

**CAREER OF LOUIS-
PHILIPPE: WITH A
FULL ACCOUNT OF
THE LATE REVOLUTION**

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BY

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CAREER OF LOUIS-PHILIPPE.

THE remarkable man who has just disappeared from the throne of France, and been doomed to present in his person and career an instance so memorable of regal as well as human vicissitudes, is the eldest son of Louis-Philippe-Joseph, Duke of Orleans, the celebrated *Egalité*, and was born in Paris, the 6th of October, 1773. His father was first prince of the blood under the ancient *régime*, and however much of infamy is attached to his name, for suspected cowardice and undoubted profligacy before the Revolution, and equally unquestioned imbecility and baseness after it, he is entitled to the merit of having selected a judicious course in the education of his offspring. Louis-Philippe is said to have been an illegitimate—some even add a substituted—child; but in the absence of satisfactory proof, we may wave all credence in the report that he was the spurious issue of an Italian jailor, adopted by the Duchess of Orleans, either when in despair of a son, or, according to other rumours, to indulge her own and resent her husband's passions; for even when a brother, and undoubted heir, who died in London in 1806, was afterwards born, the subject of this memoir was recognised as the future representative of the family, and trained with the same care as the others. The celebrated Madame de Genlis was entrusted with the superintendence of their education; and assuredly this was of an order different from that usually observed or recorded in the instance of princes. The children, including even Madame Adelaide, the sister

lately deceased, were trained to every species of robust and hardy exercise, accustomed to walk many miles each day, and to sleep on a pallias of straw, fare on the simplest food, and pursue a course of mental discipline equally vigorous; a system under which, if tender constitutions would have sunk, the healthy frames of Louis-Philippe and his sister undoubtedly prospered, as, indeed, has been indicated by the strong and vigorous temperaments which they long exhibited, and retained till an unusually advanced period of life.

A sketch of him at this early age, by his governess, may possibly, at the present day, excite a smile. "The disposition of the Duke of Chartres," remarks Madame de Genlis, "has of late greatly improved. Naturally well-inclined, he has now become intelligent and virtuous. Without any of the frivolities of his age, he disdains the puerilities which engage the attention of so many of our contemporaneous youth—fashion, dress, gewgaws, folly of every species, and desire of novelty. He has no passion for money, but is disinterested, despising glare, and truly noble. Finally," says the enthusiastic lady, "he has an excellent heart, in common with his brother and sister, and this, joined to reflection, is capable of producing every other good quality."

The following is added in the journal whence this extract is taken, and seems equally anile, though it may be deemed but impartial to add it:—"The health of the duchess having been much improved by the waters of the Sauvenière—a spring a few miles from the town, in the midst of pleasing scenery—the Duke of Chartres and his brothers and sister, prompted by their instructress—resolved on giving a gay and commemorative *fête*. Round the spring they formed a beautiful walk, removed the stones and rocks which were in the way, and caused it to be ornamented with seats, with small bridges placed over the torrents, and covered the surrounding woods with charming shrubs in flower. At the end of the walk conducting to the spring whose waters had been so efficacious, was a kind of little wood, which had an opening looking out upon a precipice remarkable for its height, and for being covered with majestic piles of rock and trees. Beyond it was a landscape of great extent and beauty. In the wood was raised by the duke and his brothers and sister an altar

to 'GRATITUDE,' of white marble, on which was the following inscription:—"The waters of the Sauvenière having restored the health of the Duchess of Orleans, her children have embellished the neighbourhood of its springs, and have themselves traced the walks and cleared the woods with more assiduity than the workmen who laboured under their orders." On the *fête* day in question, the young Duke of Chartres expressed with grace and effect his filial sentiments of devotedness and love, but suddenly left the side of his mother, and appeared with his brothers and sister, a few seconds afterwards, at the foot of the altar, himself holding a chisel in his hand, and appearing to be writing in it the word '*Gratitude.*' The effect was magical; all present were at once charmed and touched; and many a cheek was bedewed with pleasurable tears."

The good opinion seems to have been reciprocal. In a letter to Madame de Genlis, written at this period, he says,—"Oh, my mother, how I bless you for having preserved me from all those vices and misfortunes, (too often incident to youth,) by inspiring me with that sense of religion which has been my whole support."

It may be premised, however, that the policy of the parent Duke of Orleans at this period dictated an appearance of liberality, in opposition to the forced parsimony and apparently heartless conduct of the French court. Maria Antoinette had shortly before been compromised by the diamond necklace affair, which disclosed her poverty, as well as blighted her character; and he himself was burning with resentment at dismissal from the naval service, in consequence of some miserable pusillanimity, if not open cowardice, which he exhibited in a naval action off Cape Ushant, when he was accused of having hid himself in the hold, in the first instance, and afterwards of running away with his division, and leaving D'Orvilliers, the second in command, to his fate. Having consequently been dismissed with ignominy from the post of grand admiral, as well as the naval service, he adopted the extraordinary expedient of alternately ascending in balloons and descending into mines, with the view of acquiring a factitious character for courage; but this only giving rise to the sarcastic remark, that "the elements only could bear witness to his courage," he changed his course for that of extreme pro-

fusion. To regain popularity, he caused his children to exhibit the same extravagance he practised himself. His eldest son was, with this view, despatched ostentatiously to St. Michel, in Normandy, during the year 1788, to purchase, at considerable expense, a celebrated iron cage, in which some unhappy Dutch journalist had been seventeen years confined, for writing a lampoon against Louis XIV.; and the instrument of torture was afterwards publicly broken up with much ceremony, in order at once to chime in with the rising spirit of freedom, and to throw obloquy on the reigning king. It has been said, but never satisfactorily established, that the young duke, in the following year, accompanied his father when, in the opprobrious disguise of a woman,* he witnessed the savage attack on the palace of Versailles, on the 5th of October, 1789,—that day which, in the elegant language of Burke, was calculated to “make the sun hide his lustre;” and certain it is that, in a journal by Louis-Philippe’s own hand, we have an acknowledgment, that on the first of November, 1790, he was not only “admitted a member of the Jacobins; and much applauded,” but “returned thanks for the kind reception with which they were good enough to favour him.” It need scarcely be added, that in all “the sacred duties of a good citizen and a good patriot” to which he pledged himself on this occasion, he was exemplarily faithful, in the acceptation then bestowed upon the terms. His zeal, indeed, carried him so far, that on the presentation of an obscure manuscript by a writer named Towers, in answer to Burke’s celebrated “Reflections on the French Revolution,” he engaged to purchase it up, and pass off a translation as an original work of his own. A M. de Noailles, who acted as agent on the occasion, had even paid the money, and all was in readiness, when the affair reaching Egalité’s ears, he caused the negotiation to be broken off, and the translation suspended; either lest the affair should be detected and involve him in fresh ridicule, or, more probably, that it might not interfere with an arrangement he then contemplated with the court. But this design failed: Mirabeau, from whom he had previously cherished hopes of the lieutenant-generalship of the kingdom, contemptuously threw him off, on learning the intrigue, with

* Biographie Moderne, article, Orleans, vol. i, p. 370.

the exclamation, "This imbecile scoundrel is not worth a moment's attention!" and hastened to form an arrangement with the Government instead. The two Orleans—father and son—consequently entered into the fiercest ranks of Opposition; and while the former daily plotted with the Jacobins—the most abandoned of whom were in his pay—the other, whose natural sagacity already foresaw the issue, set out to assume the command of a regiment of dragoons on the frontier, in order at once to promote the views of the club and provide for his own security. Of the book, consequently, no more is heard, though it may possibly form part of those interesting *souvenirs de ma vie* with which the late king was said to be in the habit of entertaining his descendants.

His journal thus alludes to this singular affair:—

"*January 8.*—In the morning to the Assembly; at six in the evening to the Jacobins. M. de Noailles presented a work on the Revolution, by Mr. Joseph Towers, in answer to Mr. Burke. He praised it highly, and proposed that I should be appointed to translate it. This proposition was adopted with great applause, and I foolishly consented, but expressed my fear that I should not fulfil their expectations. I returned home at a quarter past seven. At night, my father told me that he did not approve of it, and I must excuse myself to the Jacobins on Sunday."

Yet he was at the same time engaged in occupations which may be deemed more meritorious.

"I went," he adds, with exemplary piety, "yesterday morning to confession. I dined at the Palais Royal, and then went to the Philanthropic Society, whence I could not get away till eight o'clock. * * I went to the midnight mass at St. Eustache, returned at two in the morning, and got to bed at half-past two. I performed my devotions at this mass."

Another extract from this journal, which the *Quarterly Review* quotes with commendable fervour, may suffice:—

"*August 3.*—Happy day! I have saved a man's life, or rather, have contributed to save it. This evening, after having read a little of Pope, Metastasio, and Emile, I went to bathe. Edward and I were dressing ourselves, when I heard cries of '*Help, help! I am drowning!*' I ran immediately to the cry, as did Edward, who was farther. I came