochefoucauld found neither. His gift for choosing the losing side in court intrigues found him, at fifty, a man without any outlet for his abilities.

It was in sales conversation that La Rochefoucauld's maxims were induced. They were designed to jar the intellectual and spiritual complacency of the noble ladies and wits at these gatherings.

They caused comment in conversation, more comment when published and they have never ceased

to excite discussion. La Rochefoucauld's life of failure had prepared him for a success more lasting than his life.

The "Maxims" in their published form are the product of tireless labor in composition and revision. It is difficult to improve upon the incisive statement, rhythm and balance of the "Maxims"; with most of them, it is in fact impossible. Take No. 171:

Les vertus se perdent dans l'interet, comme les fleuves se perdent dans la mer. (Virtues are lost in self-interest, as rivers are lost in the sea.) Or a more complex example, No. 3:

Les passions sont les seuls orateurs qui persudent toujours. Elles sont comme un art de la nature dont les regles sont infaillibles; et l'homme le plus simple, qui a de la passion, persuade mieux que le plus eloquent, qui n'en a point.

(The emotions are the only orators who are always convincing. Their art is that of nature, whose rules are unchanging; and the most simple man with a passion persuades us more than the most eloquent man who has none.) I do not see how any alteration in the wording of either maxim could be made in the direction of improvement. The flow of language is smooth, the diction choice yet simple.

La Rochefoucauld's style is an illustration of No. 245: "The greatest art is that which conceals its artistry."

No book that has survived the centuries is more free from allusions to other books than are the "Maxims." I can recall only one reference to historical personages, Antony; and I can remember no mention of literature, classic or modern.

La Rochefoucauld had no need of allusions or annotations. His subject was eternal man and his eternal characteristics — his loves, hates, fears and pleasures. All men are thus qualified to understand La Rochefoucauld.

To understand, but not to appreciate. Most readers recoil as from the pit of hell itself, from such statements as the following: Our virtues are often nothing more than vices disguised. However carefully we cloak our emotions with piety and honor, they always contrive to escape their veils.

Gerike's Fables

By ANN GERIKE

The Penguin Who Didn't Believe In Dragons

Roland, the Penguin, was born in the Far North, as most penguins are, except those who are born in the Far South. His family lived in a village which was right on the edge of a cliff, and they had taught him from his childhood that a dragon lived over the edge of the cliff and that he must stay away from it.

They said that the steam coming up was the steam from the mouth of the dragon, and the roaring was his roaring. They told him that, if he wasn't good, the dragon would get him, so he always kept his distance from the cliff and behaved as well as a young penguin could be expected to behave.

But one day, when he was fourteen years old, Roland started to talk with a young penguin of the village who had taken a two-day journey into the Other World and had come back just loaded with knowledge.

"Son," the young penguin said, "don't believe everything your folks have told you. After all, they've been raised in an outmoded society and they don't know about many of the things that go on in the Outside World; they just close their eyes to anything new."

"For instance, that business about the dragon. Have you ever seen the dragon? Of course not! Well, do you know what it really is? It's just a roaring river, and the warm currents of water make the steam that comes up here."

At first, Roland was indignant. The very idea—accusing his parents of being old-fashioned and narrow-minded! But the more he thought about it, the more logical it seemed.

He hadn't even seen the dragon, and neither had anyone else; all they had were these old books that told about him, and they were probably just a bunch of fairy tales that someone had dreamed up to scare his kids.

So, he started to say that it was just a river, too, and pretty soon several penguins went up to the cliff and fell over. Of course, they never came back again, and all the towns-penguins said that they had been seized by the dragon, but Roland knew that they had just been seized by the Death Impulse and had drowned themselves in the rushing river.

He couldn't see much sense in his making a thorough investigation of the matter; after all, he had more important and pleasant things to do. With a ready-made tux, who wants to sit at home every night?

One evening he did have a little scare. He was out walking near the cliff, and he thought that he saw a couple of eyes staring at him over the edge of it, while the steam poured up from below and the roaring seemed louder than usual.

For a minute, he almost believed that the dragon was there, but then he turned around to the village and decided that that distilled tundra juice must have been a little stronger than he had thought it was.

In the middle of January, the worst snowstorm the village had ever seen came blowing down the Far, Far North. Roland had been out to a Penguin Hop and had just taken his girl home when the storm broke—5:22 a.m.

He thought that he was heading for home, but he was actually heading for the cliff; and by the time he reached it, leaned over it and saw the roaring mouth of the dragon with the steaming nostrils and the fiery eyes, it was too late.

MORAL: You can fool all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time, but you can't fool yourself forever.

The Octopuses Who Had A Contest

One day a group of young college-age octopuses decided to have a contest. They planned to go deep sea fishing, and the one who could capture the most and the largest fish would get the prize—which was a pickled man in the Aquarium of Natural Science.

They thought it would be great sport to spirit the pickled man out of the museum under the eyes and tentacles of Old Herman, the halfblind caretaker; and when they opened the bottle, the man would be delicious, because he had been preserved in fermented juice for at least 42 years and was probably 160 proof by this time.

So, they told their instructors that they were going on a morphology field trip and set out for the museum, where Joe, the leader of the gang, wrapped his tentacles around the pickled man and floated out with him while the others kept Old Herman busy by disturbing the prize giant-crab exhibit.

Then, they put the pickled man in a safe place and set out for the open sea. What a glorious time they had. They took their girls with them; the girls had told their instructors that they were observing the schools of fish.

Every time a marlin was caught, the girls cheered and opened another can of seaweed beer. At 4 a.m. in the morning, the affair was called to a halt, and they all swam, as well as they could, back to the hiding place of the pickled man to count their catches.

Joe had won the contest by a wide margin, so they gave him the prize. He opened the jar, anticipating the alcoholic flavor; but the smell drove them all out of the room. I guess something had gone wrong with the preserving fluid.

MORAL: To the victor belongs the spoiled.

Poem Five

To flee the cloudless corridors of awkward death forever in this rock clad echo time. To spill into the bay of frostwood stakes the netless stakes of one grey fisherman. And run the chase of great white wings from white grass shore to steaming bay and pray to my love who is singing away in the sail of the black cowled steersman. To be refused and in terrible grace to sink moon hidden into my wake.

—Frank English

G. Thomas Fairclough

There is no glorification of man's reason, and little enough of his will. Man follows his self-interest as far as he understands it, which is not far.

They were the product of the author's love. La Rochefoucauld must have enjoyed writing them; and to him they did bring comfort. In the "Maxims" he wrote himself free of the bitterness of years.

The apostle of self-interest knew that he was an artist with words, an excellent phrase-maker and it pleased him to prove it. The writing of the "Maxims" gave a reason and a design to La Rochefoucauld's life; and any book powerful enough to shape the course of a single soul's existence is worthy of study.

The Book of Job is not really a pleasant book to read, not in "Samson Agonistes," and the "Maxims" are worth reading for the same reason.

They all are, or contain, stories of salvation. The salvation which Job, Samson, Milton (for the writing of "Samson Agonistes" was Milton's salvation) and La Rochefoucauld found appears strange and undesirable, if indeed we recognize it as salvation. Yet, by their experiences the souls of these four men were restored to integrity.

This is salvation; it is a noble experience, and gives nobility to books that describe it. "These are they which came out of great tribulation . . . They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more."

Chat Of The Topics . . .

- With sugar-tongued tongues in a Haviland clatter, They chat of the topics always to matter— To never fade: Of Aristotelian matter and shape, (The terrible shape of Mrs. Blade) The cultural value of Mexican jade, The metrical foot of the Light Brigade, (The unsymmetrical feet of the maid) But who turned on the radio? Somewhere bones of children Run through skin Of nylon thinness. And men face Firing squads in rows As straight as any rhinestone Lines. Most tragically of all Are men who can distinguish Nemesis from mambo bands. They are the helpless ones. Their thinking has gone out of style Like God And ostrich plumes. They suffer more than the suffering, For they have answers, But manicured minds cannot even see Problems. They live the hardest lives. But snap off that noise like you snap shut your purse It curdles my coffee, and what's even worse, We can't be bothered by petty details Of truth with unfilled fingernails When probing the depths of the universe. The hostess, wishing to salvage her cake, Rushes out on the verses of William Blake. (They really don't interest me quite As much as his life.) Would the frosting look better in yellow or white? And gradually all of the ladies come down From their grandstands of knowledge with hesitant sounds To meet their men with the coffee-break frowns. Now out to face the ignorant world (Remember next week to have my hair curled) —Glenna Berry

LITTLE MAN ON CAMPUS by Dick Bibler



"WELL, TELL HIM AGAIN—I'LL BE DOWN IN A MINUTE."