INTAGLIO EDITION

This Edition containing impressions of the Intaglio etchings printed in Van Dyke brown by hand on Dutch hand-made paper is limited to 333 registered sets of which this is

Number 28

One of the originals of the illustrations by French artists will be sent to each subscriber upon completion of the subscription.

The Human Comedy

Scenes of Military and Political Life

Volume II
THE ASSIZE OF TROYES

Pressed with questions, harassed before Gothard, put in contradiction with himself, Michu struck the rail of the prisoners' gallery a heavy blow with his fist and said: "I had nothing to do with carrying off the senator, I am disposed to believe that his enemies have merely confined him: but if he reappear, you will see that the plaster could have served no purpose in the affair:"

Honoré de Balzac

NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME COMPLETELY TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH
A PASSION IN THE DESERT BY J. ALFRED BURGAN
AN EPISODE UNDER THE REIGN OF TERROR A DARK AFFAIR BY PETER P. BREEN

ILLUSTRATED WITH ETCHINGS

IN ONE VOLUME

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY GEORGE BARRIE'S SONS
PHILADELPHIA
A PASSION IN THE DESERT

"That spectacle is terrifying!" she cried on leaving Monsieur Martin's menagerie.

She had just seen that daring speculator performing with his hyena, to use the language of the poster.

"How can he have tamed his animals so completely as to be certain of their affection for—?" she continued.

"What seems to you so problematical," I replied, interrupting her, "is a most natural circumstance."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, while an incredulous smile played on her lips.

"You believe, then, that brute beasts are entirely without passions?" I asked her. "Know, then, that we can teach them all the vices growing out of our civilized condition."

She looked at me in astonishment.

"But," I resumed, "when I saw Monsieur Martin for the first time, I confess that, as in your case, an expression of surprise escaped me. I was then close to an old soldier whose right leg had been amputated, and who came in with me. His face had attracted my attention. His was one of those fearless faces upon which the seal of war and the battles of
Napoléon were imprinted. The old soldier had a remarkably frank and cheerful air which always favorably predisposes me. Doubtless, he was one of those troopers who are surprised at nothing, who find a subject for mirth in the death-struggles of a comrade whom they despoil and bury cheerfully, who parley with the cannon ball resolutely, in short, one of those whose deliberations are brief, and who are on good terms with the devil. Having closely watched the proprietor of the menagerie at the moment of his leaving his dressing-room, my companion curled his lips in a manner that expresses mocking contempt by a kind of significant pout that superior men assume to distinguish themselves from dupes. So, when I expressed myself as to the courage of Monsieur Martin, he smiled, and shaking his head, said to me with the air of an expert:

"That is simple!"

"How, simple?" I replied. "If you will explain this secret to me, I shall be very much obliged to you."

"After a few moments, during which we became acquainted, we went to dine at the first restaurant that we saw. At dessert, a bottle of champagne restored the recollections of this strange soldier in all their vividness. He told me his whole history, and I saw that he was justified in exclaiming: Simple!"

On returning to her house, she inveigled me, by many enticements and promises, into narrating the confidences of the soldier. The following day, she received this episode of an epic which may well be called The French in Egypt.

At the time of the expedition in Upper Egypt, made by General Desaix, a provincial soldier having fallen into the hands of the Maugrabs, was taken by these Arabs into the deserts that lie beyond the cataracts of the Nile. In order to put between them and the French army a distance that would ensure their peace, the Maugrabs made a forced march, and did not halt until night. They pitched their camp around a well that was hidden by palm-trees, near which they had previously buried some provisions. Not dreaming that the idea of escape could enter the mind of their captive, they contented themselves by binding his hands, and they all fell asleep, after having partaken of dates and fed barley to their horses. When the brave Provençal observed that he was secure from the observation of his enemies, he made use of his teeth to obtain possession of a scimitar; then, fixing the blade between his knees, he cut the cords and regained the use of his hands. He found himself free. He seized a carbinie and a dagger at once, provided himself with a supply of dry dates, a small sack of barley, and some powder and bullets; buckled on a scimitar, mounted a horse, and spurring it sharply dashed off in the direction that he supposed would lead him to where the French army must be. Eager to see a bivouac once more, he urged his coursers so rapidly, that the poor animal, already fatigued, expired, his flanks torn, leaving the Frenchman in the middle of the desert.

After having walked for some time in the sand
with all the courage of an escaped convict, the soldier was compelled to stop, as the day was declining. Despite the beauty of the heavens at night in the Orient, he had not the strength to pursue his march. He had fortunately been able to reach a height on the crest of which some palm-trees, whose foliage, for a long time visible, had awakened the sweetest hopes in his heart. His weariness was so great, that he stretched himself on a granite rock, whose fantastical outline resembled a camp-bed, and there he slept without taking any precautionary measures to protect himself during his slumber. He had sacrificed his life. His last thought even was a regret. Already he repented having left the Maugrabins, whose nomad life appeared fascinating, now that he was far from them and without succor. He was aroused by the sun, whose pitiless rays, falling perpendicularly on the granite, created an intolerable heat. Now, the Provençal had been stupid enough to place himself opposite to the shadow cast by the green and majestic palm-trees. He looked at these isolated trees and shuddered! They recalled to him the peaceful shafts, crowned with long leaves, that distinguish the Saracen columns of the Cathedral at Aries. But when, after having counted the palm-trees, he cast a look around him, the most frightful despair overwielded his soul. He saw a boundless ocean. The dark sand of the desert stretched away in every direction, as far as his eye could penetrate, and sparkled like a steel blade reflecting bright light. He did not know if it were a sea of glass or lakes as smooth as a mirror. Carried away in waves, a fiery vapor eddied over this moving land. The sky shone in oriental splendor, whose every purity disheartened, as it left nothing that the imagination could desire. Sky and earth were on fire. The wild and terrible majesty of silence terrified. The infinite vastness in every direction weighed on the soul; not a cloud in the heavens, not a breath in the air, not a break on the bosom of the sand stirred by insignificant little waves; in a word, the horizon ended, as at sea in glorious weather, in a line of light as fine as the edge of a sword. The Provençal hugged the trunk of one of the palms, as if it had been the body of a friend; then, sheltered by the elongated and straight shadow thrown on the granite by the trees, he wept, sat down and rested there, contemplating the relentless scene before him with profound sadness. He cried out as if to tempt the solitude. His voice, lost in the hollows of the eminence, pierced the distance with a feeble sound that awoke no echo; the echo was in his heart. The Provençal was twenty-two years old; he cocked his carbine—

"It will always be in good time!" he said to himself as he rested the liberating weapon on the ground.

Looking alternately at the dark and the blue expanse, the soldier dreamed of France. He thought with delight of the gutters of Paris, he recalled the towns through which he had passed, the faces of his comrades, and the minutest incidents of his life. In fact, his Southern imagination
soon evoked glimpses of his loved Provence, which he traced in the waving, heated air that floated over the sheet of desert that stretched out before him. Dreading all the dangers of this cruel mirage, he descended from the eminence by the opposite slope to that by which he had ascended on the previous evening. Great was his joy in perceiving a kind of grotto, formed by nature from the huge blocks of granite which composed the base of the hillock. The débris of a mat disclosed the fact that this retreat had been formerly occupied. He next perceived, at a very short distance, palms laden with dates. Then, the instinct that attaches us to life awoke once more in his heart. He hoped to live long enough to await the passing of some Maugrabin, or perhaps he would soon hear the roar of cannon! for at this time Bonaparte was scouring Egypt. Reanimated by this thought, the Frenchman dragged down some branches of ripe fruit, which, by their weight, appeared to bend the date-trees, and he satisfied himself on tasting this unhooped-for manna, that the occupant of the grotto had cultivated the palms: the sapid and fresh pulp of the date evinced, in fact, the attention of his predecessor. The Provencal passed, at a bound, from gloomy despondency to mad joy. He retraced his steps to the top of the hill, and for the remainder of the day occupied himself in cutting down one of the sterile palms which the night before had served him as a roof. A vague recollection made him think of the animals of the desert, and foreseeing that they might come to slake their thirst at the spring lost in the sand that appeared at the foot of the granite blocks, he decided to protect himself from the danger of their visits, by erecting a barrier at the entrance of his hermitage. Notwithstanding his zeal, and the strength imparted to him by his fear of being devoured during sleep, he found it impossible to cut the palm in pieces during that day; but he succeeded in felling it. When, towards evening, this king of the desert fell, the noise of its fall reached afar, and the solitude uttered, as it were, a groan; the soldier shuddered as if he had heard a voice that foretold disaster. But like an heir who, for only a brief period, mourns the death of a relative, he stripped this splendid tree of the broad and tall leaves, which are its poetic adornment, and used them to mend the mat, of which he was about to make a bed. Overcome by the heat and by his labors, he fell asleep beneath the ruddy ceiling of his damp grotto. In the dead of night, his sleep was broken by an extraordinary uproar. He raised himself to a sitting posture, and the deep silence that reigned enabled him to recognize the alternating accent of a breathing, whose fierce energy could not belong to a human being. Profound terror, augmented by the darkness, the silence, and the phantasies of his awakening, chilled his heart. He almost felt a painful twitching of his hair when, after straining his pupils, he perceived two faint yellow glimmers that pierced the shadow. At first, he thought these gleams were in some way a
reflection from his own eye-balls; but soon the bright light of the night enabled him gradually to distinguish the objects within the grotto, and he saw a huge beast lying less than two paces from him. Was it a lion, a tiger, or a crocodile? The Provençal was not sufficiently well-informed to know in what species to classify his enemy; but his terror was the more extreme because his ignorance led him to imagine every misfortune to be comprised in one. He suffered the cruel punishment of listening, of marking the peculiarities of this respiration, without losing one, and not daring to permit himself to make the least movement. An odor as strong as that thrown off by foxes, but still more penetrating, heavier, so to speak, filled the grotto; and when the Provençal had scented it, his terror was complete, for he could no longer entertain any doubt as to the existence of the terrible companion, whose royal den he now used as a bivouac. Soon the reflection of the moon, which was hastening to the horizon line, lighted up the lair, and gradually disclosed the resplendent spotted skin of a panther. This lion of Egypt slept, rolled up like a big dog, the peaceful possessor of a sumptuous niche at the entrance to a mansion; its eyes, opened for a moment, were again closed. Its face was turned toward the Frenchman. A thousand vague ideas traversed the mind of the panther’s prisoner; at first, he thought of dispatching it with a ball from his carbine, but he saw that the space between him and the animal was too limited to take aim, and that the barrel of his

A PASSION IN THE DESERT

weapon would reach beyond the beast. Suppose it should wake up?—This supposition rooted him to the spot—Amid the silence he heard his heart beat, and he cursed its too loud pulsations produced by the coursing of his blood, fearing lest he should disturb that sleep which gave him time to devise some safe expedient. He laid his hand twice on the scimitar, thinking he would decapitate his enemy; but the difficulty of cutting through the close, stiff hair compelled him to abandon that daring project.

“To miss him? That would inevitably be death,” he thought.

He preferred the chances of a battle, and resolved to await the day. Daylight was not long in coming. The Frenchman could examine the panther; it had its muzzle dyed with blood.

“It has fed well!”—he thought, without any anxiety as to whether the feast had been of human flesh; it would not be hungry on awakening.

It was a she-panther. The fur of the belly and the thighs was sparkingly white. Several small spots, like velvet, formed pretty bracelets around the paws. The muscular tail was white also, but ended in black rings. The upper part of the coat, which was of the yellow of dull gold, but very glossy and soft, was characteristically spotted and shaded in the form of roses, which serves to distinguish panthers from the other species of the feline race. This quiet but redoubtable hostess snored in an attitude as graceful as that of a cat sleeping on the cushion of an ottoman. Her blood-stained paws,
nervous and well-equipped, were stretched out in front of her; her head, resting thereon, was plentifully supplied with straggling and straight whiskers, resembling silver threads. If the animal had appeared in a cage thus, the Provençal would have admired the grace of the beast, and the striking contrast of the bright colors, which gave her coat an imperial magnificence; but at that moment, he felt that his vision was confused by this sinister sight. The presence of the panther, although she was asleep, produced the same effect upon him as the magnetic eyes of the serpent, it is said, produce on the nightingale. The soldier's courage vanished for a moment in the presence of this danger, although, doubtless, it would have been heightened before the mouth of cannon vomiting shot. Nevertheless, a daring idea penetrated his soul, and dried the spring of cold sweat that trickled down his brow. Acting like men who, pushed to extremes by disaster, arrive at the point of defying death, and opposing themselves to its attacks, he saw, without being able to account for it, a tragedy in this adventure, and resolved to play his part in it with honor, even to the last scene.

"The day before yesterday, the Arabs would perhaps have killed me!"—he said to himself.

Regarding himself, therefore, as dead, he awaited bravely, and with restless curiosity, the waking of his foe. When the sun appeared, the panther suddenly opened her eyes; then violently stretched out her paws, as if to restore the circulation in them and get rid of the cramp. Finally she yawned, and in so doing, showed the formidable array of her teeth and her pointed tongue, as harsh as a rasp.

"She is like an elegant woman!"—thought the Frenchman, watching her roll and gambol with the most peaceful and coquettish movements.

The panther licked the blood that stained her paws and muzzle, and scratched her head repeatedly with the prettiest of gestures.

"Well!—finish your toilet quickly,"—said the Frenchman to himself, whose gaiety returned with his courage; "we shall soon wish each other good-morning."

He then seized the short dagger which he had taken from the Maugrabisins.

At that moment the panther turned her head in the direction of the Frenchman, and stared at him without approaching. The fixity of her metallic glance, and the unbearable brightness of her eyes, made the Provençal shudder, especially when the beast moved toward him, but he looked at her with a caressing air, and with a glance as if to magnetize her, he permitted her to come close to him; then, by a movement as gentle and loving as if he desired to fondle the prettiest woman, he passed his hand over her body from head to tail, he scratched the yielding vertebrae which ran along the yellow back of the panther. The beast raised her tail with evident pleasure, her eyes became gentle, and when, for the third time, the Frenchman used this selfish flattery, the panther purred just as cats do to
express their satisfaction; but this murmur came from a throat so strong and deep, that it sounded in the grotto like the last swelling notes of the organ in a church. The Provençal, realizing the importance of his caresses, redoubled them so as to appease and stupefy this imperious courtesan. When he felt convinced that he had overcome the ferocity of his capricious companion,—whose hunger had, happily, been satisfied overnight,—he rose and decided to make his exit from the cave. The panther permitted him to go, but when he had climbed to the crest of the hill, she bounded with the nimbleness and lightness of a sparrow, hopping from branch to branch, and drew close to the soldier, gently rubbing herself against his legs, and rounding her back like a cat; then looking at her guest with a glance that had lost some of its fierceness, she uttered that savage cry that naturalists compare to the noise of a saw.

"She is very exacting!" said the Frenchman to himself, with a smile.

He endeavored to play with the beast's ears, to stroke her belly, and to scratch her head vigorously with his nails; and perceiving that his manoeuvres succeeded, he tickled her skull with the point of his poniard, while watching for the opportunity to kill her; but in discovering the thickness of the bones, he trembled at the thought of his not succeeding.

The sultana of the desert manifested her approval of the ability of her slave by raising her head, stretching out her neck, and acknowledging her delight by her tranquil attitude. The Frenchman suddenly thought that in order to dispatch this savage princess by a single blow, it would be necessary to plunge his poniard into her throat, and he raised the blade in order to do so, when the panther, doubtless satisfied with the attentions that she had received, gracefully stretched herself at his feet, glancing at him from time to time with an expression which, in spite of its natural ferocity, indistinctly betokened friendliness. The poor Provençal ate his dates, leaning against one of the palms; but he alternately scoured the desert with an anxious eye, in the hope of discovering rescuers, and kept close watch on the uncertain clemency of his terrible companion. The panther watched the spot where the stones of the dates fell, each time that he threw one away, and her eyes then expressed incredible distrust. The animal examined the Frenchman with commercial sagacity; and that the survey proved favorable was evident from the fact that when he had finished his frugal meal, she licked his shoes, and with her rough, muscular tongue, she removed with marvelous skill the dust that had become encrusted in the creases.

"But when she gets hungry?"—the Provençal thought.

Notwithstanding the shudder created by this thought, the soldier, out of curiosity, proceeded to scan the proportions of the panther, which was one of the most magnificent of her species, standing three feet high and measuring four feet long,
exclusive of her tail. This powerful appendage was round like a cudgel, and nearly three feet long. The head of the beast, as big as a lioness's, was remarkable for its cunning expression; the cold-blooded ferocity of a tiger was the prevailing characteristic, but there was, besides, a vague resemblance to the face of a crafty woman. In short, the face of this solitary queen presented, at this moment, a kind of gayety similar to that of a drunken Nero; she had slaked her thirst in blood, and now wished to frolic. The soldier endeavored to move to and fro; the panther gave him full course, satisfied to look after him, in this less resembling a faithful dog than a big Angora cat restlessly watching everything, even the movements of her master. When he turned round, he saw the remains of his horse beside the spring, the panther having dragged the carcass thus far. About two-thirds of it had been devoured. This sight reassured the Frenchman. It was now easy to explain the absence of the panther, and the consideration that she had shown him during his slumber. This first stroke of good luck emboldened him to tempt the future, he conceived the wild hope of keeping on good terms with the beast during the remainder of the day, not neglecting any means of taming her and securing her good graces. He returned near her, and had the unspeakable joy of observing her agitate her tail by an almost insensible movement. Almost fearlessly he then sat down beside the panther, and they commenced playing together. He handled her paws and her muzzle, and twisted her ears, threw her on her back, and vigorously scratched her warm and silky flank. The beast submitted, and when the soldier endeavored to rub the hair of her paws, she carefully withdrew her curved claws, making them as soft as silk. The Frenchman, who kept one hand on his poniard, still thought of burying the blade into the belly of the over-trustful panther; but he feared lest he should be immediately strangled in her dying convulsions. Moreover, he felt some remorse which appealed to him to spare so inoffensive a creature. It seemed to him that he had found a friend in the boundless desert. Involuntarily his mind reverted to his first mistress, whom he had sarcastically called *Mignonne*, by way of contrast, because of her overmastering jealousy, and whom, during the entire period of their passion, he held in constant dread, because of the knife which she always threatened to use upon him. This recollection of his youthful years led him to make the effort to induce the panther to answer to this name, for he now felt less fear of her and admired her agility, gracefulfulness and suppleness.

Toward the close of the day, he became accustomed to his perilous position, and he almost liked its sufferings. His companion at length habitually looked at him, when in a falsetto voice he called: *Mignonne!* At sunset, Mignonne repeatedly expressed herself in deep and melancholy cries.

"She is well brought up!"—thought the light-hearted soldier; "she says her prayers."
But this mental jest only occurred to him when he had observed the peaceful attitude in which his comrade rested.

"Come, my fair little one, I will let you go to bed first," he said to her, thinking that he would be able to run away more easily when she should be asleep, and that he could reach another lair during the night.

The soldier impatiently awaited the hour when he might flee, and when it arrived, he set out rapidly in the direction of the Nile; but he had hardly traversed a quarter of a league over the sand, when he heard the panther bounding behind him, uttering from time to time those hoarse, saw-like sounds, more terrifying even than the dull thud of her bounding footfall.

"Well," said he to himself, "she has taken a great liking to me!—This young panther has perhaps never met anyone before; it is very flattering to enjoy her first love!"

At this moment, the Frenchman sank into one of those quicksands so dreaded by travelers, from which it is impossible to extricate one's self. Feeling himself a captive, he uttered a cry of alarm; the panther seized him by the collar with her teeth, and with a vigorous leap backward, pulled him from the gulf as if by magic.

"Ah! Mignonne," cried the soldier, caressing her enthusiastically, "we are friends now until death—But no tricks, remember!"

Then he retraced his steps.

From that time the desert seemed to him inhabited. It held a creature to whom the Frenchman could talk, whose wild nature was softened toward him, without his knowing the cause of this extraordinary friendship. However powerful the soldier's desire might be to remain standing and on his guard, he could not resist the power of sleep. On awakening, he could not see Mignonne; he ascended the hillock, and in the distance, he saw her running with the bounding motion peculiar to the animals of her species, who cannot, owing to the extraordinary flexibility of their vertebral column, run like most animals. Mignonne arrived with her lips smeared with gore; she received from her companion the necessary quota of caresses, testifying the while, by repeated purring, to the enjoyment she experienced. Her eyes lacked all ferocity of expression, and were turned upon the Provençal with even more gentleness than on the previous evening, and the latter addressed her as he would a domestic animal:

"Ah! ah! mademoiselle, you are an honest girl, aren't you? Just look at this!—we like to be fondled. Aren't you ashamed? Have you devoured some Maugrabin?—Well, they are only animals like you!—But you are not going to craunch Frenchmen at any rate—I shouldn't love you any longer!"

She gamboled as a young dog plays with its master, allowing herself to be rolled over, slapped and stroked in turns; sometimes she invited the soldier to play by stretching out her paw and touching him.
Some days passed in this way. This companionship enabled the Provencal to admire the sublime grandeur of the desert. Now that he experienced moments of calm and fear, found nourishment, and a creature of whom he thought, his soul was stirred by contrasts. His life was full of opposing conditions. Solitude revealed all its secrets to him, and wrapped him in all its charms. He saw at sunrise and sunset, glorious effects unknown to the world of habitated places. He trembled on hearing over his head the gentle whistling sound of a bird in flight—rare traveler!—on seeing the clouds blend their misty outlines, ever-changing, many-tinted travelers. During the night-watches, he studied the moonlight effects on the sea of sand, on which the waves of the simoom rolled in undulating and rapidly changing effects. He lived in the blaze of the oriental day, he marveled at its wonderful magnificence; often, having watched the terrific majesty of a storm on this plain, when the uplifted sands became a red, searching fog, a deadly cloud, with delight he saw the veil of night drawn, for with it came the beneficent freshness of the stars. He heard imaginary music in the heavens. Then the solitude taught him to draw on the treasures of revery. He passed whole hours in recalling trifles, in comparing his past with his present life. Finally he became enamored of his panther, for he felt the need of loving. Whether his will, forcibly exerted, had softened the character of his companion, or, thanks to the battles then waged in the desert, she found abundant food, certain it is that she respected the life of the Frenchman, who came at length to distrust her no longer in seeing her so tame. He passed the major part of his time in sleeping; but he was obliged to keep watch like a spider in the meshes of his web, so as to lose no chance of effecting his escape, if anyone crossed the limits of his horizon. He had sacrificed his shirt in order to make a flag, which he hoisted at the top of a leafless palm-tree. Prompted by necessity, he devised the plan of keeping it spread, by stretching it on wands, for the wind might fail to wave it at the moment when a hoped-for traveler might scan the desert—

During the weary hours, when he abandoned hope, he amused himself with the panther. He grew at length to recognize the various changes in her tones, the expression of her glances, and he had studied all the shades that played over her golden coat. Mignonnette never growled now, even when he seized her by the tuft of her redoubtable tail, in order to count the number of black and white rings which ornamented it so gracefully, and at a distance, shone in the sun like jewels. He found pleasure in studying the fine and soft outlines, the pure whiteness of the soft belly, and the gracefulness of the panther’s head. But he was most delighted when she frolicked, and the nimbleness, the youthful gambols of the animal astonished him always; he admired her suppleness when she bounded, crawled, glided, smoothed her fur, clung to him, rolled over and over, crouched, darted about everywhere.
However sudden her bound, however smooth the block of granite on which she gamboled, she stopped suddenly on hearing the word: "Mignonette!"

One day, when the sun was shining most brilliantly, a huge bird hovered in the air. The Provençal left his panther to inspect the new guest, but after a moment's delay, the forsaken sultana growled sullenly.

"Deuce take me! I believe that she is jealous!" exclaimed the soldier, in observing the severe look of the panther. "The soul of Virginia must certainly have passed into that body! —"

The eagle vanished from sight while the soldier was admiring the sleek rump of the panther. How much grace and youthful beauty were embodied in those rounded lines! She was as pretty as a woman. The light fur of her coat insensibly blended by fine gradations of tint with the dead-white that marked the thighs. The intense light of the sun made this living gold and those brown spots sparkle, so as to endow them with indefinable attractions. The Provençal and the panther contemplated each other with looks that indicated their mutual understanding. The coquette quivered when she felt the nails of her friend scratch her skull, her eyes sparkled like stars, then she shut them firmly.

"She has a soul!" he said, while studying the contentment of this queen of the sandy waste, like them, golden, white, solitary and burning—

"Well!" she said to me, "I have read your plea

in favor of brute beasts; but what was the end of this association between two creatures so well adapted to a mutual understanding?"

"Ah! that is it—it ended as all ardent passions do, in a misunderstanding. It may be supposed that on one side or the other, there was treachery, one from pride never makes an explanation, the other quarrels from obstinacy."

"And sometimes when enjoying the happiest hours," she said, "a look, a word, suffices—"

"Well, go on then, finish your story."

"It is very difficult, but you will understand what the old growler had already confided to me, when, finishing his bottle of champagne, he exclaimed:

"I do not know in what way I had hurt her, but she turned round as if she were mad, and with her sharp teeth tore the flesh of my thigh, slightly without doubt. Believing that she intended to devour me, I plunged my dagger into her throat. She rolled over, uttering a cry that froze my blood, and I saw her struggling while watching me without a sign of anger. I would have given the world, my cross that I had not yet received, to restore her to life. It seemed to me that I had slain a human being. The soldiers who caught sight of my flag and ran to my aid found me weeping bitterly—Yes, monsieur," he continued, after a moment's silence, 'I have fought since then in Germany, Spain, Russia and France; I have moved my carcass about a great deal, I have seen nothing equal to the desert—Ah! that is really beautiful!'"
A PASSION IN THE DESERT

"'What did you feel?' I asked him.

"'Oh! that cannot be expressed, young man. Besides, I do not always regret my clump of palms and my panther,—I must be in a sad mood for that. In the desert, you see, there is everything and there is nothing—'

"'Go on, explain to me—'

"'Well,' he replied, with an involuntary gesture of impatience, 'it is because God is there, but without man.'"

Paris, 1832.

END OF SCENES OF MILITARY LIFE.

SCENES OF POLITICAL LIFE
AN EPISODE UNDER THE REIGN OF TERROR