

After we leave Brébant's, on the boulevard the word *capitulation*, which it would have been dangerous to utter a few days ago, is on everybody's tongue.

*Wednesday, January 25*

Nothing of the vigor and feverish agitation characteristic of the passers-by a few days ago. A population, inert and beaten like a bird, dragging along under a grey sky where heavy flakes of snow continually fall.

There is no longer room for the absurdities of hope. People are lined up before the only shops that have anything left to eat—the chocolate shops. And you see soldiers who are triumphant at having conquered a pound of chocolate.

*Thursday, January 26*

The shells are getting closer. New batteries seem to be revealed. Shells fall every minute on the railroad line, and people cross our boulevard crawling on hands and knees.

In everyone you witness the painful adjustment of mind by which people are coming to accept the idea, the shame, of surrender. However, there are some energetic men and women who still resist. I heard some poor women this morning who were still shouting in the breadlines: "Let them cut our rations down even more; we are ready to suffer anything rather than surrender!"

Uneasy and agitated crowds on the boulevard.

Monday, January 30

Oh, the hard consequence of surrender, which will turn the next Assembly into those twelve burghers of Calais, who, rope around their necks, had to submit to Edward VI's conditions! But what angers me most is the Jesuitry—never was word more accurate—the Jesuitry of these rulers, who, hav-

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ing succeeded in placing the word *Agreement* instead of *Surrender* at the head of this dishonoring treaty, hope like sinister, cowardly deceivers to conceal from France the extent of her misfortunes and her shame. Bourbaki excluded from the armistice, which is supposed to be general! The agreement about unsealed letters! And all the secret shame which the negotiators still conceal and hide from us, which the future will gradually unveil! Could French hands have signed that? Truly, they are proud of having been made the jailers and provisioners of their army; how worthy of them! Don't they understand that the apparent mildness is a Bismarck trap? To shut up in Paris 100,000 men, undisciplined and demoralized by their defeat, during the period of famine before supplies start coming in, isn't that equivalent to shutting up rebellion, riot, and pillage? Isn't it a way of providing the Prussians with an almost certain pretext for entering Paris?

In a newspaper which contains an account of the surrender, I read about the enthronement of King William as Emperor of Germany at Versailles in the Galerie des Glaces in sight of the stone effigy of Louis XIV in the courtyard. There indeed is the end of French glory.

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Paris is a disheartening spectacle with all the Mobiles displaying their laziness and uprootedness like the stupid and frightened cattle which you saw wandering in the Bois de Boulogne at the beginning of the war. Even more disheartening is the spectacle of strutting officers around the tables of boulevard cafés, preoccupied with the canes they have just bought in order to parade along the sidewalk. Their unheroic uniforms are too much in evidence. They lack tact.

Saturday, February 11

Parisians are now beginning to have meat and other things to eat; but they still completely lack coal and wood to cook with.

*Tuesday, February 28*

Impossible to describe the atmosphere of sadness that surrounds you. Paris is weighed on by the most terrible apprehension, apprehension about the unknown.

My eyes see pale faces in the ambulances: they are the wounded from the Tuileries who are being moved in haste so that King William may have lunch at the palace. On the Place:

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Paris under Siege

Louis XV<sup>5</sup> the cities of France have their faces veiled in crepe; these women of stone, with night on their faces in the sunlight of bright day, make a strange, lugubrious, fantastically alarming protest.

*Wednesday, March 1*

Accursed Auteuil! This suburb, having been starved, cut off from the rest of Paris, sacked by the Mobiles, and finally bombarded, now is to have the misfortune of being occupied by the Prussians.

This morning we no longer hear the great humming voice of Paris, and the disquieting silence of the bad hours is such that we can hear eleven o'clock strike at the Boulogne church. On the horizon there is the silence of empty, dead places. So far we have seen only a few Uhlans, penetrating the Bois de Boulogne in the direction of the Auteuil gate with the utmost caution.

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which it is impossible for me to keep my thoughts on anything, hours when it is impossible to remain in any one place for a moment. The Prussians have sounded retreat and no Prussian has yet appeared: no doubt we shall have some tomorrow.

I slip out into the darkness of Auteuil, where there is not a living soul on the street, not a light in the windows; in the strange and mournful streets I see some Bavarians pass by, walking four by four, anxious and ill-at-ease in this dead city.

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*Friday, March 3*

I am awakened by music, their music. A magnificent morning with one of those bright suns that are indifferent to human catastrophes, whether they be called the victory at Austerlitz or the capture of Paris. Splendid weather, though the sky is full of the sound of crows, which are never heard here at this season but which follow along behind Them, the black escort of their armies. They are going away? They are leaving us at last! We cannot believe in our deliverance, and under the impact of a shattering stupefaction we can look at the dearly loved objects in our houses—which have not been carried off to Germany.

Deliverance appears to me in the form of two gendarmes taking possession of the Boulevard Montmorency at a gallop.

The people near me walk slowly, as happy as convalescents who are out for their first walk. The only trace of the occupation at Passy is chalk marks on porte-cochères and shop shutters indicating the number of soldiers quartered on the inhabitants.

The Champs Elysées is full of a lively and talkative crowd, who are taking the air without apparent notice of the vindictive destruction of a café that remained open for the Prussians during every night of the occupation.

*Sunday, March 5*

All along the road from Boulogne to Saint Cloud the mattresses which the Mobiles deigned to leave in possession of the householders are airing in the open windows. Saint Cloud, with its crumbled houses, its windows black from fire, has the grim grey look of a stone quarry.

The conditions of peace seem to me to be so heavy, so crushing, so mortal to France, that I am terrified lest war begin again before we are ready.

*Friday, March 10*

A scatological pamphleteer might produce a biting, witty book with this title: *Shit and the Prussians*. Those disgusting conquerors have *sullied* France with so many researches, inventions, and fantasies of this sort that there ought to be a psychological study made of that people's taste for things excremental. At Charles Edmond's house they took down his father's portrait, made a hole where the mouth was. . . . You can guess the rest.