General La Fayette in Indiana
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It would, indeed, seem to be a difficult task to write a fresh and illuminating essay on La Fayette at this late day. My reason for attempting to throw a new gleam of light on so well worn a subject is to rescue from oblivion the historical fact that Marie-Joseph-Paul-Yves-Roch-Gilbert du Motier, the Marquis de La Fayette spent a few hours on Indiana soil in 1825 as a guest of the state. In order to give point to the reason for so august a visitor to so remote a spot, it seems necessary to review, somewhat briefly, his part in two momentous events in which he participated, the war for American Independence and the French Revolution: and interest may be enhanced by an emphasis upon his traits of character and his personal appearance—in short, what I have been able to glean of the personality of our visitor. The many existing portraits of La Fayette show marked differences. The painter wielding his brush puts much of himself into his painting and produces, perhaps to an unconscious extent, his own ideal of his subject in his portrait. So, to a degree, the biographer draws his own conclusions from his view of materials at hand, seen through the prism of his own personality. There can be little doubt that some of the modern biographers are bent on destroying most of our ideals as old-fashioned and obsolete, and
they bring out what they are pleased to term “human” traits at the expense of matters of the mind and spirit. It may be a coincidence but nevertheless it is noticeable that they usually choose for their victims men who have not only been dead a long time, but who have no virile descendants surviving them. So far, La Fayette has escaped the destructive pens of these biographers.

La Fayette was nineteen years old when he presented himself to the Continental Congress and received the commission of Major General. He was at that time a Captain of the Dragoons in France. His commission was intended by Congress to be honorary. The question of a command was left to Washington. Unlike many Frenchmen who came over seeking at that time the opportunity to make money and acquire fame and power, for which in most instances they were unfit, La Fayette modestly announced that he sought only to serve the colonies without allowance or pension. This was his attitude throughout the war. In fact, he spent, of his own fortune, large sums for equipping ships to convey troops from France and to furnish American troops with necessary clothing and arms; notably for his command in Virginia before the battle of Yorktown. When he had successfully interceded with Vergennes, the Foreign Minister of Louis XVI, for more troops in 1780, he stepped aside so that Rochambeau, the old and experienced general, should be in command of the French army in America. During the summer in Virginia, to use the appellation of Cornwallis, this “boy” held Cornwallis from taking the American line all summer. American historians agree that what La Fayette did at this critical juncture was all that could have been expected of any commander and that it was very satisfactory to Washington.

La Fayette made no effort for a decisive offense during the summer of 1781 against Cornwallis, as he considered that Washington was the Commander-in-Chief of the armies and that the stage should be set and kept until Washington arrived to take charge. Here he consistently subordinated himself to Washington, as he had done since 1777, with poise and self-restraint worthy of an older head. Perhaps the statement that La Fayette never achieved any distinction on the field might not be so true, if he, cooperating with Comte de Grasse, had struck unexpectedly and heavily against Cornwallis. The capitulation which afterwards came might have been the vic-
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The victory of La Fayette. The first week in August, Cornwallis occupied Yorktown with 7,000 men. La Fayette had 5,000 men on Malvern Hill, which he was pressing against Cornwallis awaiting further developments. On August 31, Comte de Grasse with his great squadron arrived in Chesapeake Bay. There was no fleet nearby capable of defeating him; Cornwallis was shut in from the sea. On the arrival of the fleet, La Fayette had an accession of 3,000 men. He therefore had 8,000 men as against Cornwallis' 7,000, and he had the support of the French fleet which, as was subsequently proven, was strong enough to keep back the British fleet. So La Fayette, while awaiting the arrival of Washington, had present all the elements which brought about Cornwallis' catastrophe. Yet this youth, ambitious as he was, properly waited until Washington's master hand could achieve the decisive victory.

We have had, within the last year, a fine exhibition of modesty in Lindbergh, after he had accomplished his daring feat in crossing the Atlantic ocean through the air. For this he has received the applause of the world. With similar modesty, in 1777, at a critical time in our struggle to throw off the British yoke, there came a youth of nineteen, whose imagination was fired by that incomparable manifesto declaring our independence; who, although a son of a French nobleman and in the service of a monarchical régime, believed in the right of the people to govern themselves; he left his family, disobeyed his king and hazarded his fortune and his life in the service of the struggling colonies. For the sacrifice he only asked to be allowed to serve.

When he was twenty-three he returned to France with the warm esteem and appreciation of Washington and with the plaudits of the citizens of the new republic ringing in his ears.

The most important part that La Fayette played in our Revolution was his help, in conjunction with Benjamin Franklin, in securing the cooperation of Vergennes and Louis XVI in our cause. Those were days when human passions were deeply stirred; when avarice, envy, selfishness and other mean

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1 Since the above was written, an interesting biography of La Fayette by Henry Dwight Sedgwick (La Fayette, Indianapolis, 1928), has been published commenting on "this dangerous temptation to a young man of just twenty-four, thirsting for glory." He quotes from records that Comte de Grasse "wanted to take Yorktown by assault" and that the glory of Cornwallis' defeat belonged to French arms. The records further state, "La Fayette was deaf to the temptation." French historians consider that the Battle of Yorktown was won by the French navy and army. In that magnificent display in the Palace of Versailles of pictures of the military victories of France, one very large picture is that of the Battle of Yorktown as a French victory.
traits of human nature were actively at work. La Fayette had at that time the sympathetic interest of Marie Antoinette. Vergennes, steadily the friend of the American rebellion and erstwhile the enemy of England, secretly aided our cause until war broke out between France and England, when he openly espoused the American cause. On the surrender of Cornwallis and in the terms of peace, Vergennes stood firm, determined that the British absolutely withdraw from our territory.

The importance to the colonies of La Fayette's influence at the court of France and with Vergennes cannot be over-emphasized as one of the strong determining factors in our favor. To quote from Charlemagne Tower:

The work which La Fayette did afterward in this country in the campaigns of Virginia and on the field of battle does honor to his name; but it was not indispensable, because other men would have been found to do it if he had not been present. It was different at Versailles, for no one else could have taken his place there. He brought together and set in operation all the forces that could be exerted in our favor; he filled men's minds with his own enthusiasm; he intensified the hatred of his countrymen for England; he invoked the glory of France; he appealed to the most effective impulses of his people, always with one object in view, —to send help to America.*

It has truthfully been said that without France we would not have won; without La Fayette we would have been deprived of our strongest influence in the cabinet of Louis XVI; without Vergennes, with whom La Fayette had his personal contact, we could not have prevailed in that court against the dull apathy if not dislike of Louis XVI and the open hostility of Turgot, the Minister of Finance.

Maurepas said he believed La Fayette would strip the palace of Versailles for the benefit of his "American cause."† Both Turgot and Maurepas opposed the alliance with America on the ground that it was against the principles of monarchy, but Turgot had the further, and from the French standpoint, palpably sound reason, that France did not have the money and that aid to the colonies would plunge her still deeper in debt and increase taxes, already a source of great discontent among the people.

As La Fayette could not have succeeded without Vergen-

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†La Fayette. Mémoires de Ma Main, p. 165, quoted in Tower. The Marquis de La Fayette, Vol. II. p. 56.
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nes, who did more for American independence than any other Frenchman aside from La Fayette, it is strange that some American historians consider Vergennes unimportant. It is true he was actuated by his enmity to England, but he never sought, as did Spain, to acquire any interest in America as a consideration for his aid to the American cause. He opposed any attempt to reestablish French power in Canada. In a recent book by Bernard Fay entitled The Revolutionary Spirit in France and America* the author says that Franklin and Vergennes decided French intervention. Franklin, he writes, inspired confidence in the public mind in France in the sentiment for America; the share of Vergennes in turning this sentiment into action, he thinks, “has been systematically belittled.” Vergennes “had seen in America a means of restoring the moral credit of France, while crushing English pride and winning the favor of a young nation at a time when this was necessary.” Our government has recognized Vergennes’ name, if not his services, bybestowing it upon a fourth-class postoffice in Illinois and a second-class one in Vermont. This probably measures our understanding of Vergennes’ services during that critical period. The American people never had any conception of his services, as was the case of George Rogers Clark, who conquered an empire from the British—a daring, momentous act. Our grateful government presented Clark with a second-hand dress sword in recognition of this service.

Considering his activity for liberty in this country, it seems contradictory that La Fayette should, on his return to France, undertake to save the throne of Louis XVI. At least upon one occasion, he protected that monarch and his queen from the ferocity of a Paris mob. Upon his return to France, after his last visit to America, he exerted himself to save Charles X from destruction during the Revolution of 1830, although during that visit to America he had been proclaiming the principles of liberty and a republican form of government, saying specifically that the welfare of the world was bound up in the welfare of America. And further, following the abdication of Charles X, La Fayette, by his great influence, handed, figuratively speaking, the crown of France to Louis

*Translated by Ramon Guthrie (New York, 1927).
Philippe. Turnbull's work on the *French Revolution of 1830* contains lithograph portraits published by Colburn and Bentley, London, of Louis Philippe and General La Fayette side by side under the title, "The King of the French and the man who made him such." These actions, however, as we shall see, are not inconsistent.

While he was commanding the Army of the North and located at Sedan, in 1792, La Fayette attempted to induce his army to declare itself in favor of the king. The army was obdurrate. He had tried to obey the oath to uphold a constitutional monarchy; he would not submit to the decrees of the Jacobins nor would he join enemies marching on his country. On August 19, 1792, La Fayette quit France, driven out by the Jacobins and denounced as a traitor to France. The Jacobin Club, as it was constituted in 1789, did not hold extreme political views. Jefferson then viewed the Jacobins as the real republicans of France, but later the character of the club profoundly changed. The moderates left it. Thereafter its constituency included the worst elements. Robespierre, its leader, demanded the impeachment of La Fayette as well as that of Louis XVI, charging that "La Fayette, as great a Royalist in France as in America a Republican, attempted to induce his army to declare itself in favor of the king." It was this organization that forced La Fayette into exile as a traitor to republican principles. He was captured and kept in prison by the Austrians. Francis II refused to release him, even on the entreaty of Washington, for the reason that La Fayette's principles were incompatible with the safety of the Austrian government. He was released, however, by the Treaty of Campo Formio in 1797 by the stipulation of Napoleon.

It is an irresistible temptation to compare La Fayette and Napoleon. La Fayette was altruistic. In his political and military moves he really had the good of the people unselfishly in mind. When he returned after the war for American independence had been concluded, he was greatly venerated in France. But in less than ten years he was an exile. He was a Frenchman of an old and noble family. He had enthusiasm, poise, courage and persistency, but lacked aggressiveness and vision; he did not appeal to the imagination of the French people. On the other hand, Napoleon, with no French back-
ground, with little understanding of the French people, through marvelous leadership in war and a marked degree of statesmanship in government, captured and will hold for all time, not only the fancy, but at last the affections of France. Although, as charged by La Fayette, two million Frenchmen had been his victims and their bones whitened in Russia and Africa, Napoleon is today the remembered idol.

If one will go to the cemetery of Picpus on the lonely road to Vincennes and take a little walk through the cemetery to the place where are buried over a thousand persons beheaded during the Reign of Terror, he will find the last resting place of La Fayette in an obscure corner, marked by a marble slab, over which two small American flags flutter, placed there by American patriotic societies; beside him lies his son named for his beloved friend George Washington; dreary, little visited, hidden away behind the kitchen garden of the nuns and closely associated with those ghastly, luckless victims of the Revolution. One shudders at the forlornness, in spite of Pershing's, "La Fayette, we are here!" and gladly turns to listen to the caretaker's story, as she points out the identical spot where Jean Valjean leaped on the wall with Cosette, when he was pursued by the police. It is a dreary enclosure. If you re-read Victor Hugo's description of it as it was in Jean Valjean's time, one hundred years ago, you see little change in it, except through the ravages of time.

To go directly from this doleful, still place to the tomb of Napoleon, one sees the dramatic contrast in death, as in life. In his will of April 20, 1815, Napoleon said it was his wish that his ashes might repose on the banks of the Seine. Many of us have seen in the Hotel des Invalides the ebony coffin resting on the couch of porphyry beneath a gilded dome. It is flooded by a sublime light, transformed by beautifully stained windows into a delicate blue and gold, which seems almost heavenly. Napoleon is majestic even in death. This impressive tomb, visited daily by multitudes of people, has been maintained by the French people for over eighty years. The tombs of La Fayette and Napoleon present sharp contrasts that invoke our meditation. It seems that Napoleon's place is in the hearts of the French people and La Fayette's in the hearts of the people of America.

La Fayette was not a leader of movements or of men. In our war he was a valuable assistant to General Washington.
When he returned to France and was confronted with the conditions which ripened into the French Revolution, he never found a way to lead the people out of their difficulties. Apparently he misunderstood the effect on the French people of what had happened during the reigns of the three Louis'. Apparently he did not see that the years of government extravagance, of oppressive taxes, of increasing debts had produced a condition of irritation and dissatisfaction in the people against which a monarchical government could no longer stand. There is no proof in history that La Fayette ever desired to establish a republic in France. There is proof that he desired a constitutional monarchy with the abolition of the hereditary and divine rights of kings. But he was not a leader who could climb upon the heights and see and direct the French people out of the approaching flood of indignation that was to overwhelm Louis XVI and his court. Because of that lack of vision and strength he failed.

In fairness we must say that the fact that La Fayette did not achieve any glittering military distinction in America and the further fact that he failed in the French Revolution do not detract in any way from his great service to the American cause in procuring with Franklin through Vergennes the French alliance at the critical time, when without it we could not have succeeded.

La Fayette, as an historical character, is a perplexing personality. His courageous, self-sacrificing and helpful adoption of the American cause commands our unstinted admiration and appreciation. His personal courage even to rashness was shown on many occasions. Many times he faced death unflinchingly in crises in the American and French Revolutions. He endured untold cruelties in Prussian and Austrian dungeons. In 1830, when past seventy, he participated in another revolution. In 1792, when he fled from his country, Paris was in the hands of a maddened, murderous mob; the King's authority was suspended; France was in the control of the Commune of Paris, which in turn was directed by vicious elements. His flight left no reflection on his personal courage. His passion for liberty was a cult; Sedgwick says it was a dogmatic cult. He adored Washington, without whose wise and fatherly advice it is to be doubted that La Fayette could have served the colonies so well as he did. In analyzing his character and
noting apparent inconsistencies, we must have regard for the conditions in France at this period.

France, before and up to the time of the Revolution and during La Fayette's time, had ruling factions led by priests and nobles; it had feudal conditions that were of ancient origin; monarchical government and traditions of loyalty to the king had existed for eight hundred years. The people had no understanding of republican principles. They had been taxed beyond endurance by the autocratic governments of Louis XVI and Louis XV. They had seen their money wasted; they had seen a privileged class exempt from taxes and living in idleness and pomp. Of course, the privileged classes were loath to give up their privileges; the religious orders to give up their benefices. No one knew better than La Fayette that a republic could not be planted upon such a stony and barren soil. Republics can only be established where there are no internal dissensions. He believed, therefore, that a constitutional monarchy surrounded by republican institutions was the form of government best suited to the French people of that time. Washington deplored the renunciation of the king by the French. The fact that the first French Republic endured through war and the Reign of Terror, for only seven years is some confirmation of La Fayette's judgment.

La Fayette possessed traits that had gained for him great popularity; yet, perhaps, no important historical personage has had more adulation, veneration and bitter criticism; he was a zealous and courageous commander of the National Guard; his ideas of liberty were lofty and he was constant to them. He did not believe in the divine or hereditary rights of kings any more than we believe in them. The world has suffered grievously within our memory from these two doctrines. The enforcement of the right of hereditary rule for the oldest son has produced appallingly tragic results down the years even to recent times. He undertook to act as a mediator between the forces of the Revolution and the old régime, with the result that he was mistrusted and incurred the hostility of the extremists on both sides. Simplicity was a strong trait of his character. His ensemble was intellectual spirituality, with strong altruistic purposes and with constant courageous devotion to his principles. To illustrate: the monarchists or the republicans of France would gladly have accepted him.
as a leader, or as dictator; he was offered the crown of Belgium, to which he replied that the crown “would become him as a ring would a cat.” He refused release from prison in Austria on the condition that he would not re-enter Austrian territory, as he felt service to France might require him so to do. He accepted release, however, with the condition that he would not go to France. He refused to vote a life tenure to Napoleon as First Consul, which got him Napoleon’s enmity.

One almost concludes that in his devotion to republican principles his course in the French Revolution stamps him as an unwavering doctrinaire lacking capacity for leadership, without sufficient knowledge of the mechanics of statesmanship and without political sagacity, but even if he had possessed all these attributes he could hardly have saved France from the terrors and disasters of the Revolution. And yet here is one of the purest and noblest characters in history; simple and brave; constant to his ideals in awful cataclysms of blood and treasure.

La Fayette, in 1824-25, made his second and last visit to the states of the Union, and comprehended in his itinerary a visit to each of the twenty-four states. Much has been made of his visits to some of the other states. In New England and elsewhere, many of his stopping places have been permanently marked. In Indiana, his visit has not even received mention in the histories of the state. The story is to be found in the newspapers of that time or a bit later. Levasseur, La Fayette’s secretary, mentions it as a visit to Jeffersonville. In a two-volume journal devoted to this trip, this is how his secretary records it:

On the day after Lafayette’s arrival at Louisville, notwithstanding the bad weather, the General crossed the Ohio, in consequence of an invitation he had received from the inhabitants of Jeffersonville, in the State of Indiana. He remained there a few hours, and then returned to Louisville, to attend a dinner and ball, and several exhibitions which had been prepared for him.5

The comment of a contemporary periodical, the Edinburgh Review, upon this trip to the United States, is as follows:

His triumphal progress throughout the Union is as romantic a passage as occurs in the history of any people: it is by far the most romantic and poetical that appears in theirs.6

La Fayette had been invited by the Congress of the United States to make his visit in 1824. A government ship had been tendered to bring him over, but this he declined. He arrived in New York in August, 1824. He visited the eastern and the southern states, receiving warmest expressions of esteem and affection from the people. Everywhere he was met with shouts of welcome. Daniel Webster in a speech at Bunker Hill glorified him.

In May, 1825, leaving Nashville, where Andrew Jackson had entertained him, he and his party took passage on a steam-boat, the "Mechanic," up the Mississippi to Illinois and then up the Ohio river to Louisville. At a point in the river opposite the place where Cannelton, Indiana, now stands, the boat went down, "A snag infiltrated us and we sank," says LaFayette. His secretary, who was with him throughout his journey, with the approval of LaFayette, kept a journal of his travels in the United States which was published in two volumes in New York in 1829. The consensus of opinion is that this journal contains the best and most authentic account of LaFayette's visit to America. The book was published five years before LaFayette's death, and had it received his disapproval that fact would certainly have become known. Levasseur tells the story of this accident with vivid details. I quote:

\[\text{\ldots at 11 o'clock the profound silence which prevailed about us was only interrupted by the loud groanings of the steam-machine, and the dashing of the waves against the sides of our vessel. It was past midnight, and weariness began to invite to repose, when on a sudden our vessel received a violent shock, and stopped short. At this extraordinary occurrence, the General awoke with a spring; his son leaped from his birth [sic] half dressed, and I ran upon the deck to learn the cause. \ldots I took a light, and ran to the fore part of the vessel; and the captain, who arrived at the same time with me, assisted me in opening the hold, which was already half full of water. "A snag—a snag," cried he, "quick—put Lafayette in the boat." \ldots He [La Fayette] followed us, smiling at our anxiety; but we were scarcely in the middle of the staircase, when he perceived that he had forgotten his snuff-box, \ldots It bore a portrait of Washington \ldots I therefore returned to the cabin, found the box, and brought it to him. \ldots The captain, assisted by two sailors, had drawn the boat up to her side, and I heard his voice repeatedly call Lafayette!—Lafayette! but we could not reach him, so great was the confusion that prevailed around us. However, \ldots every moment increased the danger, and we perceived that it was time to make a last effort. We therefore pressed through the middle of the crowd, and I cried, "Here is General Lafayette!" \ldots A free passage was opened before us, \ldots The difficulty now was to persuade the General to leave the vessel before any}\]
of his companions, . . . . I got into the boat . . . . . two persons helped him in, . . . . . But his weight, added to my own, in the little boat, almost overset it, and losing my equilibrium, I should probably have fallen into the water with him, if M. Thibaudot, formerly President of the Senate of Louisiana, had not been at my side to render his assistance, which saved us both . . . . . . . Our captain . . . . . . . Holding the rudder with a firm hand, he steered us to the left shore, ordering his two oarsmen to row gently. In less than three minutes we safely reached the land, which was covered with a thick wood.

Our first care in landing, was to count our number. There were nine of us: the captain and his two sailors, Lafayette, Mr. Thibaudot, Doct. Shelby, who had in his arms a little child seven years old, a daughter of a Presbyterian clergyman, the father of this young lady, and myself. It was not until then that the General discovered that his son was not in the boat: . . . . . He was seized with anxiety, . . . . . and began to call "George! George!" with all his strength . . . . . I then threw myself into the boat with the captain, to go towards those who were in need of assistance. The vessel was still above water, although almost on its beam ends . . . . . . When I had reached the stern, I again called "George!" and he at last replied . . . . . I immediately returned to the shore . . . . . and hastened to assure the General of the safety of his son

As I had now satisfied myself that the vessel could not sink lower, having found the ground, . . . . . [I] determined to bestow my attention on the General, for whom we built a good bivouac, and kindled a large fire near it of dry branches. While thus occupied, Mr. George Lafayette and M. De Syon landed with the last of the passengers . . . .

When we had satisfied ourselves that no one had perished, we kindled a number of large fires to dry our clothes and to lighten our encampment. The general slept a few minutes, on a mattress which had been found afloat, and was almost dry on one side; while the rest of the party employed ourselves in cutting wood for the fires, in expectation of daybreak. We suffered some inconvenience from a hard rain, but fortunately it did not continue long . . . .

At nine o'clock [the next morning] we persuaded the General to cross the river, and go to a house we saw on the opposite shore, to shelter himself from the storm, which we saw approaching. He had hardly left us, when one of the company, looking out on the beach, made a signal that a steam-boat was coming down the river; . . . . . This news filled us with joy . . . . .

It was the "Paragon" that took La Fayette and his party aboard and returned to Louisville. There is a tradition, since regarded and treated as local history, that La Fayette was given the hospitality of a cabin belonging to James Cavender for the night; that the next morning the people in that neighborhood, although it was sparsely settled, hearing that La Fay-

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ette was at Cavender's cabin, came in considerable numbers and spent the morning in conversation with him. Captain Hall, who was in charge of the steamboat, in a letter of April 25, 1859, written at Marietta, Ohio, describes the incident with great particularity, but does not mention a cabin. Some very charming stories of this event, embodying the hospitality of Cavender and the manifestations of interest on the part of the people, have been told of La Fayette's first appearance upon Indiana soil, and have been accredited by several writers in Indiana. Levasseur, in his narrative, not only does not speak of any cabin on the Indiana side, but says that La Fayette crossed the river to reach a cabin as a shelter from an approaching storm. If there had been shelter on the Indiana side, it would have been unnecessary to go to Kentucky. If he left at nine o'clock in the morning, as Levasseur says, he could hardly have had the ovation that morning. Near the site of the Cavender cabin is a spring which has been named the "Lafayette Spring," and by tradition it is closely associated with his involuntary visit that night to Indiana soil. I am inclined to think that the statements of M. Levasseur must have great value, as they were written on the spot and at the time the events took place.

There have been many fireside stories told of La Fayette's visit to Madison, Lawrenceburg, Vevay and possibly other places. The fact is that La Fayette never visited any other part of the state of Indiana than the place in the woods where he involuntarily spent the night on the shore of the Ohio river near the present site of Cannelton, and later, Jeffersonville, where he made his public visit on May 12, and where he did receive an ovation. All other visits seem to be based upon unsupported tradition, without any record whatsoever. I am reminded of an authenticated story in New England of an enterprising Yankee farmer who posted a sign on his farm in full view from the highway bearing these words: "This is the farm Paul Revere would have came by, had he went this way." It is well to have traditions. Like the hors-d'oeuvre of the feast, they are the appetizers that stir the interest of people in the serious phases of real history. But traditions are uncertain guides.

There is a persistent tradition, fostered in private circles and in public meetings of an historical nature that La Fayette during his trip to America in 1824-25 called at Lawrenceburg
to see his former comrade in arms, Colonel Zebulon Pike. I have been advised that there is credible evidence in support of this statement. A Lawrenceburg newspaper states that on August 24, 1826, in a public meeting a letter was read from the great-great-granddaughter of Colonel Pike that when her great-grandmother, Mrs. Studevant, born in 1812, was a girl thirteen years old she was standing by Colonel Pike’s front gate. She saw two men coming up the path. They inquired for Colonel Pike. To quote: “One of the men was the great La Fayette who fought so heroically for the Colonies.” This statement of a girl of thirteen as to an occurrence of one hundred and three years ago seems to have been accepted in that community as evidence that La Fayette was in Lawrenceburg. There is a tradition, in Madison, that La Fayette, upon his visit to America in 1825, stopped at Madison on his trip from Louisville to Cincinnati. The story goes that he went from Louisville to Cincinnati upon a steamboat in the latter part of August or the early part of September and the river was quite low so that the boat could not land at the regular landing but stopped near the Kentucky shore. A committee of citizens crossed the river and brought him over in a skiff. The Union Lodge of Masons of Madison has a large portrait of La Fayette painted in oil. It is life size. It is painted on bed ticking, and the tradition is that it was done by an artist in La Fayette’s party; that the portrait was started at Madison and finished on the trip to Cincinnati; that it was presented to the lodge, either by the artist or by La Fayette. The tradition goes further that La Fayette attended a meeting of the Lodge.

Levasseur says that La Fayette on leaving Louisville went to Cincinnati, “his route lying through the state of Kentucky.” This statement disposes of the Lawrenceburg and Madison traditions.

In the *Youth's Companion* for January, 1928, a well known writer for young people recounts a conversation he had fifty years ago with a river pilot, Captain Hulettson, in which he was told the particulars of the sinking of the steamboat on which La Fayette was a passenger. The details in some important respects are at variance with the account of Levasseur; for instance, the author says the boiler exploded with an awful roar. Levasseur does not mention this, although he is very explicit in his account. This narrator says a few persons
perished—the number never exactly ascertained. Levasseur says no one perished. Levasseur as an eye-witness of the accident published his account of it fifty years before this conversation with the pilot occurred. I can account for these lurid embellishments only on the theory that it must be thought that the youth of today cannot be interested in what happened over one hundred years ago without them.

Apropos of fanciful traditions, a more plausible legend has prevailed in Kentucky for more than one hundred years that parsimonious Louis Philippe lived at Bardstown for four years, taught school there between 1797 and 1880, and presented a bell to the Catholic Church at Bardstown, together with other valuable presents. It has been said that traditions, like orchids, are nourished by the air. Young E. Allison, a well known historical writer of Louisville, in a brochure8 established that the story had only one truth in it and that is Louis Philippe, as Duc D'Orleans, was in Bardstown but for not more than sixty hours. The rest of the story is a fable.

It has been given out from some quarters that La Fayette's visit to Indiana was merely incidental to his visit to Kentucky. This statement will not endure against the records. On January 29, 1825, William Hendricks, Governor of Indiana, soon elected United States senator, extended an invitation to La Fayette to visit Indiana, pursuant to a joint resolution of the General Assembly.9 The invitation stated that, if it was too inconvenient for him to visit Indianapolis he would be received at any town on the Ohio river that he might designate. It will be borne in mind that reaching Indianapolis at that time from the Ohio River was a matter of considerable difficulty and would have consumed many days because of the lack of roads. On February 20, 1825, La Fayette replied to Governor Hendricks that he would visit his friends of the state of Indiana on his way up the river, and that the place could be assigned later. To quote from La Fayette's acceptance: "I am penetrated with inexpressible gratitude to the state, the General Assembly of Indiana and the chief magistrate, whom I beg to except my sincere regards."10 The matter, therefore, was formally arranged weeks before he arrived. A committee of

8 The Curious Legend of Louis Philippe in Kentucky (Privately printed, Louisville, Kentucky, 1924).
10 Ibid., p. 529.
After an engraving of a portrait by
M. Scheffer, Paris, 1824

GENERAL LA FAYETTE IN 1825
(When he was the official guest of Indiana)
arrangements of the State Senate for the visit of LaFayette was composed of Samuel Milroy, Isaac Montgomery, John H. Thompson, James Gregory, Milton Stapp, and William Graham; and of the House: Reuben W. Nelson, David H. Maxwell, John Conner, Thomas Posey, Benjamin Hurst, David Raub, James Farrington, Noah Noble, Benjamin Irwin, Horace Bassett, and Thomas Brown. It is a notable list of Indiana pioneers. A smaller committee, headed by Colonel Farnham, escorted LaFayette to Jeffersonville. It is said that all the members of the committee of arrangements were present at the reception to La Fayette, at Jeffersonville. He arrived at eleven o'clock in the morning, escorted by the committee. He was greeted on the Indiana shore by a salute of thrice twenty-four guns discharged from three pieces of artillery stationed on the river bank, at the base of three flag staffs, each seventy feet in height, bearing flags with appropriate mottoes. How the birds must have fluttered at the unusual burst of sound! And how the frightened wild creatures of the woods must have scurried off into the tall timber! How the roar of the guns must have reverberated through the quiet hills! The honored guest was escorted to the house of former Governor Posey on the west corner of Front and Fort Streets in Jeffersonville overlooking the river and the town of Louisville beyond. Captain L. C. Baird wrote an article about twenty-five years ago concerning this visit and it has furnished me with the details of the occasion. Baird says:

His progress down Front street from the place of debarkation near the present ferry landing, was a spectacle the like of which the city had never seen before. Officials, both State and local together with many other gentlemen of state and national renown from our sister commonwealths vied with the vast concourse of the "common people" to add to the generous expression of gratitude and esteem for the guest of honor. Besides the many visitors from throughout the state, the people from surrounding country had made this a holiday that all might be given an opportunity to participate in the reception. In addition to the three artillery companies and Capt. Parker's infantry company from Charlestown, there were other military organizations present, but the absence of any records concerning the Indiana Militia at this period of our history, and in fact for many years afterward, makes it impossible to discover who they were or from whence they came.

On his arrival to the entrance to the Governor's house, the General was welcomed by his Excellency James B. Ray in the following address:

"General LaFayette—you have already been appraised of the sentiments of the General Assembly of this state, through the resolutions,
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which my predecessor had the honor of transmitting to you, and which you have received, on your part, the most affectionate acknowledgement.

"Permit me, as the organ of their feelings, and of those of the people of this state, to hail and delight, this 'auspicious visit.' Your presence on our soil, whilst it satisfies the wishes of the present generation, will be marked by posterity, as the brightest epoch in the calendar of Indiana. Accept, dear General, our cordial congratulations, our heartfelt welcome, and our devoted aspirations for your happiness," etc.  

How little prophetic were these words! Indiana's obligations, as expressed by Governor Ray, have surely been too long neglected.

La Fayette responded to the welcome of Governor Ray in much the same style of speech. Effulgence of speech was characteristic of that time. Reunion took place with survivors of the War. It was a very moving occasion for many men. Everything was done in the best possible manner within the power of the hosts. At three o'clock in the afternoon, La Fayette was conducted to dinner under military escort, accompanied by a band. The table was handsomely prepared under an arbor of about two hundred and twenty feet in length, well covered and ornamented throughout with the verdure and foliage of the forest, in which roses and other flowers were interwoven by the ladies of Jeffersonville. These quaint expressions of hospitality must have touched the quick and responsive nature of the guest. The table was set in the woods, just above the Governor's house about one hundred feet above Fort Street. At the head of the table there was a banner on which was inscribed:

Indiana welcomes La Fayette, the Champion of Liberty in both hemispheres.

At the foot of the table was a similar one with the inscription:

Indiana in '76 a wilderness; in 1825 a civilized community. Thanks to LaFayette and the soldiers of the Revolution.

After dinner six toasts were offered "to our country and our country's friends"; "to the memory of Washington"; "to the Continental Congress and their illustrious coadjutors"; "to the Congress of 1824"; and "to the President of the United States, a vigorous and fruitful scion from a Revolutionary stock"; the account says toasts were drunk "with entire unanimity of applause." Thereupon, La Fayette, as soon as the

11 Baird, L. C., Pamphlet composed of newspaper clippings in the Indiana State Library.
emotion had subsided, returned his thanks in the most affectionate manner to the state of Indiana and company present, and begged leave to offer sentiments relating to Jeffersonville and Indiana; to the classic birthplace of freedom; to Simon Bolivar, the liberator of Columbia and Peru; to the surviving compatriots of General La Fayette; to the Ordinance of 1787; to the memory of George Rogers Clark, the brave and successful commander of the Illinois Regiment who by his achievements at Kaskaskia and St. Vincents extinguished the empire of Great Britain on the Ohio and the Mississippi. General La Fayette also, on invitation, proposed a toast to the memory of General Green. Ten toasts were then offered by other distinguished guests; and still other toasts by those who failed to leave copies or in the confusion of the moment lost them, so that we have no record of them. The dinner was honored by the presence of many distinguished gentlemen from Kentucky, Tennessee and other states, among whom were Governor Carroll and suite, Honorable C. A. Wickliffe, Judges Barry and Bledsoe, Attorney-General Sharp, Colonel Anderson and Honorable John Rowan. At six o'clock, La Fayette left the table and was escorted to the steamboat, "General Pike," where he was met by a committee of arrangements from Kentucky and returned to Louisville. Never again did La Fayette set his foot on the soil of Indiana and never again has Indiana entertained a more noble or a more distinguished guest.

The personal appearance of LaFayette, when he was a guest of the pioneers of Indiana, is a matter of interest. Many portraits, painted one hundred years ago, remain to this day; their value must be gauged by the fame of the artist painting them. There are as many varying likenesses of important people of that time as there were painters. No two portraits of La Fayette resemble each other closely, even in the salient points. The exactness of photography had not then been developed. Charles W. Peale's portrait in Independence Hall was done at an early date. One in the New York Public Library was the work of S. F. B. Morse, the inventor of the telegraph. It is said that it was painted in Washington from sittings of La Fayette in February, 1825. La Fayette had an engaging personality which to my mind is not apparent in this portrait. Another portrait in the Metropolitan Museum of Art is by Rembrandt Peale. There is a painting on the panel in the southwest corner of Corinthian Hall in the Masonic
Temple, Boston, which purports to show La Fayette as he appeared in Boston in 1825.

In view of the dissimilarity in the portraits of these artists, the personal appearance of La Fayette in 1825, when he was in Indiana, is an interesting study. The fact is that the most authentic picture of him is a word painting by M. Jules Cloquet, a celebrated writer on medical and other subjects, and La Fayette's personal physician. In his Recollections of the Private Life of General La Fayette, M. Cloquet says:

Lafayette was tall and well-proportioned. He was decidedly inclined to embonpoint, though not to obesity. His head was large, his face oval and regular; his forehead lofty and open; his eyes, which were full of goodness and meaning, were large and prominent, of a grayish blue, and surmounted with light and well-arched but not bushy eyebrows; his nose was aquiline; his mouth, which was habitually embellished with a natural smile, was seldom opened except to utter kind and gracious expressions; his complexion was clear; his checks were slightly coloured; and at the age of seventy-seven not a single wrinkle furrowed his countenance, the ordinary expression of which was that of candour and frankness.12

Mrs. Saint Julien Ravenel, in her book Charleston, the Place and the People, quotes from a private letter written by a citizen of Charleston, Mr. H. W. Conner, who saw La Fayette, when he visited that city in 1825. He says:

The Marquis is in his form tall and stately, perhaps an inch higher than myself, though not quite so heavy. He is lame, a little, in one foot and a good deal infirm from age, though his appearance, from the color of his wig and the brilliancy of his eye, is altogether youthful. His features are long and somewhat narrow, with a retreating but unusually high forehead. His features, taken together, are more expressive of goodness than of anything else. His eye is the only remarkably fine feature he has,—that is, a fine, large, dark eye, exceedingly quick in its transition from one object to another and bespeaks great equanimity as well as magnanimity of disposition, though it has nothing of that determined and energetic quality which fits a man for extreme emergencies. I think the man's countenance expresses his character as intelligibly as language itself could make it.

I think the most life-like portrait is the one done by M. Ary Scheffer, a celebrated French artist, who produced on canvas from life in 1824, a portrait of La Fayette. I have in my possession an engraving of it bearing the inscription: "By Annin & Smith, from the admired print by Leroux after a painting

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by Scheffer, published in Paris the present year, 1824." This portrait's correctness is supported by the statement of M. Cloquet as follows:

Lafayette's dress was extremely simple, and free from everything like pretension. He usually wore a long gray or dark-colored greatcoat, a round hat, pantaloons and gaiters, as represented in the full-length portrait executed some years ago by Mr. Scheffer, and which resembles him in every respect.13

This is borne out by George Washington Greene, American historian, who visited La Fayette in his home in Paris. Writing about it in the Atlantic Monthly for December, 1861, he says:

... I found that Ary Scheffer's portrait had not deceived me. Features, expression, carriage, all were just as it had taught me to expect them. ...14

The conclusion must follow that M. Scheffer's portrait gives us a true likeness of La Fayette as he was when he was in Indiana in 1825.

While La Fayette was on his last visit to America, the government of Louis XVIII had ended by the death of the King. Charles X, his brother, had succeeded him. It fell to La Fayette's lot, after his return to France, to participate in the Revolution of 1830 and to help crown Louis Philippe as the King of France. He had seen the obnoxious principles which he hated, the divine and hereditary rights of kings to rule, disappear in the Revolution. Louis Philippe became a citizen king, recognizing that the right to select a king was seated in the people.

This great crusader for liberty, descendant of an ancient aristocracy, possessor of great wealth, an important participant in the achievement of American independence, a knight errant who had signally tried and failed to redress the wrongs of the French people, on Friday, the twelfth of May, 1825, stepped from a boat to our shores for a few hours. It was an eventful day, too little regarded in our histories. Despite her youthful statehood, notwithstanding the primitive crudeness of her physical condition, Indiana did her best to graciously and affectionately welcome her distinguished visitor. And

14 p. 851.
evermore every loyal American will cherish in his heart the
great services General La Fayette rendered to our struggling
country.