

[27. Portrait and apostolate of Adelaide in Rennes and in Paris by Barrister Bellart](#)

In 'Arrests and Trial of Marie-Adélaïde Champion of Cicé, Maître Bellart Plea p. 4-5

Adelaide de Cicé belonged to a very pious family. She was even more pious herself. It is not a question here of debating the measure of respect or favor which one cult deserves more than another; I speak before an assembly of philosophers who make no one a crime of their opinions, and who, faithful to the sentiments expressed by a tolerant and generous government, find all dogmas good, provided they inspire the horror of evil and the taste of good.

Adelaide de Cicé, docile to the principles of her education, constantly practiced the Christian and Catholic religion. She had a very tender imagination; this imagination, still strengthened by religious ideas, became the source of a multitude of acts of benevolence, to which, from her earliest youth, she took pleasure in devoting her life. She did not act, it is true, by the sole impulse of pure morality; it was not a wholly philosophical benevolence that she was pouring out; but to some extent from an excellent nature, and out of respect for the religious maxims, which she had learned to obey since her childhood, she knew only one way of honoring her God, and that was to devote herself to all the works of benevolence and charity commanded by philosophy, which, by itself was not, always enough to persuade; what religion has often more powerfully achieved.

It was not only by monetary alms, a kind of charity so easily practiced by the wealthy; it was by this more respectable alms, because the motives are never ambiguous, **by the alms of her assiduous care, of her time, of her own work, that she helped the unfortunate.**

From the age of 20, surrounded by all the illusions of fortune and credit, greatness and prejudices, she knew how to courageously overcome all these combined seductions, to get closer to the poor, who, if they were not her equals in the political order of the time, were in her eyes her equals in the order of religion; as they are in the eyes of everyone in the order of philosophy. **She poured out her blessings on them; no obstacle stopped her from doing good, and there was no place so humble where she disdained to descend. It was in the thatched cottages, in the attics, in the hospitals, in the prisons that she went to seek and assist the unfortunate, that she brought to the needy, gold, to the sick, tender care, more precious than gold; to the afflicted, consolations sweeter than care.**

Alas! the unfortunate! whereas, without any personal calculation, she walked so spontaneously through the circle of her kindness, she was far from foreseeing that in her turn, in a prison, she would need a consoling hand which stretched out towards her, and that one day she would invoke this pity which she was pouring out on everyone.

I will not hesitate from proclaiming her innocence as a result of the deep esteem she inspired in me: **it is the result of imposing testimonies** made by those who were the spectators of the application of her virtues.

The distance of the place prevented me from producing to you in person the innumerable multitude of witnesses who could have testified.

I had to content myself with the depositions recorded in public documents which I hold in my hand, and which will pass into yours; in documents drafted under the supervision of the Morbihan authorities which all attest:

"that the witnesses know perfectly Adélaïde de Cicé, native of Rennes, who, during the long years that she remained in this city, before going to reside in Paris, had taken care of good works from an early age ; that her greatest pleasure was to visit prisons and hospitals; to go and help the unfortunate; to teach trades to poor abandoned children; that she had always devoted herself to alleviating misfortune; and that she used all her means, all her resources for this! "

And these depositions were not made by some of these superficial and obliging men whose opinions are easy to win: we owe them to women who have since been honored with the esteem of the government, authorized by it to stand up for themselves. reunite, again to devote themselves to the cares which their religion orders them to fulfill; to women who, under the name of **Sisters of Charity**, or under other similar titles, were in charge of the various hospices of Rennes. All of them attest that they did not have a more assiduous companion in their work, their zeal, and their benevolence than Adelaïde de Cicé.

I will not read you several other testimonies which all would only confirm this truth; by going through them, you will see that, if it had been possible to bring before you all the witnesses who offered themselves in favor of Adelaïde de Cicé's innocence, this enclosure would not have been large enough to contain them.

All that is needed is this information to tell you that they were her favorite occupations.

It was in the midst of this honorable care that she spent **the whole portion of her life in Rennes, the place of her birth.**

Her family having dispersed as I told you, she contacted Louis Adrien de Cicé who lived in Paris. She arrived there towards the end of 1791. Very shortly afterwards she had the misfortune of losing him.

Her conduct was in Paris, what it was in Rennes. In Paris, as in Rennes, she filled her time with the same occupations, she attended to the poor with the same tender and pious care. She seeks in Paris, as she sought them in Rennes, all the unfortunate people who might need her help and, always in Paris as in Rennes, she was eager to offer it to them.

You heard, this very morning, Citizen Jurors, witnesses who came to attest it to you! Some have even told you that they were personally obliged to Adélaïde de Cicé. You could not forget this important testimony by its naivety, important by its veracity, important still by the minute circumstances which it revealed to you; for it is these small circumstances which reveal the secret of the characters. I am talking about **this good woman from the Faubourg St Marceau**, who, in her simplicity, told you that tormented, for a long time, with a disgusting and dangerous arm pain, they told her about Adélaïde de Cicé. They "indicated" Adélaïde de Cicé to her, in the suburb of St Marceau! ... This word alone already teaches you what were the habits of Adélaïde de Cicé, and how far her acts of benevolence extended, since her reputation, in this respect, had reached this poor patient.

This woman therefore presents herself to her; she is greeted - to use her naive expression - as if she had been known to her. She receives all kinds of relief from it, in dressings, in linen which she did not have, in remedies. Happy with such assistance, the poor woman proposed to return the next day to seek the same relief. You have not forgotten either this touching response from Adélaïde de Cicé, this response born out of a true feeling of equality: Adélaïde de Cicé warns her that her condition required that she should not move, and she said that she herself who would go and take care of her. She went there the next day, she went there every day for two months, and sometimes the same day included three visits.

So, as you can see, whatever she had done in Rennes, she continued to do in Paris. Besides, and in the stormiest times, various witnesses have told you: **she submitted with perfect resignation to the different modes of government which succeeded one another.**