I will venture to state that, in the whole history of the intercourse of nations, acts so unjustifiable, so outrageous, so dangerous as those which have been committed within the last three months have never previously been committed in Europe.

Sir Henry Austen Layard, Speech in the House of Commons, 22 July 1853

L’ordre règne en Valachie.

27 November 1853
Messieurs les Cosaques

If 1852 had been a year of deaths and losses, 1853 held the promise of births and new beginnings. Rosetti’s third son, Vintilă Jules Ștefan, was born in Nantes on 23 January. The witnesses to the registration of the birth were Jules Michelet and a Polish expatriate, Dr. Ignace de Kostozenwski, who had probably assisted the birth. Michelet announced the event to his son-in-law, Alfred Dumesnil: “We went there yesterday and Rosetti asked the doctor and myself to serve as witnesses for the declaration [of the birth] at the municipality. Which we did. As for the church and the baptism, I am not going to involve myself. Here, we are surrounded and crushed by the Church.” It is very likely that the Rosettis did not, in fact, opt for a church baptism for their child, unless Marie had been chastened by the christening in extremis of her late infant, Ion.

Life in the village of Douet continued to have an idyllically stoical quality about it: a Madame Edmond brought the milk, the residents ground their own coffee and fed the chicken – for whose subsequent


326 See note 493 below.

327 The doctor’s name is an approximate reading, cf. Rosetti, *Diary*, 348, and Biblioteca Națională, the St. Georges Collection, the Dinu V. Rosetti Archive, P XLIII, Dossier 5, certificate of baptism, 25 January 1853, Mairie de Saint-Sébastien, Nantes.

slaughter Rosetti felt guilty – and the courtyard was full of children.\(^{329}\) Separations were frequent: Maria often went to England to see her mother, Rosetti attended to business, friendships and to keeping up with contacts in Paris. His letters to Marie now brimmed with overflowing emotions and urges to daily stoicism: “Let us love each other and all will be well. […] we will endure everything heroically.”\(^{330}\) Both Rosetti and Michelet found the companionship of their wives a solace at this time of exile and disappointment, as did Edgar Quinet, who, in exile in Brussels, was sustained by his young Moldavian wife of a few months, Hermione. “I am happy for your happiness.” wrote Michelet to Quinet on 11 March 1853, “and grateful to Madame Quinet who has built a hearth for you in that alien land. A great part of your new glory will be for her to share. Behind a man’s grandest works is an accomplished woman, who offers repose to his heart and a companionship in harmony with his lofty aims. I have myself felt this vividly this winter in our accumulated tribulations, our new poverty, the servitude of our country, the death that surrounds us here, the stormy weather, a new ’93. In her young heart, my wife has preserved the very soul of my country.”\(^{331}\)

Rosetti returned briefly to Paris on 9 May 1853. His habitual circle of friends during that time in Paris included Dumitru Brâtianu, Alfred Dumesnil, whose daughter Jeanne was very close to Marie Rosetti, Charlemagne Hallegrain, the shoemaker and fellow-conspirator, Paul Bataillard, Cezar Bolliac, Henric Winterhalder and his wife, and the young Constantin Racoviță, the Golescus’ nephew, who, having survived deportation to Astrakhan in 1849, was now in Paris, too. Away from his wife and children, who stayed in Douet, Rosetti’s daily letters to Marie were passionate and tender: “I love you, beloved woman. I love you in the way you want to be loved. At this moment I feel my heart melting with love for you.”\(^{332}\) The tensions and turbulence of their early years together were now replaced by a calmer and more mature appreciation of each other. “I have found in you a treasure that I was not aware existed in ‘47.”\(^{333}\) Yet, ever the malcontent, he confessed that he would be willing to trade some of her passion and love in exchange


\(^{330}\) Ibid.


\(^{333}\) Letter dated 19 May 1853, in ibid.