CHAPTER VII

A FIRST BOOK - ON NOTHING CERTAIN A YEAR

Now that McClure's was really started I felt that in what I could do for them and the two or three articles in which I had interested Scribners I could live and might drop everything else and devote the bulk of my time to my real business - a study of the life of Madame Roland. She had never been out of my mind. Soon after my arrival I had found to my joy that my daily walks to and from the National Library, where I was spending most of my time, could be laid through the very Quarter in which her father had carried on his trade of goldsmith and past the house in which she had been born, the church where she had taken her first communion, the prison where she had spent her last days, the route she followed to the guillotine.

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"What luck, what luck," I used to say, "that I should be taking the very walks she took." It was amazing how little things had changed. The house where Madame Roland was born still stands at the Western Point of the Ille de la Cité looking down on the Statue of Henry IV and the busy Seine, and to the right the Pont Neuf, in her day the heart of Paris and still to me one of its most fascinating spots.

As she slowly came to life something more important began to take shape, something which had been little more than a set of dates and events in my mind. I began to see the Revolution already well on its way when she was born; I saw it rising around her, sucking her in, using her when she thought it had gone far enough and should check its excesses throwing her over without her head while true to type it went the whole way, finally falling exhausted into the hands of a dictator equipped with guns.

The physical scars of all this long train of violence could be seen on my daily walks or studied in the Musée Carnavalet where Paris has gathered documents and relics of what she has destroyed as well as of what she has achieved. But besides the scars of Madame Roland's time were other scars dating back through the centuries, scars of Revolutionary outbreaks of the same type hardly to be distinguished from those of the period I was trying to visualize, and the more you knew of these explosions the more they seemed to fit together.

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You could not bound Madame Roland's French Revolution as I had supposed. What I had called the French Revolution was only an unusually violent episode in the life-long struggle of Paris to preserve herself as a free individual, the slave of no man or group of men. Revolution had always been her last resort in making herself what she was, in forcing Kings to do her bidding, tolerating them when they fed her well, beautified her, protected her, but throwing them over when they asked too much money for the job they did.

The marks were all over the city. How could I understand Madame Roland until I understood the elemental force which for centuries had been sweeping Paris in big or little gusts. Did these who sought to loosen the force suppose that they created it or could control it once loosened? Had Madame Roland confident as she had been of her ability to act as Providence, frank as she was in saying that no role but that of Providence was suited to her powers, been anything more than a revolutionary tool and victim?

It had always been at work and still was. I must find out about it and it looked at the moment as if I was going to have a good opportunity to watch a Revolutionary revival, of what proportions no man could tell.

The Panama affair had disgusted all self-respecting Frenchmen. Was the Republic to be a failure? they were asking. Nothing so gives heart to the leaders of lost

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causes, disappointed political groups, advocates of panacea and particularly to the radical minded, as a rousing political scandal. Panama stirred all the parties of France to action - Bourbons and Bonapartists, extreme conservatives, socialists of all the many varieties and particularly the anarchists.

There were four groups of the latter, no one of which would have anything to do with any of the others. It was the Independents who now went into action. Members of this group worked alone, letting not even their fellows know what they had in mind. A branch of the order existed in the United States, and it was one of them, Alexander Berkman, who attempted this same year, 1892, to assassinate Henry Frick in Pittsburgh. The Independdnt who acted first in Paris was Jules Ravachol by name, a man some thirty three years old, a dyer by trade, a courageous, but not a criminal face, so I thought, when a little later I secured his photograph and measurements from the Criminal Identification Bureau for McClure's Magazine.

Ravachol in April began by blowing up various houses. It was like a tocsin. All over France similar outrages followed, and they continued at intervals for two or more years - the crowning one a bomb thrown in the Chambre des Deputies in December of 1893 by a notorious anarchist known as August Vaillant. Several Deputies and eighty or more spectators in the Gallery were wounded seriously. It was a ghastly affair.

The outbreaks and the rumors of outbreaks as well as the actual distruction had a bad effect on the nerves of

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many of the French. There was Alphonse Daudet.

Madame Daudet had offered to get me a pensée for the collection I was making for McClure's Magazine and arranged for me to call for the copy. After we had tea she took me to the library to see how "Alphonse was getting on." It was my first glimpse of him, a little man, with a shock of straight black hair which stood out rather ferociously at the moment, evidently from running his fingers through it. His face was pale, his eyes astonishingly black and bright. He had lost two or three teeth and the remaining ones were not very good. He was terribly excited. He had not finished his pensee, he said, because he had just had a visit from an anarchist. The servant had let in a man who had demanded twenty francs to buy a wagon load of dynamite to blow up the Hotel de Ville. He grew more and more excited as he talked.

"I really expected the man to kill me," he said, "and I got out this revolver which I always keep in the drawer." And he pulled it out to show it to me. "A pretty affair," he said, "while you two were visiting in there a tragedy has gone on in here."

I so shared the general nervousness that more than once when I saw a man on the omnibus carrying a package I feared a bomb and abruptly descended, yet along with all my nervousness I was always nosing around hoping to see a bomb go off. It seemed to me that was my journalistic duty, but I never saw anything more than the ruins they had caused. But I did see a pretty good Revolution, one that had all the ear marks that I had

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been finding in my attempted study of Revolution. It was in July of 1893. This time it was youth in revolt, the youth of the Latin Quarter and the Beaux Arts. From start to finish the revolt went on practically under my windows. ¶ The Annual Ball of the Beaux Arts in the winter of 1893 had scandalized Paris. As I remember the exhibit which outraged was a lady who promenaded with no other covering than a mosquito net.

The protest finally reached the Chambre of Deputies where a member - Berenger - took it up in a serious way and proposed a restrictive law which angered the students. It was, they said, an interference with their right to amuse themselves. Immediately long and picturesque monomes, single lines of men, one hand on the shoulder of the man in front, the other grasping a hand of the one behind threaded their way up and down the boulevards particularly in the vicinity of the Luxembourg chanting at the top of their voices, "Conspuex Berenger," conspuex (Chief of Police) Lozé," "Down with the Puritans."

The demonstration began on a Saturday and that night a great crowd centered in a Cafe in my neighborhood. The place was packed inside and out with youths noiser and noiser as the hours went on. Finally the crowd became so unruly that a squadron of police charged them. There was a great hubbub and in the melée somebody hurled one of the heavy white match boxes which were used on all the tables in the Latin Quarter restaurants - a dangerous missile. It hit an innocent spectator who had come to see the fun, a young man of twenty two or three from the other

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side of the river, hit him and killed him. The students were wild with rage and all that night and all next day they tore up and down the streets pulling up trees, knocking over kiosques, breaking windows. // The shop keepers of Paris having the experience of centuries of revolutionary outbreaks behind them knew when to retire and before Monday night the heavy wooden shutters with which they protect their fronts were all up, their doors closed, and the Quarter was alive with soldiers and mounted police. The center of the disturbance that day however was not the Latin Quarter but the streets around the Chambre des Deputies, where a great band of angry students kept up a tumult. There were funny incidents. A big group of deputies came out to look over the demonstration and on the instant the air rang with the jingling of hundreds of big copper sous pitched on the pavements to cries of, "Panama, Panama."

The Dahomeyans were pets of Paris in those days, a picturesque addition to the population. Handsomer creatures never were seen. It happened a carriage full, naked to the waist, attempted to pass through the crowd. At once the students set up the cry, "Berenger, Berenger, bring 'em a fig leaf, bring 'em a fig leaf."

By Tuesday the Latin Quarter had begun to look sinister. The inevitable had happened.

A popular disturbance never remains long in the full control of those who start it. Advocates of all sorts of systems and causes join it, seize it, if one of them can produce a

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real leader. A students' revolt can easily become an anarchist raid, with looting and arson on the side by professional law breakers, who always come out of their hiding places when anarchy breaks out. As the to-be-expected invasion of the Latin Quarter from without began, destruction increased. Omnibuses were seized and at strategic points piled up as barracades.

But the rioters never succeeded in making a stand. Steadily and quietly night and day platoons of mounted police moved up and down the boulevards and into the Quarter. I tried at first to go on my usual round, hoping to learn something of Revolutionary technique, but after I had been caught in a crowd the calvary was driving from the Place de la Sorbonne, had heard bullets whistling over my head, been forced to take refuge in the portal of the church, I was content to stay at home. However, there was excitement enough there.

Our street was narrow and steep, opening off the broad Rue Soufflot. When the calvary charged, it would fill up with the rioters. The movement was amazingly quiet, no shouting, no shots, the only noise the clatter of the horses feet as they drove the mass ahead.

This invasion of our street produced panic among the foreigners in the house. There were a couple of middle aged American women on the floor below me out seeing the world, but they had not bargained for a Revolution, and during the three or four days our Revolution was going on they shut themselves night and day in their room.

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The Egyptians were in a worse panic. They whispered horrible stories of what happened in Revolutions, and one night when fires had been set in our neighborhood and the firemen were out, they were sure we were all going to be burned alive. "Here we are, fourth floor," cried one of them, "too high up to get out. We'll all be dead by morning."

A week was as long as the students could hold out in the torrid weather. There were too many calvary, too many soldiers, too alert a police force, and also there were the Apache, the anarchists. It was no longer their Revolution. They gave up, and by the end of the week kiosques were replaced, trees replanted, windows and doors opened and we were all going on in our normal way.

Over, all quiet, nevertheless it was a pretty fine little Revolution while it lasted. Was it not like Ravachol and Vaillant, a symptom, the kind of symptom by which the rise of the Revolutionary fever always announces itself? Were there those who would nourish these symptoms as carefully as Madame Roland and her friends had nourished them in her day? If so you would get your explosion, and for what good, I was asking myself.

Madame Roland had lost her head because she was not content with a first Revolution which had given the country a Constitution. She wanted to get the King and Queen and the high born of all varieties out of the way. She wanted a Republic. She lost her head to those who were not satisfied with getting King and Queen out of the way, who wanted her and her followers out of the way as soon as they began to cry for

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Order. Her Republic had collapsed under Napoleon Bonaparte. There had come a return to the Bourbon, then a Republic, then a return to Bonapart and again her Republic. But was this corrupt and vulgar Republic I was hearing about any better than the corrupt and scandalous court she hated and helped overthrow? Was the affair of the diamond necklace any worse than the affair of Panama? Was the Bastille a more ghastly prison than the spot where they were now sending political prisoners - the Devils Island of the Tropics?

I did not have the consolation of a fixed political formula to pull me out of my muddle. It is very easy to put everything in its place when you have that and are armed with its faith and its phrases. But here was I with a heroine on my hands whose formula and methods and motives I was beginning to question as I was questioning the formula, the methods and motives of France of the moment.

What kept me at my task, prevented me throwing up Madame Roland and going on a blind search for the nature and roots of Revolution, was the brilliant and friendly intellectual circle into which my quest of Madame Roland had led me.

Among the names I had been advised to include in my series on the writing women of Paris was that of Mary Robinson, an Englishwoman of the pre-Raphaelite school, a poetess of delicacy and distinction who had married one of the eminent scholars of France, James Darmesteter, a Hebrew and a cripple. One had only to look into his face to know that here

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was a great soul. And what interested me so was that this something in his face, his remarkable head, wiped out all sense of incongruity between the mating of this slender and exquisite woman with this man of alien race and crippled body. I never felt for a moment an incongruity.

When Monsieur Darmesteter learned I was after Madame Roland he was immediately helpful. "You must know Leon Marillier of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes. He is a great, great grandson of Madame Roland. He has papers which have never been given to the public. I will write you a letter," which he did, a letter which brought me an invitation to dinner.

This dinner was the gate to a whole new social and intellectual world. Here was a French academic household of the best sort, simple, hardworking, gay. Leon Marillier was an excellent and respected scholar. Jeanne, his wife, a sister of the Breton poet, Anatole Le Bras, was not only a skillful household manager, but like the wives of many French scholars her husband's amanuensis, copy and proof reader and general advisor. She had particular charm among Parisians, for she was a Bretonne who loved her <u>pays</u> and kept its distinguising marks without being provencial. Here I found, too, eager to go over the papers which Leon Marillier spread out after dinner for my inspection, one who was to prove a most helpful and delightful friend, Charles Borgead the eminent Swiss scholar, a friend of my friends the Vincents now back at Johns Hopkins.

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But this was not the end of it. There was a closer connection, Leon Marillier's mother, the great grand daughter of Madame Roland, and they quickly passed me on to her.

Here again I was invited to dinner, and here I discovered a circle different from anything I had ever known, a household of brilliant men presided over by Madam MarilNer, a most gracious woman, of fine intelligence, freed and mellowed by a tragic life, as I was to learn. More than any woman I have ever known Madam Marillier came to stand in my mind and heart as the personification of that quality which the French hold so high - bonté.

The leader of the group of men was a Sorbonne Professor of history - Charles Seignobos. He was a learned man who carried his learning not as an accomplishment but as a social utility. Seignobos was a not too dogmatic socialist and materialist, a good pianist, a marvelous talker, a lovable and pungent personality. Around him there gathered every Wednesday evening for dinner at Madam Marillier's table a number of young men all serious students, liberal minds, hard workers. After dinner six or eight more habitués of the house were sure to drop in for coffee and for talk.

Among there regular habitués was Lucien Herr who at that moment was seeking to convert to socialism the two men who in the years since have done most to make the

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doctrine an impregnable factor in French political life in France - Jean Jaures and Leon Blum, ~~the present premier of~~ late France. Herr at that time was the librarian at the Ecole Normale, as well as managing editor of the Revue de Paris. In both positions he met many young would-be scholars and writers. When one of them seemed to him to have the makings of a liberal thinker he worked over him as a missionary works to save a soul. He was so working in the early '90's over Jean Jaures and Leon Blum.

Occasionally Lucien Herr brought one of those whom he was seeking to convert to the Seignobos circle. If Jaures and Blum were ever among them they made no particular impression on me, much as I dislike to think so. They were simply a couple of Lucien's young men.

Although Herr believed the socialistic state he sought would and could come by a peaceful evolution the thing I remember best about him was an exhibit of indifference to bloodshed which shocked me to the core. The night that Vaillant threw the bomb in the Chambre of Deputies the group was dining with Madam Marillier - Lucien was late, not an unusual happening. We were half way through when he came in, pale, exalted. We all turned in our seats as he standing told us how he had been at the Chambre when the bomb was thrown, of the explosion in midair, of the wounded all about him. He had no word of the suffering, only of the political bearings of the deed.

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"But the wounded, Lucien," broke in Seignobos, who could not endure the thought of pain.

"Cela ne me fait rien," said Lucien.

His opposition to bloodshed was intellectual, not emotional like that of Seignobos. He was to see plenty of it in the years to come for Lucien Herr was one of the leading figures in the long struggle to free Drefus and he served throughout the Great War.

On the face of it nobody could have been less at home in such a group than I, a tongue-tied alien, all eyes and ears, contributing nothing but my presence, yet it came about before many weeks that "Mademoiselle Mees" as Seignobos called me, had a place at the weekly dinners. Undoubtedly the friendship that sprang up quickly between

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Madame Marillier and me, as well as the fact that I asked nothing but to listen, explained it. I could afford to listen; I had never heard such talk. There was nothing on earth that was foreign or forbidden. Opinions were free as the air, but they had to fight for their lives. There was a complete absence of pretence and sophistry was thrown as soon as it came to its feet. That it was a friendly circle its accepetance of me was proof enough.

Friendliness began at the door when I arrived Wednesday evening. It was always Seignobos who came rushing to meet me, seized my hand, helped me off with my wraps, danced about me asking eager boyish questions about what I had been doing since I was there last. The talk begun and I was forgotten unless by chance he suddenly recalled me. Then he would jump up, run over, demand, "What do you think of that?" Half the time I was thinking less about what they were saying than about their exciting personalities. They seemed to be vividly related to life, but much of their talk was based on something that was not life -/abstract literature, learning, speculation. I realized this when they talked of America. Seignobos saw it only as he had read about it in books. It seemed to him not to be producing that intellectual elite on which he felt the salvation of society depended - a group capable of doing the thinking and planning for a world of lesser men. It was the lesser men who were coming to the top in America. Confronted

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with superiority from America he refused to believe it native. One summer I presented to him a friend of mine, a woman of exquisite mind and manner. "She is not American," he said, "They do not produce that kind in America - where was she born- where was she educated?"

"In Kansas," I said. He bounded out of his chair like a ball. "It couldn't be, it couldn't be. Kansas is only a half-settled State. One has only to look to see this is a rare type that you have brought here. She never came out of Kansas."

I never saw him more outraged than one day when pressure was brought to bear on him to accept a position in Chicago University at a handsome salary. Jumping up he raced around the room, "Chicago - what can a man of intelligence find there? You can't build an intellectual center on money and organization. It is a growth. Five hundred years from now Chicago may be fit for scholars, but not now."

He mis-trusted the intelligence of the United States, but less than that of England. Americans were not stupid, Englishmen were. He wanted none of them in his circle. I met this prejudiced head-on when I asked permission to introduce to him a brilliant young English friend, J. Vickham Steed.

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I had never known a young man who was surer of what he wanted to do in life or who was preparing for it in a more thorough and logical fashion than Steed. His ambition was to become a foreign correspondent of the London Times. He knew that for this it was necessary for him to be familiar with the languages, the history, the men, the politics of the leading countries of the continent. He began by taking some two years in Germany. Now he was acquainting himself with the French language, literature, politics, leaders. I found Steed especially interesting on a subject of which I knew little, although we were having reverberations in the United States. This was the philosophy of Karl Marx. Steed was familiar with its then status in Germany, knew its leaders - Liebnecht and Engels.

~~An American woman sooner or later finds it necessary to assert herself with a young Englishman. I did with Steed, not on the Marxian philosophy, however, but on the way to make tea. I asserted myself by boasting of my evenings~~ at Madame Marillier's. He envied me my relations with the group, envied me my Wednesday night dinner, as he might very well.

"Could you not present me?" he asked.

I knew how jealous they were of their circle, and knew, too, they thought the English, a stupid bigoted race and wanted none of it. But Steed was certainly not stupid.

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Besides he was young, and I had a feeling that nothing would be better for him than contact with these enlightened friends of mine. And so with some hesitation I told Seignobos about him and asked him if I might bring him.

"Never, the English are stupid."

"You are wrong about Steed," I argued. "You ought to be willing to give him the benefit of the doubt."

After some arguments I was allowed to present my protegé. As I expected they pounced on him mercilessly. It was fine to see the way he held his own and a relief when after an hour or more of baiting, Seignobos came to my corner and in a tone of surprise and wonder said, "Mademoiselle Mees, your Englishman is intelligent."

When they came to that conclusion they took Steed in and from that time on he was welcome. All through the years of his brilliant career since as a correspondent and later through the war as editor of the London Times the association with Seignobos continued. In his recollections, "Through Thirty Years" Steed tells of his introduction to the circle - "a sort of entrance examination" which convinced his examiners he was less stupid than he ought to have been.

This then was the group into which my interest in Madame Roland had landed me. As the weeks went on the intimacy grew greater. Whatever occured to them might help me in my work, they suggested. It was through their introduction

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that I was given every opportunity in the manuscript room of the National Library to work over the large collection of Roland manuscripts which had just been catalogued. Indeed, I was the first person to work on them in the Library.

Delightful as well as important to my enterprise was the invitation Madame gave me in the Spring of 1893 to go with her for a fortnight to Le Clos, a country estate which had been in the Roland family for at least a hundred years before the Revolution. After the death of Monsieur and Madame Roland in 1793 Le Clos had passed to their daughter. It now belonged to Madame Marillier who managed it, giving special care to its chief yield, grapes - made into wine on the place.

Le Clos lay in the Beaujolais, some thirty miles North of the city of Lyons and close to a hamlet called Theizé. Here Madame Roland had spent some four years while her husband served as inspector of manufactures at Lyons. The chateau was little changed, so Madame Marillier told me. The activities were what they were a hundred years ago. It was a rare chance to see my heroine in a different role, busy with other duties than those of student - tuft-hunter - political diplomat - Providence to a Nation. I needed to see her in a more natural and helpful environment for I was beginning to mistrust her.

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The journey to Le Clos with Madame Marillier taken in May was an adventure for both of us. How much she had jeopardized her position in her own family by travelling with a foreigner and a Protestant I did not realize until the day we spent sight-seeing at Dijon. She left me for an hour to visit an important and ancient Aunt. "I would not dare take you with me," she said, "my Aunt would cast me out if she knew I was travelling with a heretic."

To reach Le Clos we left the railroad at Villefranch and climbed in a horse-cart for an hour and more, steadily up hills, across valleys, a high broad country, striped by many colored ribbon-like farms, dotted by stout buildings of dull yellow, the stone of the country, sprinkled with splendid trees, vineyards and orchards. Theizé, the hamlet, we sought lay high. We drove between its walls, turned into a lane and stopped

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before a big gate in a yellow wall. Behind it lay Le Clos, a little white Chateau of Louis XIV's time with corner towers and red tiled roofs, a court on one side, a garden on the other. From this garden one looked out over a magnificent panorama of hills, mountains, valleys, stretching to the Swiss Alps in the East. On clear evenings the snow caps were visible and now and then the round crown of Mount Blanc on the sky line glowed like an immense opal.

Within the Chateau there had been little outward change from Madam Roland's time. There was the same great dark kitchen, with its stone floor, its huge fireplace, although now a stove helped out, the same shining copper vessels on the walls. There was the same brick floor in the billard room with its ancient table, its guns and caps of successive generations of soldiers on the walls. The brightest place within the home was the salon done in yellow plush, family portraits on the walls, a piano, books.

I had an apartment to myself looking out on the garden and beyond to the mountains, a bedroom, toilet and work room, severe as a nun's cell with its uncovered floor, its unadorned walls, but it had every necessary comfort and a wealth of books - five hundred or more in my work room, including several magnificent sets. Among them Voltaire complete in seventy volumes. They nearly all bore the 18th Century date and some of them the name of Roland himself. Indeed, the home was rich in books of great value. In Madame Marillier's library

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there were two thousand or more, but these were only "what was left." From the collection she had inherited she had given Leon Marillier complete early sets of Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot; she had made a collection of scientific books for Louis Lapique, one of the members of her Paris household, and another of historical books for Charles Seignerbos and still there were all these hundreds, many of which I had the right to believe Madame Roland herself had handled. We ransacked them for marginal notes and hunted through the drawers of old desks and bureaus for papers, and finding not a few small bits which were grist for my mill.

Books were about all the original possessions of Le Clos that the Revolutionists of the 1790's had not made way with. The Chateau itself had not suffered seriously, though there was still some slight scars, but books aside, it had been completely stripped of furnishings. Even today, so Madame Marillier told me, it was not unusual when inquiry was made about the origin of some interesting old piece in a Beaujolais farm house to be told, "Oh, that came from Le Clos a hundred years ago."

The Revolution stripped Le Clos of its possessions and all but ended the family. But it did not succeed in convincing all the Beaujolais of its beneficience. There was not a little outspoken anti-revolutionary feeling still abroad. The Marsaillaise was never played in Theize, I was told. The curé and the municipal council would not permit it, nor would they allow the 14th of July to be celebrated. While I was Le Clos

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there was a sharp dispute in a neighboring hamlet on the playing of the Marseillaise. The bandmaster refused to lead when it was asked. It was put up to the band who voted yes. Thereupon the Master laid down his baton and went off in a huff. Madame Roland's Revolution was not ended.

But I did not think much of such dark matters at Le Clos. They did not belong to the years I had come there to relive. Those were only gay, happy, useful years. I knew from her letters before me she could and did fill the role of a local Providence, adjusting her activities and reforms to what her constituency understood and was willing to accept. She filled her time as I saw my friend Madame Marillier filling hers, busy from morning until night with the affairs of the estate, visiting the people, prescribing remedies for man and beast, vegetables and vines, arranging a marriage for this pair, making an invalid more comfortable, taking care of some peasant's wayward son, climbing up the steep hillside to early mass to set a good example, discharging naturally and intelligently that responsibility to the family, the estate, the dependent countryside, which the French woman seems to accept as her contribution to the state. It makes her something steady, wise, superior, a strong factor in the economic, social and religious stability of France.

I had never seen anything which seemed to me more useful than what Madame Marillier was doing, and I had opportunity to judge for everywhere she went she tooke me with her. Her invariable ———————————————

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card of introduction to these natural born skeptics of the value of all persons not born and raised in France was, "Mademoiselle comes from the same country as your vines." That was enough for them. Their vines had been devastated by repeated visitations of the phylloxera and it was not until the introduction of American roots that the vineyards had recovered. They were looking well now. I was welcome at once; they treated me as if I were the benefactor, yet I doubt if any of them knew where America was. Most of them with whom I talked placed it somewhere in Africa. Africa they did know, as a name at least, because many of their sons went there for military service. One of the most surprising things to me among the French, high and low, was their utter indifference to the geography of the rest of the world. Whey should they bother about the rest of the world? There was only one land about which they should know, that was France, and that they should know to the last corner. Even many educated people I met did not distinguish North from South America. In Madame Darmesteter's drawing room I met cultivated people who believed that all Americans carried weapons in their pockets and that Indians walked the streets of Chicago. When I protested that it was against the law to carry a revolver and that the only Indians in Chicago were those that were imported as they imported the Dahomeyans they smiled incredulously.

Many of them, I concluded, got their notions of what America was like from the exhibits in a certain public hall

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on the Grand Boulevard. Here you paid a sou or two to look through stereoscopes at amusing, and sometimes very improper pictures. Here the walls were decorated with illustrated newspapers from different countries and among them were always copies of the Police Gazette. As a matter of fact it was in this hall of the Grand Boulevard of Paris that I saw the first copy of the Police Gazette that I had seen since those days back in Rouseville when I and my friend carefully studied the under world in the sheets that we could slip away from the bunk houses of my father's workmen.

The visit to Le Clos with its grist of impressions, the conviction that I had seen Madame Roland, herself, in her happiest as well as her most useful days, completed the study of source material for her life on which I had been working as I found time through the twenty months I had been in Paris. It rounded out the woman she was, softened the asperity which I was beginning to feel for her, also it strengthened my suspicion that while a woman frequently was a success as the Providence of a countryside, she did no better than a man when she attempted to fill that function for a nation.

Now I was ready to write my book. Of course while I was doing this I must keep the wolf from the door, and it was not so easy in the year 1893 for a stray journalist in Paris to get out of the distracted American market orders or pay for orders. The depression of the '90's now in its third year with five years more to go was working havoc everywhere. It was hard to

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get your money even if your debtors consented you had earned it. I was depending at the moment largely upon the new magazine - McClure's. It had started in the summer of 1893, an undertaking which only the young and innocent and the hopelessly optimistic would ever have dared. It has always been a marvel to me that Mr. McClure and Mr. Phillips were able to hold on through that dreadful year, but they did and with a resourcefulness, even gaiety that nobody but those who saw it first hand can appreciate.

I knew perfectly well that if the magazine lived I would get all the money I earned, but in the Summer of 1893 they did not have it. It came to a serious pass with me, a point where I did not have a sou and nobody to whom I could confide my predicament. Not for the world would I have told my devoted Madame Marillier that there was no money in my purse; not for the world would I have confided it to Madam A, and as for the Americans on the scene I was bent on impressing them with the fact I was really getting on. At all events it must not go back to Titusville or Meadville Pennsylvania that this questionable venture of mine had brought me so low.

And so one warm summer day I took my seal skin coat, which really was a very good one quite out of keeping with the rest of my wardrobe - by this time close to scandalous - I took the coat and marched over town to the Mont de Piete. They

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were polite to me but I was a foreigner, that coat might be stolen, probably was, what credentials did I have, who could I give as reference. There was nobody in the town that I was willing to have know what I was doing. But did I have documents to prove my identity?

Yes, I said I had and I would bring them. So I left my coat and raced back to the Left Bank for my credentials. And what were they? What did I have? There were letters from my publishers; there was my check book exhausted but nevertheless a check book. Without thinking it would be of any particular use I took my Allegheny College diploma. The inspector passed lightly over the letters of editors, the stubs in my bank book, but the diploma impressed him and so it was on my Allegheny College diploma I made the loan which helped me over the bad months of 1893 while I was waiting for a check from a land in the grip of one of the most serious money famines that it had ever known.

Although there might be anxious moments over money I was freer to work on my book than I had ever been. And work I did as hard as I could all that terrifically hot summer. My friend, Madame Marillier, had gone to Brittany. She begged me to come along, but I had used up all my vacation money in my trip to Le Clos, a trip I had extended to Switzerland and to a chain of French towns where there were beautiful things I wanted to see, to Bourg, Macon, Cluny, Autun. There was nothing that I wanted to do more except finish up and go home.

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But the finishing up was not so easy. I had undertaken the study of this woman in order to clear up my mind about the quality of service that women could give and had given in public life, particularly in times of stress. I had hoped to come out with some definite conclusions, to be able to say, "The woman at this point will be a steady, intuitive, dependable force. She will never lend herself to purely emotional or political approaches to great social problems; she knows too much of human beings. Her business has always been handling human beings. Building families has been her job in society. You can depend upon her to tell you whom to trust, whom to follow, whom to discard. These intuitions of hers about people are born of centuries of intimate first-hand dealing with human beings from babyhood on - they are among the worlds greatest values. And she will be no party to violence. She knows that solutions are only worked out by patient co-operation and that co-operation must be kindly. She knows the danger of violence in the group as she knows the danger of selfishness. She has been the world's greatest sufferer from these things and she has suffered them in order that she might protect that thing which is her business in the world, the bearing and the rearing of children. She has a great inarticulate wisdom born of her experience in the world. That is the thing women will give."

That was what I had hoped to find Madame Roland giving and I had found a politician with a Providence complex. I had also found what I had been trying to shove aside, as women do, new proof of that eternal and necessary

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natural law that the woman backs up her man. Madame Roland had been Royalist, Republican, Revolutionist, according to the man she loved. She had served her man with unyielding conviction, would not temper or cooperate, intolerant, inflexible.

But what woman in America seeking the vote as a cure for injustice and corruption would listen to such a message. That, of course, was no affair of mine. My affair was clearing my own mind. So far I had only succeeded in adding to its confusion, even in destroying faiths I had held. There was the ancient faith that you could depend upon the woman to oppose violence. This woman had been one of the steadiest influences to violence, willing, even eager, to use this terrible Revolutionary force, so bewildering and terrifying to me, to accomplish her ends, childishly believing herself and her friends strong enough to control it when they needed it no longer.

The heaviest blow to my self-confidence so far was my loss of faith in Revolution as a divine weapon. Not since I discovered the world not to have been made in six days of twenty four hours each, had I been so intellectually and spiritually upset. I had held Revolution as a noble and sacred instrument, destroying evil and leaving men free to be wise and good and just. Now it seemed to me not something that men used, but something that used men for its own mysterious end and left behind the same relative proportion of good and evil as it started with.

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Never did I so realize my ignorance of life and men and society as in the summer of 1894 when I packed up the manuscript of my life of Madame Roland to take it back to America for its final revision in the peace of my home.

Of course, I told myself, I would go through with it. I would put down what I had found as near as I could, even if I had not got what I came for. And then came the question could I get what I came for? Was it to be found - the real answer to my question about women in society, the point or position where she could best serve it? Could I find an answer to this other question that so disturbed me - the nature of Revolution? Apparently, I told myself, as I packed my bag finally to go back to America, you have only begun but at least you have a new starting point. Cheer up, make a new plan. And I was making a new plan. I had been making one for some time. It was laid down economically, professionally and socially with as much precision as the plan with which I had come to Paris in 1891. It was a plan for my return to Paris.

I would go home, get my book into shape, try to convince Scribner's that it was worth their publishing. I would get a good long visit with my family, the only thing I felt now to be worthwhile in life. I wanted to be sure they were there, that the house was there, that my father's chair stood by the living room center table under the drop gas reading light, that the family Sunday dinner was what it had always been. I wanted to hear my father ask the blessing at the table, to sit

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with my sister and mother afternoons out on the shady side of the lawn. I wanted all the home flowers I could gather, and it was queer what a big place flowers took in my dreams of home. My mother was one of these women for whom they say, "Anything will grow." And she had had flowers, summer and winter. One of the depridations of not having money in Paris had been that I could not buy flowers. I had to content myself with lounging around the flower markets on the Square of Notre Dame. I lingered there almost as much as I did over the book stalls along the Seine. But at home I could gather all I wanted.

I would come back to France on different terms. My friendly publishers would give me work. I had schemes for books and articles which I felt sure would interest Scribners, that history of women, for instance. Then there was this lively, friendly, aggressive, delightful McClure's. There were plenty of things I could write for them.

I would take an apartment in the Latin Quarter up high where I could look over the roofs, see the sky. I would have a Salon like Madame Marillier's. She would find me a <u>bonne a tout faire</u> and I could have people into dinner - Madame Marillier, Seignobos and perhaps Lucien Herr and Louis Lapique and Charles Borgeau would come. The summer would bring over my precious American friends - the Vincents, Emerys, Hazens, and my sister must join me. Life would be full and satisfying

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while I cleared up my mind on women and revolution and continued my search for God in the great Cathedrals.

It was with this baggage and a terrible thirst for a long drink of family life that in June 1894 I said "Au Revoir" to my friends. I felt so sure it was Au Revoir.

The first two months after I reached America I spent at home convincing myself that my family in spite of the trials it had been suffering was unchanged in its ways, its loyalties and its philosophy. If life was not as easy materially for my father and mother as their long years of labor and self-denial gave them the right to hope I found that they were enjoying that most precious experience, the evidence of the continuity of their lives. My brother and his fine wife with their children, two girls and a boy, lived only a few doors away and the grandchildren were as much at one home as the other. They gave, I found, a continual fresh zest to the household and its doings. My father again had the legitimate excuse for going to the circus which our growing up had taken from him - "The children want to go." My mother had as strong a justification for family picnics and birthday celebrations on which she tired herself out. "The children enjoy them so."

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For me those children were a challenging experience. Three years had made the youngsters keen observers and I found them appraising me in the fashion of natural unspoiled children. Launched on one of the long narrative monologues to which I am addicted with intimates I would suddenly be checked by the cool impersonal stare of nieces or nephew. They did not know they were doing it but I knew they were taking my measure. They weme not only an unending interest and joy to me but a salutary correction, as they have continued to be to this day.

But before I was really sure of my standing with them, though quite reassured as to that with their elders and just as I had put the finishing touches to my Madame Roland I was snatched away from Titusville by a hurried letter from Mr. McClure. I must come at once to New York and write a life of Napoleon Bonaparte.

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