

## HISTORY OF THE TARDENT FAMILY 1887

by Henri (Henry) Alexis Tardent (AT13.23)

Written at Nikolayev near Odessa, 27 February to 11 March 1887,

in the form of a letter to his distant cousin

LOUIS TARDENT (12.110) of Rue de Rome, Paris (1)

## QUOTATION (from a man of letters):

'Since the possession of a sound philosophy has taught me to respect tradition and its preservation, I have on many occasions regretted that during the middle ages, middle class families have not bothered to keep modest records wherein would be preserved the most important incidents of their domestic life. These would thus be transmitted to succeeding generations while the families endured. How curiously interesting would be those of them which lasted to our period, no matter how succinct they may have been.

How many elements and experiences in their lives were lost to posterity which would have been saved with a little care and forethought' (end quote).

'Poindre, ituri in aciem, et majores restros et prosteros cogitate'. Tacitus. (2)

My dear friend and cousin,

When two years ago you sought of me some information about our ancestors and about the existing members of our family scattered in different countries of Europe, I was sorely perplexed. Like nine-tenths of our countrymen, who have not the honour of belonging to historical families, I had very vague ideas of my relatives beyond my grandfather.

Desiring nevertheless of satisfying your requests, I went in search of information. The success that resulted has far exceeded my best expectations. The good fortune that favours those who are enterprising and persevering, has been particularly kind to me.

The parish registers of Ormonts-dessous were destroyed when the parsonage was razed by fire in 1866. I thus could obtain no details whatever from that quarter. I then had the good fortune to find a most interesting copy book at 'Jolimont' near Chaba. It was of inestimable value to me and consisted of notes taken in 1815 from the parish registers of Ormonts-dessous by the old school master, David Tardent of Vevey (AT9.111). To these were added details about himself and his family. Other data more or less detailed, were also supplied to me by the Swiss, Russian and Belgian branches of the

family. Numerous bundles of old letters and ancient land division and transfer documents also came into my hands for perusal. Gradually the light became clearer and the entangled branches were sorted out and individuals took shape and lived again in those dusty old documents.

After diligently exploring all that material, I succeeded after several attempts to reconstruct an almost complete genealogical tree as from the 14th century. I must admit that the more the task progressed the greater became the interest and pleasure that it gave me. 'Here is', I said to myself, 'a good example of a middle class family, typical of thousands of such in our Swiss mountains. As far as I could see, this family had not produced any illustrious person - or any scoundrel! How will it adapt to average conditions? Will it seek new ones when the old ones no longer fulfil its needs? Finally, what influence or effect will the turbulence of historical events have on it?' If I am not mistaken, it seems to me that these questions will be answered in the pages that follow - if you have the patience to bear with me to the end.

According to a tradition conserved in the Belgian Branch, the Tardent family originated at Neuchatel in Normandy, whence it would have emigrated to Switzerland for religious reasons. (3) I have no knowledge of the reasons for this supposition. The precise name of this town gives this theory an element of likelihood, supported by the existence of a district named TARDENOIS (4). Nevertheless,

(1) Nearly 60% of this 'History 1887' has been translated from high class 1887 French by Jules, (some by Paul was re-drafted) the other 40% was made by Miss Marjorie Cran B.A. All of it has been re-cast where necessary, into modern English by the author. In some cases Michel's 1972 Genealogy code number has been inserted to allow easy recognition of a person. All the footnotes are by the translator-author-compiler.

(2) 'Therefore, you who are about to go into battle, have in mind both your ancestors and future generations'. Tacitus (Roman Emperor-Historian, 200-276 A.D.)

(3) and (4) See 'Narrative' for explanation of this unlikely theory and the clarification of the whole matter which I actually discussed with my father a couple of years before his death.



until more positive proofs support it I am inclined to believe that our family came from SAVOY, whence in about the 14th century - perhaps even before that - it would have settled at the Ormonts at about the same time as the Dupertuis, Chablais, Monod and Mermod families.

This opinion is supported by certain physiological traits which have been maintained through many generations: moderately short height and compact build, dark complexion and dark brown eyes, fine features with straight, sharp noses, shrewd and quick-witted, tenacious, aptitude in business and facility of expression etc. This theory also has historical probability in that it supports the belief that most of the principal families of the Ormonts Valley immigrated during Savoy rule and in any case much earlier than the French persecutions of the Huguenots.<sup>(1)</sup> Furthermore, the names of Amé, Robert, Amédée, etc.<sup>(2)</sup> which occur frequently in the earlier generations of Ormonans, indicate a Roman Catholic and Savoyard origin.

#### THE ORMONTS VALLEY - 'CRADLE' OF THE TARDENTS

The Valley of the Ormonts in which so many generations of our family have lived and played their part, is encased in the centre of the highest massifs of the Vaudois Alps. It is born at the Pillon Pass on the border of Berne Canton and extends from east to west at the foot of the steep and rugged range of Les Diablerets. At the village of Sépey the valley turns sharply towards the south, thus forming an obtuse angle. It finally opens into the Rhone valley just above the little town of Aigle, (population about 5000 in 1970). The mouth of the valley is wild and precipitous. Formerly one travelled up the valley by the right hand (south) slope, rising by a bad road which traversed the Wood of Chenaux and the lonely pastures dominated by Chamossaire Mountain.<sup>(3)</sup>

Today one approaches the Valley by the left hand (north) flank by a good, well-graded road of daring design. At times it traverses torrents and gorges on dizzy bridges; sometimes it runs on hazardous embankments built up from solid, overhanging rock cliffs which awe the traveller. If he is immune to fear of dizzy heights he can gaze vertically some hundreds of metres down to the bottom where the Grande Eau's yellowish, noisy waters race wildly to join the Rhone. Suddenly the scene changes. One is transported as by enchantment, into the most idyllic countryside imaginable. The Valley widens out and offers to one's view the aspect of a great basket of greenery. And what greenery! mortal eyes could never see anything more enchanting. The light green of the alpine grass forms the background, against which is contrasted the darker foliage of the pine forests, the clumps of hazel nuts and the thickets of shrubs of varied hue and fragrance.

Gracious wooden chalets scattered on the slopes brighten the scene and endow it with an incomparable charm. And what a setting for a painting! Before one, rises the rounded dome of beautiful Mont d'Or. To the left the Tours of Aï<sup>(4)</sup>, and of Mayen (towers) raise their twin peaks sharply to the heavens, to the right the eye lingers a moment on the wooded and historic hill of Aigremont, poised on the steep slopes of Chaussey Peak like a bouquet of verdure; then it encounters the snowy summits of Les Diablerets<sup>(5)</sup>, glistening in the sun like topazes and rubies. Oh, what a beautiful landscape! Once seen it can hardly be forgotten and whoever is fortunate enough to have been born there, has this lovely scene in memory forever.

An excellent main road extends through the whole valley and continues over the Pillon Pass, leading to Gsteig and the Canton of Berne. A branch road traverses the rustic plateau of Les Mosses, between Chaussey Peak and Mont d'Or and leads to Chateau d'Oex<sup>(6)</sup> in the beautiful and fertile valley of the Sarine River. (The picturesque old track that runs south west from Diablerets village to Villars in the Rhone Valley, has been modernised in quite recent years.) Some other less frequented paths link the Ormonts with the adjoining valleys. Another good, short road leads with graceful curves to the mountain village of Leysin. It was well known as a health resort for many years, is the highest village in the canton and lies at the foot of the Tour d'Aï.

The exact time of the first settlement of this valley is unknown. According to tradition, the first inhabitants date back to the time

(1) 10,000 Huguenots (Calvinists) were massacred 24 August 1572. The Edict of Nantes of 1598 gave them peace but persecution started again in 1685. In 1660 David Tardent had a score of large properties at Ormonts-dessous, therefore it appears obvious that the family was established there at a far earlier period.

(2) Pronounced Am-aye and Am-a-day.

(3) The practice now commonly used for referring to river banks is as if one were looking down stream, not up it.

(4) Pronounced Tour dye-ee.

(5) Pronounced de'abble-rays.

(6) pronounced d'eh.

of the massacre of the Roman Theban Legion near St. Maurice.<sup>(1)</sup> A few Christian soldiers are said to have escaped execution and to have taken refuge in this then wooded and uninhabited wilderness, which they cleared and occupied. At first the valley men followed the fortunes of the Counts of Gruyere, whom several Ormonans accompanied to the Crusades.



Towards the 13th Century the Valley came under the domination of Savoy.(2) To maintain their control over these new subjects, who were irrepressible and independent like all the mountain men of the Swiss Alps, the new overlords built their Chateau-fort on Aigremont Hill. The site was well chosen in the centre of the Valley and dominates it. It was surrounded by deep and dangerous gorges in the bottom of which the waters of the Torrent of La Bionzetta and of the Grande Eau roar their way.

The mountaineers ultimately regained their liberty. The chateau, then tyrannically ruled by a younger scion, the Lord Pontverre, was attacked furiously by the mountain men who defeated the garrison and sacked the castle.(3)

#### CHATEAU RUINS

A dismal piece of old chateau wall topped by a little pine tree; remnants of old dungeons which superstition has peopled with fantastic monsters; such are the only material evidences that remain of the domination by the House of Savoy. The men of the Ormonts had for a long time been free men and comprised one of those very tiny 'republics', then frequently found in the Alps. A little before the Burgundian wars they allied themselves to the Bernese. In 1746 they swooped on the Rhone plain and routed the auxiliary troops which Charles the Bold of Burgundy awaited from Italy.

After that, while preserving their autonomy and 'customary rights', (4) they became part of the powerful and formidable Bernese Republic. To better assimilate the Ormonans, the Bernese government imposed the Reformation on them but only succeeded after much trouble and perseverance. After a time they were able to firmly combine their respective modes of life and religions. When, in 1798 a detachment of French and Vaudois troops came to conquer the Ormonans and to preach the gospel of revolution, they met with a desperate resistance. The Ormonans were victorious at the pass of Col de la Croix near Arpille, where their riflemen fatally wounded Commandant Forneret and forced him to retreat. However, at La Forclaz and at the Pont des Planches on the bank of the Grande Eau, they were conquered and incorporated into the new canton of Lemman.(5)

Since then they have shared the political and religious fortunes of Vaud and transferred to it their traditional fidelity and loyalty. The new regime did not however, bring with it any great or immediate changes in their conditions or their mode of life. One of the main reasons for this was that long since, their lands had become freehold.

The inhabitants of the Ormonts are a true mountain people; quick-witted, intelligent, tenacious, industrious and enterprising. In all periods they included educated, inventive citizens of note.

They have produced men of shrewdness and genius like Jean David Jacqueroz who, without any apprenticeships, had become a watchmaker, clockmaker, draftsman, gilder, finisher, enameller, varnisher, engraver, cabinetmaker, filemaker, maker of barometers and even spectacles etc. Emmanuel Dupertuis was no lesser technician. In my childhood ( 1850's-60's) I saw a clock made by Dupertuis which indicated hours, minutes, seconds, day of month and of the year and the times of sunrise and moonrise. Briefly, it was a mechanical marvel! The fine publication by the Rev. Alf. Ceresole recently devoted to '*The Legends of the Vaudois Alps*', is evident testimony of the poetic and satirical skill of Ormonans.(6)

(1) Since nearly all tradition has some basis in fact and this one seems to have a logical base, I believe that it has a fair probability of truth. In this respect it is worth recalling that not so very long ago, only priests, a few scholars and some nobles, could write. However, old grey-beards of all races - including our Australian aborigines and old bushmen had not only phenomenal memories but also great story-telling abilities. One of the finest examples is the Australian classic, '*Such is Life*', by Tom Collins (Joseph Furphy). One's Australian education is hardly complete unless one has read it!

In my own experience one of the most remarkable memories I've ever known was that of an intelligent first class broadaxeman - bushman, Bill Harkness. He was only taught to read at the age of thirty by a kindly forester in west Queensland and became an avid reader, who could recount almost entirely, any book which he read! He camped and worked on my private hardwood forest for eight years. I often camped beside his tent, to do silvicultural work at week-ends and during holidays. Discussions with him were a delight. A nature lover, Bill often carried a little five-inch lizard about the bush, perched on his felt hat, to the delighted interest of Joan, who helped us tally trees on experimental plots. He also fed wild possums from his fingers after dark and called them down from overhead trees, by scratching on the bark roof rigged over his tent!

(2) See 'Narrative' and Appendix 'Switzerland'.

(3) See Narrative. According to Corthesy (1903) this is probably incorrect as Bernese were the more likely destroyers of the Castle.

(4) An ancient code of citizen and civic rights, of which a few copies are still to be found in the Valley.

(5) Later the name was changed to Vaud canton.

(6) On next two pages the author has interposed Julie Oguey's Poem on Le Sepey and its translation.



## 'ON SUNDAY AT LE SÉPEY'

A poem by Julie Ogey, 1870.

## LE DIMANCHE AU SÉPEY

Sur le coteau boisé d'une agreste vallée  
Qu'enserre étroitement une chaîne ondulée

Des monts vertigineux

Un groupe de chalets, trois hôtels, des auberges  
Des vieux moulins en bois fermés par une berge  
Composent le village où vivaient nos aïeux.

Aussi vers ce chef-lieu voit-on tous les dimanches  
Les bergers d'alentour vêtus de courtes manches  
Joyeux se rassembler

Au Temple qui s'élève à cent pas de distance  
Sur le front rocailleux d'une faible éminence  
Patres et villageois nombreux vont s'assembler.

Quelques uns par amour, d'autres par habitude  
Tous vont prendre au Saint lieu la pieuse habitude  
D'un vrai recueillement.

L'invariable écho de notre liturgie  
Résonne dans le chœur comme une litanie  
Que le prêtre redit auprès d'un monument.

On écoute ces mots satisfaits de soi-même  
Quelque fois l'auditeur, d'anciens magistrats même  
Fatiguée de prier et las d'être attentifs  
S'endorment à moitié, penchent leurs fronts sévères  
Les coudes appuyés aux dossiers séculaires  
De leurs bancs respectifs.

Dans la nef où s'élève un gracieux portique  
Des jeunes gens lassés du texte dogmatique  
De la prédication

Promènent des regards distraits sur l'assemblée  
D'autres venue de loin, du bout de la vallée  
Attendent en baillant, la bénédiction.

Ainsi chacun s'en va de cette maison sainte  
L'un plus indifférent, un autre l'âme étreinte  
Par quelque repentir.

Le Temple, le clocher redevient solitaire  
Auprès des noirs débris de l'ancien Presbytère  
Que l'on doit rebâtir.

La foule redescend par la route nouvelle  
Au village où déjà le marché la rappelle  
Quelquefois la polka.

L'auberge se remplit, la boutique s'étale  
On fait provision pour six jours. Rien n'égale  
chez le grand épicier le parfum de Moka.

La jeune villageoise au sourire folâtre  
Se contemple, se plaît dans sa robe bleuâtre  
Et son bel escarpin.

A la voir on dirait qu'elle emprunte l'allure  
Le langage, le ton, l'élégante tournure  
Du svelte citadin.

Sous un ample gilet de grisette foncée  
Que l'habile grand-mère a filée et tissée  
Quelque pâtre amoureux  
Hâte son pas massif en suivant la bergère  
Dans les bois résineux.

Enfin, le paysan longeant la berge étroite  
Un bissac suspendu sur son épaule droite  
Par un pain arrondi  
Regagne à pas pressés sa demeure éloignée  
Où l'attendent ses fils, ses troupeaux sa cognée  
Où de son prompt retour sa femme l'applaudit.

Ainsi quand vient le soir de ce beau jour de fête  
Muni d'or et de foi chacun a fait emplette  
De sermon et de pain.

Le montagnard pensif remonte la colline  
Le villageois rieur se prélassait et devine  
A l'aspect du couchant le temps du lendemain.



## 'ON SUNDAY AT LE SÉPEY'

A poem by Julie Ogey, 1870.

On the wooded slope of a rustic valley, closely surrounded  
by an undulating chain of dizzy mountain peaks,  
a cluster of chalets, three hotels, inns and old wooden  
windmills enclosed by a steep bank,  
make up the village where our forefathers lived.

So every Sunday the cattle herders of the neighbourhood,  
a joyous throng clad in short sleeved waistcoats,  
are seen making their way to this community centre.  
At the church which stands on the rocky brow of a gentle  
rise a hundred paces away, a crowd of herdsmen will gather.(1)

A few from love, others from habit, all will take part in  
this sacred place, in the godly custom of true contemplation.  
The unchanging echo of our communion service, sounds in the  
choir like a litany, repeated by the pastor, close to a  
memorial.

Self-satisfied, they listen to these words.  
Sometimes the hearers, even former magistrates, weary of  
praying and paying attention, fall half asleep, nodding  
their stern foreheads, leaning their elbows on the centuries-  
old backs of their respective pews.

In the nave, enhanced by a graceful porch, young folk  
weary of the dogmatic text of the sermon, cast listless  
glances on the assemblage. Others, come from afar from  
the end of the Valley, yawning, await the benediction.

So each one goes from this house of worship, one more  
apathetic; another, his soul wrung by some repentance.  
The church, the belfrey, become solitary once more,  
beside the blackened ruins of the old manse, that is  
to be rebuilt.(2)

The crowd of people go back down the new road to the  
village where already the market reminds them sometimes  
of the polka.(3) The inn becomes crowded, the shop  
displays its wares.  
Provisions for six days are purchased. There is nothing  
to equal the fragrance of Mocha(4) at the large grocery.

The young village lass gazes at herself with a joyful  
smile and is pleased with herself in her blue dress  
and smart dancing shoes. To look at her one would think  
that she had borrowed the gait, the language, the accent,  
the elegant figure from a slender city maiden.

Under the full waistcoat of dark russet that his clever  
grandma has spun and woven, some amorous shepherd,  
hastens his heavy gait in pursuit of the shepherdess  
into the pine forest.

Finally, the peasant walking along the narrow track,  
a sack hung on his shoulder, that is bulged by a round  
loaf of bread, hurries along to his distant home where  
his sons, his flocks, his axe await him and where his  
wife praises him for his prompt return.

So when the evening of this beautiful holiday arrives,  
each one armed with faith and gold, has purchased both  
a sermon and bread.

The pensive mountain man climbs back up the hill.  
The laughing villager takes his ease in his armchair -  
and predicts the next day's weather from the appearance  
of the setting sun!

(1) *Poetic licence! actually 800 metres!*

(2) *The Manse was destroyed by fire in 1866 (four  
years earlier).*

(3) *Presumably, a dense lively crowd.*

(4) *Famous Arabian coffee. A port in Yemen at S. end  
of the Red Sea.*

*(Translated by Marjorie Cran, B.A.)*

*Julie Ogey was for some years affianced (by correspond-  
ence!) to Auguste Tardent, then teaching in Russia.*

*After many years and by mutual consent, they broke off  
their engagement (also by correspondence!).*



To better understand the account which follows, I think it necessary to add that the territory of Aigle was divided into four districts called 'mandments', each headed by a Chatelain, who was a magistrate elected for three years by his fellow citizens. He acted as intermediary between them and the Bernese overlord, represented by the Bailiff, resident at Aigle Chateau (Castle).<sup>(1)</sup> In those ancient times the theory of separate functions was barely understood, for Chatelain fulfilled the combined role of Prefect (Mayor), military commander and to a certain degree, that of Judge. Unless I am mistaken the Court of Appeal consisted of the four Chatelains presided over by the Bailiff at Aigle and had the right to deal with lower and higher court cases. Highest appeal rested with the grace of the Bernese Overlords.

Next to the Chatelain, the most important citizen was the Notary because of his knowledge of law and of 'customary rights'. Later on justices were created, supported by assessors, an early form of our modern jurors. Am I wrong, dear friend, in giving you a preamble of so much topographical and historical detail? I think not; knowing the theatre, you will the better grasp the role that its actors played.

In the absence of personal details concerning the activities of our ancestors, we are led to the conclusion that they played their part in the struggles and defeats of their fellow citizens; in their battles and in their hopes and aspirations. I draw your attention to the fact that the two most important events that occurred at the Ormonts were the Reformation and the Revolution and both occurred when Tardents held the magistrature. It was in 1527 that Guillaume Farel preached the Reformation at the Ormonts and that same year Amedee Tardent was elected Chatelain.

The parish registers of Ormonts-dessous (destroyed by fire in 1866) were not established before 1578 so that it is difficult to identify with certainty, the members of the family who dwelt at the Ormonts before that year. However, old documents relating to land sales and subdivisions, quote names of Tardents dating from the 14th Century. Ours is undoubtedly one of the oldest families still in existence in the Ormonts Valley.

From the most ancient times to the beginning of this century, members of the family have continually held important positions in the administration, the magistracy and in the army. The *TARDENT* and *AVIOLET* families (the latter perhaps of Roman origin and one of the most ancient in the Valley) have contributed the most Chatelains. Five Tardents have been notaries at different epochs at Ormont-dessous: Jean, Mermet, Jean, Jacquemoz and finally, in 1766, Jean surnamed 'Mely' (of the swamp).

Eight have been Chatelains<sup>(2)</sup>: 1527 Amedee, 1530 Mermet, 1578 Mermet, 1651 Mermet, 1694 Jacquemoz, 1704 David, 1718 Pierre, and 1766 Abram. The latter held office for 21 years, thus being re-elected seven times! Long before the Parish Registers were commenced in 1578, Amé, Robert and Jean Tardent are mentioned as owners of landed properties at Plan Cerf (Stag Plain). The *FIRST TARDENTS* referred to in the first registers as existing prior to their establishment, are round about 1500; *CLAUDE*, called Little Claude, then his son Pierre. Then follow: 1578 Claude, son of Pierre; 1593 Claude, son of Claude; 1609 Francois, son of Claude; and finally 1660 David Tardent of Sergnat, Chatelain of Ormont-dessous, the common ancestor of the three branches, Swiss, Belgian and Russian. <sup>(3)</sup>

This David seemed to have reached the summit of the family fortunes, being well endowed with worldly goods mostly in the form of valuable landed properties. It is only fair to add that part of these riches may have come to him as dowry from his three successive wives, Suzanne Dupertuis ('baronesse'), Eve (or Catherine) Joret and Marie Tardent. (I presume that the title of 'baronesse' that I find tacked on to Suzanne's name in the old schoolmaster's notebook, must be a nickname.) The Dupertuis family is a very large one at the Ormonts and is split up into many branches, each of which is known by some nickname. I have never heard of any member of this family who was a Baron!

I have perused the original document of Jean Joret wherein his estate is divided among his five daughters, one of whom, Eve is mentioned as the wife of David Tardent. (She is shown as Catherine by the old schoolmaster.) Her inheritance was a very large one for those days. I have learned naught of the third wife, Marie Tardent. This David Tardent and his children are mentioned as owning some houses at Le Sépey, the fine properties at Vernay, Chesalets, Sergnat and Crettaz at the lower end of the Valley; other lesser property at Pertuis, la Carrettaz and at Planches; also two pieces of real estate at Mimont, some parcels at Mosses and Vouettes; finally the summer mountain pastures and herds of la Badusa, Chat, Leysin, Chernez (or Siernes), Trabla, Rod, Forclettaz and Charbonnières. This last named is a large property.

(1) See Appendix 'Switzerland'.

(2) See the revised list in the Narrative resulting from Helene's researches; also see the Genealogy.

(3) The Australian and French Branches were established after Henry wrote the History in March 1887.



Since then, the material fortunes of the family in the Valley have disintegrated and gone from bad to worse. The female heirs were entitled to equal shares of estates and there being usually more girls than Tardent boys, the properties gradually passed over to the allied families of CHABLAIX, MONOD, DUPERTUIS, MERMOD, DURGNAT, AVIOLAT, BORLOZ; and later MOTTIER, OGUEY and VURLOD. Today, in 1887, not a single landed property is held in the name of Tardent. 'Sic transit gloria mundi'!(1).

But let us not anticipate. (Henry then lists nine children of DAVID (AT 7.21) but his data was incomplete. The fourteen children by three wives are listed in the Genealogy.)

Henry continues: You will note the profusion of Davids(2) in the family, a feature that bothered me the most and it was only with great difficulty that I managed to throw some light on this maze. For a long time I believed that my great-grandfather and the schoolmaster of Vevey were one and the same person. From various documents I was surprised to find that they were cousins. My error is excusable if you consider that at that time there were two Davids at Vevey and that at the Ormonts the old chatelain David had two sons called David! (At this point Henry explains how he deduced that David (8.70) had a brother David (8.82) - they were actually born 27 years apart!) He continues: ABRAM (8.71) was the Chatelain for 21 years. I've seen a great bundle of parchments - legal judgements and other documents - signed with his name. He appears to have been very rich and to have lived to a good age. I know nothing about others of Chatelain David's family. As a child I knew two Mermod ladies, nee Tardent (Tardent-Moletta) but they were very remote relatives, probably linked to the many brothers of Abram (8.71). Besides, most of these must have only had daughters as their properties have passed into other families.

Leaving now the senior branch of the family to which I shall return later, I shall summarise all that I have been able to learn of interest concerning David (9.111), son of David called 'Dark David' (8.82). He was born at Le Sepey 30 Oct 1737 and was small of stature but agile, quick-witted and intelligent (I heard this from people who knew him). At an early age he showed keen interest in study. After assimilating all possible from the local teacher, he continued to develop his knowledge by means of books lent him by the Pastor of the parish. Endowed with an excellent memory and a bent for precision, he was also enthusiastic, a keen observer and eager to learn. He thus gradually acquired a fairly extensive and varied knowledge. He knew his bible thoroughly and could sing all the Psalms in a strong, clear voice.

He had a good knowledge of mathematics and natural history, especially botany. He was intensely interested in the study of history,

specialising in Swiss history. I have before me several letters written by his hand. The handwriting is beautiful but at the same time firm and soft, denoting a methodical, clear and precise mind. It also indicates kindness and a tolerant disposition. The style is firm and original resembling the clear and simple prose of the 18th century. In one of his letters he described with great clarity the tempestuous political situation of Switzerland in 1798(3).

Did he not in effect, pretend that one can learn to write without ramming one's memory full of an indigestible profusion of rules of grammar, which did nothing for one's mind? He had the children telling stories about the holy scriptures and the catechism instead of having them memorise it all literally. He also spoke of sciences unknown up to that time and of reforms to introduce. A kindly eye was not cast on this twenty-year-old storyteller who wanted things done his way and knew more than the old folk! However, his conduct on all other counts was so irreproachable that his superiors never had the slightest occasion to find fault with him.

Even if they wanted to they did not dare because Uncle Abram was handy and not too easy going. Besides, the old Chatelain fiercely defended little David, for whom he had a special 'soft spot'. Together they would often re-read old charters of the Local Authority. The nephew would also edit official documents for his old uncle who was impressed with his lucid mind, good editing and choice of words. 'Let him be' he would say to critics; 'his little dark-brown eyes see more things in one day than we old fellows would see through our spectacles in ten years.'

Meantime little David, wearied of the pestering annoyance and mischief-making that he was subjected to, parted regretfully from his pupils. In 1766 he accepted the position of schoolmaster at

(1) *'In this manner (or Thus) passeth the world's glories.'*

*In French - 'Ainsi passe la gloire du monde'. Actually the 'glory' has not completely passed because there is today ONE property near Le Sepey called 'Le Scex Tardent' (The Tardent Clearing), recorded in 1398. It might also have meant 'The Tardent Settlement'. (Not to confuse with secx or siex = rock.)*

(2) *For a long period surnames were rarely used. Henry was at a great disadvantage as he was 1500 miles from his native land and its famed archives. The wonder is that he made so few mistakes.*

(3) *The year that French and Austro-Russian armies fought each other on Swiss soil.*



Charnex, a parish of Montreux. The reading of 'Emile', by Jean Jacques Rousseau (1) published a few years earlier, confirmed his own views on teaching. It increased his enthusiasm for his profession about which he had had some doubts. It gave him the courage to continue with greater ardour, the war he had declared against the routine learning methods of the 'old school' of education. He achieved complete success and the reputation of the young schoolmaster spread throughout the country.

In 1771 the city of Vevey was effecting reforms in its high school ('College') and David accepted a call to be its headmaster. Until then the masters had mostly been selected from clergymen who emigrated from France. Supported by distinguished men like Morin, Detraz, Monnet and Guidon, he completely changed the teaching methods and introduced new ones in all the branches of learning. He compiled and published several small elementary school books among which were 'History of Helvetia' and an 'Abridged Grammar' for 'Learning to write without knowing Latin'. (2) These textbooks were well within the learning capacity of the children and even today appeal to us by their bright Pestalozzian simplicity.

David was head of the College for forty four years. He combined this with the position of soloist and choir master at the Church of St. Martin as this dual role was the custom in the Vaud canton. He had seen three generations of children seated on his school benches and was so well known that all Veveyans looked upon him as 'guide, philosopher and friend'. Having led a sober, hardworking life he enjoyed robust health well into advanced old age. At 80 years, he still led the choir of the faithful with a strong, clear but tremulous voice.

I obtained these details from a Glarus canton octogenarian named Zwiki who had heard him sing and knew him personally, (3) Zwiki added: 'he was a little old man, still lively and alert and with piercing but kindly eyes. His venerable features were framed in abundant hair and beard as white as snow. Wherever he appeared people stood up and raised their hats respectfully. The young people around me were saying "as long as we have old Father Tardent to lead the singing, we will not need an organ"'.

After having taught for 55 years in country and city, he voluntarily resigned in 1815 at the age of 78. The City publicly thanked him and presented him with a solid silver dinner service and two silver candlesticks engraved with the words 'The City of Vevey is grateful to the worthy professor who for 44 years has deserved much from her'. Satisfied with his life and confident in the promise of the Saviour, David Tardent passed away peacefully on 21 Feb. 1820, aged 83. His death was publicly mourned and all the townspeople attended his funeral service.

As was common practice those days, David married young for at 19 he wedded Esther Martin at The Ormonts. She appears to have been a worthy life-companion by whom he had a large family. (4)

	Born	Died	
1. Jacques David	10 Jun. 1757	about 1825	68
2. Suzanne Marie	8 Jul. 1759	8 Apr. 1814	55
3. Esther Catherine	2 Nov. 1760	at 3 months	
4. Abram	26 Sep. 1761	at 6 months	
5. Jean	16 Jan. 1763	at 1½ months	
6. David Josias	12 Feb. 1764	at 5 months	
7. Jeanne Esther	28 Feb. 1768	?	
8. Jean David Vincent	4 Dec. 1769	in 1793	24
9. Louis Marc Samuel	18 Jan. 1772	4 Apr. 1801	29
10. Elizabeth	1773	at 7 years	
11. Louise	20 May 1775	Apr. 1853	78
12. Charles	20 Jan. 1779	1825	46
13. David Frederic	1780	1788	8

Only four children were still alive in 1820, to whom, less a few minor legacies, the old schoolmaster willed his all of 26,000 francs (personalty 21,800 francs and realty 3,600 francs) including

(1) See Appendix 'Switzerland - "Literature and The Arts"'.  
 In 'Emile' and other works Rousseau (1712-1778) advocated a greater return to nature and more simple living, whereby the innate goodness of man would not be corrupted by civilisation, which tended too much to the achieving of a clever intellect. The Quakers had a somewhat related idea 100 years earlier, that successfully strove for a number of great humanitarian reforms.

(2) See Footnote, page AT5-a of Genealogy.

(3) See names of early Chaba pioneers in further pages and in Appendix II.

Zwiki had also fought under Napoleon.

(4) Henry's list has been corrected here because Frederic was the 13th not the 8th child and was born at Montreux. The date was omitted from David's 1815 notebook, probably because all the others were born at Vevey, where the Register of Births was readily available.

This family detail of births and deaths is quoted here, as a remarkable example of the primitive methods of child birth and medical care of infants, prevalent in olden times. A doctor's popularity was then gauged by the amount of dried blood on his 'surgery' coat! Most births were delivered in the home and were not attended by a doctor - perhaps only by a local midwife.



his house at Magel, Vevey. (1) As his will is an interesting document in various ways and will help to better illustrate David Tardent's character, I quote its full text.

Last Will and Testament of David Tardent

The frailty of human life and the uncertainty of its end are powerful motives for meditation. That is why, finding myself at an age when I cannot count on living much longer, since my remaining days are in the hands of God, I end my earthly career in thanking the Almighty for His favours in having preserved me from serious accidents, from which so many others have suffered. Above all, I thank Him for the knowledge He has given me of His holy name and for the promise of eternal life, which in His infinite mercy, He has given me the right to hope for and which I ardently beseech.

Considering the happiness of a family which lives in harmony and peace and desiring the continued fraternal relationship among my children when I am no more, I earnestly exhort them to be tolerant in the distribution among them of my modest possessions, which I direct shall be as follows:

(1) I give to the charitable Hospital of the city of Vevey sixteen (ancient) francs and to the controlling body of the Social Service League of that City Sixteen francs.

(2) I bestow on my son Charles, my walnut bureau, my silver seal, my shoe buckles, my garter buckles and my shirt studs, all of silver; in addition he is to take from my belongings six silver coffee spoons engraved with his name which were given to him at his christening. Further, I give him all my books and my pictures on the condition that he gives to each one of his co-heirs ten pictures such as he may choose. I give him the pine sideboard with one door plus another one of his choice.

(3) I give to my dear daughter Louise (at present in Dessau, Germany), my couch in blue tapestry and all that goes with it, plus the large silver serving spoon, also the steel carvers plus the silver tea strainer.

I hereby confirm my signature on the list of effects given to her by her deceased sister Suzanne.

(4) Realising the uncertain position for some time to come of my two orphaned grandsons Jacques and Philippe Tardent, and as they would have nowhere to house any furniture that may have been given to them, instead I give to each of them two hundred and fifty francs in silver, as their share of my goods; and additionally to each, two silver table services, spoons and forks; to wit one service engraved with my initials and given to me by the City, and one other.

(5) I bequeathe to my grand-son Louis Tardent-Grandjean (11.82) (2) one hundred francs in silver, my best winter suit, my best top coat; my best hat, a cinnamon coloured coat of fine cloth, my two black suits to cut down for his children, six shirts of India cotton; plus my carpenters bench with the relevant tools and glue pots etc.

(6) I bequeath to Marc Tardent (12.100) my great grandson, my pocket watch.

(7) I give to Jeanne Marie Chaupert, housekeeper in my home, in appreciation of the special and lengthy service which she has rendered, one hundred francs in silver after paying her wages in full, whether she stays in this house or goes elsewhere. She may remain another two months with her upkeep while seeking another position. In addition, I give her the wooden bedstead which she uses, with the straw mattress, one ordinary mattress, an eiderdown with its cover, two bedsheets in good condition, and one wool blanket: further, I give her the two wardrobes in which she keeps her clothes, one of pine and one of old walnut. She is also to receive something for mourning wear.

(8) Finally, I bequeath the residue of my estate in equal shares, to my children, who are:- Jacques-David; Jeanne-Esther (Buvelot); Louise and Charles: and to my two grandsons, Jacques and Philippe, one share between them.

(9) Considering the possibility that my eldest son Jacques-David might not manage his share to the best advantage and as the estate is not large enough to appoint a highly paid trustee, I beg the honorable Justice of the Peace to allow the bulk of Jacques-David's share to be given in his care and trust, so that my son may not dispose of these funds. He is to be given a statement of his legacy but is only to receive the interest thereon. The cash legacy he is to receive will be less his promisory note of 1st January 1812 with interest added.

(10) The cash portion of my bequests will be paid in silver three months after my decease.

(11) I appoint Mr. Jean Jacques Ducosterd, Superintendent of Customs, to represent my daughter Louise presently at Dessau, and he has kindly consented to so act.

(12) I appoint Mr. David Mons Jnr. to act similarly in favour of my two grandsons Jacques and Philippe Tardent, until they attain their majority.

Executed at Vevey on July 22nd 1819

(signed) David Tardent

of Ormonts-dessous, retired Teacher of the College.



All of old David's children who reached maturity have been noteworthy in various respects with the exception perhaps of the eldest Jacques-David of whom I will write later. Also of Jeanne-Esther Buvelot who appears to have slipped into the selfish materialism of her husband, although she endeavoured to give her children a good education, with little success.

I have learned little of Charles, except that for some fourteen years he was an accountant in Berlin and that he returned to Vevey, where he died intestate on 8 April 1825, universally esteemed and regretted. A post-mortem was held on his body at his express wish. His liver weighed eight pounds and was as hard as soft rock!

Judging by the above will, CHARLES' father had a high opinion of his literary and artistic tastes as he left him his library and pictures. He had a rather good collection of paintings: I wonder what became of those precious souvenirs?

SUZANNE MARIE had received an excellent education from her parents as had all of the family. She had beautiful handwriting and could draw cleverly. When aged 21 in 1780, she left Vevey to be a governess at Dessau, Germany. She remained there for fourteen years with a private family and was subsequently invited to the court of the hereditary Prince of Anhalt-Dessau to educate the young princesses. She filled this role for another fourteen years and became well liked and respected in a position which obviously called for much tact and good breeding. The old Duke, grandfather of her pupils, in appreciation of her valuable tuition, presented her with a solid silver tray, a coffee pot and milk jug, weighing six pounds. On the tray was engraved 'The Duke of Dessau to S.M. Tardent'. The young Princesses gave her a silver bowl and sugar basin in the shape of a hand basket, engraved 'S.M.T.'. In 1887 the tray was in the possession of Louis Tardent at Paris (12.110). Suzanne-Marie died at Vevey on 8 April 1814 aged about 55.

When she retired from Germany to Vevey, her younger sister LOUISE (10.150), whom she had induced to come to Dessau to be governess in the Behrenhorst family, succeeded her as chief governess at the ducal palace. Louise remained there until her death on 30 Apr 1853. She left a fair amount of money to her near relatives, less a few legacies to those about her. Uranie Tardent, nee Grandjean's (11.82a) share was 4000 Prussian crown pieces.<sup>(3)</sup> The Will stated 3000 crowns, but Louise's nephew Philippe, having found a codicil among the deceased's papers wherein 4000 was substituted for 3000, honorably respected a wish that had no legal value.

Louise was a small woman, not pretty, but with strong distinguished features. She manifested a maternal solicitude towards all her relatives and where needed, placing both her purse and her wise counsel at their disposal. She tried in vain to keep her niece Mme

Buvelot near her, as she was trying to further her education. Disappointed in this, she broke off contact with her but despite this, remembered her in her will. Louise was particularly fond of the family of LOUIS TARDENT of Brussels (12.110) (later of Paris). Also of Uranie Tardent-Grandjean of Chaba, whom she had never met in person but with whom she maintained a lengthy and affectionate correspondence for many years. These two women, both fine personalities, were ideally suited to form a strong mutual friendship. PHILIPPE Tardent of Brussels who was present at Louise's funeral at Dessau, wrote to those relatives then in Russia, of the sadness of the ducal house, at her death.<sup>(4)</sup>

#### THE GREAT ART OF WRITING

JEAN-DAVID-VINCENT died in 1793 aged only 24, after having been Lieutenant in a Company of the Vevey Regiment and Master of Calligraphy at the City College. It is sad that so promising a life should end so soon. My Aunt Julie Monod nee Tardent of Vernay (12.45) gave me a specimen of a masterly piece of his handwriting. It is an artistic pencil vignette in the form of a sunrise in the Alps, with this legend: 'auri montanus inferior'<sup>(5)</sup> followed by: 'One of the parishioners of this community hastens with pleasure to present to his fellow citizens, a specimen of the progress he has made in the beautiful art of handwriting, following the principles laid down by his father and continuing under one of the most skilled teachers of Europe. Please receive my dear fellow citizens, this slight token of my regard for you and for this pleasant community towards whom I will always extend the most sincere good wishes.' There followed more fine penwork and a note on the origin of the French language. This sample of his skill is firm but truly fantastic, with many fine flourishes. It is signed in full and dated 20 May 1788.

LOUIS MARC SAMUEL's (10.148) masterpiece is still treasured (1887) by his grandson Louis in Paris. It outshone his brother's effort

- (1) *The estate would equal approx. (?) \$A50-80,000 in 1977.*
- (2) *'The Founder' of Chaba in Bessarabia in 1822.*
- (3) *Worth about (?) \$A3000 in 1977 and perhaps much more.*
- (4) *Felix and I each have bundles of Louise's letters and it is hoped to include a few extracts at least in this volume, written about 150 years ago.*
- (5) *= 'Lower Ormonts' (Ormonts-dessous). This is probably the document sent by Henry to historian Isabel in 1914. We have a small sample of J.D.V's art, reproduced herein.*



and was a piece of fine parchment no larger than a crown piece, on which was written the ten commandments in microscopic letters. L.M.S. combined his brother's skills with a splendid voice and a pronounced inclination for music. His first post was organist for the German church at Vevey. At nineteen he applied for the position of choir director or Precentor at Lausanne Cathedral.<sup>(1)</sup> The selection committee was impressed with the fine volume and quality of his voice but was reluctant to give such an important position to one so young, whose lack of height gave the impression of an adolescent barely past childhood. His application was rejected. Humiliated by this severe blow to his pride and career, he decided to go abroad.

He went to Frankfurt where for several years he was choir leader and reader in the reformed church. Reared from childhood in the religious atmosphere of his home, endowed with an ardent and meditative mind, he worked very hard at the religious and philosophic studies which agitate humanity. He was soon able to gratify his ambition and successfully passed his examination in theology at the age of twenty seven. He was invested as a pastor in the special chapel of the Princes of Hombourg, and in their presence.

Immediately afterwards, he received a call to serve in the Parish of Waldorf in the principality of Darmstadt. Unfortunately his rather weak and nervous constitution, his intense application and the quiet apostolic ardour with which he fulfilled his new functions, all took their toll and drained away his health. Resembling a wick which flares up before finally extinguishing, he redoubled his ardour at the approach of the death which he foresaw. On 4th April 1801 he quietly passed away, only just 28 years of age, as the approaching spring offered some hope of restored health. Four years later on 21 Feb 1805 his inconsolable widow, Jeanne Catherine nee Gogoin, followed him to the grave, aged only 34 years. This worthy couple, thus mown down in their prime, left two orphans, JACQUES 6 and PHILIPPE 5 years.

Here again is an example of the kindly heart of old David. In spite of his 68 years, the misfortune which befell his grandchildren in a foreign land, prompted him to have the boys sent to him at Vevey. He was thus able to crown his successful career by concentrating all his love and care on their education. He was greatly assisted in this by his housekeeper, Jeanne Chaupert, who cared for the orphans throughout her life with an almost maternal devotion.

The whole of the old schoolmaster's life was actually devoted to the practice of the precept he had inscribed on the wall of his modest School: 'Fear God and love your country'. Furthermore, the old 'regent' had only to fall back on his own good example of

personal behaviour and on his wise counsel, to inculcate in these two intelligent youngsters, the concepts of duty and ethical conduct.

## TWO DIFFERENT CAREERS

In 1814 Jacques and Philippe, light of pocket but enriched with blessings from their grandfather, left Vevey and went far afield to battle for a living. Why were their careers so different? Why did one rise up to the light, while the other sank into darkness? Had one of them, like Jacob, taken away his father's blessing? Or what is more likely, one of them had one of those weaknesses of character which prevents success in life. It is a mystery. Six years later in 1820, Jacques was at Frankfurt as a shop assistant with the firm of Catoix and Co. In 1825, with a partner, he set up a wine and grocery business at Berne. The following year the partnership was dissolved and Jacques controlled the insecure firm which then gave up the groceries and concentrated on wines. His affairs went from bad to worse and he lost all his money. Much worse than that, he lost his brother's hard-earned savings, which had been entrusted to his care. This sad event caused a complete break in the friendly relations of the brothers but all the facts were never revealed and Jacques' later efforts at reconciliation were rejected.

In 1830 Jacques, discouraged and despairing of succeeding in Switzerland, went to Toulon whence he embarked for Algeria and remained there for two years. In partnership with a German, he tried agriculture but due to lack of funds or knowledge he again failed and soon after fell ill. After great financial troubles and suffering from serious ophthalmia, he returned to Marseilles in 1832 where he partly recovered his health. During 1833 he taught German for a living at Grenoble. In 1836, having completely regained his health, he went to Paris where, with a friend as partner, he started a commission business under the name of Tardent and Co. at 18 Rue Jean Jacques Rousseau.

In 1837 the partnership was dissolved through lack of capital and Jacques was left on his own to market wines for various firms. About this time all trace of him was lost. He must have said that he was leaving for America and would only be heard from if he prospered there. Who knows what became of him? Perhaps his progeny prospers on some South American pampas plain but what is more likely is that the bedevilled destiny that pursued him, finally ended his adventurous projects in death!

*(1) The duties were second only to those of the Pastor in the church service and included the solo chants, as well as training and leading the choir.*



His brother Philippe's career was totally different. In 1814 he went from Vevey to St. Gall as accountant or commercial traveller for the firm of Binder-Spek, which he left in May 1819. Soon after this he went to Frankfurt (on Maine) where he served a full six-year contract with Bermey and Co. till 1825. He then went to Switzerland to see again the places where he spent his youth but sadly found no dear old grandfather in the old home and met few friends of his own age. With what joy he relived those memories which stirred his emotions so deeply! This voyage which so mingled his joy and sadness, was the last he was to make to his beloved country. Another arena, another future, was opening before him. Belgium was to welcome him and shower him generously with happiness and wealth.

In 1825 he became a commercial traveller for the firm of Boulanger and Lemoine at Mons in Belgium. The firm had a branch at Brussels and Philippe often visited that city. He thus came to know the big firm of T'Kint Vanderborghen, makers of Brussels lace. He entered their service in 1828 as accountant or sales manager, having as usual, left behind him the regrets and esteem of the Mons firm. It is necessary to give a few details about this famous Brussels lace firm, which played such an important role in Philippe's life. The firm was established at the end of the 18th century. Even at that period the fame of Brussels lace was great, and well-to-do families competed for the output of the makers of these precious, rare and costly materials. Some of the lace for trimming the voluminous skirts of those days cost as much as 2000 francs per metre!(1)

Several reigning sovereigns visited this factory. When he visited Brussels, Napoleon I desired to inspect the workshops and showrooms. To demonstrate the fineness of the lace, a lady of the family passed a whole dress through an ordinary wedding ring, watched with interest and amazement by the French Emperor, who asked its price. On being told its very high cost, he turned to one of his staff and said: 'Bah, it is almost the cost of a frigate.' As a souvenir of this visit, each of the ladies and girls of the firm received a diamond studded watch. The workmen also were not forgotten and Bonaparte's visit was long remembered by the firm's staff.

#### A SPLENDID BRUSSELS-LACE FACTORY

The factory was in the centre of the city at 2 Rue des Dominicains (today called Rue Montagne aux Herbes Potage) and it occupied the remains of an ancient Dominican Convent.(2) These large buildings had a length of 100 metres and a width of 20 to 40 metres. The ancient portion of the buildings was most interesting and well preserved. It had vast kitchens and cellars with superb stone arches and a butcher's shop with slaughter house fitted with metal rings for tethering animals awaiting slaughter.

There was a magnificent and very beautiful grand staircase of stone with treads three metres wide. This great staircase was lighted by a Gothic window twelve metres high! The walls of these monumental stairs were covered with fine paintings portraying scenery in the environs of Brussels. In the more modern portion of the buildings, dating from the time of Louis XV and XVI (1715-1792) and facing the garden, were some richly decorated drawing or reception rooms. Depicted on panels in the principal salon were all the divinities of Olympus surrounded by exquisite ornamentation. Another salon, named 'The Pear' was decorated in the shape of that fruit and simulated a pleasant grove.

There was also a room called 'The Library' with superb wall cupboards for books. Most of these had secret locks that released the doors when pressure was applied on almost invisible push-buttons—real mechanical works of art. Above all the windows were the names of illustrious scientists of antiquity. Between the many bookshelves were fine paintings representing the Muses surrounded by Cupids. These works were in very good taste and of an airy grace. Adjacent to all these buildings was a very fine garden at the end of which was a round summer-house of unusual interest, surmounted by an enormous metal latticed sphere. The walls of this pavilion served to mask the hiding places during the 'Terror' of several noblemen and priests, who would have lost their heads but for this secret retreat. All these curious remains of a recent past exist no more. All the buildings have been demolished and their place occupied by a bazaar called the 'Leipzig Fair'.(3)

The workshops and showrooms of the lace factory were supervised by members of the T'Kint family, Miss THERESE PIRLET being the one exception. This lady had from childhood shown a great interest in lace making. Her parents had placed her in this business to gratify her bent, perhaps to the detriment of her general education, which had been much neglected. Therese was born at a time of great political upheaval which explains but does not excuse, the neglect by her parents of her early education. Thanks however, to her excellent taste, business acumen and inventive ability, in a few

(1) Approximately \$A100 then and could approximately equal \$600 or more in 1977—per metre!

(2) The name means, if you please, 'Street of the Culinary Herbs Mountain'!

(3) Neither Jules in '62 nor Marie-Louise in '63 remembered to seek out this spot when in Brussels — or any of our distant relatives there. Michel and Helene have been in touch with them in recent years as has Jules in 1979 & 1980 — with Raymond Fontaine.



years she became the life and soul of the firm and its real head. In view of what follows it seems advisable at this point to give you more information about the Pirlet family.

#### AN ADVENTUROUS CAREER

Therese's father occupied a remarkable place in Belgian historical annals. His father Jean Philippe Pirlet was born of poor parents about 1760 at Jodvigne, a province of Brabant, then part of France. He had little education, could hardly read and could barely manage to scrawl his signature. He was however, highly intelligent, keen and shrewd; qualities which enabled him to overcome many embarrassing business difficulties. Towards 1789, he manufactured a large quantity of decorative glass materials and lanterns for illuminations, made chariots, trophies, tentings and scaffoldings etc., with which he travelled the ancient provinces of Belgium and Northern France. With these he catered for municipalities by furnishing the materials necessary for carrying out popular national fetes and celebrations such as the Fete of Federation, of Youth, of Age, Procession of the Goddess Reason, of the Supreme Being and others.

He was well liked because of his jovial disposition, his ready wit and his great capacity for self-expression! He soon became the habitual guest of all the leading revolutionaries. In a few years he amassed what at that time was the enormous sum of one million francs.(1) He then carried off one of those audacious master-strokes which are outstanding landmarks in a man's life. Because hard currency (silver and gold coin) was very scarce and France was in debt in all directions, he offered the new Revolutionary Government of 1789 his million francs in coin in exchange for 15 to 20 million in Assignats.(2) The government eagerly accepted the offer and rewarded him with a shower of available honours and civic titles given to patriots.

With this paper money which was then legal tender, he bought up properties, principally in the Province of Brabant, called 'national properties'. These had belonged to the clergy and had been confiscated by the Revolutionary French Government. People had not dared to buy them for fear of creating enemies and there was also fear of losing their money because they believed that the confiscation was only temporary and that the lands would revert to their former owners when the revolutionary turmoil abated. Pirlet let it be known everywhere that he was only purchasing the properties to enable him to later on return them to their dispossessed owners! He was believed because on every possible occasion, he gave the impression of being highly religious. Nevertheless, in all these transactions he neglected no formality whatever. He had all transfers drawn up correctly by and in the presence of, regular conveyancers and thus became the legal (if not the moral) owner of very

valuable properties. These dealings often involved him in great danger. He miraculously escaped several times from the dagger attacks of hired assassins.

Intoxicated by his increasing wealth he led an uproarious life in grand style, scattering his gold in handfuls. Having acquired the superb castle of Montaigne, he drove to church on Sundays in a magnificent carriage drawn by six horses. He was recklessly wasteful and spendthrift and was even known to repay the favours of vulgar ladies of easy virtue, with a furnished chateau! Naturally this could not last. Because of his ignorance, his property managers robbed him with impunity, per medium of the powers-of-attorney which they held.

At the end of a dozen years in 1810, Pirlet was ruined and had barely enough left to live on. He proved himself to be a wiser man in adversity than when he was rich. Far from being discouraged, he sought out new ventures. With the help of friends, he obtained the position of farmer-general to the Barriere family in the province of Brabant. Later on he founded a butchering company in Brussels and established a large public baths there as well as other projects. At the end of some fifteen years he was again a fairly rich man although not as wealthy as before. Towards 1825 he fell ill, became a little childish, retired to Lausanne (his wife's birthplace) and died there in 1837, aged seventy seven.

At his death nothing remained of his new fortune and he was reputed to have even left debts! It is only fair to mention that during the last years of his life his daughter Marie, who was married to a solicitor, managed his affairs. Under that administration all his remaining wealth disappeared! His widow survived him and lived in retirement in Brussels with that same daughter.

Jean Philippe Pirlet had married in 1785 Miss Marie BOVIE (1757-1850) born Louvain, died Brussels, aged 93. The issue of this union were as follows:

(1) MARIE (1790-1859) born Louvain, died Brussels, married Louis Van Mons, a notary at Brussels. (At the end of the 18th and early in the 19th century the Van Mons family included notable judges, army officers and scientists - especially in medicine, botany and chemistry.) Marie had four children: Henry, notary, living in 1887; Michel, solicitor at Brussels, alive in 1887; Jenny, deceased, and Pierre Van Mons who died in Hungary.

(1) Approximately £50,000 which in 1977 would possibly equal about \$A300000 or more.

(2) French new bank notes of 1789-1799 (a result of the Revolution).



(2) CHARLES PIRLET born about 1795. Enterprising like his father; went to Batavia in 1820, where he married a rich creole by whom he had a numerous family.

(3) THERESE, born at Louvain 17 Aug. 1798; married Philippe Tardent in 1834; died, Brussels, 1882 aged 84.

Now that I have outlined the background of the family which Philippe entered, let us resume the story at the point where he joined the firm T'Kint Vanderborghen. Mme Augusta T'Serstevens, née Augustine T'Kint, the proprietor of the lace firm, decided to give up business and to retire in 1834 because she felt ill and tired. With this object in mind she offered the management of the enterprise to her 'right hand' in the business, Mlle Therese Pirlet. Therese accepted the offer with great pleasure and gratitude but immediately requested that she be allowed to have Mr. Philippe Tardent as her associate. She said that she had noted his faithful and devoted services to the firm. Mme T'Serstevens strongly approved of this idea and on 1 March 1834, a circular was sent to all the firm's clients, announcing that there had been a change in ownership and that in future the firm would be known by the new name of 'Pirlet and Tardent'.

#### BRUSSELS LACE by TARDENT-PIRLET

On 28 Oct of the same year another change was made; this time it was to endure. Philippe and Therese were married and thus the firm's name became Tardent-Pirlet. The financial resources of the newly-weds was minimal as between them they had barely 10000 francs. (1) However they were courageous and knew the firm's business thoroughly. One must say that during the past ten years the business had run-down badly as the owners had become rich and no longer had their old love of hard work.

The Belgian revolution of 1830 (2) had also dealt a heavy blow to the luxury lace industry because of the departure of the Dutch Court. The old nobility sulked or boycotted the new royalty of Belgium and could not forgive this young nation its democratic emancipation and liberal ideas, so much at variance with those of the old conservative regime. This situation weighed heavily on business affairs and the first few years were tough for Philippe and Therese, whose burden was increased by family additions. This fairly precarious state of affairs lasted until 1840. Peace having been definitely concluded with the Netherlands, and also thanks to the tact and ability of the new King Leopold, Belgian industry acquired a new lease of life and made continuous progress. Brussels became a city of luxury and the lace industry thus benefited greatly. Other industries also prospered and many fortunes were made by their owners.

In 1840 the Belgian population was four million; by 1887 it had grown to six million. Brussels had about 100,000 people that increased to 450,000 in 1887. (3) Much the same could be said of Antwerp, which became the third most important port of Europe, only surpassed in tonnage by London and Liverpool. The firm of Tardent-Pirlet played its part in this industrial expansion. From 1840 to 1848 it prospered exceedingly and its fame spread far and wide. They were approved suppliers to the Courts of Russia, France, Prussia and Belgium. Its principal clients were the crowned heads and princes of Europe. The firm was awarded gold medals at the Belgian Exhibitions of 1835 and 1841. They had an important branch in Paris and depots at London, Vienna and Berlin and had agents in all the chief cities of Europe. Business was good, and the annual stocktaking and balance sheets disclosed a profit of 80,000 to 100,000 francs; 300 to 400 workers were employed in the workshops and elsewhere.

All these workers were directed by Therese, while Philippe concentrated on the administration and finance of the firm. With such good leaders, harmoniously united in marriage, good results were bound to follow. At that period competition was practically nil. How times have changed and what keen rivalry now exists in almost any undertaking, when production in manufactures even overtakes the demand. Yes, it must be conceded that circumstances favoured Philippe but his enterprise would have turned out quite differently if the Belgian Revolution (of 1830) had been thwarted by the reactionaries. Nevertheless, one must remember that he was always capable of surmounting difficulties. Thoroughly honest, he was like most Swiss, a republican at heart. He stood for liberty before everything and could have sincerely used the phrases attributed to Patrick Henry and to Madame Roland. (4)

Having arrived in Belgium at a time when men were weary of the arbitrary yoke of the old king of Holland and were beginning to stir politically, Philippe took an active part in this liberal movement and sympathised with the new government. Due to his prominent

(1) About \$A1000 but its 1977 value could be \$A20,000 or more.

(2) Which finally established the new Belgian nation on 7 Feb. 1831.

(3) By 1975 Belgian population was about ten million and that of Brussels was about 1,100,000.

(4) French political personality, 1754-93.



industrial position, he was soon recognised as a commercial authority. He frequented the company of the group of prominent men who produced the Belgian Revolution; the Rogiers, Gendebiens, Hoogvorsts, Broukeri and others and held his own among them. Philippe admired the Belgian people, whom he thought resembled the Swiss in their liberalism. Had not the Walloons and the Flemish for many years been federated like the Swiss for the defence of their liberties? And finally, are not the VAN ARTVELDES<sup>(1)</sup>, Brydels and Coninks truly brothers of William Tell and of Arnold Winkelried? Therefore Philippe vigorously contributed to increase the prosperity of a country that had received him with open arms.

Despite his absorbing work with the lace business, he found time and energy to establish an organ factory (which is now non-existent) and an art-bronze factory, which still survives (1887) and competes favourably with some of the best Parisian firms. That factory obtained gold medals at the Exhibitions of Paris, London, Vienna, Brussels, Amsterdam and latterly at Antwerp.

Philippe Tardent was one of the founders of the magnificent zoological gardens of Brussels.<sup>(2)</sup> This Zoo has since been acquired by the city, which later sold the animals and turned it into public gardens named Leopold Park. He was also one of the foundation shareholders of the Belgian National Bank. On that occasion he was offered the position of its manager with luxurious private quarters on the premises and with a salary of 50,000 francs but refused this honour. Soon after his marriage, he and other kindred spirits founded a Swiss Circle under the title of Society of Friends and he was its president for a number of years.<sup>(3)</sup> This Swiss Group remained active in Brussels until 1855 when it ceased to function, due to the decease of many of its members. Although deeply attached to his adopted country, Philippe remained a Swiss at heart and a Protestant; he changed neither religion nor nationality. Nevertheless he proved himself to be a good Belgian citizen and conscientiously fulfilled various public offices. He joined the Civic Guard, contributing to its funds until he was fifty and continued to earn the esteem and even the affection of many citizens. King Leopold was friendly towards him and consulted him on various matters concerning industry and political economy. Although Philippe had only had a good primary education he had read and studied widely and had acquired a very wide general education. His reports were masterpieces of conciseness and clarity plus a wealth of ideas.

Had he possessed less innate modesty and more decision he could have played a leading political role in Belgium. He preferred to concentrate on private business which he did most successfully. Under an apparent serious exterior he possessed great tact and a

degree of satirical wittiness.

#### ROYAL CLIENTS

Occasionally Queen Louise née Princess of Orleans, consulted both him and his wife concerning royal entertainments and dress. Round about the 1840's the Empress of Russia and several queens and princesses were 'taking the waters' at Ems near Coblenz on the Rhine when the Empress telegraphed Philippe Tardent to attend on her. He duly responded to the imperial summons and displayed his artistic lace creations on the carpet. The Empress did not understand meterage and so the lace had to be measured in Russian 'arshins'.<sup>(4)</sup> But where in Germany could one find a Russian 'arshin' measure? Fortunately the Empress remembered that her umbrella was exactly one 'arshin' in length and the measuring proceeded with Her Majesty's umbrella as the yardstick!

The firm of Tardent was entrusted with the making of a splendid trousseau for the Tsarevitch who afterwards became Alexander II. This trousseau was on display at the Tardent showrooms and the lovely lace in Brussels point with the somewhat complicated Imperial escutcheon, aroused general admiration. The Queen of Belgium requested these treasures be shown at her Brussels palace. This important lace order took some ten months to complete and attracted a fee of 200,000 francs! The aristocratic world was stirred by these displays which were enthusiastically acclaimed.

The newspapers lauded the unrivalled art of the House of Tardent. Philippe's financial affairs prospered equally well. He had a real flair for business and was a born banker. He was splendidly supported on the manufacturing side of the business by his wife, Therese. Philippe said 'If God grants me another 10 years of life, I will leave one million to each of my children'. There is no

(1) *Magistrate and Deputy Mayor of Ghent (1290-1345) who led the Flemish revolt against the French oppressors.*

(2) *Love of the natural sciences was always a strong feature of Henry and many Tardents, either as a profession or a hobby. To quote only a few: L.V.S.T. (11.82), Charles (12.102), Prof. Dr. John Belkin (15.10), Prof. Dr. Pierre (15.140) and his father, Michel (14.66), Prof. Dr. Eugene Schanzer (15.320) and Percy Tardent (15.9.). One of Henry's sons (14.39) was a pioneer forester and conservationist!*

(3) *No connection with the Quakers.*

(4) *Archin or Arsheen was a Russian or Turkish ell of 28 inches dating from 1734 and long since obsolete. In England it was 45", Scotland 37" and Flanders 27 inches. In Turkey, from 1881 the Archine was one pace in length.*



doubt that he would have done that if the Revolution of 1848 had not supervened and put a brake on all commercial affairs, especially luxury goods.<sup>(1)</sup> The Paris branch was closed and business fell off seriously. In 1855 Philippe decided to retire from business because his health was troubling him and his financial position was secure.

It is here that I register my first serious criticism of Philippe. Instead of allowing his sons to continue the splendid traditions of work and honour associated with the lace business he gave way to the pseudo-aristocratic aspirations of his wife and sold the factory, the balance of stocks in hand, fixtures, fittings and furniture at give-away prices, such was the haste to erase the splendid, honourable past! True, business was at a low ebb just then but there was always a steady demand for goods that met the new and changing fashion trends, thus there was still much business to be done. Alas, having become rich, the Tardent parents dreamed up for their children, a very different future than their own commercial and industrial past.<sup>(2)</sup> And what regrets there were later on about the course they adopted; but it was then too late as the damage had been done!

From that period on, slow, progressive decadence affected the household. Philippe had purchased an attractive villa on a fine boulevard in a select Brussels suburb. He went there to retire and to spend his old age in comfort. In 1859 he became totally blind and seriously ill due to an unsuccessful operation for cataract. A man with an active disposition such as he had, could not cope with such a calamity and neither his wife nor his friends could console him. After a distressful illness he died on 12 Dec 1860 surrounded by all his family. He was greatly mourned by all who knew him but particularly by his family.

(3)  
He willed all his fortune of 1,000,000 francs to his widow. Under Belgian law one eighth, about 125,000 francs, had to go to the children. Therese had of necessity to take control of the banking business left in suspense by her husband. Several of these transactions were poorly managed by her and serious losses resulted. These considerably reduced the estate of this brave struggler against the tide of events.

As previously mentioned Therese Tardent was extremely intelligent. She was also generously endowed by nature, being of medium height with well moulded figure. She had clear-cut, pleasing features, very dark hair and a clear complexion. Though not a noted songstress, she nevertheless possessed a pleasant voice. Having been raised in princely luxury surrounded by many servants, she always maintained a cold and haughty manner, enhanced by her experience in the command of a large staff. This was her typical attitude

throughout her life. She was really kind-hearted but insisted on having her orders obeyed punctually and immediately.

Her marriage with Philippe was a happy one because he was kindness itself and had a most conciliatory disposition. Had he been otherwise, agreement and harmony would have been impossible. She liked social life and was quite a success in the high society in which they moved. Her marriage to Philippe had not been viewed favourably by her family, who could not understand 'this mis-alliance

(1) *The Belgians separated from Holland and were established in Feb. 1831 as a new nation. In February 1849 the reign of Louis-Philippe of France was abruptly ended when the Second Republic was established and universal suffrage was introduced. In June 1848 the French workers revolted causing serious political upheavals. The young Belgian nation depended heavily on trade with powerful, populous France.*

(2) *Few Australians today (Queenslanders especially) realise the social barriers that existed here even sixty or seventy years ago. It was not usual for a shopkeeping or industrial family as compared to, say, squatters or professional folk, to be 'accepted' in the so-called high society of that period in Brisbane. Strange but true! Even in small towns like Nanango and especially Kingaroy, downright snobbery was a real fact of life, believe it or not! All those who are old enough to remember the famed pre-1914 annual Nanango Amateur Race Balls, will appreciate this comment and realise how ridiculous some situations were. One bushman looking on at the scene through the open door of the Show Hall in 1912 was heard to say of a portly, rather ordinary townsman, dressed in very ill-fitting hired 'tails': 'look at so-and-so, he looks like a bag-full of pigs' dung tied ugly'. Those were not quite his exact words and perhaps there was a bit of envy in his vulgar comment!*

*However, social standards in the many cities and towns of Australia varied greatly at that time. Those of us of the A.I.F. who, especially after the Armistice, had enjoyed for many months in 1919 the privilege of entree to fine homes and exclusive clubs in England, were amazed at the contrasting, informal democratic, social standards in Cape Town, Durban and Brisbane! (Melbourne was somewhat different!)*

*It is easy to understand how much more rigid were the social barriers in conservative, class-conscious Europe in the mid 1800's! We should thus temper our view of the attitude of Therese Tardent with tolerance and understanding. (There were a few other Tardents who also behaved in similar fashion after 1900!)*

(3) *A large fortune in those days (=abt. \$A100.00) and probably one million \$A in 1977.*



with a man who had neither wealth nor highly-placed relatives'. Furthermore, she had ample opportunity to marry some of the richest eligibles in the city - even a Mr. T'Serstervens whom she had refused and who had recently married Mlle Augusta T'Kint!

Another fact that contributed to the objection to the marriage by the Pirlet family, was the entry of a Protestant to a family that was strongly Roman Catholic. To allow the marriage, it was necessary to obtain a dispensation from the Primate of Belgium, the Archbishop of Malines. This was only granted on condition that the children would follow the mother's religion. Therese's family made several tentative attempts to have Philippe change his religion. His response to the first serious words spoken to him on the subject were so impressive, that the matter was never again mentioned!

Therese had the good taste not to associate herself with these advances but to respect the religion and the nationality of her husband. She nevertheless was always cold and haughty by nature and upbringing and did not inspire in her children, the great affection that they had for their father. A large part of the extraordinary prosperity of the firm of Tardent-Pirlet was due to her great talent for her work and her love of orderly method. Combined with these, she also unfortunately inherited some of the foibles and prejudices of her father.

#### A MODERN VANDAL

When she realised she was a millionairess (in francs) she became ashamed as previously mentioned, of her splendid, earlier career in industry and commerce. Bit by bit to the very last fragment, she painstakingly destroyed all evidence of past business activity. She burned her husbands correspondence, melted down or sold the medals as well as other family souvenirs won by their quality products at exhibitions. These gold medals included that won at the famous Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1851 in London!

She knew that there were in the world some Tardents who were more or less well-placed, but stung by the bee of aristocratic frenzy, she wished to obliterate even the memories of a modest origin. She wanted to have her children believe that they were descended directly from the Gods.<sup>(1)</sup>

Therese's efforts were in vain! Philippe had taken care to implant in the heart of at least one of his children, that strong family bond for which Tardents are well known. Gradually experience and even misfortune broke down the many barriers of prejudices, birth, distance and even religion of Louis Tardent of Paris (12.110), Philippe's eldest son. It is due to him that the old, warm, friendly family traditions were renewed and that the

branches of the family, scattered since the days of old David Tardent (1820) were again brought in touch with each other.

Therese Tardent-Pirlet died of pneumonia on 22 Sept 1882, after an illness of two months. To her last breath, she retained all her faculties and a clear mind. Peace be to her memory for she was a courageous woman. If I have spoken candidly of her faults, which derived from her upbringing and her education, it is less by way of blame than to warn our descendants - if ever they should read these lines - of falling into the same errors. Whosoever are ashamed of their ancestors - if they have been decent people - dishonour themselves; who scorns the work that has enriched him, scorns 'the goose that lays the golden egg'.<sup>(2)</sup>

Philippe and Therese had four children: LOUIS and a twin, GUSTAVE born 28 June 1835, who only lived six days; HELENE born 23 Nov 1837 and HENRI on 11 May 1840. Louis had a bilious condition in childhood and only started to walk at two years. His parents were too busy to devote enough time and necessary attention to their children. Louis was entrusted to a governess who prepared him for the Royal Athenium (college) of Brussels. He started at this classy high school at the age of eleven and pursued his studies there to the 'rhetoric' standard.<sup>(3)</sup> He was a good pupil and nearly every year carried off the top, annual class-prize or that for excellence.

This somewhat formal education was nevertheless modified and improved by the traditional family scholastic bent, inherent in Philippe. Despite his many activities and preoccupations, he always found some time to devote to his children. These all-too-short periods of happy family contacts, aroused in the children a boundless love of, and trust in their father. Philippe often took Louis with him on business trips. What useful and pleasant talks they had en route as they discussed a multitude of subjects, which all went to build a wonderful understanding between father and son. That is true education, in which the mind of the pupil is attuned to, and imperceptibly moulded on, the qualities of the teacher.

*(1) Throughout this translation I have kept as closely as possible to Henry's own words and meanings but Paul and I agree on this rather generous piece of interpretation! Henry's actual words were 'sprung straight from the loins of Jupiter' (who was the father of all Roman gods and god of the earth and the heavens!)*

*(2) 'Sic transit gloria mundi'!*

*(3) In those days it approximated to School Leaving or Matriculation.*



Louis grew to adore his father for he once wrote to me 'I would willingly sacrifice one half of my life, if I could live the other half with him'. The great love that Philippe had for his children did not prevent him from committing several errors concerning their education. Louis as the eldest, suffered most from these. If it was desired to elevate him above the rank in life of his parents, he should have been allowed to complete his university studies, which greatly attracted him.

If on the other hand it was desired to give him an industrial and commercial career, he should not have been kept at Greek and Latin for ten years! Unfortunately it was these half-measures that were adopted. When he finished the rhetoric course, he was brusquely withdrawn from college. On the theory that one should be a workman before being an employer, he was sent as apprentice for three years to the firm of weavers, Roff's & Co. of Cologne. One must admit that it must be a rather bitter experience for a keen student of the classics - of Horace and Ovid - to spend one's days in copying dull business letters from morning until night. (1)

Philippe soon realised his mistake; that tho' good in itself, the principle involved was not applicable in this particular case. He sent his solicitor nephew Van Mons to Cologne to break the indentures if possible. Thus after a year that was debasing in his view, Louis returned to Brussels. He was not to remain there long. His mother who was far too partial towards her daughter Helene, did not desire both her sons to remain at home. So Louis was sent to Paris and placed with a commission firm. Life in Paris pleased him just as much as that in Cologne and had been unpleasant. He felt born again in this new and bustling centre of life which suited both his tastes and his temperament.

#### LOUIS OF PARIS

Three years later, in 1858, he took over the commission business himself and gave it his name. He was then 23, his business was prosperous; his life was pleasant thanks to good friends and to his bachelor state, which gained him some popularity. Alas! Why are these golden days of youth so ephemeral, when Life smilingly presents itself in the rosiest colours? It is so pleasant to relax in one's skiff, believing that the sea will always be calm and the wind favourable! And what a rude awakening when the storm bursts! Young, inexperienced and trusting like most honest folk, Louis became the victim of dishonest plotters, to which state of affairs his mother involuntarily contributed. On the advice of one of his maternal uncles residing in Paris, he acted as a sleeping partner and heavily financed an apparently prosperous firm dealing in art bronzes. This firm was really in bad financial (2) straits and Louis lost all the capital he possessed - 150,000francs.

The battered assets of this firm were bought up by the man who led Louis into this shaky business. He tried to revive it but failed again and lost all his money, which was a just punishment for his dishonesty towards Louis. This was in 1866, Louis then being 31. For some years he suffered very hard times. From a position of wealth, nothing whatever remained. He lost all his furniture which included many valuable objects of art, for Louis was an enthusiastic collector with excellent taste. It was with very deep regret that he parted with his superb collection of medals for which he had refused offers of up to 20,000 francs. His mother would not help him or even extend him any sympathy in his trouble and left him to get out of his difficulties as best he could!

Louis faced up bravely to adversity and had of necessity to live in a cheaper suburb of Paris. It was a painful introduction to life's real trials. Having acquired some earlier knowledge of gilding, decorating and flower painting as a hobby, he applied himself to these arts, decorating boxes, fans, trays and the like. Very few of his many former friends stuck to him in adversity. Too courageous and energetic to accept defeat, Louis pegged away and gradually re-entered his former social sphere. After having been accountant and cashier in some banking firms, in 1869 he entered the service of Communal Credit of France. This company decided to open a branch at Geneva and sent him there to establish it. He seized the opportunity of seeing Switzerland and especially to visit Vevey, the home town of his grandfather, Pastor Louis Marc Samuel Tardent (10.148).

He holidayed for several months on the shores of lovely Lake Lemman, of which his father had often spoken to him. Had he then known

(1) *Most modern young office workers have not the haziest idea, of the boring correspondence procedures that prevailed - even in my youth well before 1914. We knew nothing of carbon paper; we copied with a letter-book press and moist cloth while typewriters, used by male clerks almost exclusively, were still an innovation!*

*Till the letter-book press came into use, all copying was done by hand (as did Henry with all his voluminous historical writings - and with nib pens for he could not afford to buy a letter-press. For some of his insurance work he carried a stoppered bottle of ink in his coat pocket - and on very hot days it occasionally leaked!)*

*In the early thirties many old, heavy cast-iron letter presses came into use again in the Mareeba tobacco areas. Farmers pressed some of their leaf into plugs for smoking!*

(2) *Possible 1977 value of \$A100,000.*



that he still possessed relatives in the original 'family cradle' of the Ormonts Valley, he would probably have spent at least some days at Le Sepey. Early in 1870 Louis returned to Paris to resume his work at the Credit Communal till September, when he was forced to quit his work because of the war. As he could not see how he could exist in that greatly disorganised city, he left it on 15 Sept, the day before the Prussian siege commenced. With great difficulty he was able to get through the enemy front lines and reached Brussels. He stayed in his native city till 1871 and only returned to Paris after the terrible days of the Commune.<sup>(1)</sup>

That same year he went to Leyden (Holland), where, on 22 Aug and with his mother's consent and in her presence, he married Miss MARIE KAARSEMAKER, a splendid young woman. She had successfully run a fashion shop after her Mother's death. The young couple intended to establish a similar business in Belgium without giving up the Leyden shop. They went to Brussels with this intention but returned to Leyden after realising the difficulties involved. Louis' mother, foolishly and selfishly did not want them to start a commercial enterprise where she mixed freely in high society. Besides, Therese had only a moderate affection for her daughter-in-law, who had a frank and open disposition and who no more flinched from her mother-in-law's hautiness, 'than an anvil under a hammer blow'. Marie therefore preferred separation and independence and resumed control of the frock shop, while Louis travelled commercially for various Belgian and French firms.

This situation lasted until 1878. After disposing of the Leyden business, Louis and Marie went to live in Paris as they already had business interests in France which needed their personal attention. That same year Therese, notwithstanding her great age (80 years) visited the Paris Universal Exhibition and spent some days at her son's house. Thenceforth Louis and his wife lived modestly, concentrating their efforts and their joy on the education of their children, Therese and Philippe. As both seem to be endowed with pleasant personalities and intelligence (in 1887) they will no doubt prove a comfort to their parents and will carry on the worthy family traditions of industry, uprightness and duty.

The pretty and lively young Therese is being educated at the Sacred Heart College in Paris, whilst young Philippe (14 yrs) after finishing his Bachelor of Engineering degree, will continue with Civil engineering studies.<sup>(2)</sup> A good sound education is better than wealth, for it paves the way to victory along the rough road of life.

Having lived, suffered, struggled and frequented the most varied strata of society, Louis Tardent acquired much independence of thought, an eclectic philosophy and a broad political outlook. Nevertheless, Belgium remained not only his land of adoption but of

choice. He grew up so to speak, with this young and virile country and certain events left indelible impressions in his memory.

For instance the events of Sunday 9th April 1848.<sup>(3)</sup> He wrote: 'In Brussels the weather was beautiful. In the streets from an early hour, drums and bugles summoned all servicemen to 'fall in'. Civic Guards and soldiers of all arms were mustering, to form a guard of honour and a soldier-lined avenue from the Royal Palace to Parliament House. LEOPOLD I had announced that he had an important proclamation to make to the National Parliament. After inspecting the troops the king went to the Chamber of Deputies. In a brief statement he announced his definite intention to abdicate, if the welfare of his country required it and if Belgium thinks it would be happier under some other form of government than his.

While the majority of European thrones were tottering on their foundations, Leopold, by his inspiring eloquence, unshakably consolidated his. No pen can describe, the wild spontaneous enthusiasm of the populace when the king appeared after his declaration. The crowd was in tears. I can still see Leopold on his charger, covered with flowers. Alone with a big crowd and separated from his staff by twenty metres, he was shaking hands with all and sundry. With great difficulty and after much delay he was able to return to his palace.' (end quote.)

#### THE TARDENTS OF BELGIUM

Three years after the death of Philippe Tardent, his daughter Helene was married to Gustave Ryex of Ghent, whose parents had for many years owned an important spinning mill in that city. Mr Ryex Snr. had served as a volunteer in the Hussars of the Consular Guard and the Imperial Guard. He had taken part in several big battles, was an interesting story-teller and was a charming old gentleman. He died in 1870 aged ninety and was sadly missed by his many friends.

*(1) The short-lived '2nd Paris Commune' of 18 Mar to 27 May, the revolutionary government that was established after the siege ended. It was overthrown by the regular army of the Government headed by Adolphe Thiers. (Not to be confused with the bloody Commune of 1789 and the brutal guillotining of many innocent people.)*

*(2) See 13.130 and .131 in Genealogy. I have no idea when Therese and Philippe died in Seoul. He was probably there as a civil engineer. Had I known Louis was in Paris when I served in France from 1916, I would have visited him 'like a shot'.*

*(3) He was then 13 years old.*



A year after Helene's wedding, her mother, feeling lonely and unhappy at being separated from her daughter, invited her to Brussels and gave up her large house to Helene (but footed the bill for its upkeep). This comfortable state of affairs for Helene went on for 23 years until Therese's death in 1882, without her sons having received any comparable compensating favours whatever. Furthermore, at her death this valuable property was legally transferred to her daughter and son-in-law on condition that Helene would hand over a fairly modest sum to her two brothers. No wonder that the Ryex couple were much richer than her brothers, Louis and Henri Tardent.

The Ryex-Tardents had two children: GEORGE, born 1864<sup>(1)</sup> and LOUISE, born 1865.

And now to say something about Philippe's son HENRI. He had only a moderate inclination for study, so it was decided to apply fairly strict discipline to his schooling. He was first sent to the Jesuit College at Brussels and then to the Peace College at Namur, administered by the same famous Order. I do not know how much his natural gifts and how much education, went to form his character. He was intelligent and had a lively mind but unfortunately his will-power, perseverance and consistency left much to be desired. On leaving College, Henri worked for a business firm in Brussels for several years.

About 1864 he went to Paris where he spent five or six years. With some friends as partners he established a glove factory and later a soapworks. He failed to succeed with either of these ventures as he liked a gay, exciting and dissipated life; he found it impossible to follow an occupation steadily and with perseverance. In 1870, desirous of seeing the Franco-Prussian war at first hand and also to aid France in her great hour of need, he joined a company of Red Cross medical orderlies as a volunteer. He followed the French army onto the battlefields of Beaumont and Gravelotte.<sup>(2)</sup> After the fall of Sedan<sup>(3)</sup> he quitted this new type of occupation and returned to Brussels where he obtained work with one of his friends who traded in silks.

In 1878, having become friendly with a distinguished agronomist, Henri went into partnership with him at Gembloux in Namur province, in establishing a chemical fertilizer factory (phosphate of lime, waste-products from wool-scours etc.). Their products were principally intended for the production of sugar beet, a widely grown crop in those regions and where there is an abundance of beet-sugar refineries. If Henri had possessed a few more of his father's qualities he would have made a fortune in this new industry, especially with such a clever and practical man as his partner. But can a partnership succeed in which one spends all that the other

earns? In 1883 his partner died and Henri, incapable of carrying on alone, was forced into liquidation. He did this at a loss and fell into the hands of unscrupulous people, who finally ruined him financially.

On 18 Aug 1883 he went to Essen in the Ruhr where he married Miss ADELPHINE ZURSTRASSEN, about whom I have scarcely any information, except that she was twenty years older than he! The family disapproved of this marriage which it regarded as a bad match. From that time onwards relations were somewhat strained between Henri and his brother. Poor Henri! He certainly had behaved very badly and made many mistakes. But would his life have been the same if his family had not estranged him and had treated him in the same generous manner, as his favoured sister had been?

That, my dear friend is everything of interest that I have been able to gather concerning the Tardents known as the BELGIAN BRANCH of the family. Even though there have been a few failures, it has none the less represented the family worthily in that part of Europe.

Philippe by his own efforts and ability made a fortune of more than a million francs. Nevertheless he remained kindly and obliging. His weakness - a frequent defect in our family - has been to know less about preserving wealth than acquiring it! States, they say, are upheld by the principles that gave them birth and brought them prosperity. It is the same with large fortunes. If Philippe had founded a family of industrialists it is probable that the fortune of the family would have increased instead of waning so markedly.

This hardship was perhaps necessary to bring out Louis' real worth. Although raised in wealth and luxury, he nevertheless bore bravely the heaviest trials - poverty and injustice. Such was the docility of his disposition that even today he has never quarrelled with any of his relatives despite that he has been the victim of some injustices. You will notice in passing that the Belgian branch is the least prolific. Cities are not conducive to the production of

(1) Louis gave Henry this date but 1972 Belgian data shows 1863 and Louise (13.141) as \*1864! She was living in Paris in 1887.

(2) In Moselle District near Metz; battle of 16-18 Aug 1870; has a famous military museum.

(3) City on the Meuse near Belgian border; Napoleon III was defeated there and surrendered 2 Sept 1870, leading to final French defeat by the Prussians at Paris 28 Jan 1871.



large families. Culture is done in espalier so to speak - the fruits are noteworthy but the trunk quickly becomes exhausted. Let us hope that Philippe Jnr., the future civil engineer, will found a family in due course and soon be the head of a numerous clan. Amen.

#### NEXT STAGE of 1887 FAMILY HISTORY

I will now revert to the eldest son of the old schoolmaster, the JACQUES-DAVID (10.140) whose descendants are flourishing in Russia at the present time (1887). Is it a mischance of nature? Is it tribute levied by old Bacchus on this dynasty of vigneron? I do not know. But I must admit it: the first recorded member of the Tardent branch that introduced viticulture into Southern Russia was sired by a drunkard; no more no less than was the patriarch Noah!

It is said that he was tall of stature - a deviation from the original family type - and that he had attained the high rank of drum major in the Swiss militia! He felt isolated in the family of the old schoolmaster David, which was so accomplished in many ways. Because of this his disposition was surly, peevish and spiteful. He was the terror of all around him; such is the memory which he has left to his grandchildren<sup>(1)</sup> who remember their great-grandfather with so much contrasting affection and reverence. You will already have noticed that the old schoolmaster left nothing to chance in his will concerning his unthrifty eldest son; this poor unfortunate who was an exception, an anomaly in the family.

Besides, since this account is above all, truthful, I shall not hesitate to let my pen recount both the good and the bad as they occur. Jacques-David died fairly miserably about 1825. He had married a Miss Clerix, probably from Bex, of whom I know little. I regret this for I see through these misty memories one of those worthy women often met with in the canton of Vaud, who are meek, persevering and pious; whose devotion is sufficient to save a family from shame and decadence.

(Henry then lists Jacques-David's five children which differ in order and birth dates from those corrected in the Genealogy!)

Marie-Louise (11.83) married a Mr. Frederick by whom she had a daughter who emigrated to Algeria. Unhappily married, she divorced and went to Paris where she married a Mr. Plihou or Plion, a bailiff. Rose also lived in Paris, with her sister. She became a rheumatic invalid and could not work. She died 23 May 1857 in great poverty. The two sisters had little education, were of loose moral character and were very poor. They received assistance from Philippe and often pestered other members of the family

with their grievances and demands. I have found no data on JEAN or FRANÇOIS, who probably died young.<sup>(2)</sup> It is through the eldest son LOUIS VINCENT SAMUEL (11.82) that the family tradition of honesty and industry continued. His father's influence over him was negligible. On the other hand, old David, his grandfather, had noted his fine qualities and did all that he could to foster the development of his mind and intellect. He was happy to find not only an heir, but also someone to carry on his own work, for the child resembled him in character, in his short stature, elegant bearing, in his fine expressive eyes and also in his moral principles and intellectual gifts.

After teaching him through primary school, old David sent his grandson to the Pestalozzi Institute at Yverdon, probably the premier school in Europe at that time. Louis-Vincent stayed there till 1804. He earned the esteem and affection of the world-famous educationalist Johan Heinrich PESTALOZZI (1746-1827) with whom he corresponded till the great teacher's death.

In 1805 Louis-Vincent completed his studies at the Parish College of Vevey. On his grandfather's recommendation he was appointed as teacher of natural history and calligraphy at the College and he continued there until 1813. Fond of music and singing, he had assisted in the establishment of the Vevey Musical Society on whose Board of Management he sat for some time. (I have seen his relevant Certificate or Diploma.)<sup>(4)</sup> He also started a music and musical instrument business because he had trouble in making enough on which to raise his numerous and growing family. To increase his income he opened a coaching college for young people. This decision had in addition the advantage of satisfying his love of teaching and of allowing him to apply more freely the educational methods taught him by Pestalozzi, of whom he was an ardent champion.

Thanks to the solid qualities of his character and his good management, he soon had as scholars the elite of the country's youth. He would no doubt have ended his days in this career but for a fortuitous event that entirely changed the course of his life.

#### A GREAT OPPORTUNITY

In 1816 General de la HARPE had come to settle permanently in Lausanne after a most eventful life.<sup>(3)</sup> He continued to maintain a most affectionate and friendly correspondence with his imperial past-pupil, the TSAR ALEXANDER I. The oldest known document relative to

(1) One was Samuel, Henry's father-in-law!

(2) See Genealogy.

(3) See 'Narrative'. Frederick C. de la Harpe is one of Switzerland's most famous men. (4) See Item 65 in Part IV.



Tardent's Chaba venture is a letter of 22.12.1819 from de la Harpe to the Czar, referring to neglected royal vineyards at Akkerman and the desire of Vaud vigneron to take them over. He enclosed a letter from Tardent (to him), the first vigneron to move in the matter - and apparently recommended to de la Harpe by his friend Pestalozzi, as a founder for such a colony of Swiss. Pestalozzi praised Tardent highly as a man of sterling character with a wide knowledge of botany and agriculture. (H.A.T. and Wolf thesis.)

Louis already had five children whose maintenance was becoming an increasing burden. He therefore saw in this bold proposal a means of improving his material well-being. He was all the more easily tempted by the fact that the privileges offered by the Emperor were considerable. These were free land, self government, exemption from taxes and military service etc.

Louis-Vincent conferred with some vigneron of Vevey and the surrounding wine-growing villages, who agreed to join him in this project. To put it on a firm basis he drew up a preliminary draft agreement consisting of twenty-one clauses. I have found this unique document among the papers of Aunt Julie of Vernay.<sup>(1)</sup> Here it is in its entirety:

#### Deed of Agreement

In respect to the colony of Vaud vigneron that is to be established in the vineyards of Akkerman in the south of Russia under the auspices and protection of the Emperor of all the Russians:

We, the undersigned, with the object of forming a prosperous and enduring establishment in southern Russia, undertake to abide by the following clauses of agreement, more readily and hopefully because by the munificence of Emperor Alexander I, we shall obtain free of charge, not only the vine-bearing lands of Akkerman but also the fields and meadows necessary for the establishment of the colony.

Article I) Each one of us shall pay to the Committee that we shall nominate, the sum of 50 francs which will serve to set up a common fund. (Perhaps worth \$A100 in 1978.)

II) The interest from this capital which should increase in process of time as we become more prosperous, will serve to assist those who may be in need.

III) If one or more of us were to change our minds and no longer wish to join the colony, his contribution shall be forfeited by him and by his family.

IV) Each couple, namely father and mother of a family shall receive vineyards, meadows and fields proportionate to the number of individuals that constitute their family and as regards vineyards,

at least four poses for each head of a family.<sup>(2)</sup>

V) Each one of us shall lodge with the Committee the baptismal certificates of all the members of his family in order that the allocation of the lands may be made in a regular and equitable manner.

VI) Each one of us reserves the right to withdraw from the country or the colony whenever he finds it expedient to do so, provided that all the articles of this agreement have been properly observed by him.

VII) When the number of subscribers reaches thirty to forty they will be called upon to meet at a specified place, where they will elect the members of the Committee by a majority of votes.

VIII) The Committee shall consist of a chairman or leader, four other members and a secretary and their positions will be honorary. If the Secretary is qualified to carry out the duties of schoolmaster the Committee will grant him an annual stipend.

IX) The Committee shall be reappointed every three years and its members will be eligible for re-election.

X) For the welfare of the colonists, the Committee, which will be regarded as the governing body, shall have its resolutions confirmed by the government of the country.

XI) The Committee shall keep an exact account of the travelling expenses of the convoy which shall be borne in common with half cost for children and these accounts shall be settled immediately after arrival in the colony.

XII) The parcels of vineyard, fields and meadows shall be allocated by the Committee. (Meadow = pasture-land.)

XIII) Each one of us shall undertake to bring with him a Bible for his family as well as a psalter and a catechism for each child.

XIV) The Committee shall draw up rules and regulations for the welfare of the colony and said regulations will have to be sanctioned by the subscribers but they must not infringe the articles of this agreement.

XV) No member of the colony may sell or alienate his property in favour of an outsider without the sanction of the Committee.

(1) Julie could well be Henry's youngest aunt (AT12.45).

(2) I Vaudois pose = 1.245 acres, therefore area was approx. 5.4 acres or 2.15 ha per family.



XVI) We agree that the Committee shall select and determine the place, type and area of each of our holdings, in order that if we are in a position to construct a village, it may be done in an attractive and orderly manner.

XVII) Each one of us undertakes to bring with him a good carbine and all its accessories.

XVIII) To be assured of the good quality and extent of the vineyards, cultivations and pastures, we agree to bear in common, the expenses of two to four members chosen by us, to go and inspect them.

XIX) If our representatives find the locality suitable one or two of them shall remain to make the necessary preparations and the other or others shall return and give us all necessary details and to act as guides.

XX) The Committee shall fix the time and place of departure which each of us will undertake to observe.

XXI) The subscription is open only to those who are known to be honest and competent vigneron and who can prove that they have the means to contribute to the expenses of the journey and the establishment of the colony. (end of quote)

About 50 families of which I found the list in an old pocket notebook subscribed to these preliminary conditions.<sup>(1)</sup> They unanimously commissioned Louis-Vincent Tardent to go alone to Russia to reconnoitre a site for the proposed colony. He set out late in 1820. After a long and difficult voyage, much of it by sea, he arrived safely at Kishinev, the capital of Bessarabia, where he was sincerely welcomed by GENERAL INSOF, governor of the province to whom de la Harpe had warmly recommended him. Insof took a liking to the young Swiss and even protected him with all his influence with the Tsar, when he happened to become a target for denunciation and slander. The story was related last year (1886) in a Russian historical review (Russian Archives) and is worth reproducing here.

The famous poet PUSHKIN,<sup>(2)</sup> whose free verse and amazing, unorthodox conduct were displeasing to the Russian court, had been exiled to Bessarabia where General Insof was to keep an eye on him and keep him occupied with diplomatic work. The general took a liking to the fiery poet whose incisive and spontaneous wit delighted him, although Pushkin proved to be a very poor civil servant. Insof wrote: 'He is occupied with translation from foreign languages for he is unfit for any other diplomatic work.' Now what was the good general's surprise when he received from his superior the Minister for the Interior, a condemnatory letter. Here it is and

I quote from memory:

#### AN EARLY FAMILY FREEMASON

'His Majesty has learned through his private agents that Masonic Lodges have been formed at Kishinev and Ismailia and that Pushkin has been enrolled by a foreigner named Thorink (or Trend it is not known for sure which). The governor is instructed to set up an enquiry, to dissolve the lodges and to supervise Pushkin etc. and to immediately deport the foreigner who is the cause of all this trouble.'

The worthy Insof replied with much dignity: 'He himself had once belonged to the Society of Freemasons but had renounced it for love of the Tsar. Pushkin was behaving very well and had given no cause for any reproach. If he had become a Freemason it was only out of curiosity and not with evil intent. As for the foreigner Thorink or Trend there is no such person.' After having judicious-

(1) I presume this was L.V.S.T.'s precious 'route diary' in which he made entries during his journey of investigation, and which Henry presented in 1925 to the Archives of Chabag per historian Andre Anselme. It apparently disappeared or was destroyed when the Russian forces took over the colony during the second world war. I have been unable to find any trace of it, despite the efforts of the Russian Ambassador at Canberra, through the kindly personal offices of the then Prime Minister The Hon. Gough Whitlam. The diary cannot be located in the extensive Archives of Moscow Library. Henry says that Louis-Vincent set out in 1819 but Anselme quotes various events that indicate fairly clearly that it was late in 1820. (See Part IV. Dr Gander-Wolf saw all these documents in 1973 at Museum, Belgorod-Dniestrovsky.)

(2) Pushkin (1799-1837) was the founder of modern Russian Literature who probably inspired Tolstoi (1828-1911). Eugene Schanzer wrote to Jules on 18.7.75 that the great poet was featured in a book he'd just read 'Here lived Pushkin' compiled in Leningrad in 1963 by a group of authors. Eugene quotes: 'Pushkin went from Akkerman to the Swiss colony of Shabó 6 (?km) versts from the town, founded by a Swiss named Tardent who was a naturalist and Freemason. Pushkin met Tardent there and according to Lapsandi's account the two men became friendly towards each other. Tardent asked many questions which Pushkin freely answered. Tardent and Pushkin were both members of the Freemason Lodge "Ovidus" No. 89 in Kishinev.' (end quote) Louis-Vincent's only Masonic activity was to attend this lodge occasionally. Enid Tardent (Fogarty) met a clever lady in Moscow who is Pushkin's grand-daughter. She told Enid that the great writer was so impressed with a special new wine made by Tardent that he arranged a big banquet to launch the wine!



ly investigated all the foreigners in Kishinev, Insof concluded that the reference was to a Mr. Tardent, a Swiss who had come to Russia in order to organise and re-juvenate viticulture. It was indeed true that Tardent was a Freemason but he was a modest, steady, industrious man who was in no way concerned with propaganda for the Society of Freemasons. Insof therefore begged His Majesty to rescind his decision which could only be harmful to Russia, without offering any advantage to the government. The matter was settled in accordance with the kindly Insof's suggestion and Louis-Vincent was able to carry on with the accomplishment of his mission.

#### SITE FOR A COLONY

He explored the various areas suggested to him as suitable for viticulture and finally decided on a small locality five kilometres south from Akkerman in Bessarabia and adjoining the town boundary. It was at that time called Achabag, which in Turkish meant the Lower Gardens because grape-vines, orchards and gardens were scattered over the locality below Akkerman.

Louis-Vincent (as he was often called in the family) had at first named the new colony Helvetianopolis (Swiss City). Unfortunately the length of this word and the difficulty the Russians had in pronouncing it, prevented its adoption. The Turkish name, Russianised as Chabag (pronounced Shabba) then prevailed and became the official name. In recent times it became Shabö. This site, on a little bay formed within the lake-like estuary of the Dniester River(1), was wasteland at that time and almost uninhabited, having only about ten huts of adobe (pisé), (made by plastering reed walls with mud) occupied by some semi-civilised Moldavian-Walachian peasants (2). The lake shore of the area consisted of a vast swamp densely covered with tall reeds and coarse grasses that would be good summer grazing. In winter these areas of reed provided important heating fuel in a region devoid of forests and it was also the main roofing material. Of attractive appearance, cool in summer, warm in winter, it had a roof-life of not less than twenty-five or thirty years. The reed fuel was supplemented with cattle dung and grape prunings!

The south west side of the area chosen for the colony extended back for eight versts (ancient measure of 1067 metres) from the river bank, into the southern edge of the great Russian steppes - rich, black loam plains - whereon the predominant species apart from pasture grasses, were many kinds of weeds including sedges, innumerable thistles, tall, plumed coarse grasses and bracken. On the S.E. the land extended to the Black Sea shore.

Who knows what influenced Louis-Vincent to choose this site? Perhaps it was the ancient sturdy grape-vine stems scattered about everywhere and still vigorous in spite of having been abandoned and

neglected for years; perhaps also the variety of soils; marshy, sandy and black, the latter being the famous Russian 'Tchermoziom' of the steppes; perhaps also the nearness of the town of Akkerman and the city of Odessa, fifty kilometres away<sup>(3)</sup>; perhaps the

(1) The estuary is Lake Liman, about 44 km long and 12 wide but only 4 wide at Chaba. It compares with the much smaller Southport Broadwater. In French a 'liman' is an estuarine lagoon or lake.

(2) Moldavia was once an extensive Danubian principality N.E. of Odessa that included Bessarabia and which with Walachia comprises most of modern Romania. The major city was Kishinev. The few local people were remnants of the Turkish era.

(3) Akkerman had a population of 150,000 in 1975 but probably only a few thousand in 1822.

Eugene Schanzer says: 'The city's Russian name before the Mongolian occupation of tenth-thirteenth centuries, was Belgorod Dniestrovsky, meaning White City on the Dniester and that old name is now in use again. The site is that of the Ancient Greek city of Tyras or Tira, established as a Greek colony some hundreds of years B.C. The Mongols named it Ak-Libo and it was later called Ak-Kerman (White Citadel) or Cetatea Alba (with same meaning). The Turks used 'Akkerman' but the Romanians called it Cetatea Alba from 1918 when they occupied Bessarabia, until the Russian re-entry during 1939-45.

The Greeks had extensive vineyards at Tyras. The colonists later on dug up here and there in their vineyards and fields, Greek coins and amphora (wine jars) of great antiquity. The coins, possibly dating several hundred years B.C., were struck by the city of Tyras and were embossed on one side with a bunch of grapes.

Someday it would be interesting for a member of the Tardent family to revisit the present Chaba and review the facts of this family history, with changes and developments in recent years. In 1962 a tentative visit by me was not approved in London, nor was one by Carol Stevens during her six weeks stay at Odessa with the U.S.A. trade exhibit in the mid 1970's. It would be most interesting to visit the Chaba display in Belgorod D's Museum. Odessa, thirty miles distant by sea, was a large, fortified, industrial city and port serving the vast wheatlands of the Ukraine. It was bombarded by the British and French in 1854. Fifty years ago it had a population upwards of 600,000 and in 1975 had almost 900,000 souls.

Odessa was one of the main seats of the socialist revolution of 1905 and Virgile Schanzer ('The Russian Marat') was active there and apparently was first imprisoned at Akkerman.



nearness of the sea and the unusual, ingenious fisheries that the Turks had established on the sea-shore. The port at Akkerman would facilitate shipping the future colony's wines across the great river and around the coast to the profitable market of Odessa.

Several kilometres from the village site the shore of the Black Sea afforded open-sea bathing (a thrilling prospect for the land-locked Swiss!). And finally, the beauty of the site on its attractive bay and the name of his own beautiful Lake Leman, the Lake of Geneva that he had left behind at Vevey, may have established a strong affinity with this Lake Liman.

Whatever the reasons for the choice made by Louis-Vincent (and all the above factors may have influenced him) it was a judicious decision and denoted his remarkable eye for site factors and his sound judgement. The outcome fully justified his estimates as later on the colony developed on a sound basis to a marked state of prosperity.

The different soils referred to, proved to be a great asset and were more varied than is usually found in Russia. Grapes were grown on the low sandy hills towards Akkerman to the NNW. Back from the marshy shore vegetables were grown and orchards established on rich and moisture-retentive sandy loams. The black soil inland grew wheat, barley, oats and maize, the latter being a major crop in Bessarabia. Their village was built on the low sandy hills whilst the best grapes were also established there as the soil was a fine, deep, yellowish loam, rich in the various mineral salts needed for good grape crops. A considerable acreage of vines was also grown on the black soils but the latter were mainly used for cereals and pastures. A point to note here, and which I stress, is that the Swiss colonists have retained the Russian system to the present day (1887) of common ownership of crop and pasture lands. When assigned areas of tilled land became exhausted, the Swiss Parish Council decided on new areas. In the rested pastures surveyors would peg out new areas for each colonist, carefully and fairly allotting the various types of soil. Lots were then drawn and each colonist worked his new areas till these became due for resting, when the whole procedure was repeated. This system did not apply to vineyards, orchards, houses, farm buildings and the like, which remained in the same person's possession.(1)

(1) At Chabag the farmhouses were all grouped together in the village of about twenty-five or thirty acres, as in parts of some European countries, each having its courtyard around which stood the house, combining granary with wine-cellars below ground. There were sheds for horses, cattle, pigs, sheep and poultry as well as flower-beds and some fruit and shade trees; also usually a well. The courtyards varied greatly in area and were up to one

hectare.

Here follows additional data on Chaba added by Paul, when he made a trial translation of part of father's HISTORY. As an alert child he often visited Chaba from Nikolayev and was aged ten when the family emigrated to Australia:

'To establish the fisheries referred to, the Turks had dug a number of canals extending inland 200 to 300 feet and ending in a cul-de-sac. At spawning time many thousands of kiffali, a kind of large herring, would enter the canals to spawn and be easily netted. Some were eaten fresh but most were salted down in barrels and stored in cellars. This provided the settlers with a most acceptable and cheap variation of diet. The sandy soils near the Black Sea produced big crops of luscious water-melons and rock-melons.

The big game of the locality consisted of wolves in winter plus a few bears, whilst on the steppes there were foxes and hares as well as partridge, quail and bustard. In the swamps, in addition to myriads of mosquitoes, there were wild swans, geese, ducks of many species, plovers and other wildfowl. Shooting was the chief sport at Chabag.

The Roman Empire reached its greatest territorial extent during the reign of Trajan (53-117 A.D.). He conquered Dacia from 101 to 107 A.D. Where the imperial boundary of that period traversed the Russian plain, he had caused a big trench or moat to be dug, strengthened militarily every few hundred yards by crenellated towers or fortlets, thus somewhat resembling Hadrian's Wall at Carlisle. Chaba was right on this old boundary line as it meandered westerly from the Black Sea to the Carpathians. The towers had disappeared centuries earlier but the Swiss settlers levelled off the moat in the township in 1823 in order to lay down their streets and build their homes. Beyond the village, even in 1887, one could easily follow the line of Trajan's boundary, as plainly definable as the Great Wall of China.

The colonists restored some of the derelict Turkish vineyards and planted many new ones on more modern lines. Windbreaks were a necessity against the strong steppes winds and those from the sea. The vineyards were bordered with black and white mulberries, walnuts, acacias, apricots and other suitable trees.' (End Paul's noting.)

ANCIENT FORTIFICATIONS (Author's noting)

Eugene Schanzer (15.320) who is very well informed on the ancient shore areas of the Black Sea, believes that these trench



lines were probably of much more recent origin. He says: 'these trenches were on the boundaries of the old Ottoman Empire and Russia. The area was subject to the ebb and flow of many Russo-Turkish wars'. Thus the trenches may only date back beyond 1812.

The truth might depend on the actual existence of those towers! My own researches show many Grecian (pre A.D.) colony settlements in the Black Sea region, but that the borders of the Roman provinces of Moesia and Dacia were some distance away to the west. Paul may have based his story on Anselme's book or Chaba folklore but Eugene's account seems the most acceptable.

When the 42nd. Bn A.I.F. camped near the 1884 or '85 battlefield of Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt in 1916, the old British trenches were somewhat levelled by wind and weather but were still several feet deep - I have a photo (plus an old cartridge base) to prove it! By comparison the massive Roman earthworks in Europe are plentiful and still very plain to see 1600 years after the Romans left!

There is no doubt that ancient people occupied the steppes in the region of Chaba, for Scythian tumuli (burial mounds) occur there that date back about 1000 B.C. At Chaba there also still exists traces of old eroded roads and outlines of ancient Greek vineyards that probably date many years B.C. (*Henry resumes the story.*)

However, let us return to Louis-Vincent! Having selected his site, he returned to Kishinev where the final arrangements were made and these were confirmed in St. Petersburg without delay.

The colony's area covered about 50 sq.km. or about 12,400 acres. Each colonist was to receive 60 Russian deciatins (= 162 acres or 60 ha) of ploughable land and 2 of old grape vines (5.4 acres). This was to cost him an annual rental of 20 roubles 70 copeks but after 20 years he became the owner of the land.(1) (See table of Monies, Measures and Areas on next page.)

The colonists were to be self-governing except that important decisions had to be confirmed by a Russian authority called the Committee of the Colonies etc.

In 1820 Louis-Vincent returned to Switzerland.(2) According to an old pocket notebook which I have in my hands as I write, his voyage of discovery and inspection cost 5400 francs.(3) This covered transport as well as tips to officials and also items stolen from him in the customs offices.

I have unfortunately very little information about the negotiations which followed the return of Louis-Vincent to Vevey. Apparently some of the original signatories withdrew, either because they did not think the prospects sufficiently attractive or the site was too far away or because their affairs had not mended since the terrible

depression of 1816-17. I do not know. However only six families decided to form the first convoy which included: Gueris or Guery, Testaz, Plantin, Maillard, Chevalley and Zwicky of Glarus Canton - all the others were Vaudois. The last two were employees of Tardent, whose family group consisted of fifteen persons. Perrod and Meyer withdrew at the last moment, fearful of selling up their Swiss property and voyaging into the unknown. (See Appendix II, Euranie's Diary.)

(Henry added the following notes on Zwicky to his text.)

#### A NAPOLEONIC SOLDIER - BOTANIST

I met and knew Zwicky some fifty years after his voyage to Bessarabia. He was then over eighty and was one of the finest looking old men I've ever seen. He was very honest, ever thirsty for knowledge and was gifted with a quite remarkable memory. He could bring to life with his picturesque story-telling, endless events of sixty or seventy years before, such as the entry of the French armies into Switzerland in 1798. Or else in such and such a year, and month, and place and the exact hour, he would tell of seeing the Little Corporal (Napoleon) with his grey coat and three-cornered hat.

'Under the instruction of old David Tardent and Louis-Vincent, Zwicky had become an expert horticulturist, viticulturist and a quite distinguished botanist. On sight he could classify and name a plant according to either Linneus, de Jussieu or de Candolle and could quote its characteristics, its flowering and fruiting times with a confidence and accuracy which I have never before encountered - even in a professor of Botany!'

(1) The rouble was then worth 2/- Australian which makes the rental \$A4.14. On 1977 values that rent could approximate \$A40 or about 24 cents per acre - perhaps a great deal more!

(2) According to Anselme the executive committee decided on 13 Aug 1820 to send L.V.S. Tardent to select the site for the future colony. He left Vevey at the end of 1820, was away about 16 months and returned before April 1822, when he reported in full to an assembly of the prospective colonists.

(3) I believe that this notebook was Louis-Vincent's journal of his exploration trip, which Henry sent to Anselme in 1925 after the latter's centenary book was published, as a present, to be placed in the Chaba Archives. In acknowledging its receipt with great gratitude, Anselme says how surprised he was to learn from the diary that Louis had made the journey by sea and not by land as he had previously believed. The sum mentioned would be about \$A530 at the time but 1977 values could well be \$A5,000 or more. Anselme mentions that Louis-V. left for Russia via Constantinople with 800 francs at the end of 1820, so that more funds must have been sent to him by the committee, while he was away.



## MEASURES, AREAS, and MONIES etc.

1 POUCE (Thumb) = English Inch. 25.44 m.m. Ancient French=27.07 mm

1 VAUD PIED (Foot) = 0.3 m or 11.78" or 0.98 ft.

1 METRE 39.37" : 1 Km = 1000 m. or .621 mile or 1093.6 yds.  
1 MILE = 1609.3 m.

1 MILE was originally 1000 Roman paces (c.p. Km and Verst)

1 LIEUE or metric League (old French) was of 4 or 5 Km (2½ to 3 miles) but varied greatly.

1 VERST (Russian) = 1067 m., 1167 yards or .66 mile

1 TOISE (old French : Vaud) = Fr. Fathom of 6.31 ft or 1.949 m  
(1 British Fathom = 6 ft.)

At Chaba in 1850, } 1 Sagen = 2.113 m or 6.93'  
Russian measures } 1 archin = 0.711 m or 2.32'

1 ARPENT. Ancient French land area of 100 perches but the arpent :  
varied in localities from 35 to 50 ares = 0.865 to 1.235  
acres respectively. At Chaba the arpent measure is  
unclear. In Paris a perche was 34 m<sup>2</sup>.

(In Canada the arpent is a length measure of 192 Eng. feet!)

1 DECIATIN (Russian) = 1.09 ha. or 2.7 acres (v/n 2.693) and it  
seems that at times it may have been used as a VAUDOIS  
ARPENT, but is 11.3% greater than latter.

1 ARE is 10m<sup>2</sup> or 100 sq m.

1 HECTARE (ha.) = 100 ares or 10,000 sq.m. or 2.471 acres

1 POSE VAUDOIS = 45 ares or nearly ½ ha. or 1.111 acres. The Pose  
Vaudois was 4,500 m<sup>2</sup>, 1822. Before that it was = 4,300 m<sup>2</sup>

1 SQ. KM. = 100 ha. or 247 acres = .386 of 1 sq. mile.

1 SOU, ancient small French coin of varied value. Was sometimes 1  
cent

1 LIVRE : replaced by the franc. Varied greatly in periods and  
countries; 'Livre' means pound, money or weight.

1 FRANC = 10 cents or was one shilling. Now varies greatly.

1 ECU (Crown) = 6 francs (or 6/-) varied greatly

1 PETIT ECU (Little Ecu in 1677 document) = 3 francs (or 3/-)

1 LOUIS, gold, ancient = 20 to 23 French francs = from 16/6 to 19/-  
English. Replaced after the Revolution by the French  
metric 20 franc piece, called a Napoleon

1 ROUBLE in mid 1800's was worth 20 French cents or 2/- English

1 KOPEK = 100th of one rouble; thus 5 K. = 1 cent Australian

1 PIASTRE (Turkish) in use at Chaba in 1822 = 2.8 cents

1 LITRE = 0.22 gal. 1 gal = 4.5461 litres.

1 QUARTERON VAUDOIS = 13.5 litres = 2.97 gals.

1 VEDRO (Russian) = 12.3 litres or 2.7 gals.

1 POUD (Russian) = 36 lbs. or 16.38 Kg

TEMPERATURES	Cent.	Fahr.	Reaumur	
	100	212	80	Boiling Point
	37	98	30	Blood heat
	31	88	25	
	25	77	20	
	13	55	10	
	0	32	0	Freezing

(E.& O.E.!)

To convert Centigrade to Fahrenheit double it and add 30—  
approximate only.



Unfortunately the serenity of this worthy and respected man was darkened in his later years by family sorrows and he occasionally sought consolation in the 'divine juice of the vine trellis' for which he had a veneration close to the religious. Never did a priest of Bacchus lift a wine-cup to his lips with more respect than did Zwicki!

The convoy consisted of over twenty persons, men, women and children.<sup>(1)</sup> They left Vevey 19 July 1822 and only arrived at Akkerman on 29 Oct that year after a difficult, fatiguing journey of over three months across Switzerland, Bavaria, Austria, Poland, Bouk-ovina and Bessarabia.<sup>(2)</sup>

Unfortunately the trials and weariness of this great journey were nothing much when compared with the privations the courageous immigrants suffered after their arrival. The season was too far advanced for them to even dream of building permanent housing immediately. On Tardent's representations, the Russian government issued them with billeting orders similar to those used for housing troops, so that they could be sheltered through the severe winter in the private homes of the Bulgarians of Akkerman.

It was a hard winter and provisions which were of bad quality, were difficult to obtain. There was no bread but only 'straps' of dough or paste, a metre long, as thick as one's finger and four inches wide that a Turk hawked around on his shoulder, calling out: 'Bedele, Bedele'. It was impossible to obtain any meat other than mutton from the eternal fat sheep of the steppes whose huge tail of fat weighed from fifteen to twenty pounds. The use of this meat day after day develops a distaste that cannot be shaken off.

Occasionally during that rugged winter, the brave colonists longed for the sight of their blue Lake Lemman and the sweet countryside of Vaud Canton but despite this they were not too downhearted.

On his exploratory visit in 1820 Louis Vincent was given a specially warm welcome by the Swiss and French merchants of Odessa, who included two very rich Swiss, the Dantz brothers. These gentlemen later on supported Chaba very substantially.

On 3 Feb 1823 Louis wrote his first letter home to Vevey. Despite the loss of his six horses soon after they arrived (a great blow indeed) he wrote optimistically, extolling the virtues of their new colony and seeking further settlers. 'In March '23 he, Henri Zwicki and 16 year old Marc, started pruning and tending 54 acres of vines, 3 feet apart. It took them 2 months of back-breaking work from dawn to dusk'. When autumn arrived they were rewarded and enthused over 'their bounteous crop of glorious grapes. Some of the excessively old vines they uprooted had trunks a foot thick and stems as thick as a man's arm'!

During the 1823 spring the colonists cut 30,000 grafting buds and cuttings but Louis wrote to the Russian Governor complaining that outsiders were stealing cuttings in a rough and uncouth manner, that severely damaged the parent vines. He also complained of much damage to crops, vines and fruit trees by 'swarms' of trespassing horses, cattle and pigs from nearby areas. Some of the people from their district were semi-savage, causing the Swiss colonists to occasionally resort to firearms and even the lynch-law, to preserve their property!

Count Vorontsoff, the Governor-general of New Russia, most of which comprised Bessarabia (captured from the Turks) had appointed Louis-Vincent to be Inspector-general of the famous but sadly neglected Turkish vineyards of Akkerman, with residence provided in the city's great fortress on the waterfront. (See illustration.)

He made use of his important position to aid his fellow-countrymen by finding them some employment. Under his efficient supervision, the capable hands of the Vaud vigneron quickly pruned and tended the vineyards belonging to the crown and to the archbishopric (none worked harder than the founder himself).

#### ESTABLISHING THE COLONY

In the spring the settlers turned their attention to Chaba where they rejuvenated some of the abandoned Turkish vineyards, planted many new ones, fixed the boundaries of their farmyard - garden areas and pegged out their future village streets. Finally they built modest houses of adobe so that before long the whole little colony was in residence. Once there, they wrote home their impressions to Switzerland, which must have been favourable because nearly every year after and for many years, new recruits arrived to re-inforce the settlement. In 1825 the Tetuz family arrived from

*(1) There were actually thirty in the overlanding party.*

*Anselme quotes the following men as the first to sign up for the great adventure at the office of solicitor Genton in Vevey on 18 June 1822: L.V.S. Tardent, Louis Guery, Gaspar Meyer, Emmanuel Perrod, Jacob Chevally and Charles Grandjean. (See Appendix II, Euranie's Diary.)*

*(2) Eugene Schanzer of Moscow tells in a letter of January 1975 at the time of Joan Gowen and Enid's visit to his home, that for many years an old waggon with four great wheels stood on the roof of the Founder's house as a memorial to the first overland waggon journey by the colonists. This seems quite authentic but I have never heard of it before nor does it appear in any of the several photographs and illustrations of the house in our possession, but these date only from about the 1930's. They were very modest people but surely they were entitled to such a monument!*



Chebres; also that of Huguenin the watchmaker from Chaux-des-Fonds; in 1826 Jean and Francois Besson, Dogny, Gander, Kiener, Hacheler and Baud the pharmacist; in 1828 Laurent and Buxel; in 1831 Perret, Gander(1), Campiche and Dupertuis. (These years are in some doubt.)

This last convoy of thirty-one persons suffered horribly. Twenty-one died of cholera either at the Quarantine Station at Ismail(2), or after their arrival at the colony. This disaster discouraged any further migration from Switzerland for a long time, because the migration current flowed elsewhere (USA, Argentine, Australia etc.) (3).

The 120 families originally agreed on to complete the colony were never attained, so the Russian authorities decided to accept German colonists. This proved disastrous because the two nationalities failed to weld into a sound community owing to difference of origin, customs, education and aspirations. These resulted in continual bickering and recrimination. The expected immediate advantage of retaining for the colony all the lands that had been allotted to it was not achieved. The government then gave a part of these areas to Russian colonists, with the result that today (1887) the Swiss colonists have multiplied mainly via birth increase but no vacant land is available for them. They complain about the lack of foresight of their forefathers and are driven to seeking needed land elsewhere. In recent years about sixty persons have emigrated, half to Australia and half to America.

In 1846 a man of broken fortunes named Cavallo, a Chevalier, son of an Italian count, became stranded and was accepted into the Swiss colony. He became a successful and prosperous viticulturist but started drinking and ended up in misery. It is said that his wife, though proud of her origins, threw all their family documents of nobility into the fire one day when her son started following in his father's tragic footsteps!

The last recognised convoy of emigrants arrived in 1847 and consisted of only two families: Margot, watchmaker of St. Croix and Berthet. The early years of the newly-born colony were rugged and trying. One is truly astonished and filled with admiration when one considers the total amount of perseverance, courage and rugged tenacity that this handful of Swiss evinced to triumph over the many obstacles that strewed their path. (In the colony's early days, the tragic loss is recorded of six of the Founder's finest horses but Anselme gives no details. Editor.)

Sometimes it was crop failure that plunged them into despair; at other times they and their crops were robbed and despoiled by the population of semi-savages that surrounded them and against whom they were compelled to apply the lynch law. This immediate and

terrible punishment was the only means of replacing the mercenary and futile police action and to inspire the robbers with fear. At other times it was a plague of grasshoppers that destroyed in a few hours the high hope of a whole year. Outbreaks of anthrax at times decimated their cattle, or epidemic hit the colonists and put some of them into their graves. During the terrible cholera epidemic of 1836 only three able men were left on their feet: one cared for the sick, one made coffins and one dug the graves!

#### THE 'FOUNDER'S' PREMATURE DEATH

It was in the middle of these painful catastrophies that Louis-Vincent died prematurely, his fortunes half ruined, and though consumed by sorrow and cares, still confident of the final success of his great enterprise. He died rather suddenly from a neglected cold that apparently flared swiftly into pneumonia, probably due to excessive fatigue and worry. Thus ended his dynamic life in its prime for he was only just 48 years of age. His remains rest in a modest, pallisaded tomb where the earthly remains of his heroic

(1) One of the Ganders was the great grandfather of Captain Ganter of 42nd Bn, Rockhampton. Two families left Chaba for Queensland in 1885 (the spelling was altered to suit the pronunciation of the name).

(2) Bessarabian City 50 miles up the Danube and about 110 miles from Chaba by ship; Pop. 26,000 in 1926.

(3) When Anselme published the Centenary Book of Chabag in 1925, he had very few details about Louis Vincent's 1820 journey of exploration or about the first colonists' convoy of 1822. Nor did he have Henry's 'History 1887'. He did have Louis Vincent's Letter Books with copies of all the first eight years' official letters, commencing with Louis' first letter to Switzerland in Feb. 1823 (which he quotes). In 1925, too late for inclusion in his book, Henry sent Anselme L.V.S.T's 1820 Diary and much valuable information, gleaned from Uranie's 1822 Diary and her Aunt's letters (which we have here) and also from Henry's discussions from 1872 with Samuel T. and Zwicki, two members of the first convoy, and with other Chaba pioneers. Regretfully, we have no copy of Henry's 1925 letter - only Anselme's reply AND Uranie's Diary.

The actual Chaba Archives was not commenced till 1831 and its contents are apparently lost for ever, together with all the other precious local documents and books concerning this remarkable Tardent-inspired colonising achievement. How different would be the story had they gone to the Hunter Valley 65 years before Henry's venture in 1887! (Judith Wright McKinney's great grandfather Wyndham went to the Hunter only a few years after Chaba was founded and established the famous Dalwood vineyards.) In Dec '79 we discovered that the Chaba archives are safe and sound in Akkerman!



wife Uranie have joined him, in the midst of the large and beautiful garden that he created with his own capable hands.(1)

Peace be to his ashes. Honour to his name.

*The audacious dream of his youth is today a reality. All around his tomb the trees that he planted blossom and perfume the air. It is on the edge of the village, the most beautiful in Russia, which basks in the sunshine, its lovely white houses set on three wide parallel streets, bordered with acacias whose clusters of bloom in spring diffuse their heady perfume into the air. In the middle of the village stands the stylish protestant church, with its perky clock-tower and spire, where each Sunday the pastor or his deputy preach the word of Him who sustained the hardy pioneers through their rugged trials and tribulations. Nearby stands the handsome brick school where three teachers, one French-speaking Swiss, one German and one Russian, spread among the young of the colony, each in his own language, the type of education that Pestalozzi and his disciple Louis-Vincent Tardent had dreamed of.(2) It equips man for his struggle through life and lifts his soul upwards to the Divine Creator.*

In the school building is housed a library of a thousand volumes, enlarged each year by funds raised by a committee of ladies, who devote one evening per week to various kinds of needlework which is then sold. A Literary Circle also meets in the school during winter, at which volunteer speakers give addresses or readings and hold discussions on a wide variety of subjects from horticulture to the role of money in the state. The ethical and intellectual needs of the colony are also met by two choral societies, one French and the other German, which meet every Sunday; also by an amateur orchestra which ably performs the most varied programs.

There is a Chancellery (Council Chamber-cum-Court House) where the colonists have their legal differences settled by judges appointed by the colonists and where their local affairs are deliberated under the chairmanship of their elected Mayor. The miserable huts of 1820 in which lived the Moldo-Walachian peasants have been replaced by a big near-by Russian village of several thousand souls whose neat houses have their window-boxes full of flowers and whose prolific orchards bear testimony to the civilising influence that the Swiss have spread in their neighbourhood.

All round the village of Chaba there are vast pasture lands where large and small herds of cattle and some horses graze peacefully; there are extensive cultivated fields where yellowing crops of maturing cereals, display in the sunshine their golden hues and their richness.

Finally there are immense vineyards bordered by mulberry and apricot

trees, a veritable ocean of greenery that undulates gently in the breeze and from which the velvety black or golden-yellow bunches of grapes peep out like the breasts of a Kaffir virgin whose blouse is too skimpy! On all sides one sees a picture of abundance and happiness. In autumn the wooden buckets of the women grape-pickers refill again and again the big 'brantes'(3) in which the men carry the grapes to the wine-presses - or if the distance warrants it, are taken to special horse-drawn four-wheeled carts called bossettes, which are large, very elongated horizontal casks, just as is done in the lovely Canton of Vaud in Switzerland. The wine presses made by Hervy at Vevey, of which each colonist has at least one, creak happily, the grapes groan like most things that die, but their 'soul' lives on and trickles gleefully away to fill the vats to the refrain of some good old Vaudois songs, which reverberate in the great vaults where the wine is stored.

#### THE SWISS COLONY'S WINE PRODUCTION

In 1820 wine production in Bessarabia was insignificant but today (1887) 1½ to 2 million vedros are produced. The wine is mostly of excellent quality though a little on the light side. (A vedro equals 11 litres or 2.47 gallons - a total annual yield of 3.7 to 5 million gallons - Editor.) The Chaba colony lands which had no wine-yield at all when the Swiss arrived, have an annual value of 5 or 600,000 roubles today. The minimum production is 100,000 vedros (247,000 gallons) which at one rouble per vedro equals nearly 10 pence or about 8 cents per gallon.(4) (This would probably equal about 80 cents per gallon in 1977.)

During the 65 years of the colony's existence since 1822 the wine crop alone has amounted to the above amazing total with a value of some 15 to 20 million francs.

(1) *It was reliably reported to me in 1962 that by about 1948 the tomb had been dismantled to provide space for a collective-farm grain-shed. (See illustration of the Centenary celebration service in 1922 at the tomb.)*

(2) *Most of the children were bi-lingual, some tri-lingual - some even more.*

(3) *The shoulder-pack baskets still in use in Vaud and prominent at the 1977 Vevey Fete des Vignerons! The man who carries the pack is called a brantard.*

(4) *Relative values of currencies have fluctuated but Henry quotes these figures in 1887.*

Yes, a thousand times credit to LOUIS-VINCENT Samuel TARDENT whose audacious courage, great skill and perseverance made possible the creation of all these riches; material, intellectual and moral!



In 1806 he married Miss SUZANNE HENRIETTE URANIE GRANDJEAN at Vevey. She was an attractive and distinguished-looking girl from Neuchatel and, I believe, was of French origin. Her father, a manufacturer, had married an Englishwoman. The union was not a happy one and a friendly, permanent separation was agreed to. The lady went to (1) Sweden where she was a schoolmistress for many years and died there.

Two of their children were boys, who were swept into the Napoleonic conscription, went to Russia in 1812 and disappeared in the GREAT French army disaster without leaving a trace. The youngest, a sweet, blonde, clear-eyed child, was placed in a good Basle boarding school where she completed her rather extensive education.

For the benefit of those who dabble in spiritualism and the like, I quote here an adventure that befell her towards the end of her school years.

#### EURANIE GRANDJEAN'S 'PREMONITION'

"I was," she said, "quietly lying asleep in bed, when, suddenly, I saw the door open and Death appear with her scythe, just as she is depicted in old Holbein paintings. Here is Death coming to take me though I am still so young! Could I not find some means of eluding her? I rose on my bed, made a low curtsey, "Madame Death" said I, "you are no doubt seeking Mr. Stock (her headmaster); he lives on the third floor, allow me to show you the way". Passing quickly in front of her and taking good care to squeeze past out of reach of her scythe, I swiftly climbed the three flights of stairs and arrived breathless at Mr. Stock's door. "It is here" I said to Death.

She pushed the door open and entered and I ---- awoke, torn with anguish, as the clock struck midnight. I snuggled under the bed-clothes and vainly tried to fall asleep again. Finally near daylight, overcome with weariness, I was very drowsy, when the housemaid rushed in breathless and very scared. 'Mademoiselle! Mademoiselle! Mr. Stock died suddenly at midnight last night!' I cried out bitterly "It is I", wringing my hands. "It is I who killed him, it is I who led Death to him!" They thought me mad and frankly, I was close to it. For some days I was greatly upset and only shook it off when I left boarding-school to return to my father and brothers'.(2)

At the very least this story proves that Uranie had a lively imagination! She was a very charming person in several respects; tall and lissome with fine, dainty hands and feet. She had a gracious mouth, slightly curled at the corners, with slightly sensuous lips, set to suggest wittiness and lively roguishness. Her nose was straight and clear-cut and her eyes were velvety, of an indeterminate colour between grey and blue and were real 'heart-stoppers'. She had a fine forehead on which two wayward curls imparted to her face a definite

stamp of nobility and distinction. She had abundant blonde-chestnut hair which fell nearly to her knees.(3)

(1) Thus we have a well-mixed background, since my great-great grandmother was English!

(2) There are many things that we humans have yet to discover, for Euranie's experience is far from being unique. Myrle Tardent (14.39b) recalls that an incident of almost 100 years later has an amazing similarity to Euranie's: 'When I was about ten years of age (about 1905) I had a very unusual experience.

I had recently spent six months in Bendigo with an uncle and aunt, Mr. & Mrs. Frank Macoboy (my mother's sister) and their four children. Their daughter Nerida and I became very close pals and corresponded after the family came to live in Queensland. Some time after we settled in Wynnum I awoke in the early hours and cried out in distress to my mother, saying "Nerida came and stood beside my bed and said goodbye as she would not see me anymore".

Mother thought I had been dreaming but that day a telegram arrived saying that Nerida had died at the actual time that I was so distraught. She had fallen and hit her head with great force on a rock and died some hours later. This strange incident has ever remained clear in my memory, for Nerida and I had formed a deep attachment to each other. There seemed to be no explanation for my strange experience.'

Hortense, Virginie and Marie-Louise all had at times, a considerable capacity to experience premonitions.

I often get premonitions myself - sometimes of quite trivial things - that can hardly be attributed to subconscious memory. At times these 'promptings' are so definite that one has learned to heed and act on them - or refrain from acting! Twice during the first war I had most disturbing 'premonitions'. Once as I lay in hospital in Alexandria in Nov. 1915 - it turned out that my dear mother was critically ill on that very day - we always did have a very close, understanding, mother-son relationship. Another time on the Somme, early in June 1918, Clarrie Trudgian and I shared a dugout in the railway cutting on the outskirts of Villers Bretonneux. As I was very tired, I asked him to wake me to watch the distant heavy bombardment for the 25th Bn dawn attack on Morlancourt, in which Ossie Tardent was to take part. I slept through that fairly distant 'thunder and lightning'. Because my pal knew I was very tired, he did not wake me to see the 'fireworks'.

All that day I had a dreadful feeling of gloom and oppression which I could not shake off. This worried 'Trudge' for we were close pals and I was usually of a very cheerful disposition and



Uranie had a particularly good education and knew several languages well. Among her accomplishments was the making of pillow-lace with spindle and distaff. She was expert at drawing and embroidery and made pictures or portraits on glass with human hair. I have one example of this last work depicting their Chaba house and its surrounding trees, into which she had worked some hair from each of her children. The various shades blend admirably, whilst the whole work gives the impression of fine artistic talent.(4)

Endowed with all the virtues of a Christian wife and mother, throughout her life she proved to be a great helpmate to her husband, inspiring his love, supporting him with wise counsel and even dominating him at times by her moral strength and calmness.

Louis-Vincent was a good man but he had a lively temper. On one occasion it is said that during a family tiff, he so far forgot himself in a fit of annoyance, as to dash his teacup to the floor, where it broke into a hundred pieces. Unabashed and with perfect calm, Uranie promptly dashed her own cup to fragments to join his. Dumbfounded he said 'What doest thou there?' "Since thou hast no cup, thy wife cannot have one either!" was her reply. After that event Louis broke no more crockery - at least, not intentionally!

During her husband's first voyage to Russia in 1820-22, all the domestic cares of the household and the control of a large family, and especially of their education, fell on Uranie's shoulders. She carried her devotion to this duty to the extent of learning a Latin lesson each day, to enable her to hear her boys repeat their lesson that evening. Always a devoted and amenable wife, Uranie accompanied her husband to Russia and suffered without complaint the rigours of that great journey, the severe climate and the primitive early facilities at Akkerman and Chaba, in a country which at that time lacked most material and intellectual amenities.

After the death of her husband in 1836, Uranie refused several good offers of re-marriage and devoted her life to honouring the memory of her husband, to bringing up her large family and to paying heed to the hereafter. Her moral influence and qualities of leadership carried much weight in the young colony. She reproved the drunkards, livened up the lazy ones, aided the sick, gave others help with her advice and aided the needy with her purse.

She fell asleep finally and peacefully on 3 Nov. 1852, deeply mourned by her family and by all who knew her, whilst the colony lost its finest member. Her mortal remains rest beside those of her beloved husband in the prosperous centre of lovely Chaba, which in the end she had come to love.

If LOUIS-VINCENT was the father of the colony, his wife URANIE can in even greater fairness be called its mother. Even today the memory

(2) Cont'd.

made a deliberate habit of fostering optimism. A week later the 25th Bn on the march, rested near our position and I went off to seek Ossie. His O.C. Company told me that he had been killed in that attack and I have no doubt that my unusual state of mind on that occasion, was linked to dear old Ossie's death.

Explanation please? Strangely enough, I had no premonition of Teddie's death on 31 July 1917 although constant concern for him was always in my mind.

Spiritualism relates to the human personality existing after death, which can be contacted through a medium. One is rather critical of this as one's own exploratory experiences with relevant seances, were anything but convincing! Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, physician and author of famous Sherlock Holmes stories, was a great believer. However, one has a very clear recollection of Sir Hiram Maxim's (inventor of the machine gun) scientific tests of over seventy years ago. Illustrated reports appeared in England that showed up the 'miracles' performed per mediums, in a very poor light indeed!

One is also among those Christians who reject the mass of publicity (and profit for some!) that is constantly presented to us in the press concerning our affinity with the stars. It seems to measure up with the ancient, pagan Greek and Roman Gods and the soothsayers. However, it is a human privilege to have what beliefs one wishes but this seems to degenerate into individual aggrandisement when hundreds of 'religions' spring up as has occurred in one great country!

Parapsychology appears to be a 'very different kettle of fish'. It is the study of phenomena not explainable by accepted principles of science. The main research in this field has apparently been about extra sensory perception (e.s.p.) which includes telepathy, foreknowledge and clairvoyance. I discussed this with the kindly, famous entomologist Dr. Tillyard, a man of vast intellect. He was a keen researcher into e.s.p. and believed we had a great deal to discover on the subject - but resented any implication that he was a spiritualist.

(3) Her grand-daughter Hortense bore a strong facial resemblance to her and had two long, fair, Anglo-Saxon tresses to near her knees till well past 60 years of age! At 10 or 12 years our Joan seemed to be the personification in appearance of Uranie and Hortense, for she was not a Hampson or Tardent type. Zoe, for instance, though of similar intelligence, had facial features of both her parents.

(4) If this picture came to Australia with the family, I have no



of her graciousness hovers over the colony, like that of the ancient Queen Bertha over the canton of Vaud.

Of the ten children born to the founder and his wife, eight were born at Vevey in Switzerland and two at Chabag.(1)

One can say that despite rather unfavourable circumstances and environment, the members of this family have done very well on the whole. They owe much of this, no doubt, to the splendid character of their father and the example he set, but more especially to the boundless devotion of the mother. She nourished them not only at her breast but also with the richness of her soul and intellect.

#### LOUIS-VINCENT'S FAMILY

Some of their family even distinguished themselves, beginning with MARC the eldest (12.100). He was short of stature, intelligent and of robust health. Married at the age of twenty-one to Caroline Vaillant, daughter of a Genevan who was a land-holder near Odessa, he set to work with a will, planted a vineyard, sowed wheat and prospered rapidly. No doubt he would have become one of the wealthiest Tardents in Russia had not the pitiless scourge of cholera mown him down before he was twenty-three. Marc left only one son, Charles-Etienne, better known as CHARLES 'MARCOVITCH' (= son of Marc - 13.50). The Russianised addition to his name was given him to distinguish him from his namesake cousin, Charles II of 'Jolimont' near Chaba (13.77). Small of stature, lightly built and subject to illhealth, he seemed to have a poor grip on life. However, if nature has poorly endowed the scabbard, she has provided a finely tempered steel blade of exceptional quality. Lively, alert, intelligent, tenacious, sarcastic, indefatigable talker, can brag a bit if need be, Charles-Marcovitch is one of those personalities who make their mark in the world, and who, once seen, are never forgotten.

His grandfather Louis-Vincent, noting his natural qualities, took him to his heart and sent him first to the Richelieu College at Odessa. A couple of years later he sent him off to Lausanne where he boarded with the old teacher Rambert, father of the celebrated Swiss barrister and writer Eugène Rambert, whose death Switzerland and the world of letters mourned recently. (1887).

In this cultured environment, of which he always spoke with respectful gratitude, Charles-Marcovitch made rapid progress. Unfortunately his uncle Louis recalled him to Russia before he had completed his studies. On his return to Chaba he married Miss Therese Floken, daughter of a Bavarian doctor who conducted a hydrotherapy clinic at Grossliebenthal near Odessa.

Aided by his young wife who was earnest, educated, industrious, witty and sarcastic, he devoted himself to viticulture with great success. He planted more than 60 deciatins (162 acres) of grape

vines and received diplomas and medals for the manner in which he kept his vineyards. His business prospered and the future seemed bright. Why did he not keep to his first profession instead of dabbling in commerce? Too confiding, too generous for the world of Jew, Greek and Armenian traders with whom he had dealings, his affairs collapsed. Today, perhaps after having lived in too much luxury, he is on the threshold of old age, his legs crippled with rheumatism, disillusioned as to the sincerity of human affections, he is far from being well-off.

Nevertheless Charles-Marcovitch has done a great deal of good to many people who have never said a word about it, while those who lost money through him have shouted it from the roof-tops. He always took an interest in the School and the welfare of the colony. He was Mayor of Chaba in 1870 and Inspector of Viticulture for all Bessarabia, for which services he received from the Tsar a silver medal on a St. Stanislaus ribbon, to wear in his buttonhole. In 1872 he was unanimously elected honorary Justice of the Peace for the whole district of Akkerman.

As one of his best memories he recalls the visit he made to Switzerland in 1859 in company with his wife Therese. He had taken with him two barrels of his best wine with which to regale his old schoolmaster and his ex-college mates. Professor Rambert declared that the Chaba wine was equal if not superior to the best vintages of Yvorne (near Aigle). Now it is pleasing to a wine-maker to hear so august a person praise his wine so highly, and that in the very country of Yvorne and Lavaux, famed for good wines.

After twenty years of hoping, Charles-Marcovitch at last experienced the joy of the birth of a son, Louis Frederic on 23 Oct. 1873.

#### (4) Cont'd.

*clear recollection of it. What we do have is a very old framed, daguerreotype photo on glass of mother, 5" x 3½", which appears to have been taken at or soon after her marriage in 1876. Her frock is bordered with wide, frilled lace and blossoms are tucked in on one side of her crown of plaits. I've known this photo all my life but only discovered in 1973 that under it was a watercolour Hortense had made of it, to illustrate the colours of the frock. It could well be her bridal frock! I've made a slide of the water-colour-No. 4717 of 24-1-73 - see Chaba Museum list.*

*(1) Here Henry lists their commonly used names and other data which is enlarged on Page AT9a of the revised Genealogy. I only discovered Uranie's full name in one of her Aunt Louise's letters of early 1800's. My co-compilers obtained it from Vevey Archives.*

Though a little delicate in appearance, little Louis is robust enough and seems well gifted. At present he is doing well in his



studies at the Lyceum (H.S.) of Akkerman. This long-awaited advent of a son has given his father a fresh lease of life. Despite his impaired health he still hopes to re-establish his fortune or at least to provide his son with the means of doing so in the future.

LOUIS (12.101) the founder's second son, is still alive (1887) and is, I believe, the oldest Swiss at Chaba. Of small build with wonderfully good health, tough, hard on others and on himself, he has inspired those around him (even his mother) with more fear than affection.

While crossing the Liman on the ice one cold winter's night, he had to wait for daylight on a piece of floating ice just large enough to support his waggon and his two horses. Unfortunately his feet were so badly frost bitten that his big toe became gangrenous. The doctor wanted to amputate but Louis would not allow it. He had however, made a small pruning saw (called a tchikmai by the Turks) from an old scythe blade, and he used this to 'prune off' his own toe. The operation lasted several days and was completely successful. (What courage and fortitude!)

Fifteen years after his brother Marc's death, Louis married his widow, Caroline nee Vaillant. The story is told that she finally succeeded in marrying him! He made the most of the dowry that she brought him and as he was frugal and a tireless worker, he prospered rapidly. Not content with possessing some of the best vineyards of the territory, he acquired the large properties of 'Godze' in Roman-ia and 'Tardanovka' near Tatar-Bounar.

Unfortunately this life devoted to the pursuit of material wealth had a sad ending. Louis had only one daughter, LOUISE, who married a Frenchman named Charenton, an intelligent, active businessman of Odessa but somewhat unscrupulous and mercenary. Charenton cast longing eyes on most if not all of old Louis' considerable possessions. He supported his claims by this reasoning: marriage being a partnership we will divide my father-in-law's property thus; one half each to old Louis and to his wife Caroline. Louis to give the whole of his half to his daughter Louise (my wife) and Caroline to divide her half share, between her first husband's son Charles-Marcovitch Tardent, and her daughter Louise by her second marriage.

Result: three-fourths of the old man's fortune passes virtually to Monsieur Charenton! To this argument Charles-Marcovitch points out that old Louis built up his fortune from the fund of money provided by his deceased father Marc, per his widow Caroline's dowry. Consequently it is only justice that Charles-Marcovitch should adequately benefit from this wealth. So the dispute went on. Law suits followed one after the other, in which both adversaries displayed great activity and ingenuity in presenting their cases. All indications are that the honours went to Charenton, who remained wealthy all his

life, whereas Charles-Marcovitch bordered on poverty.

Old Louis has been paralysed for almost 30 years but able to see and hear all this conflict. However, he is quite unable to voice his wishes on the disposal of his hard-earned wealth among his rather premature, over-anxious heirs. He retains enough automatic reflex intelligence to realise his misfortune; his will can be seen clearly in his eyes and in the few words that he can still pronounce but he cannot give proper expression to it. This impotence is constant torture for him. He understands that his beloved riches are in peril and struggles mentally in vain against the obsessions of his heirs, whom he calls in his picturesque, if limited language, the 'bigdevil' and the 'little devil'.

Admittedly old Louis has on many occasions been hard on his relatives and has often merited more blame than praise. Nevertheless in the face of his sad predicament, criticism of him is mollified. One tends to only remember that he has always manifested an extraordinary activity and energy and that he constantly interested himself in the welfare of the colony, of which he was Mayor for nine years. It is also due to his initiative that the fine Swiss Church was built and finally, one remembers that he was not as black as some have painted him. There are indications that in the acquisition of his very large fortune of 500,000 francs(1), he has not been activated solely by personal ambition and if today (1887) he had the power to distribute this wealth, he would, I feel sure, do so in a manner that would bring credit to the family.

CHARLES-RODOLPHE-ADRIEN, (Charles I - (12.102) the founder's third son, proved to be the most outstanding man of his family. Wonderfully gifted mentally, he had the big advantage over his brothers of having had a good education and in having developed his splendid faculties to their full potential. He equalled if not surpassed, his father in meritorious services rendered to his new country, and has left a deep and lasting impression on all of Southern Russia's far-flung grape and agricultural areas.

Born at Vevey in 1812 Charles I was only ten when the family emigrated to Russia. He shared the rough life of the early days of the colony with his brothers.

On coming of age he obtained a colonist's grant of land of 60 deciatins plus a vineyard. But, obsessed with the desire for knowledge, with an urge to struggle against routine and to introduce improvements everywhere, he soon realised that there were gaps in his theoretical knowledge and resolved to fill them.

Determined to complete his knowledge of botany, agriculture and zoo-

(1) \$50,000 then, that could equal up to approximately \$A500,000 in 1977.



logy, he gave up his local activity and in 1836 went to Switzerland at the age of twenty-four. He hoped to spend several years there but unfortunately was recalled home to Russia ere long by the untimely death of his father. However, he benefited greatly from his journey. He had become friendly with several distinguished naturalists and horticulturists. He brought back with him a fine collection of Alpine plants and numerous specimens of plants and seeds which he intended to introduce into Southern Russia. He had also established business relations with a Vevey firm which he was to supply with Russian hides and tallow. These associations failed to honour their contract so he gave up the trade idea to devote himself entirely to his true vocation, viticulture.

Feeling a little cramped at Chaba and foreseeing that the Swiss colonists would soon lose their privileges (exemption from certain taxes) and realising that exemption from compulsory conscription had only been granted for 50 years by Czar Alexander, he sold his local rights and established himself 5 km from Chaba on 26 deciatins (70 acres or 28 ha) of land granted to him by the government. The sole condition was that he plant it with grape vines and also carry out experiments in viticulture. Charles was happy at having regained complete independence and at having preserved the Swiss citizenship which he so greatly prized (although he had received offers of great advantage if he would become a Russian subject).

He again visited Switzerland in 1840 and completed his military service, attaining the rank of cavalry lieutenant. He married at Lausanne a Miss JEANNE PHILLIPINE BALLENEGGER 'Jenny' and returned with her to live on his new estate which he named 'Jolimont'. Aided by his active and industrious young wife, he set to work with great zeal and energy.

He built a fine two-storied house and numerous outbuildings(1). He dug a well 130 feet deep to supply good water for all purposes. Under his creative guidance the barren-looking steppe was becoming an Eden of fruit trees, grape vines, shrubs, flower-beds, the whole carefully and scientifically tended and a delight to behold. He built an immense cellar partly under the house with tunnels and endless side-cellars for storing his plentiful wines. Under such ideal conditions his products were of superlative quality. Each of his vineyards was planted with one variety of grape and in his nurseries he had as many as 240 different varieties which he budded and grafted and thus evolved improved varieties, which he tested out on various types of sites.

His wines soon acquired a great reputation and he won many prizes at exhibitions including one gold, two silver and two bronze medals. He was thus rewarded for his important improvements to the viticulture of Bessarabia and in South Russia generally, including Crimea

and all the Caucasus.

It is said that his famous table grape 'Achauss' which he created, had a great success at a Moscow Exhibition. For this display Charles had ingeniously 'layered' an Achauss vine into a small wooden vat sunk into the earth. After some years he cut it off the parent stem and was able to exhibit a vine in full bearing at the Exhibition, some of its magnificent bunches weighing three and four pounds each!

#### CHARLES I's FAMOUS BOOK

He was not only an indefatigable worker but was also most methodical and observant; he kept excellent detailed records of his experiments, deductions and conclusions.(2) At the request of the South Russian Agricultural Society of which he was an active member, he decided to publish a treatise on viticulture and wine-making.

I have seen the manuscript of this work, which ran to at least three editions in the Russian language.(3) I was struck by the simple yet methodical presentation of his subject, and the manner in which he presents to the reader technical and scientific data in such a way that they can be easily understood by the uninitiated. He opens with a dedication to Southern Russia, after the style of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In it he thanks Russia for her welcome and asserts that he could have found none better elsewhere, nor been happier.

'How can I thank you and show my gratitude? Here are some notes on one branch of agricultural industry, which I have gathered over a number of years and which may not be generally known. Allow me to do you homage with them as a mark of my deep gratitude for all your kindnesses and in my earnest desire to do something useful for Russia.'

There follows an Introduction in lofty language, in which the author outlines the deplorable condition to which agriculture and especially viticulture have been reduced in Southern Russia, due to ignorance and to primitive routine practices. He speaks of efforts to be made and means to be employed as remedies. He then gives an historical sketch of the introduction of the grape into Russia and makes the

(1) *In a letter of his mother's, she describes the big family gathering that attended the house-warming in Sept. 1851.*

(2) *This seems to be a family characteristic, handed down in varying degree, to some present-day Tardents. Henry had it in marked degree, as witness his hundreds of wheat experimental plots, at Westbrook State Farm before they were taken over by a brilliant young scientist, Souter, after he graduated from the early student classes at Gatton College in the nineties.*

(3) *See Bibliography.*



discerning remark, that Greek writers only refer to grape vines trailing on the ground while Latin writers refer to staked vines. From this he deduces that wherever grape vines are grown on numerous stakes as at Ismail and Poukari, the grape had been introduced there by Roman colonists, whereas around Akkerman and in the Crimea, the low type of culture owes its introduction to Greek colonists.

The remainder of the book is divided into the following 18 chapters:

1. Fifty two different varieties of grapes are minutely and faithfully described.
2. Favourable soils for viticulture.
3. Selection of cuttings and seedlings.
4. The method of planting and spacing.
5. Pruning the vine.
6. Cultivation.
7. Disbudding, staking and propping.
8. Manuring.
9. Layering.
10. Burying for winter and uncovering in spring.
11. Budding and Grafting.
12. Is blank in the manuscript.
13. Insect Pests. This is one of the most interesting chapters dealing minutely with exact descriptions, habits, etc. of various insects, their life cycle and the best means of combating them.
14. Vintage and various Types of Wine Presses.
15. Cellars.
16. Management of Wines.
17. Diseases of Wines and Remedies.
18. Manufacture of Vinegar.

The book concludes with some general remarks and a number of woodcuts illustrating the text, and to assist the reader's understanding. I repeat that I have been impressed by the quality of this splendid work which, moreover, has been greatly appreciated by Russian viticulturists and which was distributed throughout Southern Russia as far as the Caspian Sea. Charles Tardent not only preached but practised, and set a splendid personal example with all his viticultural activities.

He also published a brochure on the flora of Bessarabia - a solid Latin-French treatise in which are mentioned all the species that he was able to observe, with their habitat, flowering and fruiting seasons etc. Finally he wrote about the draining of the Talmage marshes near Poukari, a thesis for which the Society of Agriculture awarded him a massive new gold medal.

Charles was very honest in business matters and careful of his prop-

erty but was a charming friend. He had the gaiety and high intelligence of most great workers; he had outstanding wit and good humour. Good fortune seemed to smile upon him; his business prospered, he was happily married, respected and in keen demand on every hand. Sometimes, however, a cloud of deep sadness darkened his brow; he had no son to carry on his name and his great work!

By way of compensation, girls abounded in the charming nest of 'Jol+imont'. All were pretty, witty and appreciated by the best Russian society. Here is a list of them with a word on each:

1. VICTORINE (13.70) born 6 Jan 1842, married her cousin DAVID TARDENT, eldest son of Samuel I to whom she had a large family. She had the misfortune to have her old age afflicted by complete blindness resulting from weakness caused by the simultaneous suckling of twin sons! (1).
2. ROSALIE, 17 Mar '45, died (in?) after having been the wife of Mr Kravtsof, a Russian officer. She had a fine talent for poetry. I have in my possession one of her girlhood notebooks which evince a deep feeling of the poetry of the steppes and a premature disenchantment with life. She had a presentiment of her impending end and may have had some deep spiritual wound of which I know nothing. It is said that she even ended up in seeking consolation in wine. She had only one son, Pierre, a decent lad who unfortunately is a cripple and walks with crutches.
3. MATHILDE, 11 May '47, married Colonel Masto who is an excellent husband. She is an impressive, stately beauty. They have one of the most charming families of five children that I have ever seen.
4. CHARLESIE, born 4 June '48 first married an officer, a Mr. Tolouchkine by whom she had two daughters Olga and Eugenie, who are quite beautiful girls. Widowed, she married a Mr. Sipiaguine, also an officer, and lives at Ismail.(2)
6. ADELE, 1 Nov '48, was first married to Mr. Vichinskoi. an officer. Her second marriage was to Captain Mieville and they live at Akkerman.
7. HELOISE, 29 Nov '53, married Mr Edmund Ruppert, a watchmaker's son from Odessa, where they live. They have a regiment of charming little Prussians and Gretchens with hair as flaxen as ripe wheat.

(1) Modern Baby-care specialists might not agree with this theory!

(2) A letter of Uranie's states that a fifth child was born about Dec '51 but was very short-lived. Ismail is on the Danube in Romania and 100 miles S.W. from Chaba.



8. AURELIE-THERESE, called 'Zina', 3 June '54, married a Mr. Tchewder, a Bulgarian customs officer of Akkerman.

Then at last on 7 Sept '56 Charles heard the joyful news that a son was born to him and he was naturally named CHARLES (13.77 - 'the II'). His happiness was complete and his joy was boundless. Usually very thrifty he invited his friends and treated them royally to a groaning board of generous and varied refreshments. Like all men of a generous nature, his own happiness increased by sharing it. The future appeared to him to be very rosy indeed. Alas! complete happiness is not of this world.

Three days after the birth of this offspring whose coming he had greeted with as much joy as Napoleon did that of the King of Rome, Charles I died from a little pimple in the nostril, to which he had paid no attention but which rapidly developed into carbuncular blood-poisoning. His body rests in his garden, midst the works that he created and which serve as his monument. His memory will live as long as his work and will be honoured for a long time yet in the whole of Southern Russia to whose agricultural development he contributed a great deal, as much by his writings as by the example of his deeds.

Left alone at the head of a large family and of a great agricultural enterprise, his widow 'Jenny' did not lose heart. She married off and re-married her daughters in succession, giving to each a dowry and trousseau, taking in the bereaved ones after each widowhood. She sent her son Charles II to Lausanne where he successfully studied many subjects at the Industrial School of the Canton. When he returned he expanded his father's big property and maintained the great reputation of the wines of 'Jolimont', which prospered exceedingly.

Today his heroic mother has handed over to her son the cares of managing the estate, retaining only top guidance and role of the good grandma, who spoils her great-nephews a little too much! (See Family Tree Sheet 8.)

As for Charles II, he is not only the successor but the personification of his father; small of stature, sallow-skinned, with an intelligent face, the salient features of which are immense dark eyes and a Merovingian head of hair.<sup>(1)</sup> He is less expansive than his father but just as thrifty and industrious. On first acquaintance he appears to be a little cold; it pleases him to appear listless; one would say that nothing 'stirs him up', that nothing interests him. But while he is whistling indifferently under his breath his mind is working actively. He appears to be 'not with it' while others are having discussions but he suddenly breaks into the conversation by hurling a verbal shaft, always witty and original, that

goes straight to the point and never misses the mark!

He had scarcely finished his studies at Lausanne when he married his cousin 'Fanny' Balnegre who is his actual antithesis. They went back to 'Jolimont' where he is not only the head of one of the finest viticultural concerns in Russia but also of a whole dynasty of future vigneron with lively, attractive, intelligent faces, faithfully continuing the traditional family pattern.

They are: CHARLES III, (14.130) born 6 Nov 1879, JENNY, 6 June '81, PIERRE, 15 Jan '83 and FREDERIC, 17 Jan '85.

And now I come to the last of Louis-Vincent's sons, SAMUEL, called 'Malette', (= Nugget) the good, dear old Malette, whose juvenile nickname his sisters still use, despite that he is on the wrong side of 74!

His early education was neglected but he has made up for that by much natural intelligence, by reading and by associating with well-educated people. Kindness is the distinctive trait of his character but it is a shrewd kindness, withal witty and playful. He is an inimitable story-teller. He does not always tell quite the exact truth but neither does he tell lies; he invents stories in the manner of Homer, colouring everything that he touches with his lively imagination.

I know no keener intellectual enjoyment than to go out of a drawing room where everyone is stiff and formal, to go and listen to this fine old fellow relating some episode of his long and industrious career. With an astonishing mixture of Swiss good humour and Parisian banter he charms you with his unexpected sallies, with his words and his phrases, all the more picturesque since they vary so much from those in his dictionary or as are taught at the Academy!

He is still, thank God, enjoying all his faculties and his memory is particularly good. Should you ask him to, he will relate his most distant childhood recollections including when he frolicked on the lake-shore of blue Lac Lemman in Switzerland.

His great-grandfather, old schoolmaster David, would take a rug under his arm and with his other hand would lead little Malette. When they had bathed, had run and played pebble-skipping on the surface of the water, the rug would be spread on the ground and they would go to sleep side by side. What a picture those two curly heads made, close to each other, one white as Alpine snow, the other blond as ripe wheat, both sleeping peacefully under God's heaven, to the splashing of the waves and surrounded by the most superb scenery

(1) *The first kings of France, dating from 457 to 751 A.D. and who apparently had impressive heads of hair.*



that man can ever hope to see!

Malette was only seven when they set out for Russia. What a wondrous array of places, peoples and things for this lively, intelligent and impressionable little boy to behold. He said that they travelled by easy stages, sometimes staying the night at inns, at other times they camped-out in the open country. 'On arrival at Akkerman (where we were billeted in private homes for the first winter) one was as hard as a Spartan. There, one became tough as a Zouave!'

The walls of the famous fortress and the ground near it were still strewn with bombs, cannon balls and pieces of shrapnel, since it had been captured from the Turks not many years before.(1)

From these war relics they would build forts and batteries that they then bombarded relentlessly, right up to their complete destruction and the surrender of the enemy!(2)

Ere long these military exploits were succeeded by expeditions to Chaba. They went on foot, father giving his hand to Malette, while a lean horse pulled their provisions and tools on a primitive cart. Suddenly the frisky turnout of a Russian nobleman, galloping along in his troika would pass them.(3) Samuel, whose little legs were sinking deeply in the loose, sandy soil and who was sweating profusely, would profit from the distraction to stop and wipe his brow. 'Say, Papa, if we were rich we would also go by horse and carriage' (4). "Yes, child, but instead of comparing yourself with this rich man who is an exception among many thousands; why don't you look at the poor peasants who are using the same road. Less fortunate than we, they have no horse at all to pull their provisions; they have to carry their loads themselves!"

Common wisdom, you will say. Would to God that there were still more of it! It has contributed more to Malette's happiness than many books on ethics would have done. To this very day when Grandpa Samuel wishes for some pleasure that is beyond his means he does without it with little regrets, remembering the poor peasants and that appropriate lesson given him so long ago by his wise father.

During the first years of establishing Chaba, they led a truly pioneering existence, often sleeping not in beds but on the floor; killing vipers, taming snakes and even shooting them when necessary.

One day in 1826 when Malette was twelve, some Turkish pashas who had come to Akkerman to settle a difference with the Russian authorities, had gone for a stroll to Chaba. Entering Mr. Tardent's garden they beheld a young lad keeping guard and gravely walking up and down with a big musket on his shoulder. The pashas asked him if he knew how to use it. Receiving an affirmative answer one of them placed a target

a hundred paces away. 'I tore their dummy to shreds with every shot; you should have seen their delight; they all gave me a hug and filled my pockets with ducats'.(5)

Alas! like many things here on earth, this youthful life, full of liberty and charm for Samuel, came to an end when his father died prematurely in 1836. The elder brothers pulled out from home and established themselves on their own properties. Good old Malette, always a devoted son, remained the faithful helper of his mother right to her old age (and also the guardian of his sisters). When the girls were all married his mother advised him to think also of himself, so he set out to find a life-companion.

The choice was not difficult for he was a handsome man with his fine moustaches and his abundant head of hair that had become jet-black and as curly as the fleece of an Astrakan lamb. He had designs on a young German girl, Mlle 'Elise' (Elizabeth) Hagstolz whose acquaintance he had made by chance at Leontief (where she had grown up in the home of a Swiss family). She was a pretty girl with a roses and cream complexion, almond eyes and rich back tresses that fell below her knees. And besides she was so timid, so gentle and in no way pretentious.

Then began the days of love-making, the homeric horse-rides of twenty-four hours to go and embrace his fiancée and return. When they were married the wedding was gay, although neither the cellar nor the granary were abundantly filled at the time. His last thirty kopecks were given to Jean Besson the clarionettist, who made the

(1) *He little dreamed that a future grand-daughter would one day marry the great-grandson of the Duke of Wellington's famous general of artillery who invented the new Shrapnel shell, and have the general's own sword hanging in the hallway at Kingaroy, Oakey, and Brisbane; as it did later on for so many years at Major Geoff Shrapnel's home on the hill overlooking Nambour.*

(2) *Reminds one of the 'battles' between British and Boers that we kids had in 1899 with dry dung from the children's ponies in Ike Waddel's new school 'paddock' at Biggenden (a few cheated by using not-so-dry ammunition!).*

(3) *A three-horse landau or carriage.*

(4) *Pronounced Pap-pa, not as the Pa-par in English.*

(5) *The silver ducat (originally named for the Duke of Apulia in 1140) was then probably worth about 3 shillings and 4 pence!*



whole colony skip and dance to the sound of his energetic music!(1)

After the wedding the young couple set about serious matters. He built a house, dug a cellar, ploughed, planted and sowed. All was going well when fire — the terrible 'Red Rooster' as the Russians call it — descended on them and destroyed house and crops — everything!

What could they do? Little Malette was not the man to be discouraged. With the help of his brother Louis — who reacted to the disaster with far greater kindness and generosity than usual — Malette started work again the day after the fire and six weeks later they celebrated Easter in his new house with his wife, relatives and friends.

Grand-papa is an excellent vigneron and an enthusiastic horticulturist. He has received several special diplomas for the good management of his vineyards which are planted with more than 120,000 lineal feet of various grapes (nearly 18 acres) and for his orchard of 1800 fruit trees of all kinds (probably 4 or 5 acres). It is there that one ought to visit him — in the midst of his garden — the finest in the country — in their pretty Swiss chalet sheltered by a giant oak and an elm planted by him 60 years ago. He has his bottle beside him for he drinks nothing but wine, holding the opinion that the frog's beverage is worthy only of the vine and not of the vigneron! He reads his 'Petersburg Journal' or prepares some clever mixture to destroy the caterpillars, the only creatures that he really hates along with the priests of the Inquisition, whose senseless cruelty he has never been able to understand.

A conversation begins with the philosophical consideration of politics in general and imperceptibly slips into personal reminiscences. Soon the demon of narration takes possession of the story-teller and he entertains you with the most outstanding episodes of his life.

He will tell you about his Pantagruelic(2) hunting trips when he had a big pack of hounds and when the country was so well-stocked with game that they were able to salt hares in casks on which to feed the servants during winter.(3) Perhaps he will tell you again of his famous ride over the Liman of the Dniester. He was galloping on his handsome chestnut horse across the lake, which was covered with a good but thin sheet of ice. Suddenly the ice broke, the horse went under and the rider found himself sitting on the ice twenty paces away. With a straight face he sometimes adds: 'I learned later that my horse had been fished out at Constantinople. The Sultan thought him so good-looking that it became his favourite mount!'

With more likelihood of truth he will perhaps tell of his nautical experiences on the Black Sea when the Admiral, commander-in-chief of the Fleet and the Black-Sea Ports, had given him the responsib-

ility of organising a lifeguard station at Bougaze on the Liman. He may even show you the acknowledgements and the enamelled silver cross with crossed anchors medal that H.M. The Empress(4) had sent him for the services he had rendered to this philanthropic project.

However, what he loves best to recall is his visit to Switzerland in 1866. He travelled all over his homeland and took part in countless festivals; the famous Federal shooting match at Schaffhausen and in the world-famous Fete des Vignerons at Vevey.(5) He did not fail to go and see the ancient house of old Magel at Vevey, where he was born. He then went to Paris and visited en route many horticulturists and viticulturists. He collected and purchased generously as he travelled and came back to Russia with a rich and varied collection of seeds and plants, grape vine cuttings, etc.

Then another glass is drunk and one is taken to see his marvellous garden. 'Here is the rose path; along it there are 150 varieties, (1) A rouble was then worth just over two shillings and the kopek was 1/100th of it. Thus Besson was paid about six cents for his musical performance — a contrast with today's fees for a 'rock' band! These are surely, and not very slowly, wrecking the hearing of multitudes of young folk — and the not-so-young — for dancing is extremely popular today, especially in country towns in Queensland.

*Deafening noise is not music and is alright for negroes in Darkest Africa, where it originated — or in Harlem, New York. It cannot be compared with the thrilling, romantic tempo of one good accordion — even when reasonably amplified in a big dance hall. Rare, but it is done today — and besides, it allows one to whisper 'sweet nothings' in the ear of one's partner, which can be a quite pleasant part of a dance evening!*

(2) Rabelaisian character — humorous and satirical.

(3) Much (but not all) of the rougher vineyard and farm work — cattle tending etc. — was done by hired hands from the near-by Russian village right up to the end of the Swiss era — about 1940.

(4) Wife of Tzar Alexander II. Bougaze is the pilot and customs station below Chaba village on the Dniester's mouth (See Sketch plan.)

(5) A great festival that now lasts for 14 days including the portrayal in a massive procession of the whole history of winemaking in Vaud and the many costumes of the periods and the various peoples. It is only held four times per century. Enid Tardent-Fogarty was tour-conductress of a party of Australians to the Fete in 1977, whilst three of Annette Heinen-Tardent's children were the first Tardents to participate for close on 200 years. (See illustration.)



all of which I grafted myself. Here is the wax mirabelle and Imperial mirabelle (both golden plums); my Spanish mulberries, my grape-vine trellis whose countless stems grow from one single stock planted sixty years ago, now nearly half a foot thick; my long butter pears (called 'ladies thighs'!), etc. etc.'

Fortunate and wise old man! He has gone through life and his mistakes without losing his wittiness and good nature. He is still a philosopher and optimist despite the wickedness of men and the disheartening disasters of nature. He loves young people sincerely and all activity and life.

The last few years he has been unafraid of antagonising the local conservatives, the sanctimonious and the hypocritical, by converting at his own expense the little park area adjoining his house into a recreation garden. It contains a dance-hall, various games and also a stage where amateur groups of touring companies give performances in the several languages in common use.(1)

This daring new venture of Malette's has started an attraction for tourists to visit Chaba in large numbers, so that it might even become the Montreux of Southern Russia!

His wife has valiantly supported him throughout his long career and we hope to celebrate the Golden Wedding of this grand couple in a few years time. Grandma battles obesity by ceaselessly trotting about and keeping watch on the household chores and the cultivation of her beloved flowers. Her glass-house and flower garden are really beautiful and cast a breath of sweet, joyous poetry over the declining years of this vigorous old couple.

Their house has always been a gracious and hospitable home but they are not rich. However, God has blessed their hard work and they have the joy of seeing all their children well started in life. An honest financial ease, fruits of their labour, will allow them to reach the end of their old age without many worries. Grandpapa Samuel is the soul of the Tardent family in Russia today. It is he who maintains its unity by his frequent and witty letters to its members scattered almost everywhere from Nikolayev and Sebastopol to as far as Riga in Latvia and Erivan in the Causasus. Every year at St. Sylvester's Day the whole Tardent family gather at his home.(2)

When he is seated at the head of their great dining table, one likens him to an Old Testament patriarch at the head of his tribe. It is then delightful to see him with his face radiating happiness and with his bright, twinkling dark eyes framed in the halo formed by his long white beard and thick snowy hair.

He is adored by his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. For them there is always a piece of fruit or a sweet somewhere in

his pockets or at least a caress or a pleasant word for each.

He is a splendid old man; may he live long to continue giving happiness to all his relatives. Now at the end of his active career, he says he has nothing with which to reproach himself except a few peccadillos in the matter of sex. It is so long ago that he feels no great repentance; he clicks his tongue naughtily, like a wine-buff at the memory of a good wine!

Samuel had eight children: 1. DAVID, 28.7.1838 (13.80); 2. EDQUARD, 12.8.'42; 3. VIRGINIE, 30.7.'44; 4. NAPOLEON, 31.1.'48; 5. SAMUEL II, 4.9.'60; 6. LEONIDE, 29.10.'52, † 15.7.'66; 7. HORTENSE, 4.8.'57 and 8. AURELIE, 7.6.'65.(3)

David had a rather stormy youth that troubled his parents a little but he became a good husband and father and had a large family. He had a different mother from that of his brothers but was accepted and loved by all and does honour to the family. He is tall, with grey eyes and a blond beard. From his father he has inherited optimism and good fellowship but can be a little caustic. He has a lively disposition but also a conciliatory nature. He was elected Prefect of Chaba at a time when there was local strife and discord.(4).

His first term of four years was noted for good administration; for the lively impetus to restoration of the school; for the beautification of Chaba Village and the establishment of a kephir and koumiss factory.(5) In short, he transformed Chaba into a tourist and health

(1) Probably French, German, Russian, Roumanian and also perhaps even Turkish and Moldavian. Henri Samuel (15.340) told me that he knew all these - several of them very well.

(2) the 31st of Dec. for in Switzerland New Year's Day is their main Christmas-time day of festivity.

(3) Hortense's date is correct; the others are 12 days ahead (by the old calendar).

(4) Local-Authority Administrator - of Chaba's elective Council.

(5) Kephir or Kefir is a sourish, fermented drink made from whey in the Caucasus and sometimes used in Europe as a food for invalids. Koumiss resembles kephir and is made from the milk of mares, asses and cows. It is a favourite drink of Tartars and other wandering tribes of Central Asia. These drinks must closely resemble the pleasant, refreshing, non-alcoholic 'Rivella' that 'we two oldies' enjoyed so much with Marguerite and Michel in 1962, seated in warm, bright sunshine at 6000 ft on top of the Niederhorn Mtn with a superb view across Interlaken to the great Jungfrau and the majestic Bernese Alps. This was also a romantic day



centre where invalids worn out by exhausting city life, come to breathe pure air, to take a grape and milk 'cure' and to restore their impaired health(1).

In civic and social matters a noticeable improvement occurred. Swiss and Germans tolerated each other with more patience. They found that the new industry introduced to Chaba provided not only profit but some compensation in case of crop failure. They finished up rendering justice to David. He has just been re-elected for a new term despite that Chaba has been included in an extensive new electoral subdivision, formed by the addition of German colonies of the district.

His civic position is important in regard to the general welfare and is a distinct honour for David. He devotes all his time to public business but neglects his own affairs which are presently on the down grade. David married his first cousin Victorine, eldest daughter of Charles I of 'Jolimont'. He ends the little note I asked him to write about his family with these words:

'May our descendants be grateful towards the country that has welcomed us as children and may they follow our example of cultivating well the land our 'foster-mother' gave us. Above all, may they not neglect their wives, so as to maintain and increase into the far-distant future, this good Tardent seed which has already endured for centuries!'

To add example to precept David had twelve children! :

1. EUGENIE (14.140) born 27.11.1860, married Edouard (or Gustave?) Forney, Vigneron, of Chaba and has 4 children (1887) (2).
2. VICTOR, 21.3.'63; handsome, blonde like father, good worker; married Mlle Bauer of Odessa.
3. ADELE, 19.8.'65; pretty, capricious, charming blonde with a fine contralto voice.
4. ALICE, 24.12.'67, lovely blue eyes, good singer, married Gustave (or Edouard?) Forney.
5. CECILE, 13.2.'71, has two shiny, dark-brown cherries for eyes!
6. GEORGE and twin? 7. HELENE, 7.4.'73 (1972 Geneal. shows latter \*'75).
8. ADRIEN, 3.10.'77.
9. LEONARD PAUL and twin 10. ROMAIN, 16.1.'81.
11. AUGUSTA-MERY, 10.10.'83 and
12. HENRIETTE-HORTENSE, 1885 (both 11 & 12 were still-born).

EDOUARD (13.81), Samuel's second son, is tall, has dark brown eyes and hair and a sun-tanned complexion. He has always been a good son, zealous worker and respectful to his parents. He married a Polish girl, Wandeline von Bram, 'Vanda', daughter of the prefect of police of the Russian village adjoining Chaba. Because his wife did not share his love of country life, he leased his farmer's right and vineyards and became a railways officer at Volotchisk, Odessa, Blelostok and then deputy station master at Teraspol. He has become patriotically Russian. In 1887 he resigned and settled once more in Chaba.(3)

(5) *Cont'd.*

*for dear 'Mimi' and Michel, because it was hereabouts that this wonderful couple became engaged!*

(1) *The European grape-cure consists of holidaying at or near a vineyard and living almost entirely on grapes - a mono-diet and a pleasant one, prescribed to cure most ills! Add a milk diet to the grapes and one should be able to cure almost any human complaint, especially the 'fast-life' variety. Rest in pleasant surroundings is usually part of the treatment.*

(2) *Henry's 1887 Tree only shows 3 of Eugenie's children, named somewhat differently from those in the 'Genealogy 1972' Q.V., which was presumably checked by the Chaba expatriates at Lausanne. From elsewhere I have birth dates for Eugenie's children: LOUIS 1878, JULIE 1881 and VICTOR 1883. Either the expatriates or Henry may have confused the families of 14.140 and 14.143 but Henry lived among them at the time (1887).*

*Of David's descendants the only ones bearing the Tardent name that might be alive today (probably with the name Russianised) are descendants of: (A) Victor's (14.141) large family of children; and (B) Leonard PAUL II's, son of DAVID 15.290.*

*Descendants on the female side might also exist per: GEORGES Forney's 3 sons (16.530); LUCIEN Forney's 2 sons (16.535) and VICTORIA's son VALERIC (16.550).*

(3) *He died in 1889. Henry says that they had no children but Louis (14.160) was probably born to them (perhaps in 1888) after Henry wrote these notes or went to Australia. Louis left Chaba in 1930 and went to the new Swiss Colony of Osnova near Kherson on the Dnieper River.*

VIRGINIE (13.82) is a pretty, brown-eyed brunette. She married Leon Schanzer, a German chemical engineer and they had fifteen children.(1) Only four are still living. She is a person of head and heart, speaks and writes four languages fluently and is highly intelligent.(2) She is the most deeply devoted wife I have ever known



but unfortunately fate has persecuted her cruelly. A shipwreck, three fires and losses of all kinds have severely damaged the finances of her husband. He is a very honest, hard worker and a battler whom nothing has ever defeated. I do hope that their affairs will prosper and allow them to enjoy a well-deserved affluence in their old age. Their son VIRGILE (14.188) shows great promise and is at present completing his education at the Classical Gymnasium (College) at Nikolayev.(3)

NAPOLEON (13.83) is short but stocky, muscular and of Herculean strength; I have never seen arms so solidly set in massive shoulders. His uncle Louis had all but adopted him and had promised to see to his future. Because of intrigues on the part of Louis' heirs of which I have spoken earlier, this has not eventuated.

Napoleon married a young Chaba girl, Emilie Besson who brought him a fine dowry, as well as rather feeble health and a character which lacks a little as regards gentleness and charm.

Napoleon was estate manager for the Demidoff family for some years. At present he is directing his own affairs. Given almost solely to the pursuit of material things, like Uncle Louis, he succeeds very well at it. He is a great worker and if he succeeds in conquering over-fondness for grape juice, he will ere long be the richest of the new generation Tardents. Unfortunately he has no son, so that this fortune is destined to pass to other families because of the dowry system. He has only one daughter, the pretty, fair-haired, blue-eyed ALEXANDRINE (14.170).

His brother SAMUEL II is also of short build and has the same alert small, dark-brown eyes of his mother, whilst his most distinctive feature is his exceptionally long moustaches which have a striking range of colours! Samuel, younger son of his father, has set himself the task of following the same traditions set by his sire and loyally assists his parents in their old age. His aged father has entrusted him with the management of his vineyards, reserving for himself only one favourite vineyard as well as his beloved garden.

Samuel married a German girl at Odessa, Wilhelmine Zauze, called 'Mina'. She is a charming person, gay as a Provençale, industrious and thrifty as an ant, clean as a Dutchwoman, and who has created a delightful home. Not a speck of dust can one see, but only flowers and knick-knacks everywhere. The two windows of her drawing-room which open onto the main street of Chaba (Rue de la Harpe) are framed with ivy and other creepers, set above hydrangeas and geraniums. All this produces a delightful effect.

Samuel's young family is increasing rapidly, but as he owns very little property he has sought to augment his income by the sale of wines and cream of tartar (which is a by-product of wine making).

(1) Eugene Schanzer tells me in a letter that he gave to Joan Gowen (written in passably good English) about his grandfather Leon. He was a German chemical-technology engineer and had his own winery in Odessa where he made wines and cognac. He was even awarded a medal for the quality of his wines but was a failure as a businessman. His winery was burned to ashes so he built another at Akkerman but it was also destroyed by fire. Leon then became an engineer at a steel mill. Early in the 1900's he designed a metro (underground railway) for Moscow but his project was rejected. (One wonders if the spectacular modern Moscow Metro was based on Leon's plans. I know not - but Virgile was almost certain to have known about his father's project. As the city is so vast and needed such a means of transport - the aristocracy had their carriages - it may have been revived among Lenin and his associates. The Metro was established in 1935.)

Eugene says that Leon's father, Maximillian, lived in Vienna and owned forest lands in the Carpathian Mountains - then part of Austria-Hungary. Leon quarrelled with his father and decided to go to England. He embarked at Hamburg but the ship sank in the North Sea and Leon was saved by an English lifeboat after a harrowing experience.

With no relatives there for guidance and help but having 'a great deal of energy and drive', he entered London University. That year his father called him back to Vienna (having pardoned him - or vice versa!) but they again quarrelled. Leon then went to his father's Carpathian logging projects. In about 1863 he was on board a big raft of pine and beech logs, being floated down the Dniester to Russia when a storm tore the raft apart. Tossed into the river he swam ashore and with great difficulty struggled through the great reed swamp that bordered the river.

On the river road he saw a pleasant house at whose gate stood a lovely maiden - Virginie Tardent - and she naturally rushed to the rescue of the exhausted and near-drowning young man! It must have been 'love at first sight' for within a fortnight he proposed and ere long they were happily married.

Chance meetings that end in marriage are not very rare but this one of my oldest Aunt, must surely be one of the most unusual and romantic!

(2) In Virginie's widowhood we had news from her in the 1920's, when she was matron of the maternity hospital at Tighnia (Bendery) near Tiraspol on the Dniester.

(3) See footnote (1) in the Genealogy (AT 15-a). Our family has certainly produced a great variety of 'characters' with a quite amazing array of achievements! The book 'The Russian Marat' on



Although taken down once by a rogue associate, he has succeeded moderately well. He has a flair for business, has audacity and a persuasive eloquence that captivates the prospective customer.

He also has great initiative and it is to him that Chaba owes the possession of a good wharf that allows him to export his wines direct to Odessa, instead of travelling the heavy, sandy road and be shipped from Akkerman. The malicious ones were laughing up their sleeves to see the sacrifices that he was making to build his wharf. That same year, however, Samuel rented it to a company at a price equal to the capital cost! Today all the local wines, wheat and fruit etc. are exported over this wharf. In summer a regular service of steamers, motor-launches and boats land travellers on the quay up to five times per day! If his intention to organise a direct connection between the future railhead at Bosinovet and Chaba succeeds, the latter could become an important warehouse centre for the produce of Southern Bessarabia. This would create serious competition for the nearby city of Akkerman.

I forgot to mention that Samuel, like his father, is a really great gun shot and hunter. In the many pigeon-shoots organised by the sportsmen of Akkerman, he has been proclaimed 'king of the shoot' many times; an honour that he sometimes concedes only to his cousin Charles of 'Jolimont'.

LEONIDE (13.85) was a pretty brunette who unfortunately died of a bad chill aged only fourteen (probably pneumonia).

HORTENSE (13.86) is a quite remarkable example of atavism(1). She closely resembles her grandmother Uranie, from whom she inherits not only the slender graceful figure, the clear eyes with their soft, deep expression, the abundant light chestnut-brown hair, but also the natural kindness, conciliatory affectionate nature, devotion, the bent for education and the arts, a lively poetic imagination and a bright and flowing style of writing. Her letters are little masterpieces of grace and facile expression.

In June 1876 she married a distant relative, HENRI TARDENT (13.23) who came by chance to Chaba from Switzerland and by whom she had twelve children. She lives a somewhat retired life at Nikolayev although a success in society. She devotes all her time to household cares and the education of her family of which she is truly the soul and the inspiration.

AURELIE, the youngest child was born 8 years after Hortense and when her parents were middle-aged. This seems to have affected her health, education and even her morale. She is a pretty, lively and mischievous brunette, who dances well. At 19 she married a Russian, Mr. Lobanoff, who is secretary to the Police H.Q. at Chaba. They seem to have had a painful start in married life in every respect(?)

but were prospering, when on 4.1.'87 their house, all their precious possessions and the year's harvest were destroyed by fire. A few days later their son (and only child) Leonide was born. They went to live with the grandparents (Samuel I) who had hoped for peace and quiet in their old age but who seem to devote themselves to saving the shipwrecked and taking in waifs!

Dear kinsmen, the Russian Branch of the family is so luxuriant that you will have some difficulty in finding your bearings(2). I will now return to the daughters of the founder, Louis-Vincent. To characterise them briefly: all have been pretty and more or less flirtatious excepting Louise who died aged 5.

(3) *Cont'd.*

*Virgile's life, was published in 1969. The drawings of him therein closely resemble a typical, bearded Tardent of those days with strong aquiline features and a broad, intelligent forehead. He obviously had strong leadership qualities. His memory is widely and highly respected even today in Russia, as the close colleague of Lenin - especially at the time of the 1905 revolution.*

*One can only wonder what his thoughts would be on the individual freedom of expression in Russia today - and on men like Solhenitzyn!*

(1) *Atavism is the resemblance to ancient ancestors, tho' in this case the 'skip' is only one generation.*

*When our Joan (15.70) was a child, people were puzzled by her attractive cream and roses complexion and her blond plaits, so different from the features of Cora and Jules. One only has to see the portrait of Uranie or to have known Hortense, to see clearly that Joan is another striking example of atavism, in marked contrast to Zoe and Peter, who so strongly resemble the best traits of both their parents. Zoe is especially alert and extremely resourceful - in fact initiative personified - not uncommon family traits, down through the centuries.*

(2) *After 90 years members of that same Branch have, as far as we know, either failed to reproduce, have returned to Switzerland or flitted to far countries. Only a few distinguished members remain in Russia. 'sic transit gloria mundi' indeed!*

*In the book on Virgile Schanzer's life, 'The Russian Marat', mention is made by its co-author-researchers of talking to Prokovia Gabriel Tardent, of about 35 to 40 years of age, at Chabo in 1963. This might be another Gabrielle of about that age tho' I have no news of or contact with Andre Anselme's daughter. Further enquiries are proceeding.*



EMMA (12.105) the eldest, married Major Koutcharovsky at Chaba. As he was also a landed gentleman Emma spent nearly all her life on his estate in the pretty countryside of Scouliany near Kishinev, where she reared her family of six. She had three sons and three daughters, at present all quite well placed. Several of them have physical and intellectual traits inherited from the Tardent side. I did not know Emma, who died in 1874.

ANTOINETTE (12.107) is called 'good Aunt Antoinette'. In 1841 she married the quarantine officer at Bougase, a Mr. Sarchinsky. They had only one child, a girl Emilie. Aunt Antoinette still lives at Chaba on the modest income from her house plus a small pension from the government. Antoinette's qualities resemble those of 'Malette' for she is kindness itself and a jewel of a grandmother. Unmindful of self, she is forever concerned about the happiness of others. She must have been beautiful, for even today in her early old age she has refined features that radiate kindness and affection. Despite her limited finances, she bears with resignation and pride the added burden of caring for her grandchildren, Rosalie, Malvina and Henri Kitzinsky, who were orphaned without means at an early age.

URANIE II (12.106), 1819-46, spinster. Born two or three years before the waggon train left for Russia, she was considered too young for the great trek - Antoinette was only one - she was left in the care of a Tardent aunt called Zwall(?) of Villeneuve. This was a great misfortune for Uranie because it deprived her of the beneficent influence of her mother and family. Badly reared by her rapacious aunt, whose morals were later strongly suspect, she was poorly educated and arrived in Russia aged sixteen. Lazy, careless, talkative and flirtatious, she was a great affliction for her family and especially for her mother who vainly did her utmost to reform her. It was too late - the twig was already hopelessly bent. Fortunately for her and for her people she died young, exhausted by precocious behaviour and fiery passion.(1)

CAROLINE, born 1826, married Colonel Soudkovoi by whom she had six children. She gave them the most flamboyant names that she could recall from her studies of history and mythology: CLEOPATRE, ZINAIDE, VALENTINE, OLYMPE, LYDIA and APOLLON! This last was a poor, puny, deformed little fellow who fortunately died when aged seven. Caroline is above all else a woman of the world and has married off all her daughters 'advantageously'. Unfortunately her great interest in things material has obscured her judgement on the true conditions for married happiness. I doubt if any one of her daughters is really happy.

When she became a widow she found that her pension as the relict of a colonel was not sufficient to maintain her living standards, so

at fifty-six she married an old and patient admirer, the worthy and honest Colonel Sporre, of Swedish descent. Do not laugh, but Aunt Caroline has remained so young in heart and mind and she is so lively and gay, that enhances any conversation - and with much grace. She therefore has all that is needed to keep a husband happy (who is content with a pleasant home and the pure joys of platonic love!) She lived very happily indeed for some years at Toukoun, near Riga in Latvia. Then her husband fell ill and she accompanied him to the Caucasus where he died at Piatigorsk in 1885. At the present time she lives at Odessa on her pension plus a handly little fortune that her grateful husband left her.

AURELIE (12.109) is the youngest of the founder's daughters and is also the most outstanding. She has enjoyed more of the close and elevating company of her mother than the other children and this has greatly enhanced her education.

When only twenty and knowing all too little about life, she married a man much older than herself, Admiral Louzanof, commander of the Danube fleet. Her husband was a good and honest man but was churlish and jealous. Aurelie realised ere long that she must give up any hope of a really happy married life so she devoted herself entirely to charitable works and to the social duties that her high position in society demanded. She also busied herself a great deal with the family, using her influence to marry off her nieces and great-nieces as advantageously as possible. It is to her kindly help that I owe several details that have been used in compiling this account.

An aristocrat at heart, Aunt Aurelie is very reserved and haughty with a newcomer but to anyone who gains her confidence she becomes warm-hearted and friendly. She is a charming woman, lively, highly intelligent, sparkling with wit and good humour but withal very sensible. She is well-read and well-versed in the ways of the world. When her husband died she had to face a costly lawsuit against his relatives, in the course of which she showed great understanding of business matters and indomitable energy. After an endless variety of successes and defeats she ended by winning her case before the Directory Senate which in Russia is the court of final appeal. Nowadays Aunt Aurelie spends the summer travelling

*(1) How fortunate are those who have been reared in a good family environment! Henry is kind to her memory in his comments on Uranie II. It is sad that for thirteen years her parents were unable to make the three months journey overland to get her, nor could a young girl travel alone. Aunt Louise's letters from Dessau are tragically enlightening, for she had learned sad facts that were quite unknown to Uranie's parents.*



and the winter at Sebastopol, where she lives on the income from her fine house and her admiral's widow pension. She is much sought after in local society of which she is one of the leading lights. (I forgot to mention that for some time she made a name for herself as head of the Young Ladies Gymnasium (College) at Sebastopol.)

VALERIE (13.120) was her only child. After having been given an excellent education at the select 'Institute' for noblemen's daughters at Odessa, she married one of those disordered and perverse beings such as are portrayed in the works of the most realistic Russian writers. Death fortunately delivered her from this monster, who could only have caused her endless suffering. She then married very happily, an officer in the Imperial Navy, Mr. Grammaticof, a good and worthy man.

Here I am, dear kinsmen, at the end of my second chapter. You can see that the family has found a favourable new environment in Russia, that it has multiplied remarkably and has also distinguished itself. Let us hope that in future it will be able to maintain the high standard of its splendid beginnings and that those who follow on will never endanger the traditions of culture, honesty and hard work that the family brought to this region

### HENRY'S CHAPTER III, 1887

Let us now return to 1660 and I will endeavour to outline briefly some events in the lives of the members of the Swiss branch, the oldest one of the family.

If one day I could revisit the Ormonts I should be able to touch up some of what follows with verified and additional facts. I've told you before that due to lack of documents I am somewhat confused at times, especially as regards persons of the 1700's.

(Henry got his many Davids etc. mixed here and I've sorted them out according to Helene's researches as follows:(author.)

'DARK DAVID' (8.82) who moved from Ormonts to Montreux in 1740, does not appear to have achieved much because his son, the 'regent of Vevey' never mentions him in his letters. Another ABRAM (JJ 10.10) was elected Chatelain seven times in succession, a total of 21 years.)

ABRAM (8.71) 'Dark David's' brother was of outstanding character, typical of the old Swiss magistrates of the mountains, severe on others - and on himself. However, he had an open mind, receptive to new ideas and to change, as witness the manner in which he supported the educational reforms of young David at Le Sepey school.

Another DAVID (10.25) \*1736, also elected Lieutenant Civil, did not have as good an education as Abram but was a man of staunch honesty and openmindedness. His cousin the Chatelain once wrote him 'Dear

Cousin, you may keep the 1000 crowns that I lent you as long as you please. While they are in your hands I regard them as gold'.(1)

This David had the following interesting experience which has been traditionally preserved in our family and of which I found traces in the correspondence of two cousins.

A magnificent mare that he prized highly had been stolen from the Ormonts. Having had wind of its hiding place on the Rhone plain, he went there in company with the J.P. and a policeman. He said to them 'I shall shout at the stable door; if the horse in there does not neigh I declare now that it is not mine'. This visibly troubled the thief. With several persons keen to witness the affair, they had all gathered at the stable door. No sooner had David uttered a few affectionate words with the intonation of voice quite peculiar to the Ormonts highlanders, than the intelligent animal began to neigh in recognition and apparent joy. When released and returned to her rightful owner, she came and affectionately licked his hands and face!

David had 7 children (see Genealogy AT7-a) born on the following dates:

11.1, 17.5.1765	11.3, 5.2.'71	11.5, 30.11.'77
11.2, 10.4. 68	11.4, 3.7.'74	11.6, 8.12.'80
		11.7, 2. 6.'85

David (11.1) followed in his father's footsteps as Lieutenant Civil and was still in office when the revolutionary stormwave swept into the Valley of The Ormonts. What part did he play in this troubled period and unrest in the minds of men? It is rather difficult to decide without confirmatory documents. In all probability he had the same beliefs as his fellow citizens, all keen on the old order of things under the Bern Republic. Had they not, indeed, for several centuries enjoyed a great administrative and even political autonomy under its protection? However, David must have had some doubts about the old regime and was receptive to new ideas.

He was in frequent correspondence with the old schoolmaster of Vevey (9.111) and his sons who strongly favoured the revolution. In their letters they hit hard at 'those rascally aristocrats (of Bern) and that traitor Reding'. A TARDENT from the Ormonts (I could not discover which one) had enlisted in the revolutionary Swiss Government troops and had been wounded fighting against the small forest cantons. It is perhaps through these unverified channels that the new ideas penetrated into the Ormonts.

What seems to confirm this supposition is that for a time David lost

(1) A Crown was an Ecu, worth 3 livres 'pounds' or francs, therefore the amount was 3000 francs (in 1977 about \$A6,000, or perhaps double that!).



the confidence of his fellow-citizens, who conferred the command of their troops on the old ex-Chatelain Marlettaz, the passionate representative of extreme conservatism in the Ormonts. He successfully defended the Tine Bridge against General Chatel, who at the head of 2000 French, Lower-Valaisans and Vaudois, expected to push through the Valley of the Ormonts to Berne. However, Marlettaz was defeated at the Planches Bridge<sup>(1)</sup> where the enemy troops had arrived before he was able to concentrate all his men on the north bank of the Grande Eau.

Following this check an armistice was concluded. Chatel was astonished at having met such bitter resistance and learning of the failure of the Forneret column, beaten in the pass of the Cross of Arpille,<sup>(2)</sup> abandoned his designs on Bern and was content to occupy the Ormonts, while Colonel Fischer of Bern retreated with a contingent of auxiliaries from Gessnay that he had armed. Did David Tardent (11.1) play a part in these events? I do not know. I only know that it was in his house at Velard that the peace preliminaries were concluded. He also soon regained the esteem of his fellow citizens, because after the Ormonts was incorporated in the canton of Vaud, we find him again occupying the same offices as he had held before the fighting but now adorned with the title of National Agent, more consistent with the spirit of the new regime.<sup>(3)</sup>

This third David (11.1) had only two children - two daughters, HENRIETTE (12.1) and JEANNETTE, two charming aunts whom I knew very well. Unfortunately they died before I thought of collecting their memoirs. I only have a little data concerning the descendants of Henriette but those of Jeannette are well known to me. The Vurlod family is one of the most prominent in the Valley. Two of her sons have been or are schoolmasters, Vincent at la Forclaz and Alexis at the Mosses. They have our family traits which they duly recognise with very good grace. Alexis especially is very kind-hearted although this sometimes extends to weakness.

JEAN-DAVID-VINCENT (11.5) has inherited the family domain of Vernay. He had three children, the eldest my Aunt JULIE (12.20,  $\infty$ Mottier), is goodness personified. She has the interest of our family in high esteem. I owe most of the information I possess about the family to her drawers filled with most interesting documents that she reverently preserves and also to her remarkably reliable memory.

ESTHER-MARIE (11.3) married Josias Oguey whose son (probably David (12.10 \*17.1.1795) lived to over eighty years, was for a long time a schoolmaster and one of the prominent men of the Commune. The family of this man was very successful. A daughter Julie (13.5) has been teaching in England for years; a son, David, is a notary and Federal colonel; the other, Henri, is Public prosecutor (solicitor) and National Councillor etc.<sup>(4)</sup>

Julie married a Mr. Borloz whose son Marc (of the Chenevieres) strongly resembles Charles I Tardent of 'Jolimont', Chaba. He has held some public offices in the Commune. Of the two other sons, Auguste is a municipal councillor, the other, Vincent, is the teacher at Cergnat.

LOUIS-SAMUEL (11.7), my grandfather, was unknown to me personally (\*26.7.1785, +27.10.1854). I only know that he was of small stature, sprightly, shrewd and intelligent, although sometimes a bit capricious. He was still in a financially comfortable position although the family estate was beginning to dwindle seriously. He dealt in cattle, cheese trading and generally in the various industries of a good Swiss small farmer in the mountains. He once had the desire to emigrate to Russia with his kinsman of Vevey (L.V.S.T.) the godfather of his son Louis but I know not why he gave up the idea. Without being a hard drinker he was sometimes 'tempted into the chapel of Bacchus'. That usually happened when a new grandson was born! It is said he greatly regretted that the TARDENT family was dying out in Ormonts for at that time it consisted of only three male representatives: himself and his two sons, LOUIS (12.43) and HENRI.

He married Suzanne Dupertuis in 1809 who appears to have been of excellent character because my father always spoke of her with greatest respect. Moreover all that branch of the numerous tribe of Dupertuis are excellent people. A Dupertuis cousin of my father who married a Durgniat has always remained in my memory as one of the prominent personalities of my childhood.<sup>(5)</sup> Their family has inherited her finest qualities. One of the sons has been mayor of Lower Ormonts and a J.P., the other a schoolmaster and member of the State Cabinet. The daughter has an excellent character and is

(1) The important bridge 800 metres south of Le Sepey village.

(2) On the mountain path that leads to Les Diablerets village and 4 km s.w. of it.

(3) See AT 7a 11.1. This title approximates that of Member of the State Council or Cantonal Cabinet.

(4) For some unknown reason the children of 12.10 (nor their children) do not appear in the Genealogy '72 nor does Henry show them on his 1887 family tree - probably because of lack of data, space and lengthening family link.

(5) Pierre Durgniat of La Comballaz is a distant relative and is interested in the Family history. In 1977 he sent Jules a photograph of a 1790 judgement on parchment by ABRAHAM TARDENT, Chatelain and recently the Tschanner Regiment Discharge.



earnestly religious. All are notably honest and have pronounced literary tastes. (For Louis Samuel's seven children see Genealogy AT 9a.)

I did not know Aunt ROSE (12.41) well as she nearly always lived at Bern and Clarens, only rarely visiting the Ormonts, where she never failed to lecture her relatives! When leaving for Russia I went to see her at Clarens where she was living alone in a pretty little flat. She was already old, tall, gaunt, with a lemon complexion and was as wrinkled as a withered apple! She had angular features and that hard, peevish expression of old maids who have been unable to devote themselves to some worthy cause. However she had the good name of the family at heart and would have liked to see it return to its old numbers and greatness (on condition, however, that it cost her nothing!).

Shortly before her death, having learned of the modest successes abroad of one of her nephews, she sent him a book by Rambert with these two words written with a feeble hand: 'Adieu, adieu'. This unexpected keepsake gift from an aunt whom I had known so little, touched me deeply. She died of old age in 1881 at Clarens and her brother Louis attended her funeral, little dreaming that he would soon follow her to the grave.

I have much better and more pleasant memories of Aunt JULIE-MARGUERITE (12.42). She was also tall with bold and expressive features. Although not a great songster she had a sweet and true voice. Often in my childhood I went to see her in their house at Velard where she lived with her husband Francois Ansermet, a rather weak man who had had a stormy youth but was basically a good man. I would read to them as well as to their neighbours the Aviolats and Chablaix. When I tired, Aunt Marguerite would relate the old legends of the country; also terrible stories about ghosts and wizards' spells; or else she would teach me some old ballads or old patriotic songs(1). It was always a real pleasure for me to see her arrive to visit us, nibbling a roasted coffee berry, an ample supply of which she always had in her pocket! Marguerite had only one daughter, Henriette (13.10), whom fate treated badly. Still quite young, she had been left the widow of a Dupertuis, with a numerous family and with a legacy of useless guarantees. She battled on bravely and it is said that she is succeeding in bringing up her family well!

SYLVIE (12.44) although my godmother, has never been very sympathetic towards me. She was a dressmaker and had the reputation of gossiping as much as sewing! She died in 1868 after a long and painful illness. She had two daughters, Sylvie and Lenore. Sylvie married Vincent Dupertuis when fairly young. She has had a hard life and has a big and growing family. Lenore went to Galicia as a governess and from there she went to Odessa. She spent some time as

governess to Leon Schanzer's family, for she was a good teacher, and then married a Chaba colonist, Philippe Chevally. They emigrated to Rouchtchouk in Bulgaria, where 'tis said they are prospering.

Aunt JULIE (12.45) is the only link of that generation still alive. She has not been very happy, for her husband, a Monod, was violent and bad-tempered. Julie had three daughters, Sylvie (AT 10a 13.32), Louise and Alisie. Louise married quite well at Chateau d'Oex. Alisie's husband, an Oguay, shamefully abandoned her and a large family. Sylvie has not married. She is the family mainstay, supports her mother, is a school-mistress at Laysin and is adored by her pupils. The mother is very old and ailing but retains her excellent personality. She sadly mourns the recent death of her dear brother Louis. I have spent some delightful hours with mother and daughter and found the latter well-informed, wonderfully kind and a fine character.

Henri-Frederic (12.46), the youngest of the family, had a rather wasted life. Small, slender, highly-strung, he had mobile, expressive features with large, ebony-dark eyes and the sensuous mouth of a Rabelais; all this plus a head of hair that looked quite soldierly. He had ability and was highly intelligent but lacked the will to succeed; was generous and careless so that he soon ran through his father's legacy. Not suited to hard farm work, he emigrated in 1852 having enlisted in Wolff's Swiss Regiment, hired out to the kingdom of Naples in Italy. He served there for seven years and perhaps would have ended his life there but for the sad events of 1859.(2)

Switzerland finally became ashamed of seeing its beloved federal flag at the service of all the petty tyrants who could pay for it and proclaimed that foreign service by her soldiers would cease to be officially approved. Consequently, the four Swiss regiments of

(1) Henry taught us 'little Australians' some of these songs, many of which I have now unfortunately forgotten. In 1919 when spending a couple of weeks at Le Sepey, doubtful weather cancelled an Alpine climb of the Diablerets Peaks. Instead I spent a week-end with the Le Sepey men's choir on a 'bus' tour (in an open truck with seats!) of Gruyere, Fribourg, Moudon and back through Montreux (where I called on my old spinster cousin, IDA). We sang happily as we drove in fine weather through the glorious countryside and I was able to join in on most of them. The repertoire exhausted, they were amazed to hear me burst into several that father had taught us but that were unknown to them, or just a faint memory! (Another case of 'sic transit gloria mundi' !!)

(2) Palermo was bombarded by the Bourbon Ferdinand II; for this he was dubbed 'King Bombo'. The Sicilians were fiercely nationalistic and resented the kingdom of the Two Sicilies (Sicily and Naples).



Naples were ordered to surrender their flags. Two obstinately objected and revolted. It was thought best to have them see reason per medium of their fellow Swiss who were loyal to their own flag, but Naples provided the odious spectacle of Swiss at each other's throats, to humour an infamous tyrant.

Henri, who was fundamentally loyal and humane, had tears in his eyes and a lump in his throat whenever he related this painful experience in his life. Disgusted with this military life, he resigned and returned to Switzerland with the rank of sergeant-major. He had repeatedly refused officer's epaulettes which were again offered to him on his departure if he would re-enlist. 'Never,' said he, 'shall I ever serve under any other flag than the white cross on the red ground.'

In Switzerland he declined good offers to become an army instructor. He was disgusted with army service after his recent Naples experience, although he always retained an interest in military matters.

Demobilised, without future prospects and having lost the habit of regular work, he was incapable of holding a regular job. He was a 'jack of all trades' - sawyer, timber cutter, shoemaker and school-teacher. He was a real Figaro, witty and a great teller of jokes; he flouted luck and wealth. 'Who for a million, would kiss my rags and tatters', but he was really a very unhappy man. He was perfectly well aware of his lowly status but lacked the necessary will-power to rise above it.

An intense love for a person whose close kinship forbade marriage so overwhelmed him that he ended up by drinking regularly on Sundays and Mondays the money earned during the week, unsuccessfully trying to forget his sorrows and disappointment with wine. This poor uncle had a great liking for me, his godson and namesake. I have often been the witness and confidant of the intense moral struggles within him. Unfortunately he did not have the resilience to regain a normal life but gradually declined and died in 1874 after saying goodbye to his near relatives, repentant and calm and with little regret for life. He was highly intelligent, kind, had natural eloquence, wrote a good hand and had a relatively extensive education. What a pity that a man so richly endowed with natural ability could not have achieved more, in better circumstances!

MARC-LOUIS-SAMUEL (12.43), my father, had a hard life and his career was strewn with severe trials. On the other hand the development of his character reached a high standard, not surpassed by any other member of the family known to me. He led his family through severe times of poverty for some sixty years. He struggled day and night, without respite or rest, against the spectre of poverty, which was ever ready to perch on his hearth. Although he felt weaker but less fortunate than the Biblical patriarch, like Jacob he never lost hope

of victory but only saw its dawn ahead of him. His eyes hailed this dawn and closed for ever. His earthly life ended too soon but he went to a better world to continue his steadfast ascent towards the light.

When barely ten years old, he entered his apprenticeship to life at the arduous task of cowherd on the mountains of Rosettaz, 2 km south of Chateau d'Oex. Rising at three a.m. he would go through rain, fog, heavy dew and sometimes snow to muster the herds for the morning milking. He carried water, milk and also wood, which he had to seek afar in the forest. However, this arduous work strengthened him whereas the degrading poverty of the towns would have been weakening. His character was enriched and his appreciation of beauty was awakened and fostered by the ever-present beauty and grandeur of the Alps. The Spartan life he led built for him an iron-tough health and Herculean muscles that enabled him to endure the severe trials that beset him later on.

When still very young he displayed courage and presence of mind on many occasions, above that of even these hardy alpine people. One day the whole herd, startled by a sudden heavy hail storm, stampeded towards the edge of a cliff several hundred metres high. The little herdsman acted swiftly, headed off the frightened mob by racing with them and repeatedly hitting them over the eyes with a stick and saved them all from certain destruction.

Another time he was chased and thrown by an angry bull that he forced to retreat by hitting it hard with a stone just above the hoof. When he was older, at Mimont near La Combalaz on the mountainside of Chaussey, he was ready to bring down six bundles of vine-props on a toboggan. The ground was frozen hard with a thin layer of fresh snow. The iron chain broke, that is passed under the runner to act as a brake, and the young mountaineer was swept down a slope in places of up to forty degrees. The speed was so great that a peasant he passed on his dizzy descent had no time to see if there was a man in front of the toboggan! Keeping a cool head, Louis stiffened his legs and ploughed the frozen ground with the half-inch crampons screwed to the heels of his boots. As he crossed a ditch the two heels dug into a pile of compacted snow, his legs did not give way and this frightening descent came to an end but man and toboggan were buried in the pile of snow. My father got out of it with a few bruises.

While still quite young Louis undertook the management of the family affairs and succeeded by dint of hard work in supporting his mother and sisters on an already depleted patrimony. This early responsibility matured him rapidly and early gave him the highly-principled authority and dignity that characterised him. He acquitted himself so well in this task that his brother and his sisters always regarded



him as the real fatherly head of the family.(1) Throughout their lives they extended to him a tender and respectful affection.

When Louis' sisters were well established and he was twenty-seven he married a mountain-reared girl from the Ormonts, Marie Louise Perrod. She was a charming little dark-eyed brunette, lively and alert, had splendid health and a complexion as fresh as an Alpine rose. With her help and support Louis hoped to restore the fortunes of the family. At first he prospered. He leased Alpine pastures and in the spring reared cattle, selling part in the autumn, as well as the milk products. This industry was at that time most remunerative and everything seemed to smile on the young household, whose family already consisted of three boys born at rather short intervals. Alas, this brief spell of happiness was not to last long for the terrible anthrax epidemic of 1852 wiped out his herds and reduced him to poverty. When Louis Tardent had paid off all his creditors he said that he 'had absolutely nothing left but eyes to weep with and two arms to support his growing family'.

He despaired of doing this with the resources that the Ormonts offered and for a moment thought of emigrating to Australia. A friend was to supply the funds for the journey, on condition that Louis shared the profits with him that the gold mines recently discovered in that country would yield. To this day my mother attributes the defeat of this project to the passionate fervour of her prayers. Whatever the reason, Louis did not leave the Ormonts!

Louis' Colonel at Aigle had just purchased the then wooded mountain of Monterete two and a half leagues (about 10 km) from Sepey. He gave my father the job of building and operating a water-powered sawmill there. I think that Louis spent about ten years there, working on an average eighteen hours a day, busy with the different operations of the sawmill or in transporting the sawn planks that were taken out of this deep enclosed valley by means of a tip-wagon moving on wooden rails and worked by hand windlass.

In winter this wild region was enlivened by a crowd of carriers who came to fetch the planks and take them by good roads as far as Le Sepey and Aigle, whence they were dispatched to Geneva and Lyon in France. This life was very arduous but it enabled the family to live in relative comfort and this Socrates of the mountain rendered thanks to God every evening for the daily bread and the blessings received.

When the exploitation of the near-by forest was nearly complete Louis went on to the sawmill at Romayen, situated in the middle of the extensive forest of Charbonnieres, where there was consequently more future.(2) Emboldened by the experience that he acquired, he added timber falling to the many skills he possessed. I can still see in my mind's eye the splendid 'rizes' or long chutes a league

long which he constructed from four pieces of timber and which were joined end-to-end to form a gutter or trough and supported on trestles. The big, slippery, freshly-barked pine logs, when set moving down the chute on a rainy day, would descend with the speed of an express train, then rebound in a giddy leap opposite the saw-mill.(3) There they were piled up in big log stacks, before being sawn into baulks and boards.

At that time Louis had numerous workmen mostly German-speaking Swiss. Once more beguiled by false hopes he believed he could see ahead the revival of his fortunes. Unfortunately the owners of the enterprise were unfamiliar with business methods and fell into extravagant spending. Ere long they were bankrupt and my poor father was left without a feather to fly with and had to begin all over again.

He then applied successfully for the recently advertised position of Lower Ormonts postman at Le Sepey. This job, modest as it was (about 1000 francs per year)(4) had the advantage of being less laborious and also of offering a regular salary. For the most part, the youngest members of the family did the letter rounds while the father and mother contributed to the common resources by their own work. That state of affairs lasted for fifteen years.

The sons were growing up; some left home, others were at school, so little by little the father took over the whole of the work. On an average he travelled on foot thirty to forty kilometres per day, ploughing through snow and mud, climbing the great hills, descending the steep slopes, with the steady pace of a marching soldier.

(1) I do not fully understand this statement because it implies that Louis-Samuel relinquished much of his family responsibilities and work, long before his son Marc Louis married early in 1844 or before the father's death in 1854.

In the next sentence, the pronunciation of Grandma Louise's name is Perr-oh.

(2) Five km. north of Le Sepey and named for the charcoal that for centuries was produced there in charcoal pits for use by blacksmiths in their forge, for making gunpowder, for use in the women's pressing irons, in bed-warming pans and in braziers for roasting chestnuts. (No electric irons or blankets those days!)

(3) Chutes were also used in Queensland but were usually on the bare earth and not lined with timber. Andersen of Esk's famous chute on the Bunya Mountains, was lined.

(4) This equalled £50 per year that might equal \$1500 or much more in 1977 but bread was then one half-penny a loaf. In Paris, eggs were a farthing a dozen and men worked a 12-hour day (six days a week) for 1/5 (15 cents) per day!



I should add that he broke a leg twice, that he gashed himself deeply many times with an axe, that a whitlow cost him the end of his index finger, that several times his body or legs were crushed between logs or in the gear wheels of the sawmills. When he was stricken himself, he suffered for those of his children who had measles, whooping cough, croup, scarlet fever; sometimes in succession, sometimes all laid at the same time on a sick bed like sheaves in a field. On various occasions he saw his furniture and his tools seized and sold up dirt-cheap for debts. All his life he had debts contracted solely for the upkeep of his family, for he was neither a smoker, drinker, nor gambler of any kind. What energy and courage he must have had to withstand such a life!

Oh my dear and worthy father! How my throat tightens and tears threaten to dim my eyes, when I think of all that you did to ensure bread for our body and soul; of the privations you have imposed on yourself, of the devotion which you demonstrated at all times; of the anguish that wrung your heart as you looked to the future and saw nothing - nothing but that rock of Sisyphus of poverty, which at the least sign of relaxed effort, threatened to crush you and yours! (1)

It seems that in such circumstances there should not be room for the ideal, and that intellectual and upright life should have been crushed. However, his power of resistance was such that on the contrary, his ideals never ceased to grow stronger and his faith greater.

In his childhood he had learned at primary school not only reading, writing and arithmetic, but also religion; meagre luggage for life's journey. Fortunately he always had a great love of reading. He never missed on one single day, to increase his knowledge, strongly supported by sound judgement and a very keen sense of observation. He was an excellent farmer, good mechanic and very ingenious in unexpected and difficult circumstances. Impossible to have a working companion more industrious, gayer, more jovial, with whom it was easier to get on. He had become expert at surveying land and at practical geometry and had acquired through his dealings with topographical engineers and naturalists, a quite extensive knowledge of geology and botany. He had an enthusiastic belief in republican institutions and a great devotion to Switzerland, whose history he knew well.

Finally, all his life he had a keen interest in military science, his true vocation if he had been able to follow his bent. Recruited in the Vaud militia about 1837 as a private he soon obtained corporal's then sergeant's stripes. It is in this capacity that he took part in the campaign of 1838 against France. The energetic attitude of Switzerland, that preferred the risk of war to expelling Louis-Napoleon who had become a Swiss citizen, gave liberal opinion in Europe the time to intervene. When parliament re-assembled Guizot's

reactionary ministry was overthrown by a majority of one and General X who was insolently threatening our frontier, had to disband his troops.(2) The Swiss militia, including my father, returned to their homes proud of the result obtained by their firm stand.

In October 1847 the Sonderbund war broke out and only lasted for about a month - Oct to 24 Nov, when Lucerne was captured. The European governments(3), almost all reactionary, hoped that liberal Switzerland would be unable to put more than thirty thousand men in the field. However, General Henri Dufour soon entered the campaign at the head of ninety thousand men. The canton of Vaud alone enlisted thirty-four thousand!

The Ormonts raised two detachments of volunteers, one of which was reinforced by an auxiliary detachment from Lausanne and placed under the command of Colonel Chabelais. He staged a diversion in the valley of the Sarine and took the canton of Fribourg in the rear. The other contingent commanded by Louis Tardent, appointed Captain on this occasion by the State Cabinet of the Canton of Vaud, advanced upon Aigle where it waited in vain for the order to attack St Maurice. My father has often told me that he begged insistently of the commander, Ciserix, to order this attack, undertaking with his mountaineers to scale the steep slopes which face St Maurice. He would thus out-flank this important position, where were gathered the finest flower of the Jesuit troops and the clergy of Valais. The commander was inflexible not wishing, however fine the opportunity, to act without orders from General Dufour. The latter, who wished to avoid bloodshed as much as possible, had made up his mind to first get possession of Fribourg, then of Lucerne and the forest cantons, being confident that Valais canton, left to itself, would not resist for long.

The events proved him correct and my father led his volunteers back to their homes without having seen battle action.(4) With

(1) *In Greek mythology he was the Corinthian King, destined for ever to push a huge rock up a mountain slope. It never reached the top but always fell downhill again.*

(2) *Henry could not recall the general's name.*

(3) *Principally Austria, Prussia and France.*

(4) *My brother Paul recounted a humorous incident of the 1847 campaign, told him by our grandfather in 1881. The two armies were entrenched some distance apart. One of Louis' men was over-eager to take a pot-shot at an enemy who had dropped his pants for normal reasons but had insultingly turned his bare backside towards the enemy. 'No', said Louis, 'as far as possible we must refrain from bloodshed against fellow Swiss'. 'Can I then frighten him?' On being conceded this, our Ormonts marksman put a*



great republican simplicity he resumed his rank of sergeant 'which is more in keeping with my education and my financial position', he said, and continued right up to 1878 to carry out his duties as instructor to the young men aged from sixteen to twenty whom he prepared for recruitment into one of the branches of our Swiss militia.

As if it were yesterday I can still see this superb soldier, so graceful and masculine. His majestic height of 6'3" (Vaud) - which made him the third tallest grenadier in the canton - was still more enhanced by an enormous shako with a wide top.<sup>(1)</sup> The powerful torso was rounded out under the wide, white leather straps of his equipment. His bearing was upright and not stiff, his step elastic and military. No sooner had he donned his uniform than he held his head high like a war-horse at the sound of a trumpet. He was held in high esteem by his men, his N.C.O's and his superior officers.

One day at the annual Spring Review Parade the contingents from Upper and Lower Ormonts and Leysin were assembled on the tiny parade-ground at Le Sepey. Colonel Chablais, the commander of the region refused to take charge of the parade because he did not know the ground and also excused himself because he had not been forewarned. They then asked Louis Tardent, who agreed to carry on. He successively carried out with remarkable precision all the drills for a troop, company and battalion! He knew how to make use of the smallest undulation of the ground which was as uneven as it was small. His troops performed the drills in perfect unison, deployed in open skirmish order then formed 'close column' etc., etc. They wheeled right, then left; wheeled 'on the centre', formed square, then re-formed again in massed ranks to simulate an irresistible attack with independent fire and platoon fire.

Filled with admiration the regional commander came up to the substitute officer and shook him cordially by the hand. 'Tardent', he said, 'you are worthy to command on horseback' (to be a colonel). Oh yes, he was worthy of it. I am firmly convinced that with his clear head, his upright mind, his character of authority which inspired respect, he would have become one of the outstanding military men of Switzerland, if his natural ability had been given the chance to attain its full development in more favourable circumstances.<sup>(2)</sup>

As a citizen he always showed plenty of good judgement and great independence of character. Poverty kept him away from public office but such was the natural influence of his character, that without holding any official position, he exercised considerable influence over his fellow-citizens. He was the natural counsellor of the young, of widows and orphans, finding with a tact that I cannot sufficiently admire, the right word to console, reprimand or encourage. As he knew life and knew what makes up the happiness of

nine-tenths of men, he bore the little daily ills without apathy but with real Christian fortitude. Only injustice made him lose his calm and shook him as a stormy wind whips up the ocean waves.

If an injustice were done, even to the humblest citizen, his broad brow would crease in a frown, his piercing eyes would flash anger under their thick eyebrows; stirred to the anger of Christ chasing the profaners of the temple with his punishing rope. Louis knew no respite till the injustice had been rectified or unmasked. Then nothing, neither relationship, friendship nor interest, could prevent him from doing what he considered to be his duty, right to the very end of the matter.

I shall cite but one example. The school at Le Sepey, after having been directed with distinction for about thirty years by my wise

(4) *Cont'd.*

*shot into the ground near the defecator whose trousers were promptly pulled up in great haste!*

(1) = 6'1½" (English), a very tall man by Tardent family standards. The Vaud foot was 11.78" or 30 cm.

(2) This came to light in his grandsons: Eugene, Lt. Col, a Divisional Chief of Staff; his brother Marcel, Commander of the famous Alpine Brigade, who rose to command a Division; Michel, O.C. of a battery of mountain artillery; also several Australians who served well in war as A.I.F. Volunteers. (See 'Narrative', 'Service in the Armed Forces'.)

One of them is even reminded by the above demonstration of the drilling ability of his grandfather, of his own selection with several others, to take their turn on alternate Saturdays at Oxford O.T.C. in 1917, to drill the battalion of 1200 officer cadets on the big University sports ground. Not only was it necessary to have sound knowledge and judgement of complicated battalion drill, but also very clear and clarion words of command. Over four years practice when surveying in the Aussie bush, of throwing one's voice long distances, paid dividends!

By a strange co-incidence, of the six selected from all those varied British Commonwealth officer cadets, two were from the 42 Bn A.I.F.! The other was Eric Patterson, who as signals officer was my second in command at Forward Bn H.Q., for the attack on the Hindenburg Line and St Quentin Canal Tunnel. In that action Eric won the M.C. In 1939-40 he was the Lt. Col. commanding the 47th Militia Bn, when I was an O.C. Company, having volunteered in 1938 to help him build up the Bn strength because war seemed a probability.



old teacher, Mr Monod, was taken over after the latter's death by Mr Mottier, a worthy and honest man, but weak and frail, who jeopardised the instruction and discipline. My father, who had a high respect for education and had sacrificed a great deal for that of his children, made friendly but unsuccessful suggestions to Mottier for improvements. He then organised a petition by the fathers of the families concerned, which resulted in Mottier's resignation.

He was provisionally replaced by a Mr Chappuis, a learned, honest man and an excellent teacher who, in a short time, was able to earn the respect of his pupils and the esteem of their parents.

Unfortunately his improved methods of instruction and his enlightened liberalism excited the jealousy of some of his colleagues and of some of their related families. When Chappuis' formal appointment came up for confirmation he was dismissed by the communal Schools Committee despite his high qualifications and superiority over his rivals.<sup>(1)</sup> This was due to secret slander that had been spread among committee members.

Though loaded with debts and dependent on several of the persons he intended to attack, my father did not hesitate. He sought the aid of the pastor who agreed that he was in the right but declared himself powerless to help. Then he circulated a petition which was signed by the fathers of nearly all the school's families and sent it to the Canton's Cabinet Minister in charge of Public Education, who did all he could to get the commission to do its duty. His efforts were unsuccessful; the law is explicit; a teacher cannot be appointed to a Commune without the consent of their School Commission. Mr Chappuis, disgusted, said goodbye to his tearful pupils and went to a good position near Lausanne. He was replaced at Le Sepey by a worthy man but who had neither Chappuis' talents nor abilities.

My father never forgot this injustice; he often referred to it in his last letters and even spoke to me of it again a few days before his death.

No doubt this is a small incident, but the passions and objectives that motivate men are the same therein as in a larger sphere. In the words of the Evangelist, 'who is faithful in little things will also have been faithful in great things'.

In his own home Louis was strict but very kind, guiding his big family of boys firmly but gently; and they never even thought of disobeying him. Whenever he had time he would help my mother with housekeeping chores, caring for the sick and fondling the babies with maternal tenderness. In the evening he would supervise the studies of the elder children and teach the smaller ones to read from the big family Bible. Lessons over, they would read aloud.

One evening we were reading 'Genevieve de Brabant'. At the poignant account of her suffering I felt childish sobs starting to choke me. Without a word I passed the book to Charles who soon also had to stop. My father impatiently took the book but likewise he had hardly read a few sentences when he also stopped, as tears welled up in eyes. He exclaimed, 'that is terrible; is it possible that a human being could suffer so much without dying?' And there we all were, with shameless tears in our eyes!

His experience of life had cultivated his mind in accordance with Pestalozzi's profound dictum, which made him a good teacher. He was rarely eloquent but used other, subtle means of persuasion. When we boys scattered afar he kept up a frequent, steady correspondence with us. I kept all his letters whose grammar was not impeccable but his plain style was lucid and straight to the point.<sup>(2)</sup> He had inspired such faith in us that had we committed a crime, we would surely have confessed it to him!

The last days in my father's life remain in my memory like the glorious 'alpenglow', that rosy light that enhances the high mountains, as the sun casts his last rays on them at sunset.

After an absence of twelve years I returned to Le Sepey to visit my parents with my wife and two eldest children, all the way from Nikolayev near the Black Sea. Auguste came from distant Asia but arrived too late for our father's funeral. Vincent came from nearby France after an absence of fifteen years; the other children were near at hand.

Father gazed with a fond eye at all these seven sturdy sons in whom he saw the reward of his life of toil, trials and sacrifices; he found in my wife a loving and devoted daughter; and his grandchildren made his heart feel young again. His debts were almost all discharged. We were all making splendid plans for the future; a shared life, calm rest, contemplation.

Alas! God had decided otherwise. A month later, he who had never been ill except due to an accident, caught a severe cold one morning and like an oak crashed by the storm, he collapsed. After four days' severe illness he died of pleurisy on the 31st July 1881. My wife was at his bedside as he breathed his last sigh.

In contemplating my father's life and death I have often wondered from whence he obtained that boundless devotion, that resignation,

(1) This recalls a similar fight for reforms in education by young David (9.111) at Le Sepey, recounted earlier by Henry.

(2) To the best of my knowledge, regrettably none of these letters have survived though a couple of Grandma Louise's more recent ones have.



that perseverance that nothing could daunt. Doubtless it derived from his own inherent disposition, which was naturally inclined to all that is good and to kindly deeds, but it also derived from his religion. Without being over-devout or bigoted he was, on the contrary, truly religious in a deeper, finer sense of the word. He was imbued with true Christian charity, which had become part of his personality. To a high degree he reconciled a complete trust in God with an indestructible belief in the liberty or free will of man.

One day a neighbour attributed a certain person's success in life to destiny and asserted that there was a fixed destiny for each one of us. Louis replied 'Well, well, there is a destiny of course, but above all there is one's own responsibility! (1)

The earthly life of Louis Tardent was what life ought to be: a long period of perfecting. Trials and joys all contributed to the gradual purification of his character. His self-denial discipline reached a higher standard than I have known in any other person. Right to his very last day he retained his serenity and his sprightliness, welcoming everyone to his bedside with a friendly and benevolent word.

After having lived wisely he died like a Christian. 'Have you regrets about your life?' I asked him at his deathbed. 'No, my son, it has been a very hard life for me.' 'If you were beginning life again, would you exchange it for that of a wealthy man who sees his children arguing about his estate at his deathbed?' After a moment's reflection he said 'No my son, what God has done has been well done'. Later on a venerable Christian was speaking to him of hope and eternal life. The only reply the sick man made, for by now he could only speak with difficulty, was to take off his cap and gaze heavenward.

A few moments after his death the deep lines with which suffering and affliction had furrowed his face, disappeared and I shall never forget the expression of beautiful and absolute serenity that pervaded his face. Involuntarily I thought of an ancient portrait of saintly Nicolas de Flue that I had seen as a child, and for the first time I really understood the meaning of the word 'saintliness'!

A large cortege headed by five of his sons (Charles and Auguste did not arrive in time) accompanied his body to its last resting-place. He was sincerely mourned by all who had known him; the Director of Posts telegraphed his condolences to the family and sent Louis' widow a year's salary (1200 francs) as a gratuity - a somewhat rare act of generosity in our frugal Swiss republic.

On the tomb of Louis Tardent, the family erected a modest marble monument in the form of a gnarled and sturdy truncated oak, on

- (3) PERROD FAMILY of Ormonts-dessous. Helene Tardent has researched the following details: Moise (Moses) Perrod, \* about 1720, ♂ Suzanne Chablais. They had Moise (II), \* about 1740: ♂ Anne Bocherens, daughter of David and Marie, nee Jacquierod. They had 4 children. (1) Moise (III) \* Nov. 1770. (2) Suzanne-Marie \* 19.3.1775. (3) David \* 10.4.78 and (4) Abram-Alexandre \* 15.8.1779. Abram ♂ Suzanne Marie Pittex. They had 6 children. (1) Suzanne-Marie \* 31.7.1804. (2) Louis-Alexandre \* 5.4.1806. (3) Marie-Catherine \* 17.2.1808. (4) Marie-Anne \* 2.6.1811. (5) Julie-Catherine \* 15.3.18 and (6) Marie-Louise \* 22.1.1824. She ♂ Marc Louis Samuel Tardent (12.43).

which are engraved these words:

M.L.S. TARDENT, born 9th October 1816, died 31st July 1881

Persevering in goodness,  
Patient in affliction,  
He Struggled, Hoped, Fought, and Conquered.  
In the bosom of the Father he sleeps and awaits us  
at the Haven.

A mountain fir, his favourite tree, the symbol of hope, flourishes at the head of the tomb. (2)

I have already said that in 1844 Louis Tardent had married Mlle Marie-Louise Perrod of Upper Ormonts. I have very little information about the family of my mother. I scarcely knew her father. He was a good mountain farmer and fairly well-off, but had a large family. (See Perrod line of descendance.) Marie married a Moise Pictet and died childless; Alexandre left a son and daughter; Marianne and Vincent live at the Ormonts where they have had large families; Suzanne married a rich man named Grosjean at Leysin and had an only daughter Sylvie, who married a Mr Tauxe.

Julie married a Mr Cochaud at Montreux and has a numerous family which she has reared like the excellent Christian mother that she is. Abram, the youngest of the family, has been the support of his parents in their old age. He is one of those self-taught philosophers whom one meets quite frequently in the Alps.

They are very thrifty and attached to worldly possessions but not to the point of becoming materialistic because they have derived a lofty idea of life and a relatively extensive education from experience, from familiarity with the Bible, and from the influence of the inspiring and majestic Alps which surround them. Uncle Abram had promised me a detailed account of the Perrod family but domestic troubles have prevented him from so doing. (3)

(1) *It seems that he implied fairly clearly that 'God helps those who help themselves' and that we were not given free will and capacity to reason and to express that reason, for no purpose.*

(2) *I recall seeing this tomb and tree in 1919 and it is hoped to re-produce it in this volume. I could find nothing in 1962 except the tree, which is mentioned elsewhere as possibly that on the Grave of the father of Jules Dupertuis! Helene saw the grave and tree in 1930 but in April 1977 she made a special trip up to Le Sepey to enquire about it and found that since 1940 there have been two alterations to, and re-siting of the cemetery. All the trees close to the church have been removed and the tombstones discarded from the old cemetery, 'and you'd find nothing there of grandfather's tomb'. 'Sic gloria transit mundi', once more!*



As for my mother, Louise, words fail me to describe this wonderful mother of eight. And what a rich and fruitful nurse she proved to be. Rich and copious milk flowed from her ample breasts with the spontaneity and force of an artesian bore! Not only the plump and greedy baby gorged on it, but it was also necessary for the elder children and sometimes even the father, to play their dutiful part in relieving her swollen breasts of their over-plentiful supply!

No, my dear kinsman, the true aristocracy of a nation will never be adequately and entirely recruited from among the pale offspring of women whose blood is impoverished and constitution weakened by idleness and worldly distractions and dissipations. Many will derive from the sturdy children of the people with rich and copious blood nourished right from their birth, at the fertile springs of vigour and good health.(1)

To my dear mother's burden you can add all the sufferings and afflictions that my father suffered, which she always shared heroically, and you will perhaps begin to have an idea of what her life was like. A torment, yes, a long torment so much the more because she had a lively humour, a quick temper and a great sensitivity with the result that the least vexation affected her deeply. Small, but active, energetic, industrious, thrifty, well versed in housewifery, she worked wonders in rearing her family.

The more I learn of life, the less I understand how she succeeded in rearing such a large family with such scant resources. Her little chalet was always shining with cleanliness; a speck of dust pained her. She always managed to have bread in the kneading-trough and a pot on the open kitchen fire. We were eight men, often occupied with heavy work. The linen and clothes had to be kept in order, washed and renovated. At any rate the socks were always whole, the linen white and we were always cleanly and decently dressed.

When my father died we suggested that she come to Russia with us to live there, or at least that she should take advantage of the rest that we could easily afford to give her. She firmly and obstinately refused both offers. She did not wish to be separated from her beloved mountains and her way of life. 'As for the resting, it would kill me' she said, 'I am not used to it at all'.

The Postal authorities have left her part of the position that my father occupied. Every day from three till six, she carried out her Cernat deliveries, sturdy as an elm, always gay and alert, her cheeks rosy and fresh like a young girl's. She is highly esteemed by everyone; even feared a little. She has a sturdy pride that no misfortune has been able to humble and is candid at all costs, always expressing her opinions openly and honestly without worrying about anybody's reaction.

Of upright, honest character and religiously inclined, she has imparted to us nothing but good rules of conduct and good examples. Even today (1887) when she would be fully justified in thinking only of herself, she is only happy when she can dedicate herself to some worthy cause. Despite her age, her modest position and her work, she finds time and ways of acting as father and mother to some of her grandchildren. From familiarity with the Bible she has drawn a lofty idea of duty and an amazingly cultured mind.

Since my father's death it is she who has kept up the family correspondence, and I have been surprised and charmed by the biblical loftiness and simplicity of her style. Beloved and worthy mother! May God in his goodness protect your old age and keep you long in our deep affection and respect.(2)

(1)  
*Methinks that the law of nature still applies: the strong and vigorous in mind and body survive and the weak die out though the process may be long drawn-out. The old saying that it takes three generations to make an English gentleman is often incorrect but the word still applies: 'aristos' = best; 'kratos' = rule, but today obviously 'demos' = the people, like the pre-Christian Greeks, can also produce a great many 'aristos'! Anyway, as stated elsewhere, can we be absolutely sure that back along any family line some great man's blood and genes has not been 'accidentally' introduced and his traits carried forward?*

*However, one can be sure that specific origins, environmental factors and their way of life have a lasting influence on any race or sub-race. Typical Tardents resemble the general run of strong-featured, French-speaking Swiss, who owe much of their character to the influence of hardy alpine living for a thousand years and more.*

*One wonders sadly about the future of Australians and of our fair land, when one sees such a high proportion of young men with flabby bodies and 'pot bellies'. Many use machines not muscles to do physical tasks. They are obviously not content to have a beer before or with the evening meal but are intent on swilling at lunch-time, at knock-off time and indulge in a special lengthy session on Friday afternoons! This applies to far too many workmen, tradesmen and business men. It robs the wife and family, not only of father's time but a vast amount of family money. Our beer bill would easily clear away the nation's annual deficit of thousands of millions!*

*Thus did Rome fade into history! (and the Romans lacked our drug and smoking problems and probably suffered less than we do from the monster of excessive gambling).*

(2) G'mere Louise was 57 at the time of Louis' death. (She died 20.11.07 aged 84, walked the kilometre and back to church every



Henry then details the family of Louis and Louise Tardent, which is recorded on Sheet 1, FamilyTree and on AT 10a in the Genealogy.

The young parents had based great hopes on VINCENT, who was an open-natured, congenial lad, naturally intelligent and sensitive. As soon as he started school he topped his class and stayed there. He was very fond of music. At the age of ten or eleven he constructed a little sawmill from scraps of this and that and made clay moulds in which he cast the pulleys and the fly-wheels. Then he cut out cog-wheels with a file and fixed them on iron spindles. A little crankshaft transmitted a to-and-fro movement to a frame revolving on vertical triangles (by means of wooden bearings) that contained a saw-blade in the centre. A small cog-wheel moved a wagon forward, carrying a piece of wood or a carrot from which the saw cut miniature planks. The whole was driven by a water paddle-wheel which transmitted the power to the saw by means of a driving belt. It was quite clever and attractive. (His friend Jean Rubin was even more ingenious; without ever having seen any locomotives he built one out of nearly nothing which drew five or six wagons all round the room.)

At the age of sixteen or seventeen Vincent was articled in commerce to a friend of father's, Mr Jaquier, a merchant at Aigle. There he made himself so popular that his employer was even thinking of giving him his charming daughter's hand in marriage and of letting him carry on the business. In spite of his parents' advice to consider accepting, Vincent refused very firmly and left the job. He then worked in Ogay's mechanised bakery at Lausanne, where life was rather hard. Next he worked in Warnery's sawmill at St. Prex.

He then joined the Vaud constabulary. He liked this sham military life at first and would only have had to stick to it to ensure a good career for himself. He continually improved his education by reading and as he had a great capacity for learning rapidly, speedy advancement seemed certain. However, he was unstable as a bird on a branch and always needed a change at all costs!

One day at Coucise where he was acting as district road-surveyor, his pocket-watch packed up so he dismantled it bit by bit, cleaned it and over-hauled it. It started again perfectly. His mates got him to do the same for theirs with the same success. Seized once again by his first love for mechanics, Vincent left the constabulary and became a watchmaker. After staying for some further time at Coucise he went off to perfect his skill at the famous watch centres of Neuchatel, Bienne and Flourier. Returning to Neuchatel he had a try at setting up a business in partnership with a friend, for the manufacture of watch parts.

Too casual and fickle to make a success of such a business at a period when competition was forcing the manufacturers to be method-

ical and thrifty, Vincent gave up his business and crossed the border into France. He worked for a long time at Besançon where he made a great deal of money, for he had become one of the most skillful watch tradesmen there. Alas! like so many of his work-mates he regularly spent the week's wages on Monday.

Henri found him at Besançon in 1881 after much fruitless search, for he had not contacted the family for many years but was persuaded to come back to Ormonts. This return of the prodigal son gave our father one of the greatest joys of his life. Vincent proved himself worthy of forgiveness by his great care of his father during his last illness. After the latter's death, with the aid of some of the family, Vincent settled at Le Sepey. It was a good opportunity to turn over a new leaf and begin life again on new foundations; no competition, plenty of work, a profitable and assured future. We placed great faith in him, as the need was being felt more and more for the introduction of new industries into our native valley.

At first all seemed to be going well with him; his letters were full of enthusiasm and good resolutions. Alas! it was all idle talk. His workshop was always full of idlers who came for a bit of a chat and ended up by inveigling him into the nearby hotel where the publican knew how to flatter him and worm the honest fellow's money out of him. In short, after running into debt, one fine day Vincent shut up shop and quietly departed for France. The creditors divided up his possessions from which - let it be said in his favour - he had not taken one sou.

At the present time he may be in the vicinity of Montbeillard: we know not, for he has again given up all contact with the family. He sent to Ormonts for his papers so that he could marry a widow, Adele Charmot nee Tissot, about whom I have no details nor do I even know if this marriage ever took place. It is with a pang of regret that I recount these events in the life of this brother for whom I have always felt a special affection.(1)

As my eldest brother, he had in my childhood, exercised an almost maternal care of me and one never forgets such things. If he wished to he would dress well but he preferred to dress casually and disdained smart clothes and the social conventions. One day in Lausanne in a street of vagrants, he saw some Italians playing pitiful music on a few instruments and were failing to attract the attention

(2) *Cont'd.*

*Sunday right to her last several weeks of life and read her bible assiduously - and without spectacles!)*

(1) *The marriage did take place, on 12.6.1880. There seems to be some ambiguity here for Vincent was apparently married before his father's death.*



of passers-by. Vincent, who has music on the brain, tossed a coin in their hat, seized an instrument, checked the tuning and tempo and led them with such zest that in no time they had quite an audience - and a rain of coins in the hat!

This kind of recklessness brought him many gay and happy hours but they were not free of handicaps. Too much sky-larking dulls one's sense of the serious and one can finish up by committing - without a thought of it - actions which border on the indelicate.

'All leave something on shrubs by the roadside, the sheep some fleece, men their quality', wrote Victor Hugo.

Vincent did his Swiss Army military service in Neuchatel, where he qualified as a Lieutenant. His tall, wiry frame, fine forehead, intelligent, dark-brown eyes, his aquiline conqueror's nose, his long moustaches and his jet black goatee beard - all this went to make him look a splendid soldier. He knew his job well and was popular with his 'lower-story' as he called his lively little Neuchatel infantrymen. His graceful military bearing, his swarthy complexion and his almost Arab-like appearance, caused his comrades to believe that he'd seen service with the Zouaves in Algeria (many Europeans had done so). I believe that he let this story 'ride' like his fairy-stories of Algerian lion-hunts, after the style of Tartarin.<sup>(1)</sup>

During the Franco-Prussian war Vincent volunteered as a Hospital orderly or male nurse, caring devotedly and selflessly for the smallpox and typhoid victims and other cripples of Bournaki's army. What a pity that a man so richly endowed by nature could not profit better from the numerous opportunities that life lavished upon him. May these lines, if ever his eyes behold them, cause him to reflect and change his ways while there is yet time. (He had died in 1886 leaving two children, Gaston (14.1) and Jeanne.)

CHARLES (13.21) has been the most unfortunate but also the most durable of the family. Small of height, thick-set, touchy, hot-tempered, swift to attack and quick to retort, he speaks in a clear voice with minor tone and sustained like the crow of a Gallic rooster, whose audacity and courage he has. His courage personifies at least one feature of the family type. Witty and caustic, he is haunted by a persecution complex, like Jean-Jaques. He sees enemies and intrigues everywhere but in fairness one must agree that life has far from pampered him. At the age of twenty he married a young woman of French origin, and as she was ten years older than he, in no time she became - I believe without cause - as jealous as a tigress. Their marriage became impossible and Charles had to get a divorce.

The court which granted it allotted his children, Ida, Edmond and

Gustave, really bright little Tardents - by means of a plot - to the mother. This was a final blow for Charles who adored them. He refused thenceforth to have anything to do with them; for which I have strongly blamed him. All my efforts to get him to change his mind have been rejected with stubborn obstinacy.

A sawyer like his father, timber-faller and mechanic, Charles has been a Jack-of-all-trades. After his marriage he was for a time a postal clerk at Le Sepey. Then he rented the grounds and hotel of Le Cherettaz in a good location eight kilometres from Le Sepey on the busy road to Chateau d'Oex. It was also close to a farrier's smithy that Charles had begun to develop. He would probably have made his fortune there if the discord and estrangement in the home had not paralysed his efforts. Having wound up his affairs he again took up his timber-faller's axe. By tiring his body with this hard work it at least created a diversion from his worries. Alas! misfortunes never come singly.

One day when he was working in the forest he was dragged by a log of wood into a steep gully covered with ice and with a gradient of from 55° to 60°. Arrived at the bottom on the Diablerets road he had a deep gash in his head from the eye brow to the nape of the neck; 'a flap of flesh hung on my cheek like a pig's ear' (according to his own picturesque description) bareing the skull-bone. An iron wedge in his trousers pocket had also cut his thigh to the bone.

'Hey, friend', he cried to his companion, 'come down as quickly as you can, but take a better path; this one is far too fast!' His friend, upset at the sight of that awful-looking head, stutteringly asked what must be done. 'Remove those pieces of timber that are obstructing the highway', replied Charles heroically, 'so that there will not be an accident if a carriage comes along'. Then he shouldered his tools and walked back to his dwelling some five kilometres away!

You can see, my dear cousin, that life can be rather hard in our Alps and that war does not produce the only heroes. Charles bore the stitching operation stoically, even helping the surgeon to pull together the mutilated flesh. He even pretended that it had only really hurt badly when his eyebrow was shaved! Be that as it may, he lay on his bed of pain for many weeks, sorely afflicted in his family relationships, in his business and in his health. However, he braced himself against fate and swore to overcome his problems.

When he had fully recovered, he was employed for some time at the

*(1) The hero of an 1872 novel by A. Daudet wherein he tells a lot of tall stories about lion hunts and finally kills one! (Which Vincent did not do!) As earlier stated, Henry was a prodigious reader with a quite extraordinary memory.*



Aigremont sawmill. Then he left the Ormonts where everything recalled painful memories. He went down onto the plain at Vernayaz, to Nyon, then to Geneva, then back again to Aigle. Finally he went to Montreux where he is at present (1887).

'Dissatisfaction with oneself and with others is a condition necessary for all progress', said Richard Wagner (famous 'path-finder' composer), Charles seems to corroborate this paradox. He has a lucid and biting witticism which criticism dissects and enlightens. He is an ingenious, resourceful mechanic, a skilful sawmiller and an undisputed master of all that concerns the exploitation of forests. I am firmly convinced that if he decided to emigrate, he would do better than in Switzerland where his wings are clipped by the old environment. With his tenacity, his sharp-eyed alertness and his education that is quite superior to his present status, he is fit for everything.

What a splendid pioneer that man would make in the virgin forests of U.S.A. or among the 'squatters' of Australia! I know not what the future holds for him, but I am firmly convinced that there is a worthy someone in Charles.

AUGUSTE HENRI was born at Velard, Le Sepey. Short, heavy and chubby, he was even sturdier than his brothers but he appeared to be endowed with less intelligence. Scarlet fever, which hit him harder than the others, left him with two rather unpleasant weaknesses one of which disappeared when he was about fifteen or sixteen and the other when he was about twenty. Having a less lively, excitable temperament than his brothers, he had more difficulty in learning his lessons.

Although he loved school he disliked repetitious letter-printing, which put him to sleep. By dint of labour and diligence he kept in the middle of his class but he never reached the top places.

One day, despairing of mastering the bizarre names which studded the geography lesson, he laid his head down on a sloping bench, hoping that the knowledge of Strabon(1) would enter his head more easily that way! However, he did have a frank and loyal character and un-failing cheerfulness, that was to become a magic key that opened all doors and all hearts for him.

Always good-humoured, obliging, a willing but unservile helper, he readily became liked everywhere. He had an honest disposition, without the slightest trace of envy or jealousy and rejoiced in the successes of his brothers as if they were his own.

To be truthful, none of us thought him likely to have a bright future. He was a slow thinker, but his judgement was sound yet he ended up by achieving the finest career of all the brothers.

His first job was to learn farming with the Durnat cousins, whom I mentioned before. He profited well from his stay with this sterling family where culture is traditional. The long evenings spent together, engaged in thoughtful discussions were well suited to improve his judgement and his memory.

Later he went to a friend of my father, Mr. Mottier, a farmer and the assessor, an egotistical man as hard on others as he was indulgent towards himself. Fortunately his worthy wife was in complete contrast to her husband and ever after Auguste looked upon her as a second mother and benefactress. However, Auguste was not very happy with his job, and even almost lost his life by accident there. He was literally crushed by a pile of snow several metres thick that fell on him from a height of two metres. He then experienced the sensations of a dying man and with frightening clarity he saw in a flash the whole of his past life, his good and bad deeds, unroll before his eyes. Then a pit-pat beat faster and faster in his ear, then.....oblivion! His workmates hastened to shovel away the snow and pulled him out unconscious.

However, his sturdy constitution soon prevailed; he even found enough strength to kick away those who, despite his opposition, wanted to make him gulp down black coffee at the risk of choking him when he was struggling hard to recover the use of his lungs for normal breathing! An army of leeches on his chest, a battalion of sucking-cups on his back succeeded in clearing up his severe bruises. He was left with a stiffness which handicapped him for several years.

Desirous of learning more about farming and of learning viticulture, the only careers that seemed to be open to him, Auguste left the Ormonts and went down to the Rhone plain where in Vaud and Geneva he had several minor jobs all of which helped him to acquire the knowledge and qualities, subsequently so valuable to him.

In 1869 at Geneva and aged twenty-one, he chanced to make the acquaintance of a Russian general, Baron D. The Baron, who was impressed by the honest appearance and solid qualities of the young man, suggested to him that he should accompany him to Russia (apparently as a kind of aide). Auguste, whom the unknown strongly attracted, accepted at once. He returned to the Ormonts to take leave of his relatives and friends, then he set off gaily on the journey to distant Russia.

First they stayed two months in a German spa, then some weeks in Berlin. At last he reached that Russian frontier, object of his dreams and his desires. His first impression was of disillusion; the country was flat, monotonous and sandy, the inhabitants ragged.

(1) Born 58 B.C., author of the famed Greek 'Geography'.



The bowing and scraping which the moujiks (peasants) and railway personnel showered on the general seemed very debasing to Auguste's republican backbone.

He felt compensated on arriving at St Petersburg, where the scene was markedly different. The splendour of the public squares, imposing monuments, buildings; life in the broad streets, all deeply impressed and enchanted him. Regretfully, at the end of two months, spent like a dream in the midst of pleasant, civilised society of St Petersburg, they set out for the baronial country residence of the general, situated beyond the Volga in the governorship of Nijni-Novgorod(1).

There he spent most of the time in a dejected state of mind for serfdom, though abolished by law, still existed in fact. He beheld painful scenes which deeply offended his Swiss citizen's heart. The only consolations in this depressing environment were reading and long conversations with the general, a man with a cultured mind and a generous heart, whose confidant and close friend he became.

On the other hand he often picked a bone with the baroness, a severe haughty, devout and cruel person, who made everyone around her tremble with the single exception of her husband's Swiss assistant. His firm, frank gaze of independence specially irritated her. One day this impudent fellow even pushed his audacity so far as to stop the noble hand of the baroness just as she was going to pitilessly whip a poor serf. The baroness was bewildered, breathless, and nearly choked with rage(2). The fit passed and she compared this noble fearlessness with the somewhat passive kindness of the general, and would have been ready to acclaim like Madame Fourchaubault: 'There is the husband I ought to have had!' Such are the mysteries of the human heart, especially the feminine variety.

Unfortunately the kindly general died. Scenes of simulated despair, piercing cries, sighs - interrupted by brief and positive remarks about her much more material interests, reminded Auguste of the comparison with the death of the Duc de Bourgogne of St Simon(3). Auguste was probably the only one of the entourage who genuinely mourned the general as he deserved to be mourned, without fuss and sham. He wept for him as for a father and a friend. It was Auguste who undertook to accompany the body as far as Nijni-Novgorod where it was interred in the family vault.

The baroness had fifty roubles sent to Auguste telling him that it would allow him to leave for Moscow where she would send him the thousand roubles owing on his salary without delay. The general had expressed the desire to leave something in his will to his friend but he had not time to do it. Although his wife knew this wish of the general perfectly well, she took very good care not to carry it out. She also did her best to defraud Auguste of his salary for

which he wrote several times; he had to make an unsuccessful trip to Nijni-Novgorod, and finally succeeded by appealing to the all-powerful governor of the province.

Arriving in Moscow without a position, without references and with a very light purse, Auguste knew the disappointments of a beginner, the bitterness of begging for a job and on one occasion even suffered the pangs of hunger.

He still recalls the day when he was seated gloomily in the little hole where he lived, nibbling a piece of black bread that he had purchased furtively from the corner baker and washed down with a glass of Moscow water, in default of Chambertin.(4) Fortunately this sad state of affairs did not last long.

The next day he received a visit from a Mr. Zien, son of the family tutor of Mr. de Bismark, who offered him the position of assistant teacher in his boarding school. Auguste taught there only three days a week and was fairly well paid. He doubled his salary by teaching on the other three days at the Armenians Institute. Meanwhile the thousand roubles arrived from Nijni-Novgorod and his wheel of fortune took another turn for the good and the sun shone

(1) Now called Gorki, on the Volga, 300 miles east of Moscow.

(2) This recalls the experience as late as 1908-09 of our Swiss 'aunty', Miss Lena Blum, Hortense's friend who emigrated with our family to Australia and lived with us as mother's companion, all those years. (It was said that she set her cap for Uncle Emile but they both remained single for life!) 'Tantine' acceded to the plea of a lonely old schoolmate, a Russian princess, to return and be her companion.

I spent some time with Tantine in 1919 in Lausanne where she was living in retirement with another childhood friend, Mme Couchpin, wife of the Post Master. She told me that she 'stuck it out' for a year. The princess thought nothing of having a pregnant serf sleeping on the floor at her bedside so as to be handy with a bed-chamber during the night. To call her she merely gave her a kick on the enlarged abdomen as she lay (on a mattress?) on the floor beside the princess' bed! Lena found this kind of thing too terrible for a Swiss-Australian to endure and went to Switzerland. She said 'it's not surprising that the Russian people revolted in 1917'.

(3) Louis de France (1682-1712) father of Louis XV. Am not familiar with this particular death but Louis studied under the famous Fenelon, prelate and writer.

(4) A choice Burgundy from the French village of that name - he was a good judge of wines and, like his nephew 100 years later, loved a glass of good 'red' with his dinner!



again for him. That lasted till 1873. Then Henry, for whom he had a high and affectionate regard, wrote from Odessa and arranged for the two brothers to teach at the Knory Gymnasium (Private Grammar School) and also to study for the examination that would qualify them as teachers in a government school.

Unfortunately the Grammar School changed ownership and the new Head, a Mr. Lambert of Fribourg, who was learned but jesuistic and cunning, did not approve of the modern teaching methods of the brothers. After some wrangling they both resigned sooner than forego their teaching principles.

They were out of work for two months, which they spent with the hospitable family of engineer Leon Schanzer, related to the Tardent families of Chaba (see AT 13.82).

Auguste became dissatisfied with teaching and decided to seek another career. Mr. Schanzer at that time was busy with water reticulation works for Odessa and, under his guidance, entrusted Auguste with the management of his fine liqueurs factory. In a year Auguste had mastered the book-keeping and other knowledge that made for a successful merchant and decided to establish his own wine business to handle the Chaba products.

His idea was sound and looked certain to succeed. Impressed by the excellent qualities of these wines and the little outlet they had, he wished to have them appreciated in Russia and to induce the upper-class Russians to consume their own superior products which were far better than three-quarters of the adulterated wines that they were importing at pretty steep prices. These inferior products were impressively labelled and bore high-sounding names!

The idea of freeing Russia from costly wine imports was excellent and his plan promised to crown the achievements of the wine industry established by Louis-Vincent at Chaba fifty years earlier. Auguste tackled the task enthusiastically and performed organising wonders to ensure its success.

Encouraged and backed by several viticulturists - in particular by the worthy Mme Klotz of Pouskai who supplied him with stock on credit - he rented a cellar right in Odessa.

The business began modestly but grew and prospered. He worked honestly and earnestly, treating his wines scientifically, filtering and pasteurising them. He soon built up a large connection with shops and private purchasers. He opened a branch at Nikolayev which his brother (Henry) looked after as a side-line to his teaching duties. He sent some casks on approval to Moscow and Warsaw; the wines stood the journey well and found ready sales. Their business was really going well.

Early in 1876 prospects seemed good for obtaining more capital backing to greatly enlarge the business but the abortive peace conference of 1876 at Constantinople (Istanbul) aggravated the many rumours of likely war with Turkey. This dealt a cruel blow to all Russian trade and a fatal one to business in Odessa (too close to the likely conflict). The money supply dried up, business came to a standstill and one after another Auguste's rivals became insolvent; he was one of the last to hold out. Finally costs exceeded profits and he was also badly cheated by a relative, B. Charenton (AT 13.60). Auguste finally admitted defeat and went into voluntary liquidation at a loss. The Nikolayev branch hung on for some time before suffering the same fate.

Once more Auguste was left without a future and worse still he had a deficit of thousands of roubles. He stated his position frankly to his creditors and asked them to have faith in him. He did not as yet know how he would do it but was determined that all of them would be paid to the last penny. These men granted him the respite he requested because they knew his honesty and industry and that he had only succumbed because of abnormal pressures.

Auguste then spent some time with his brother at Nikolayev, vainly seeking a means of livelihood. One morning he announced to me his intention of leaving for his beloved Moscow, that rich commercial city, where there was something for a man of action to do. The same evening the train took him and his dream to the old Muscovite capital. Alas! business was no better there than at Odessa as all eyes were turned anxiously towards the Balkan Peninsula.

Once more Auguste was a frustrated man and lived with a friend, the watchmaker Thievauld, where, to pass the time, he busied himself like Charles V at repairing old clocks(1).

He was impatiently awaiting the end of the terrible struggle that was raging on the banks of the Danube, when one day he read a newspaper article tragically depicting the plight of the Russian wounded, lying helpless on the battlefield, sometimes for whole days without succour. He immediately went to the Red Cross Society and volunteered his services. He was told that to be accepted he must first take a crash course in surgery at the University. He rushed off and enrolled and at the end of two months he came out second of thirty-six with an assistant surgeon's diploma!

Burning with impatience to go and apply his new knowledge to succour the unfortunate wounded, he again applied to the Society but they

(1) This allusion is unknown to me, except that Charles V of France (1500-1558) who had a distinguished career, abdicated two years before his death and retired to the Spanish Monastery of Yuste. He may have spent his time there repairing clocks!



refused to send him to the front. 'The Russians can handle this; we do not need the help of foreigners,' was their reply. Temporarily rebuffed, Auguste got in touch with a Mr. Terichtchenko, director of the military workshops of Moscow who had invented special appliances for transporting the wounded, which were fixed on to peasants' carts by means of screws. Auguste visited the workshops several times. The inventor, having noticed the ease with which the young foreigner had understood his system, said to him 'You are exactly the man that I need to send to the front with my equipment'.

On Terichtchenko's introduction, the governor-general of Moscow, Prince Dolgorouky, agreed this time to send Auguste to Army Headquarters at Kishinev. Auguste arrived there quite penniless. He sold his fine big boots and bought himself cheaper shoes. With most of the difference he bought a pair of gloves when he arrived at Bucharest, in order to present himself more appropriately to the Deputy of the Red Cross.

This Deputy was a Prince Dolgoroukof, a vulgar, insolent man who could not speak ten words without including eleven oaths. He received Auguste most discourteously, told him that he could go back again, that his mission was finished and that gloved gentlemen were not needed, only fellows who knew how to take a hand in 'kneading the dough'. Auguste was tempted to show him on the spot how his gloved hands could 'knead the dough' but he restrained himself.

He went into a cafe to think things over and met at the same table two well dressed Red Cross Deputies. They were no less than Count Tolstoi and Count Mouravief who had just arrived from Berlin with a train load of varied goods for the Red Cross.

They complained to Auguste 'we have a large quantity of supplies for the Red Cross but we do not know how to transport them to the front. Dolgoroukof (the Russian Commander-in-Chief) says that the army has requisitioned all the district's transport and that it is impossible to obtain even a small cart for us.' 'It is not by lamenting in a cafe that you will solve your difficulty' replied Auguste somewhat drily. Stung to the quick, one of them retorted 'I should like to see you do it'. 'There is no real obstacle - give me a horse and six Cossacks and in two days I will bring you back twenty vehicles'.

His proposal was promptly accepted. He left the same evening and next day returned to Bucharest with seventy-five peasant carts! 'Oh, but you are a valuable man; we will not let you go like that. You are going to take over the supervision of the convoy and accompany us to Zimnicea!' (On the Danube, 50 miles from Plevna.)(1)

At last! Here he was at the famous seat of war of which he had dreamed night and day for months (two weeks before his 29th birthday). If he had come to experience emotions and be useful, his ex-

pectations were promptly realised.

He arrived at Zimnicea on 18th July 1877 and had hardly entered the town and begun to unload his carts when some fugitives arrived at full gallop from Plevna, saying that the Russians were in full flight and that the 'bachi-bouzouks' (Turkish irregulars) were pursuing them and holding lances at their backs.

Frantic terror took possession of the inhabitants. In the twinkling of an eye, doors, shutters and shop fronts slammed shut. There was a general stampede and men, women, children, old men, the strong, the wounded, cattle, horses, asses, buffaloes, all jostled each other as they fled pell-mell. Some shouted, some swore, some prayed; they blasphemed, they bellowed, they roared and they howled. This terrifying mob all ran together and rolled along the streets of Zimnicea through blinding dust under a fiery sun. Never was there a more horrible scene - like a vision of Dante in the depths of hell.

This panic was futile but it was not without cause. You may remember that it was on that day that Osman Pasha had made a victorious sortie from Plevna, defeating generals Schakhorskoï and de Krude, inflicting on them a loss of 20,000 men. The following days were marked by a great flood of wounded.

In a few days between 5 and 6000 of them were brought in. For want of tents and hospitals to shelter them, they simply lay on the ground under a burning July sun. 'Without false modesty' wrote Auguste, 'it is then that I began to be really useful. With gold in my pockets, men and carts at my disposal, I organised a shuttle service of carts between the camp for the wounded and the town, laden with all I could find in the town. I broke down the doors of the inhabitants who refused to give up the things needed for the wounded.'

It is also there that I had the opportunity, for the first time, of assisting the famous surgeon Sklifassorsky in one of his wonderful operations. He was amputating the leg of an officer and I held the thigh firmly. I still feel the chill of the knife entering the flesh and the grating of the saw severing the bone. During this first operation I had to go out three times for fresh air and to restore zest to my failing heart.

I was indignant at hearing the surgeons discussing the laws of their art, weighing the pros and cons of the success of this operation. One becomes accustomed to everything and by the third operation I

(1) On the north bank of the Danube, S.W. of Bucharest and on present border of Romania and about 80 km east of the battlefield at the town of Plevna.



had become inured to war and I took a keen interest in the explanations of the learned professor.'

After a few days Auguste went to Listoro where the same heart-rending spectacle met his eyes.<sup>(1)</sup> The sick and the wounded continued to flow in from Plevna and from the Balkans and the help we had was quite inadequate. The Red Cross depot had the appearance of complete confusion. Linen, garments, medicines, liquors, tobacco and preserves all lay about higgledy-piggledy. One had to search a whole day, turning out all the crates before finding what one needed.

Auguste expressed his indignation in no uncertain manner at such disorder. The local Red Cross Delegate, stung to the quick and at his wits' end, appointed him on the spot as Representative of the Red Cross and manager of the Listoro depot. Sustained by the desire to promptly relieve the untold sufferings that confronted him, he displayed his typical activity. He requisitioned Iconnas, one of the mosques of the town and hoisted an enormous Red Cross flag on the minaret of the prophet, who must have shuddered in his tomb. He equipped his depot with first aid kits, sorted, labelled and arranged.

At the end of three days everything was in perfect order. Not only did he keep the depot organised, delivering promptly to the hospitals and doctors what they needed, but he still found time to contribute to the setting-up of sustenance stations between Plevna and Listoro where the wounded could be given soup and tea. He continued to assist at the operations of surgeons Sklifassorsky and Heim who greatly appreciated his Herculean strength, his calmness and his intelligent appreciation of the care that the wounded needed.

His casual, jovial frankness, liveliness, good humour and indefatigable energy earned for him the affection of all, from the private soldier to the chiefs and the ladies of the Royal Court who nursed the wounded.

When the terrible crisis of the battle for Plevna was over there were fewer wounded coming in and the medical staff at Listoro were able to regain their breath a little. The great surgeon decided to keep a memento of his staff during recent difficult days together. Auguste was invited to be in a photographic group consisting only of the Red Cross and medical teams. A copy of the photo was given to Prince Tcherkassky, Deputy Chief of the Russian Society of the Red Cross in Bulgaria. The prince asked about the only face in the group that was unknown to him. They praised Auguste very highly; indeed, too much.

The prince, an ardent lover of the Slavs, detested anyone who was a foreigner. He summoned Auguste to headquarters at Gormy-Studene, thanked him politely and with sham warmth told him that he wished to keep him near him and promptly put him in charge of the local depot

of the Red Cross, a tiny place with an embryo hospital of only a few patients.

Auguste spent two long months there with almost nothing to do, champing at the bit, thinking of all the useful work he could be doing elsewhere.

He would have died of boredom but for the frequent friendly visits of Switzerland's military representative, the worthy Colonel Colombi who by his interesting conversations kept him up-to-date with the military operations, pointing out the errors, predicting the checks with a wisdom that the event nearly always justified. Under a very plain exterior Colombi hid real ability. The Emperor, who had complimented him on the elegant simplicity of his Swiss uniform which was in striking contrast to the embroideries of his colleagues, had a high opinion of his judgment. One day at the Emperor's table a discussion having arisen on the respective merits of the Austrian and German armies, Colombi was chosen as the referee. He decided the question in favour of the German army.

Auguste, quite convinced that Prince Tcherkassy would not relent, went to see him and declared that he was embarrassed to accept a salary for work so unimportant, and was resigning. This was accepted and Auguste set out again for Listoro, where he arrived almost as poor as on the first occasion. It was then suggested that he enter the Army Supply Corps where they offered him 1500 gold francs a month, while indicating the means by which he could make from 10000 to 15000 'on the side'.

Despite his debts in Russia and his present poverty Auguste flatly refused. 'A Swiss does not enter a service where one steals', he replied. His honesty and his foresight were fully justified for after the war some cases of fraud against certain Army Supply Officers involving 40 to 50,000 roubles were under investigation.

Discouraged and disillusioned, Auguste was about to return to Russia when a doctor friend, who had resigned for similar reasons, proposed opening a hospital at Listoro for the army's carriers who were dying by the hundred from fever, dysentery and privation. Funds were to be supplied by a Warsaw company which as Auguste has since learned, created this philanthropic effort only to conceal its corruptions and throw dust in the eyes of some very important people. Auguste agreed and took charge of administration while the doctor busied himself with the medical side. They struggled for a few weeks in a scheming environment of Jews, Poles of ill repute and adventurers of all nationalities but rendered great service to these poor devils of carriers, obscure victims of the war and its exploiters. At the

*(1) I cannot locate this town - it might be Levski, half way to Plevna?*



end of a month the funds dried up and they had to close their hospital.

It was mid-winter; the Russian armies were in the Balkan Mountains struggling to cross the Schipkas and Gorny Doubniak passes, against severe natural conditions and a fierce enemy. The sufferings of the soldiers and the wounded were indescribable, especially those who also had frozen feet and hands. Auguste could not bring himself to leave this scene of misery where so much suffering still cried out for relief. He joined forces with a gentleman who planned to cross the Balkans. Each supplied a horse and a sledge, provisions were purchased, and they set off.

The two travellers first followed the hard-frozen Danube, sinking sometimes under the ice in places where warm springs occurred near the banks. Leaving the river they arrived at Plevna a few days after the mutiny in the square. Great God! What a terrible sight! The ground had been ploughed up by shells; the gutted houses were but ruins, torn by shells and riddled by bullets. 'They stared at you with their empty eyes like skeletons of some gigantic monsters.' The carnage had been terrible for the thick layer of snow that covered the ground was spotted with reddish blobs of blood, brains, intestines and shreds of flesh, and resembled a slaughter-house. Corpses galore lay there; some singly, others in close-packed masses. Patrols moved about in the midst of this charnel scene escorting small bands of captured Turks - pale, emaciated, gaunt as cab horses; some were completely exhausted and collapsed on the road never to rise again. 'Vae victis'. (Woe to the conquered.)

Auguste and his companion continued up the northern side of the Balkan Mountains forcing their way through an increasingly thicker blanket of snow. They spent the nights in shattered abandoned villages, in huts without doors or windows, setting off the next day by roads that got worse and worse.

It was then that Auguste fully appreciated the harsh apprenticeship he had served in the rugged Ormonts. His iron health, his good humour, his ingenuity in procuring warmth, forage and even food, overcame all obstacles. A few days later the intrepid travellers emerged on the southern side of the mountains and reached Sofia, then called Philippopoli.

Meanwhile Prince Tcherkassky had died and had been replaced by the Secretary of State, Panioutine. Auguste therefore called on the Sofia Red Cross Deputy and offered his help. The man was in great confusion; the sick and wounded were pouring in from all sides at once, communications through the Balkans were frequently interrupted and the Red Cross depot was short of everything. 'Have you any money?' asked Auguste. 'Yes, but it is of no use!': 'Nonsense' he replied; 'if it is the nerve of war it is also that of charity'.

He was handed a few thousand francs and bought all the linen and flannel that he could find from shops and individuals. Then, in the name of charity, he knocked on many doors enlisting women and girls. He organised a big clothing workshop to which they all hurried and got busy sewing. In a week two thousand pairs of flannel underpants and shirts had been delivered.

The local Deputy, delighted to have found such an active and energetic assistant, appointed him Deputy-in-Chief, put him in charge of the Philippopoli depot -- and vanished for good! Typhus had just broken out and was raging, causing untold misery in the midst of this conglomeration of wounded, sick and crippled men, exhausted by snow and cold.

Auguste was truly a providential God-send for these unfortunates for his great activity and 'savoir faire' coped with every problem. Setting the example, he electrified his subordinates by supervising everything personally, including the hospitals. He created order and cleanliness everywhere, visited all his doomed typhoid patients and saved some of them in spite of the doctors who refused to go into the worst places.

However, concerned by the great responsibility thrust on him, he kept on asking for a Deputy Red Cross Chief and his repeated wish was granted. Warned by telegraph of the Deputy's arrival, he went to meet him at the railway station and saw alighting from the train a dry little man with an expressive open countenance, indicative of both kindness and energy. 'You must be Mr Balachof' said Auguste in his clear vibrant voice that pierced the air like a bugle note. 'Ah, how pleasing your voice is to me, and how distinctly I hear it' he replied for he was a bit deaf.

Such was Auguste's first meeting with this man who was to have so great an influence on his life. A millionaire with a rather delicate constitution, intimate adviser and Chamberlain of the Czar, Mr. Balachof, like so many others, could easily have led the idle and useless life of a young man of good social position.

Endowed with a generous nature and brilliant talents which had been cultivated by his Swiss tutor, Mr Falleli of Geneva, he adopted quite another way of life. Frail and delicate as a child, healthy physical hygiene had transformed him into a good walker, swimmer, an excellent mountain climber, an intrepid horseman and had made him immune to fatigue and privation. May I add that he found a worthy rival in Auguste. Here are a few examples:

One day in the Caucasus, between Petrovsk and Thenis-Khan-Chour, one of them was travelling by post-coach; the other, who took to the road on foot, arrived first! Another time in the rugged Transcaspiian steppe they had covered 125 kilometres on horseback. 'Are you



tired?' --"No". 'Could you do another stage?' "Certainly;" 'Come on then'. And they did another 25 kilometres in spite of being sore and stiff for they had been fifteen hours in the saddle! (See Appendix: 'Euranie's Diary'.)

Another time at Yalta in the Crimea, all the guests of the Grand Hotel were confined to their rooms by a fierce wind, blowing in gusts and whipping up waves of two to three metres. 'Are we going swimming?' asked Balachof.--"With you, I am willing" answered Auguste.

In no time they were in the water despite the vehement protests and entreaties of the other guests who were fully convinced that they were going to certain death. Undaunted they swam out a good half kilometre — then turned back, sometimes disappearing in the troughs, sometimes tossed like a walnut shell on the foaming crests. When they returned to shore it was impossible to make a landing; the waves were breaking in wild surf and undertow dragged them back again and again. 'Let us dive,' said one. The cry arose from the onlookers; "They are lost!" 'Come on then!' They swam under water, the wave receded and there they were, safe on shore and greeted with cheers. They dressed and went off calmly to dine.

A few days later they set out from the hotel at four o'clock in the afternoon and reached the Aspetre, the highest peak in the Crimean range, in time to admire a superb sunset. They got back to the hotel at midnight after having walked fifty kilometres without pause, passing through a forest with precipices where the chance of breaking one's neck was twenty to one! This time they conceded that they were tired! For two days they hardly dared touch their legs for their leg muscles felt like red-hot iron bars! Balachof had high principles which fitted him for any self-sacrifice and made him compassionate towards all suffering. When he went to the Balkans, he asked for the most dangerous job. Later on, when the plague broke out at Vetliemke on the Volga, he went there immediately, undaunted by the epidemic, although on the first day he saw thirty-six die of the disease. Under the command of General Laris-Melikof he took the most energetic and thorough measures; perhaps thanks to his devotion to duty, Russia and Europe were saved from a terrible scourge!

Such was the new chief that Auguste brought back to the town. He took him to visit all the hospitals and other Red Cross buildings. He then handed over his accounts and the Depot, saying that now his own role was finished and that he was going to withdraw. 'Not at all, Sir, on the contrary I earnestly beg of you to stay. I am amazed at all that you have done. You know all about everything and I very much need your help.'

Gradually these two men, both so worthy of each other, learned to

know and esteem each other. They formed a deep and lasting friendship that has never ever failed them since. After the peace was signed at San Stefanoinis (now called Yesilkoy, village near Istanbul), it was necessary to repatriate the Turkish wounded and prisoners of war. Auguste was appointed a member of the Evacuation Commission and played an important part in its work.

One day when he was in charge of a train going to Adrianople (120 km N. of Gallipoli), he was told that an entire carriage had revolted under the leadership of a huge negro who, forgetful of the law of Mahomet, had filled himself with brandy and was threatening to throw all the 'Moscofs' through the window (Muscovites, Russians). Auguste boldly entered the carriage and floored the rebellious negro with his fist as he was advancing to meet him. This convinced the rabble to a man! Not one stirred and the train proceeded without further incident.

At Adrianople the new commander in chief of the army of occupation, General Todfleben, gave the young Swiss a warm and cordial reception as he had been informed of Auguste's exploits since the beginning of the campaign. He thanked him publicly for his fine conduct and the care that he had lavished on the Russian soldiers, gave him the accolade (ceremonial embrace) at a parade of all his staff officers, made him a present of his photograph duly autographed with a friendly and eulogistic dedication and invited him to dine.

Towards the end of the repast, when in reply to a toast, Auguste had bravely made his little speech in Russian, General Todfleben asked: 'Why is a man like Mr Tardent, who has rendered us so many services, not yet an official Deputy?' "He will be," said Mr Kabat, Deputy-in-Chief of the Red Cross, taking good care not to mention that, although twice recommended by Balachof, Tardent had twice been ruled out — because he was a foreigner!

The next day Auguste was appointed a Deputy of the Russian Red Cross Society and a month later it was confirmed by Her Majesty the Empress, Patroness of the Society. Meanwhile, with the evacuation of the Turkish wounded completed, they proceeded to do the same for the Russian wounded. Auguste was given charge of the Yamboli-Burgas railway line. (Latter is a port on the Black Sea, N.W. of Istanbul.)

Here again his great energy was needed. A major of the Army Supply Corps had been instructed to organise this line but came back discouraged, telling the chief doctor that the thing was impossible; the wind blew the tents over, the officers refused to supply the men necessary to establish the field hospitals etc. etc. Auguste said that he understood the task and would carry it out. He promptly confronted the obstructing general and politely but firmly requested the soldiers that he needed. The general, who was riding



on the drill ground at the time, rudely refused and even made a show of raising his riding whip. 'Never mind that,' replied Auguste, looking him squarely in the face, 'I will immediately write you an official demand for so many soldiers and you will answer it or not, please yourself.'

Red Cross Deputies had long arms and it was not uncommon for their complaints to get right to the all-powerful Empress and even higher. The cool assurance of the new Deputy gave the general something to think about and an hour later Auguste had the soldiers he wanted. Next day the general visited him to personally apologise, saying: "I did not know that you were that kind of man". The line was soon very well organised; the hospitals, the food depots and the trains always in order and fully equipped, and the evacuation proceeded smoothly and efficiently.

All seemed to be going well when one day Auguste had set out from Burgas to inspect the line, lightly clad in tussore silk. He was caught out in cold rain and soaked to the skin. In the evening he went upstairs with difficulty for he had caught a bad dose of typhus and it kept him in bed for four weeks, struggling between life and death. This terrible scourge that he had braved so many times with impunity, was a severe trial for him. The physical suffering was easier to bear than the immobility, weakness and impotence that followed the crisis(1). The Red Cross campaign finished without him.

Thanks to devoted, skilful care his sturdy constitution triumphed and in June 1878 he returned to convalesce at Odessa. I went there to see him and we spent a few days together. What a happy experience were these brotherly outpourings after the trials and fears that had oppressed us like a nightmare.

How happy I was to hear his cheerful accounts of his role in relieving so many unfortunate sufferers, and how proud I was to see the high esteem in which all held him; the private soldiers all knew him, the Sisters of Charity never called him anything but their 'dear uncle', the doctors, his chiefs Mr. Panoutine and General Todfleben himself, now become governor-general of Odessa, all vied with each other in showing him affection, esteem and gratitude.

I was happy to see him return in this manner not like so many others - rich and despised. Rich - he was scarcely that. If his salary in the later period was quite high, his position also made big demands on his purse. Furthermore, he had sent from Burgas quite a big sum to my father, (6000 roubles) thus saving him from financial ruin and whose courage was thus restored, just as he was about to lose hope.(2)

With only a few hundred roubles in his pocket, he set out for St

Petersburg in company with General Levitsky and Mme Scobelef, the mother of the famous general. He was warmly welcomed by St Petersburg society, especially by the Central Committee of the Red Cross which asked for his portrait (to be placed in the Society's museum). He rested for some time with his protector and friend Mr Balachof. He was promptly chosen as his assistant, because Balachof had just been appointed Deputy in Chief of the expedition that the Red Cross was arranging to send to the eastern side of the Caspian Sea.

Never have chief and subordinate understood each other better and acted with more unanimity and consistency than these two. Taught by experience, they first set the extensive preparations moving, necessitated by an expedition into a country devoid of all resources and where the Red Cross would, no doubt, be called upon to play an important role.

In 1879 they went first to Tiflis in Caucasian Georgia to establish contact with the local Red Cross and to investigate the problems involved. From there they returned west to Odessa, where the Depot held the supplies left over from the Turkish campaign and where nearly all the needed supplies were purchased.

In the meantime General Lomakine had been badly defeated by the Turkomen and the remnant of his troops brought back to the Caspian Sea. Balachof left for St Petersburg, leaving to his assistant the task of continuing the preparations and the recruiting of staff, a delicate task demanding a great deal of tact. Some well-connected persons in St Petersburg high society volunteered. Auguste knew plenty about staff and would only enrol mature, experienced nursing sisters whose moral principles were above all temptation.

He was hard-hearted in face of prayerful requests and threats. Balachof supported his decisions despite the slander and intrigues

*(1) How feelingly can his nephew endorse these sentiments! He will never forget his sudden raging typhoid fever, delirium, emaciation and frustration, wondering how his mates were faring at Chatham's Post and Lone Pine. It was nearly forty years later that he, like Auguste, lay for weeks, hovering between life and death in the British Army Hospital in Ras-el-Tin Palace in Alexandria - and after trying to shovel away the bunk struts on the hospital ship, en route across the Aegean Sea! Then in periods of sanity, apologising to the pretty and devoted English nurse, for such unseemly conduct! (Henry suffered similarly at Roma in 1893).*

*(2) = \$A1,200, which in 1977 values would approximate \$25,000; a measure of the great bond that exists within our families - I could quote quite a few modest modern examples!*



that were used in an attempt by disgruntled applicants, to blacken Auguste's reputation in his eyes.

Balachof had gone to St Petersburg to clarify the future activities of the detachment. Must he disband it with the option of reforming it later at great expense, or must he try to use it elsewhere while awaiting the renewal of hostilities planned for the following year? The latter view prevailed and Auguste was then able to proceed with the transportation of 2,500 pounds of goods as far as Tsaritzine on the Volga. The remainder of the material went by rail to Vladikavkaz, thence by cart as far as the Daghestan centres(1). The agents of the Red Cross hesitated to undertake this last task for the highways were scarcely safe. It was even not uncommon for the cossacks serving as escorts to join in with the brigands who plundered the convoys.

With his usual courage and determination Auguste did not hesitate. He travelled at the head of the first convoy declaring to all that he would blow out the brains of the first man who faltered. All went without further incident except an encounter with a 'djiquette' who drew his yataghan (curved dagger-like sword) when they tried to push him aside to let the convoy proceed. In Daghestan province Auguste distributed his sisters of charity among the hospitals of Thenire-Khan-Choura, Petrovsk, Derbent and other centres, where he also formed Red Cross Committees.

When the ice melted and the Volga was again navigable, he sent for the supplies from Tsazitzine(2). As they were not very busy he and Balachof hunted wild boar and golden pheasant, which were plentiful in the scrub forests bordering the Caspian Sea.

He visited Baku and its artesian oil wells from which mineral oil gushes hundreds (?) of feet into the air and spills into huge reservoirs. The surrounding mountains are so saturated that if one only makes a hole in the ground with one's cane and lights it, a gas jet will burn day and night!

Auguste went to see a Hindu priest in his cell where the eternal flame burns; the last representative of a numerous caste of fire-worshippers. He also visited the vineyards on the Caspian side of the Caucasus Mountains with special interest and saw the large madder plantations at Derbent, now abandoned.(3)

When General Scobelev arrived in the spring of 1880, Auguste accompanied him to the eastern side of the Caspian and together they explored the extensive Turkestan Steppe. The first armed reconnaissance took possession of Bami, which they fortified and it became the base for military and medical operations(4). The general, who feared that his only line of communication might be cut between Tchikichliar and Bami, along the Persian border, prepared a second

line more to the north between Bami and Krasnovodsk. Scobelev made this reconnaissance in person with a small escort including Auguste.

What a country! What fatigue and hardship! They rode daily stages of 60 to 70 km and the heat, greatly increased by reflection from the sand, varied between 40 and 50° (132F). Reaching a well which was to quench their thirst and revive them, Scobelev's party found only muddy water tainted by dead camels, deliberately thrown into it and producing the appetising perfume of rotten eggs! Their lips were swollen resembling those of negroes' turned inside out, and were also split with painful cracks.

After fifteen days of fatigue and endurance the courageous little band arrived at Krasnovodsk on the Caspian Sea's opposite shore to the border of Turkey. Auguste, never very fat, was one of the least distressed although he had lost fifteen pounds in weight in fifteen days!(5).

Today (1887) the railway trains cross this inhospitable desert in a

(1) Approx. 41 tonnes (1 pound = 36 lbs = 16.4 kg).

*Tsaritzine was changed to Stalingrad and then to Volgograd at the great bend of the Volga R. Vladikavkaz is Vladicaucas on a 1910 map, and apparently now Ordzhonikidze (or near it), then, and still a railhead at northern foot of Caucasus Mountains, 230 km west of Petrovsk. Derbent and Petrovsk (now called Makhach-Kala) are ports on the west shore of the Caspian Sea. They were in the Daghestan province, now a U.S.S.R. republic. Incidentally, the Caspian is 82 feet below sea level and a big area of land including Astrakhan at the Volga's mouth is also below sea level, so that in summer great heat prevails.*

(2) The logical implication appears to be that the supplies were sent south by river and sea, to a port on the opposite shore to the seat of operations.

(3) Madder is a shrubby climber whose roots yielded a popular red dye in earlier times. Experimental plantings were hopefully made at Chaba but other dyes came into favour.

(4) Bami is 160 km N.E. of Ashkhabad and 300 S.E. of the port of Krasnovodsk, now both on the railway to Samarkand. Henry gives no details about their points of departure - they apparently crossed the Caspian by boat and started their ride from some point south of Krasnovodsk.

(5) They apparently rode in the desert out from the eastern shore of the Caspian but I am unable to trace their amazing journey with certainty because the route is sketchily described. One wonders how their horses stood up to this ordeal; and how they were fed - probably with fodder carried on pack-animals.

See Uranie's Diary 1822 for an account of other long hard rides.



few hours. When the two lines of communication were established, the army's advance began in November 1880. The Army Service Corps was unfriendly to the Red Cross at first, accused it of encroaching on its powers and considered the Red Cross as its auxiliary. However, it undertook to supply it with forage and pack and draught animals.

Balachof and his assistant knew from their Balkans campaign experiences that the Army's own medical service would soon become hopelessly incompetent. They therefore set up their main base at Tchikichliar, assembled all their equipment, provisions and stores there, and sent for their staff. Advance depôts and field hospitals were set up at places recently occupied by the troops and at first included small numbers of horses, camels and carts in transport parks.

Without warning the overworked Supply Corps declared that it could not give the Red Cross the promised help and handed over all the army transport to its care! The Red Cross was equal to the occasion. Auguste was given complete charge of transport and in a few days had organised wheelwright, blacksmith and saddler's workshops.

He invented two kinds of wagon, one a two-wheeler, the other with four wheels, equipped so as to be readily adaptable for the transport of wounded or alternatively of provisions. This ingenious idea doubled the value of his vehicles and allowed him to utilise the greater strength of his draught animals on the return trips. He proceeded with the acquisition of horses and camels, and soon had a park of 300 horses, 50 camels and 150 different vehicles under his command as well as a staff of about 100 servants; sufficient to cope with any likely need.

Some high society ladies of St Petersburg, including the Countess of Wilioutine, an old maid, daughter of the Minister of War, had arrived and offered their services free to the Red Cross. Auguste could not do other than accept them. Mr. Balachof had to spend two months in St Petersburg due to illness, so for that period Auguste became acting Deputy in Chief with all the responsibility of a big staff and stock worth about 150,000 roubles.

He did not have all the consideration for these ladies that they expected. He wanted things done his way and did not intend that the sisters of charity should spend excessive time in religious devotions, that could well be employed much more charitably in caring for the sick and wounded. In short, the Countess, who could not accept being thwarted by 'this foreign commoner', schemed with her father in St. Petersburg to influence the Central Committee of the Red Cross and even with the Empress herself. To gain her ends more surely she accused Auguste of having committed some malpractices.

Mr. Balachof hurried back anxiously from St Petersburg. 'Mr. Tardent,' said he, 'I like you and I am rich; if you have the smallest act on your conscience, tell me frankly and I will pay, for I wish to avoid scandal at all costs.' Auguste replied, "I thank you but I have only one answer; set up an enquiry and let it be as complete as possible." 'I knew you were honest,' replied Mr. Balachof, giving him a hug; 'and your reply relieves me of a great worry.'

Balachof's official request for a double enquiry, military and civil, was made and ended of course in the complete vindication of Auguste whose perfect honesty and obvious excellent conduct, on the contrary, were publicly proclaimed. The small quantity of 'markhota', a leaf of tobacco at two roubles a poud, which were found at a retailer's shop and which were the Countess' pretext for her accusations, were found to have come from non-smoking soldiers who had sold their rations to the shopkeeper!

Auguste scorned to sue the Countess for defamation of character but contented himself with writing her the following letter: 'Excellency! There was once a man who had but one rich possession in the world, that of an honest name respected by those who knew him. Then came a person who, sheltering behind a higher position, desired to steal his only wealth, his honour, quite gratuitously and for no reason. Nothing justified this attack, so much the more odious because it was made by stealth. Probably the only thing that saved the poor devil from the noble lady's unprovoked attack was the intervention of a third party.

Perhaps you know this certain Mademoiselle. As for the poor man, he has the honour to be your very humble servant, (signed) A. Tardent (who encloses a copy of an official document and draws your special attention to a certain underlined word which will always remain linked to his memory of you). Tchikichliar, 12th November 1880.' The word underlined in the document was 'kleveta' which means 'slander'.

The slanderous insinuations also had their repercussion against Balachof. The Central Committee, upset and torn in different directions, yielded to powerful requests and they sent out a new Deputy in Chief, Prince Schakhovskoi, to the seat of war.

Balachof and his assistant were thus faced with two difficult alternatives - either to accept the orders of a young man of twenty-eight, their former subordinate in the Turkish campaign who had no qualification other than to have been born in a princely cradle; or to resign at the risk of seeing their work wrought with such great care and trouble jeopardised in incompetent hands; also this would allow the slanders spread against them to gain credence.

Deeply disgusted by so much intrigue and black ingratitude, Balachof



wished to resign. Auguste held a different opinion. 'We are not here for the satisfaction of our own self-esteem', said he, 'but to perform a humane task. We know all about the detail operations of the Red Cross. We only, can help our wounded in the manner that they have the right to expect of our Society. Moreover, in wartime the power, of necessity goes to the man of experience and action. If anyone finds himself discredited here, it will not be you or I'.

Balachof, convinced by this reasoning, sustained by this mountain-eer's determination which nothing could shake, agreed to stay on with the simple title of Deputy whilst Auguste was appointed Chief of the Medical Park.

Events fully justified their self-sacrifice. The Prince, bewildered and out of his element, was reduced to referring those who asked for orders to the only persons who were competent to give them and who had full knowledge of all the problems. In the eyes of the whole staff the prince's sybaritic St Petersburg character was in painful contrast with that of his industrious predecessor(1). Soft and feeble of character, he allowed himself to be talked over by the Countess, (on whose activities he had to make the enquiry) and finished by marrying her, despite the great difference in their ages. This strange marriage provoked great bursts of laughter in the whole army and its echo resounded mirthfully in St Petersburg's society.

During this time Balachof capably organised the medical service in the outposts, thinking of everything. He personally went right up under the walls of Geok-Teke under a hail of bullets to collect the wounded. Auguste, no less busy, evacuated 2,000 wounded and sick from the Caspian Sea in a few weeks and supplied the medical stations with all they needed. He even assisted the hard-pressed Army Supply Service by transporting cannon balls and other munitions for it! He maintained his draught animals in good condition thanks to a clever fitting on the wagons which allowed them to always carry a good supply of forage. He proved his gallantry and fearlessness on many occasions.

One day when he was escorting a convoy of wounded, the cavalry scouts signalled the approach of Turkoman troopers. The nearness of the enemy was not unexpected since a few days before Dr Stoudzis and his escort of cossacks had been massacred only a few versts away. Everybody was preparing to sell his life dearly, if necessary.

The enemy, however, did not seem in a hurry to attack. Auguste, impatient to know whom he had to deal with, leapt onto his horse, made sure that his holsters were in good order and rode forward at a gallop to reconnoitre the enemy. He stopped a hundred paces from them for they were completely hidden by a dense cloud of dust; then he suddenly burst out laughing and returned. On reaching his own men he was surrounded and plied with questions. 'What did you see?' 'how many

are they?' 'have they rifles or spears?'

"Go and see for yourselves," he said coldly, "you who are soldiers" (One of them was the son of a famous Russian general.) No one moved. "Well, set your minds at rest, my friends. It is a flock of sheep!" he told them. What a joke!

Another time he noticed on his arrival at Tchilichliar that he had lost his watch and its precious solid gold chain, a friendly present from Mr. Balachof. Despite the late hour he remounted and set about searching for it accompanied only by his orderly, the brave 'djiquite' Khodof, (2) a splendid soldier who was later made a Knight of St George for his heroic conduct during the attack on Geok-Tepe.

After a ride of several hours he was lucky enough to find his precious keepsake sparkling on the sand like a small fantastic reptile. But the sun was setting; darkness was rapidly spreading its dense veil and the two horsemen lost their way.

There they were, alone on the steppe which was swarming with enemy patrols. If they ran into one they had the pleasant prospect of being impaled; that is to say having their feet and hands bound then seated on their anus on a pointed stake, which their own weight would cause to penetrate the body tearing through their entrails till death resulted in three or four days; or else having the skin torn from their backs by heavy flogging.

Nothing is so nerve-racking and demoralising as an unknown danger. They found their bearings somehow or other and made for the Caspian Sea. They moved cautiously; intensely concentrating their hearing, and with the pupils of their eyes dilated and staring ahead. At last, close on midnight they saw a small fire and heard the confused murmur of a camp. Were these friends or enemies?

Should they go forward or should they flee? They were dropping with fatigue; their mounts were tired out. They moved forward with extra caution, cutlass between their teeth, finger on revolver trigger. 'Who goes there?' cried someone in Russian. They gleefully answered: "Friends!" Ah! what a relaxing of nerves!

Those two hours roused more emotions in them than whole years of ordinary life.

Finally Auguste personally organised the defence of his park during the frightening night of 30th December 1880. Their whole camp was

(1) *The Sybarites were a degenerate Greek colony in south Italy, noted for their luxurious living and their sensuous effeminacy, which indicates that the prince must have been a bit of a naughty, mincing cissy!*

(2) *I do not know this word - possibly means peasant soldier.*



sound asleep when suddenly a frightful noise arose and threw panic into all their hearts. The Turkomen sallied out from fortified Geok-Tepe with the suddenness of a lava-flow and furiously attacked the left flank of the Russian army whose camp was sited only a few hundred metres from the ramparts.

Auguste had a few bad moments, until he found his revolver (hidden in a chest) but the feel of it in his hand instantly brought calmness and presence of mind. He assembled his hundred men, ordered them to grab any arms, anything they could find, axes, spears or guns and formed them into a square around the park.

His calm, commanding voice was clearly heard midst some cries of pain and terror, crack of rifle-fire and the whiz of bullets all about them. He soon brought calm to his men who were the more upset as they remembered the almost complete destruction of General Lomakin's army two years earlier and the horrible mutilations which the prisoners suffered, including loss of manhood (castration)!

After two attacks the enemy was driven off, having inflicted casualties on the Russians of 52 dead and 96 wounded.

Auguste remained at Geok-Tepe until the final assault on 12th January 1881, a horrible battle in which 8,000 Turkomen bit the dust.

His brave and competent conduct did not go unnoticed. General Scobelef was a good judge of men and personally recommended Auguste for the decoration of St Vladimir with crossed swords. This is a very select order very rarely awarded to Russian civilians and almost never to foreigners. It is only given 'with swords' for acts of bravery under enemy fire.

It automatically confers hereditary nobility on the recipient with the right to bring up his children at the expense of the Crown and other social privileges. Furthermore, Scobelef's opinion of the Red Cross had completely changed and he praised it publicly for its services and declared it had deserved well of Russia and of mankind. He instructed it to succour the Turkomen victims of the war and to proceed with the complete evacuation of the sick and wounded.

When all was settled, Auguste gave up his plan for an extended journey to Teheran in Persia. He went with all haste to the Caucasus and from there to Switzerland, whither he had been summoned by repeated telegrams announcing the sudden dire illness of his father. Unfortunately he arrived too late to see him and found only the tomb of him who would have been so happy to clasp him in his arms.

At least he had the satisfaction of finding his dear old mother and all his brothers gathered there as well as his old friends, who gave him a warm and most cordial welcome. After visiting parts of Switzerland, he left for Russia with his brother Henry and family,

with whom he rested for some weeks at Nikolayev.

What was Auguste to do now? Mr Balachof gave him a large gratuity in recognition of the loyal service that Auguste had rendered and for the unfaltering devotion that he had shown him, when so many others were fawning on Prince Schokorskoï. The amount would have been a fortune for some(1). However, when Auguste had paid all the cost of his journey and part of that of his brother to Switzerland, and generously lavished an abundant dew on all his relatives he had only a few thousand roubles left - too little to start any worth-while trade venture. Moreover he was in no hurry as he had powerful and important friends and had little trouble about the future.

Meantime he wished to rest a little from the hurly-burly of life. 'You do not know,' he said 'what great pleasure one has in eating a European dinner and in sleeping in a good bed, after having lived for more than a year under a tent and without any comforts.'

However, inactivity soon weighed upon him more heavily than the arduous of the Transcasian desert! He set out once more for Moscow where the National Exhibition of 1882 was being prepared. The Central Committee of the Red Cross gave him charge of the organisation of the Asiatic section of the Society. There again he displayed his talent as an organiser and his usual quality of a man of action, unafraid of conflict.

The director of the Exhibition was influenced by envious schemers, refused to allot him the site requested by Auguste and proposed to place his exhibit in several isolated pavilions separated from each other. Auguste realised that a scattered exhibit would be ineffective and that he would be blamed for its failure. He would not be budged by either prayers, appeals or threats.

He told the Director, 'I would rather take my tents, wagons and camels back to the city where I shall organise something appropriate, thus justifying the confidence that has been placed in me - or nothing at all.'

Prince Dolgorouky, governor-general of Moscow, a man who was universally esteemed, presided at the sitting of the Committee of the Exhibition Commission. He agreed that Auguste was fundamentally in the right, but he besought him to yield for the sake of peace. 'Impossible, Prince. I would consider myself dishonoured if I faltered in what I believe to be my duty'.

(1) At the end of Henry's History, in an MS book of thin pages, is an undated copy of the text of Balachof's letter of appreciation to Auguste. The amount was 15,000 roubles, face value then £1,500 (\$13,000) which in 1977 could equal 50 to \$60,000! (Balachof was a very rich and also a generous man!)



The Committee rose without reaching agreement or passing any resolution. The Prince, amazed at such determination took Auguste's arm in a friendly manner and as they walked up and down together, asked him what he expected to do. 'Commence tomorrow setting up my display on the exact site that I have selected'. 'And if the director is opposed to it?' 'I shall submit the case direct to the Empress.'

When they were convinced that his determination was invulnerable they tried a flanking attack: A few days after this, an important-looking gentleman bedecked with medals appeared at the pavilion site and began to give orders. 'Who are you?' asked Auguste.

'General so and so, a confidential adviser specially appointed to organise the Asiatic section.' Auguste replied, 'Let me see your credentials, Sir.' 'I have none, I only have verbal instructions'. 'Well, Mr Confidential Adviser, I declare here and now that if you only move one stone here without proper credentials, I shall have you promptly thrown out by my workmen'. The ruse thus failed.

The general grabbed his hat and fled and may still be running, for Auguste never heard of him again!

Ah! Will-power! That is the point of support that Archimedes should have demanded, to enable him to lift up the world. After having beaten his enemies by his great determination, Auguste won them over by his jovial out-spokenness, devoid of malice or bitterness.

Everything went wonderfully well. On the day on which their Imperial Majesties were to visit the Exhibition, everyone was at his post hoping to win a glance or a word from the supreme master. Auguste who had worked with quite a different end in view, was quietly lunching in a city restaurant when a chamberlain came in haste to tell him that they were looking everywhere for him, that the Empress desired he be presented to her.

He returned to the pavilion only a few moments before their Imperial Majesties arrived. They went right through the whole of the Red Cross section without saying a word to anyone.

When they arrived at the Asiatic pavilion the Empress came forward and with her usual graciousness said: 'Mr Tardent, I thank you warmly for all that you have done for our beloved wounded'.

Those gracious words were a magnificent justification of Deputy Tardent and their aim was obviously intended to disprove the slanders with which certain people had tried to blacken him.

Ignoring the rule of etiquette which forbids one to speak to their Majesties unless directly asked a question, Auguste bowed and replied: 'I have only done my duty. Perhaps Your Majesty wishes to see how our wounded were cared for and made comfortable during the

campaign'. "With pleasure", she replied, left the Czar's arm, entered the felt tent and inspected the beds, etc.

The Emperor followed her and agreed that the wounded had not been so well treated at Bouchtchouk. From there Auguste showed the royal visitors the wagons which he had fitted up for the transport of the wounded, quickly dismantling them and explained their use and their advantages. He interested them by his breeziness and that respectful ease, free of servility, natural to republican Swiss. Their Majesties finally moved on after half an hour's interview and inspection!

If you have ever lived in a monarchical and especially an autocratic country, I leave it to you to think how many people were made envious and jealous that day by Auguste. 'We others were speechless but the "Frenchy" has a tongue of gold; he was not the least bit embarrassed, not he; in their company he is "like a gentleman with his brother"'! (Russian proverb (1).)

His success was manifold. On the recommendation of the Central Committee, he was created Commander of the Order of St Stanislaus and his wagons were awarded a Diploma of Honour, the highest award at the Exhibition for means of transport.

When the Exhibition closed, the Central Red Cross Committee requested miniature models of his vehicles and he sent them to the Museum of the Society, at St Petersburg, with an explanatory pamphlet in Russian, which had the distinction of being translated into French and published in the International Bulletin of Geneva (No. 61, Jan. 1885).

Auguste once more found himself with no employment but not without projects. One of his friends, Mr Gromoz, in negotiations with General Tcherniaef, governor of Turkestan, proposed to the Russian government to replace the caravan trade of those distant regions by a system of main roads, railways and river navigation. The contractor undertook to finance the project - boats, railways, everything. In return he demanded exemption for ten years from all customs duties on goods imported into Russia through this frontier, and thus to monopolise all the Russian trade of these vast regions for that period.

It was an impressive project. Auguste was to have an interest in the profits and his task would be to act as right-hand man of the director, so as to ensure its success in those countries that he knew so well and where his friend, who had supplied Scobelef's army, had seen him at work.

(1) As mentioned elsewhere, the term 'Frenchy' was not only used by the Russians for those who spoke French, but for any foreigner, especially Europeans.



Auguste would probably have made big money there if at the very moment when the project appeared to be safely launched, it had not collapsed through the sudden dismissal of General Tcherniaef, who was its patron. Tcherniaef was in great favour at Petersburg, but he was sacrificed for having expressed strong sentiments towards France at a banquet given in honour of the Attaché of the French Embassy. This at a time when Russian policy relied essentially on the Alliance with Germany.

Other projects were adopted for Turkestan transport and preference was given to the Krasnovodsk-Morvi-Boukhara line which is being built at the present time (1887). Auguste stuck to his friend Gro-moz and would have nothing to do with the new scheme.

While all this was going on at Tashkent and St Petersburg,, Auguste lived on hopes. In order not to waste his time he travelled to Vilna in Poland at his own expense, hoping to have some thousands of roubles restored to a poor Swiss woman, left a widow with several orphans. He found legal muddles, trickery and delays that had dragged on since 1846. He had a chancellor dismissed, interested some important people in the lady's welfare and obtained some financial redress for her. On the way, he created a sensation in the little town of Vizhma for two days, where his appearance and his decoration ribbons had caused him to be taken for an imperial ravisher. (See Gogol's play of that name.)

On his return to Moscow in May 1885 he had the rare opportunity of being present at all the ceremonies of the coronation of Their Imperial Majesties, from the religious ceremony inside the Kremlin to a gala ballet. He was the only guest in a dress suit (plus his many decorations) - all the others, the cream(1) of European Society, were in court dress or military uniforms.

He was soon bored with this life of pleasure and idleness and came back to his brother at Nikolayev. He said something like this: 'I must do something, but what? Mr Balachof and I have agreed that to preserve our friendship, I should not enter his employ in civilian life.

It is true that many other important people have often offered to help me but I have too much pride to beg a job from people at whose table I have been a guest, and who have all treated me as an equal.

Well, my dear brother, I am going to return to my former profession, teaching. It is the only honourable career that is sufficiently independent and that suits me. Besides, I still need to improve my mind.'

No sooner said than done. Despite his thirty-five years he was soon once more deep into the study of Latin, interrupted at Odessa. He dreamed and spoke of nothing but grammar and literature from morn-

till night. I would not be surprised if at times he would not sooner have been among the bullets at Geok-Tepe! The sedentary life palled on him; he found that it slowed the blood and dulled the mind. However, he knew how to counteract this with a vigorous health programme: cold baths, long walks and swimming up to two kilometres out from the shore, etc.

At the end of a few months he was sufficiently self-confident to present himself for tests to the Director of Schools of Moscow District, Mr Lavrovsky, who gave him a good pass and appointed him forthwith as provisional teacher for one term at the Akkerman Grammar School. Always thorough and dedicated in all that he does, Auguste devoted himself body and soul to his teaching, stimulated his pupils who adored him, and soon became the life and soul of the College and of the town.

His appointment was for one term only. It would certainly have been confirmed if Mr Lavrovsky had not died suddenly. His successor, who did not know Auguste at all and who had a protege of his own to place, did not renew his appointment. Auguste only had to get him to revise his decision but he did not desire to do so. A year in a Russian provincial town was a long time for this restless and active man.

He went to the Caucasus and stayed for some time with his friend the architect Knore at Stavropole; from there he went to Tiflis (now Tbilisi) where he was well received by the Director of Schools. He was promptly offered a position at Tiflis itself. Auguste declined this but accepted a post of teacher at the Erivan Classical Grammar School(2).

How I should like to quote here some extracts from his letters. His thoughts are so exuberant that the sentence is sometimes as involved as the vines of a rain forest and the grammar gets a bit twisted though there is plenty of action! Those letters of fifteen to twenty pages are in a style as animated as a Michelangelo Sculpture, full of warmly coloured imagery, joyous as a Spanish mule-bell; then suddenly poetical as moonlight or sparkling like spangles of snow on a starry night.

Everything delighted or interested him in the Caucasus; the picturesque of the highway, the beauty of some sights that recalled Switzerland, the majesty of the mountains—above all, that of Ararat—the bracing air than expanded his powerful chest; finally the strange customs of the many different races that people these regions.

(1) Henry used the French expression 'top of the basket'.

(2) Or Yerivân, capital of the Armenian U.S.S.R. Republic, very close to the Turkish border and only 50 km from Mt Ararat's 17,000 ft. peak.



As everywhere he ever lived, Auguste knew everybody from the governor of the town to the last cabbie. He had a friendly, jovial word for the passing milkmaid, the Jewish dealer sitting behind his heap of ribbons and laces, the Gypsy tinker or the dervish after prayers. The Moslems of the town took such a liking to the 'Frenchy' that they reserved for him a place of honour in their mosque, which no Christian was usually allowed to enter.

Thus it is that he was able during the feast of Ramadam(1) in 1885 to be present at the famous procession of fanatical dervishes. 'A stage is built in the precincts of the mosque', he wrote me, 'and it is there that the performance of the Mystery Plays takes place. From six to eight character actors present the different scenes of the life of the Prophet. They hold a piece of paper and declaim by turns from it, singing sometimes with a nasal intonation sometimes in a harsh and guttural voice.

'From time to time they draw the sabres which they wear at their sides and make the gesture of cutting their own throats. When the play is finished the whole community wanders through the town in a long motley howling procession, lighted by huge petrol torches. They are generally in groups of from fifty to eighty persons; with the left hand they hold on to the belt of their neighbour, with the right they brandish a sword with terrifying gestures.

'The procession goes forward howling rhythmically the words: "Allah, Allah, Allah, Allah!" These frenzied beings halt at all the cross-roads and utter cries of great ferocity; one could liken it to the rejoicing of a troop of cannibals'. Auguste goes on:

'Today is the last day of Ramadan. After ten days of these training exercises the fanaticism of these wretched men reaches an incredible crescendo. About 300 of the most fanatical go through the town's streets in five or six groups. Each group is preceded by about ten horses dressed out in garish coloured fabrics, some are ridden others are led by the bridle.

'The fanatics, clad in long white robes, brandish their sabres and strike each other repeatedly on the head to the continual howling of "Allah, Allah!" Blood gushes, congeals in the hair, trickles down their cheeks in scarlet threads and soils their white robes, which soon take on the appearance of very gory butcher's aprons! Their faces are hideous, drawn with pain and the paroxysms of religious exaltation give them the appearance of devilish monsters emerging from a sea of blood.

'A carriage would frequently pass me bearing one of these poor wretches who had fallen exhausted in the street. I am assured that every year a number of them die a coveted death, for they believe that they go straight to Paradise.

'What a strange animal is man! In ordinary life these same fanatics are the gentlest, most honest men that one could wish to meet.'

There, dear kinsman, is the concise account as faithful as I have been able to reconstitute it, of those events which have marked the restless and sometimes adventurous life of Auguste. The envious ones maintain that he was 'born with a caul', that he has been particularly lucky.

As for me, the more I think about it, the more it seems to me that he owes his success to his persevering will, to his steadfastness in adversity, to his excellent character, to his honesty - which has resisted the most seductive temptation - and also to his energy and great activity.

It is still necessary for a man to bestir himself in order that God may lead him. One has hardly ever seen Him set a limit to the advance of those in the front ranks.

#### HENRY ALEXIS TARDENT AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES 1887

Henry resumes his story: Finally, at your express request, and to complete the record, here follow some notes about myself; the most thankless part of my task; the one for which I have the least inclination. Nor do I believe that I have reached the age at which one likes to record one's recollections.

Strangely enough my prenatal existence probably affected my life permanently, for I was born during the collapse of my parents' affairs and when my father wanted to emigrate to Australia against the very strong objections of my mother. This was a time of great trial for her, incessantly tossed about between fear and hope, and also a prey to intense religious emotions.

I believe that I owe my relatively delicate constitution and an over-riding sensitivity, to the circumstance of my birth.(2) This temperament has brought me great intellectual and moral enjoyment

(1) *The Moslem religion's fast (our lent) of thirty days, kept during the ninth month of their lunar year and therefore may fall in any season.*

(2) *Father told me that his actual birth was quite amazing because his mother, who had extremely easy child-births, was crossing snow-covered ground at their chalet, when he was suddenly delivered into that chilly environment! The doctor was sure that Henry would not live three hours. They saved him and though weakly*



but also deep and bitter afflictions scarcely suspected by those who know me. Everything affects me profoundly both good things and bad and I go through life rather like skinless creatures which suffer joy or pain from the least variation of temperature.

All my childhood was spent entirely in the Ormonts Valley and from my earliest years I took part in all that the family did. This healthy mountain life which unceasingly calls on all one's faculties, has certainly made my life because it was the origin of my pronounced taste, even almost a passion for reading and study.

It is a fact that from the age of ten, or even earlier, I was earning my living. This early initiation into life matures a child like a fruit exposed at the same time to the Sirocco (hot wind from the Sahara) and to the midday sun. I should have liked to continue my studies. I know that my dear and wise father had taken some steps towards this end but he had to abandon the idea because of money problems. Despite this I kept up my studying hobby and obtained for myself a tutorship in Poland.

I was sixteen years old and had just made my first communion when I set out on 7th September 1869. On the way my money ran out and I still had another fifty leagues to go and not one sou left in my pocket. However, I was already resourceful enough to overcome this problem and arrived successfully at my destination. To be honest it is the only time that I kept the Jeune Federal strictly!(1)

I spent two years and eight months with the Boniezky family at Kornie in Galicia where I was fairly happy. My mornings were completely free, so I took advantage of this to study, perfect my French, my knowledge of literature; to learn something of the sciences, a fair amount of History and two other languages, Polish and German. My only pupil having departed for Vienna to further his studies, I found myself a position at Kitaigrerad in Podolia in the Ukraine, (2) a detestable post about which I could write a volume of poignant memories. I left after two months, being the thirty-sixth of the tutors and governesses who had left this honourable family within four years!

I then spent some weeks at the home of a friend, and was about to set out for Moscow to join my brother Auguste, when I learned by chance of a Tardent family living near Akkerman.

#### AN UNKNOWN FAMILY BRANCH

The next day I set out to find this family and in three days reached Chabag in October 1872. Imagine the surprise and amazement of our good Russian relatives! They said: 'but we were told that all the Swiss Tardents were dead'. I replied 'Perhaps there are some who have suffered such a fate but as for me, I am well and truly alive.'

The wine harvest was over; the granaries and the cellars were full to over-flowing and life was gay at Chabag. I do believe that they danced every day. A week after my arrival the wedding of one of the new cousins took place. I had the opportunity to make the acquaintance of a crowd of people and lots of relatives. I, who thought myself alone and isolated in Russia found myself suddenly surrounded by numerous Tardent families who received me most cordially and with open arms.

Above all, there was a swarm of charming girl-cousins who made my 20-year-old heart bound like a chamois in the Alps. Their forbear had left the Ormonts for Montreux and Vevey in 1740. I arrived at Chabag exactly fifty years after the first colonists and it had been decided to mark this important occasion with ceremonial celebrations. Oh what lovely days! The celebrations were splendid and lasted a week. I was happy as I bubbled with joy like a fermenting vat of wine. I was pushed in my turn to the rostrum the day of the main function; my speech was a tremendous success. (3) Duty, Progress, Homeland; I spoke of you. Forgive me, I was not thinking of you; I saw only two magnetic, starry eyes fixed on mine. It was for them that I spoke; it was they that inspired me. The next evening that splendid garden, romantically lit up by the moon; that peaceful lake with its silver beam; that Swiss chalet with its little balcony; just she and I - then a few lines from the beautiful poem 'The Lake' and suddenly one's heart over-flowed and the words poured out like a torrent. 'I love you' and the fair-haired echoed "I love you too". Oh! the age of twenty, youth and love - how won-

(2) (Cont'd) till about seven, he overcame this to survive and 'battle' through a long and often rugged life. With the model medical care available to us, he would surely have lived many more years than he did (76½).

(1) Le Jeune Federal is a Swiss national fast-day when nothing but prune tarts are supposed to be eaten. Helene assures me that most people eat meat freely instead of fasting seriously. The first Federal day of abstinence was held in Basle in 1480 and was devised as a day of penitence for people of both main religions. Its object was to ward off the plague and other evils and it became a national day in 1832, to be held on the 3rd Sunday of September. It was probably observed fairly seriously in father's day. (Jeune means fast.)

(2) In western Ukraine, north of the Dniester.

(3) Even as a very young man Henry was an able, impressive orator, with a flair for the resourceful, appropriate phrase and the knack of holding the attention of an audience.



derfully good and great they are!

'Come my friend' I said to myself, 'do not fall asleep amid the delights of the Festival. It is not everything to have found the bird of happiness; one still needs to provide a nest in which to fondle it'.

#### AN END TO HALCYON DAYS

I left Chabag for Odessa minus my heart, and found a position as an assistant teacher at the Knory Gymnasium. At the end of ten months I left and spent some weeks with my future brother-in-law Leon Schanzer.

During the summer vacation I went to Tiraspol(1), where I gave lessons to two families alternately. In Autumn 1873 I went to Nikolayev to once more take a position as an assistant teacher but did not stay there long - it afforded too little free time for study. I had no intention of remaining a junior master for ever. Having fallen out with the Head's wife - a former serf become a grand lady, I set up a boarding-school there and also gave private lessons. One's affluence was far from great for the revenue was only between fifteen and twenty roubles a month (\$60 to \$80).

For one whole month my main diet consisted of borchtch in which the thickest part was a piece of soup-meat which had inadvertently strayed into it, giving my stomach the illusion of a second course! (2) I even sold my bedstead to pay for my dinner!

What did it matter? I was happy. Oh! poverty at the age of twenty can be delightful: it is a thousand times better than the satiety of the rich man without a fertile imagination that promises him the world and all it contains!

#### HARDSHIPS OF AN UNDERGRADUATE

That my trousers and frock-coat were artistically repaired with white thread dipped in black ink, did not hinder me from being very welcome in the best society and of once even dining in excellent style with a group that included the celebrated writer and minister Count Tolstoi(3).

If I was enjoying myself I was also working hard at my studies and would work almost without pause from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m.(4) Thus in less than a year I had mastered enough Russian and Latin (this last a matriculation course that ordinary students covered in eight years) to dare to present myself to the Examination Commission of the University of Odessa. This Commission consisted of University Professors presided over by the Chancellor, Prince of Abiege. One had to write compositions for them in three languages, translate from Russian authors into Latin and vice versa. Also to do oral tests in three languages. To crown all this it was necessary to

give an impromptu lesson to a class at the Richelieu High School, in the presence of the Commission. Some advanced candidates much older than I, failed this severe series of tests but I passed - how could a man of twenty-two fail when he is deeply in love? And this despite that I had travelled part way to the exam in a most original manner - by riding on the back of a school inspector!

Let me explain. On the boat bringing me to Odessa for the degree exam there was a very big gentleman, obviously important, wearing the official peaked cap with blue borders and cockade; and he was in a fairly advanced state of intoxication. This gentleman did not like 'Frenchmen' (non-Russians). I put up with his gibes and impertinences for two hours without appearing to take the slightest notice. Doubtless he mistook my calmness for cowardice and took the liberty of throwing a cigarette butt in my face. Without descending to unfair punching of a drunken man, in less than no time he was lying full length on the poop-deck with the little Swiss seated astride his prone bulk.

The second officer saw it all from the bridge and shouted 'Give him a good thrashing Mr. Tardent; he is a rogue'. Our drunk was kept thus immobilised for ten minutes until the Captain who had been asleep in his cabin, arrived with four sailors who shoved him in the bottom of the hold to sober up.

I apologised for my conduct to some nearby ladies of Nikolayev's high society, whom I knew well but they only thanked me warmly for

(1) 100 km up the Dniester from the Black Sea.

(2) Borchtch is a popular nutritious Russian vegetable soup made from beetroot, cabbage and tomatoes plus sour cream, etc. It is almost a meal in itself, and certainly was once, for millions of hardy peasants as well as for this love-lorn young teacher!

(3) Tolstoi (1828-1910) like many Russian aristocrats, favoured the warmer clime of Odessa and the Black Sea region for holidaying. His famous 'War and Peace' recently featured on Australian T.V. will live for all time as a novel because of its superb portrayal of the life and soul of his people. Though very long, it provides fascinating reading and is sometimes in two volumes.

(4) It must be in the blood. His only surviving son, having had to compile important and interesting reports, occasionally wrote right through the night till it was time to go home to breakfast! Now over 88 years, he has worked steadily (even though much 'slowed up') writing hundreds of letters, translating, editing, re-writing, correcting and compiling this volume of Family History, since a New Year resolution of Jan 1974! This involved rising every morn before 4 a.m. and usually retiring by 10 p.m. - but with a good sleep in bed after lunch. (Cont'd, Col. 1 next page.)



having delivered them from the boorish attentions of this ill-mannered pig, who during dinner, had continually foraged in their plates with his hands! No one had dared to say anything to him because he was a man of high position.

*(4) Each year there have been tours of travel to interrupt the work; in 1973 by air to New Zealand, the next year to West Australia; by car to Sydney and Canberra and in 1977 to Adelaide and Melbourne as well. All these have been serious diversions, as have been the string of visitors who often 'pop in' - many times unexpectedly - but invariably welcomed with open arms!*

#### HIS FIRST TEACHING APPOINTMENT

I started teaching at the Junior High School for young ladies at Nikolayev(1). On 1 January '75 I was appointed to the College of the Empress Marie in the same city where I spent the best eight years of my life. I love my profession and also have much affection for my pupils who return this sentiment to some extent. I always taught the upper forms at this college, where some of the students were older than I! Because of a better salary I transferred in 1882 to the Royal Czar Alexander College where I am at present (March 1887).

In order to preen all my feathers, I must add here that in twelve years of official service I have climbed the ladder of the Russian Civil Service to the title of State Councillor, a kind of civilian rank that is almost equivalent to that of Major-general in the army. (Apparently all civil servants including teachers wore uniforms of various kinds. Ed.)

At Chabag in June 1876 I was married to my new Penelope who had had the patience and constancy to wait years for me, despite her numerous ardent admirers (and their serious threats to my happiness).(2)

#### MARRIAGE AND THEIR FIRST HOME

The very day of the wedding I took her to Nikolayev, where like a pair of swans, we have made a little nest at the edge of the water. We have lived for many years at Spask, a mile or so from the city, on Great Marine Street. Our house, originally built by architect Knore for his own family, is a large three-storied brick villa on a hill on the bank of the river Bug(3) not far from the local wharf and Spask's Summer Gardens. From our balconies we can observe the manouvres, submarine exercises and gunnery practice of the Black Sea Fleet. The port of Nikolayev is the fleet's chief naval base at present!

Henry then lists the six children born to them to March 1887 - see Genealogy AT 12a and 13a, and Personalities at the end of the Narra-

tive. He remarks 'All our cherubs appear bright and have brought their parents more joy and happiness than sorrow. They are too young to comment on because education and character depend on too many factors and varied influences, to warrant a forecast of their future at this stage. May they always give us the joys that they have accorded us in the past!'

#### A BUSY HOUSEHOLD

Despite that at 'Bellevue' we lead a fairly quiet family life, we are not a gloomy lot. The house buzzes with constant activity; we sing, we study, we paint, and we read a great deal.

The city's Swiss Society has met at our house every fortnight for the past ten years. At these happy gatherings we play music, sing, dance, declaim poetry or act comedies. One does some gardening or else relaxes from school-work by using the saw or plane at the work bench. In winter we enjoy skating parties. When the North Wind blows, a hand-sail carries one away across the ice with the speed of an express train. In summer we enjoy boating, sailing and fishing. We have often entertained distinguished Russian visitors including professors, officers of the Fleet, artists, and amongst others Prince Hidwitz, a direct descendant of the former Lithuanian Kings. The Governor of the Province and Admiral Mangassan, Commander in Chief of the Fleet and Ports of the Black Sea visit us regular at least twice a year.

Sometimes one also suffers and frets and grieves, but what can one do about that? Is not that the lot of every living thing in nature, especially that of every human being? Therefore let us merely say 'I am a man' and leave it at that! What more can one add to portray faithfully the man being described for you? I love nature and art in all its forms. I dare not show my wife the bills from my book-seller for fear that she will object to further purchases. I adore my country, my dear old Switzerland. I love all peoples, believing that they only hate because they do not know each other. (How true!)

Finally I must have a well developed bump of family love, since

(1) Apparently a rather select school because such education was not for the peasantry.

(2) Penelope, wife of Ulyses, who waited long years for his return, including the protracted six years siege of Troy. It was he who thought up the idea of the wooden horse that resulted in the capture of the city in the period 1500-1184 B.C. (recorded in Homer's famous epic poem 'The Illiad' supposedly written about 850 B.C.)

(3) Pronounced 'Boog'. It enters the Black Sea through a lake-like mouth about 30 km east of Odessa. With the Dniester and Dni-eper it comprises the three big river systems of the great, rich Ukraine wheat and industrial regions.



one of my principal roles so far here on earth, has been to act as a link between the different elements of our fragmented family.

The writing that I am finishing at this moment towards restoring the family links, will I hope, be ample proof to our most remote descendants, of my love for, and esteem of that family!

Finis

Nikolayev, 11th March 1887

(Signed) Henri Tardent!

(Thus ends Henry's 1887 Family History, that he undertook after completing the Family Tree, thus committing to paper the great amount of information that he gleaned during researches for the Tree.)



ФОТОГРАФИЯ

АНРИ ТАДЕНТ

Left: Henry in full dress uniform of a Professor. Aged 24 years

Below: Villa Tardent, the Private School in 1898 that Auguste had built for him at Erivan in the Caucasus.

Front: Aunt Viera with the baby Lydia, Inna, Auguste and Alexandre ('Sasha'). The stone title in the gable reads 'Villa Tardent'. Teachers and a few of the student boarders in uniform. (This photocopy per Michel Tardent)



**CENTENARY MEMORIAL SERVICE  
at THE FOUNDER'S TOMB, CHABA, 10 Nov., 1922**

1. Mme Malvina Altooundji, 14.80.
2. Dr. Suflery, brother (?) of Tatiana, granddaughter of No.1
3. 'Gretja' T. 14.181
4. Tatiana Suflery.
5. Henri-Samuel T. In Orchestra
6. Raoul T. 14.182. In Orchestra
7. Mme Clemence Cataneau. 15.330
8. Mme Emelie Dimitriu 15.331
9. Alexandrine Besson 14.170
10. Mme. 'Vanda' T. 13.81a
11. Mme Louise Ostroverkoff (?)
12. The Pasteur Gutkevitch from Kichineff
13. Eugene Skalsky 15.197a
14. Marie Makoutine (?)
15. Catherine Anselme 15.195a
16. Gabrielle Anselme 16.486
17. Marie Anselme 15.197
18. E. Anselme 14.81a
19. Madeline Skalsky 15.196A
21. Eleonore Anselme 14.81
22. Alexis Makoutine (?)

Between 10 & 11 is partly hidden Mme 'Mina' Tardent 13.84 (Sister-in-law of Hortense)  
Photo: A. Anselme.