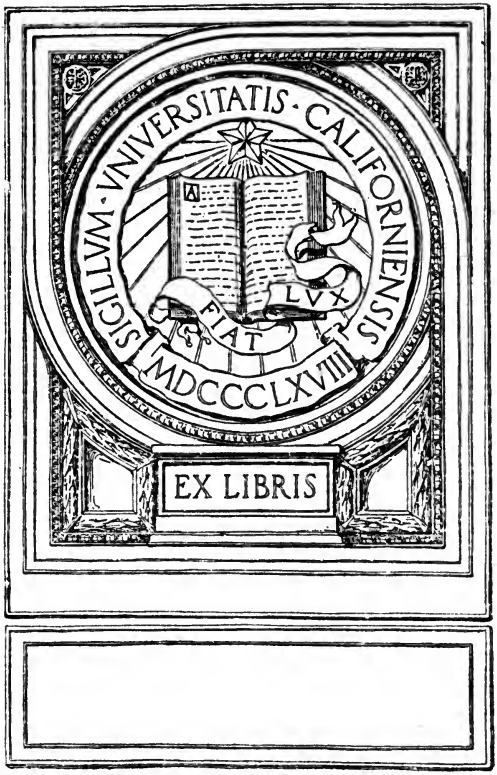
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A FRIEND OF
MARIE-ANTOINETTE
(LADY ATKYNS)

MADAME CHARLOTTE ATKYNS.

(*After a miniature in the possession of Count Lair.*)

A FRIEND OF MARIE-ANTOINETTE

(LADY ATKYNS)

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

OF

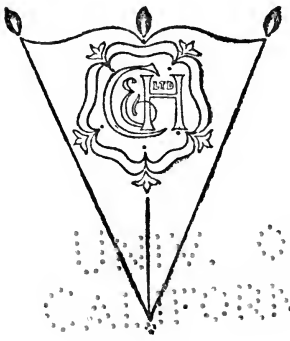
FRÉDÉRIC BARBEY

WITH A PREFACE

BY

VICTORIEN SARDOU

OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY



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PREFACE

When I brought out at the Vaudeville in 1896 my play, entitled *Paméla, Marchande de Frivolités*, in which I had grouped together dramatically, with what verisimilitude I could, all the various Royalist attempts at rescuing the son of Louis XVI., the Dauphin, from the prison of the Temple, there were certain scholars who found fault with me for representing an Englishwoman, Lady Atkyns, as the protagonist, or at least the prime mover in the matter of his escape. Some of them went so far as to accuse me of having invented this character for the purpose of my piece.

Lady Atkyns, certainly, has left but few traces of her existence; she was a Drury Lane actress, pretty, witty, impressionable, and good—it seems there were many such among the English actresses of the time. Married (we shall see presently how it came about) to a peer, who gave her wealth at least, if not happiness, and who does not appear to have counted for much in her life, Lady Atkyns became a passionate admirer of Marie-Antoinette; she was presented to the Queen at Versailles, and when the latter was taken to the Temple,

the responsive Englishwoman made every effort to find her way into the prison. She succeeded by the use of guineas, which, in spite of the hatred professed for Pitt and Coburg, were more to the taste of certain patriots than the paper-money of the Republic.

Lady Atkyns suggested that the Queen should escape dressed in her costume, but the Royal prisoner would not forsake her children. There is a tradition that in refusing the offer of her enthusiastic friend, Marie-Antoinette besought her good offices for the young Dauphin, while putting her on her guard against the intrigues of the Comte de Provence and the Comte d'Artois. However, most of these facts were still in doubt, resting only on somewhat vague statements, elliptical allusions, and intangible bits of gossip, picked up here and there, when, one day, my friend Lenôtre, who is great at ferreting out old papers, came to me, all excitement, with a document which he had come upon the evening before in a portfolio among the Archives of the Police.

It was a letter, dated May, 1821, and addressed to the Minister by the director of the penitential establishment of Gaillon. This official was disturbed over the proceedings of a certain "Madame Hakins or Aquins." Since the false Dauphin, Mathurin Bruneau, sentenced by the Court of Rouen to five years' imprisonment, had become an inmate of that institution, this foreigner had installed herself at Gaillon, and had been seeking to get into communication with the prisoner. She

seemed even to be bent upon supplying him with the means of making his escape.

I drew from this the obvious conclusion that if in 1821, Lady Atkyns could bring herself to believe in the possibility of Mathurin Bruneau being the son of Louis XVI., it must be because she had good reasons for being convinced that the Dauphin had escaped from the Temple. And this conviction of hers became of considerable importance because of the *rôle* she herself had played (however little one knew of it) in the story of the Royal captivity.

It was quite clear that after her promise to the Queen, the faithful Englishwoman, who, as we have seen, was not afraid to compromise herself, and who was generous with her money, must have kept in touch at least with all the facts relating to the Dauphin's imprisonment, learning all that was to be learnt about the Temple, questioning everybody who could have had any contact with the young captive—warders, messengers, doctors, and servants. If after such investigations, and in spite of the official records and of the announcement of his death on June 9, 1798, she could still believe twenty-six years later that the prince might be alive, it can only be because she was satisfied that the dead youth was not the Dauphin.

Had she herself got the Dauphin out of prison? Or had she merely had a hand in the rescue? By what process of reasoning had she been able to persuade herself that an adventurer such as this Bruneau, whose

imposture was manifest, could be the Dauphin? Why, if she believed that the Prince had been carried away from the Temple, had she kept silence so long? If this was not her belief, why did she interest herself in one of those who had failed most pitifully in the impersonation of the prince? Lenôtre and I could find no answer to all these questions. To throw light upon them, it would have been necessary to undertake minute researches into the whole life of Lady Atkyns, following her about from place to place, learning where she lived during the Revolution, ascertaining the dates of all her sojourns in Paris, studying all the facts of her existence after 1795, together with the place and date of her death, the names of her heirs, the fate of her correspondence and other papers—a very laborious piece of work, still further complicated by the certainty that it would be necessary to start out upon one's investigations in England. We did not abandon all idea of the task, however; but time lacked—time always lacks!—and we talked of it as a task that must wait for a year of leisure, knowing only too well that the year of leisure would never come.

Chance, upon which we should always count, settled the matter for us. Chance brought about a meeting between Lenôtre and a young writer, just out of the École des Chartes, M. Frédéric Barbey, very well informed, both through his earlier studies and through family connections, concerning what it is customary to designate "la Question Louis XVII." M. Barbey had

the necessary leisure, and he was ready to undertake any kind of journey that might be entailed; he revelled in the idea of the difficulties to be coped with in what would be to him an absorbing task. Lenôtre introduced him to me, and I felt certain from the first that the matter was in good hands. M. Barbey, in truth, is endowed with all the very rare qualities essential to this kind of research—a boundless patience, the *flair* of a collector, the *aplomb* of an interviewer, complete freedom from prejudice, and the indomitable industry and ardent zeal of an apostle.

M. Barbey set out for England at once, and came back a fortnight later, already possessed of a mass of valuable information regarding the early life of our English Royalist, including this specific item: Lady Atkyns died in Paris, in the Rue de Lille, in 1836. An application to the *greffe de paix* of the *arrondissement* resulted in M. Barbey's obtaining the name of the notary who had the drawing up of the deeds of succession. At the offices of the present courteous possessor of the documents, after any amount of formalities and delays and difficulties, over which his untiring pertinacity enabled him to triumph, he was at last placed in possession of an immense pile of dusty papers, which had not been touched for nearly seventy years: the entire correspondence addressed to Lady Atkyns from 1792 down to the time of her death.

That was a red-letter day! From the very first letters that were looked at, it seemed that henceforth

all doubts would be at an end: the Royal youth had assuredly been carried away from the Temple! Between the lines, beneath all the studiously vague and discreet wording of the correspondence, we were able to follow, in one letter after another, all the plotting and planning of the escape, the anxieties of the conspirators, the precautions they had to take, the disappointments, the treacheries, the hopes. . . . At last, we were on the threshold of the actual day of the escape! Another week would find us face to face with the Dauphin! Three days more . . .! To-morrow . . .! Alas! our disappointment was great—almost as great as that of Lady Atkyns's fellow-workers. The boy never came into their hands. *Did* he escape? Everything points to his having done so, but everything points also to his having been spirited away out of their hands just as he was being embarked for England, where Lady Atkyns awaited feverishly the coming of the child she called her King—her King to whose cause she made her vows, but on whose face she was destined probably never to set eyes, and whose fate was for ever to remain to her unknown.

Such is the story we are told in this book of Frédéric Barbey's—a painful, saddening, exasperating story, extracted (is it necessary to add?) from documents of incontestable authenticity, now made use of for the first time.

But can it be said to satisfy fully our curiosity? Is it the last word on this baffling "Question Louis

XVII.," the bibliography of which runs already to several hundreds of volumes? Of course not! The record of Lady Atkyns's attempts at rescuing the Prince is a singularly important contribution to the study of the problem, but does not solve it. What became of the boy after he was released? Was this boy that they released the real Prince, or is there question of a substitute already at this stage? Did Marie-Antoinette's devoted adherent succeed merely in being the dupe of the people in her pay? At the period of her very first efforts, may not the Dauphin have been already far from the Temple—hidden away somewhere, perhaps gone obscurely to his death, in the house of some disreputable person to whom his identity was unknown? For must we not place some reliance upon the assertions of the wife of Simon the shoemaker, who declared she had carried off the Prince at a date seven months earlier than the first steps taken by Lady Atkyns? It is all a still insoluble problem, the most complex, the most difficult problem that the perspicacity of historians has ever been called upon to solve.

The most important result of this new study is that it relegates to the field of fiction the books of Beauchesne, Chantelauze, La Sicotière, and Eckart among others; that it disproves absolutely the assertions of the official history of these events—the assertion that there is no room for doubt that the Dauphin never left his cell, that he lived and suffered and died there. Henceforward, it is an established fact, absolutely irrefutable,

that during nearly five months, from November, 1794, to March, 1795, the child in the jailer's hands was not the son of Louis XVI., but a substitute, and mute. How did this deception end? Was the issue what was expected? The matter is not cleared up; but that this substitution of the Prince was effected is now beyond dispute, and this revelation, instead of throwing light upon the impenetrable obscurity of the drama, renders it still more dense. This mute boy substituted for the boy in prison, who was himself possibly but a substitute; these sly and foolish guardians who succeed to each other, muddling their own brains and mystifying each other; these doctors who are called to the bedside of the dying Prince, and who, like Pelletan, long afterwards invent stories about his death-bed sufferings—though at the actual time of his death they were either so careless or so cunning as to draw up an unmeaning *procès-verbal*, as to the bearing of which commentators for more than a century have been unable to agree;—all these official statements which establish nothing; the interment recorded in three separate ways by the three functionaries who were witnesses; the obvious, manifest, admitted doubt, which survived in the minds of Louis XVIII. and the Duchesse d'Angoulême; the manœuvres of the Restoration Government, which could so easily have elucidated the question, and which, by *maladresse* or by guilefulness, made it impenetrable, by removing the most important documents from the national archives; finally, the foolish performances of the fifteen

or so lying adventurers who attempted to pass themselves off as so many dauphins escaped from the Temple, and each of whom had his devoted adherents, absolutely convinced of his being the real prince, and whose absurd effusions, when not venal, combine to produce the effect of an inextricable maze; these were the factors of the "Question Louis XVII." The worst of it all is that one must overlook no detail: it is only by disproving and eliminating that we can succeed in bringing out isolated facts—solid, indisputable facts that shall serve as stepping-stones to future revelations.

It is necessary to study, scrutinize, and reflect. One opinion alone is to be condemned as indubitably wrong: that of the historians who see nothing in all this worthy of investigation and of discussion, to whom the story of the Dauphin is all quite clear and intelligible, and who go floundering about over the whole ground with the calm serenity of the blind, assured of the freedom of their road from obstruction, and that they cannot see the obstacles in their way. Frédéric Barbey's work unveils too many incontestable facts of history for it to be possible henceforth for any one to see in this marvellous enigma nothing but fantasies and inventions.

VICTORIEN SARDOU.

INTRODUCTION

To tell once again the oft-told story of Queen Marie-Antoinette; to go over anew all the familiar episodes of her sojourn at the Tuileries, her captivity in the Temple, her appearance before the Revolutionary tribunal, and her death; to append some hitherto undiscovered detail to the endless piles of writings inspired by these events, and in our turn sit in judgment alike upon her conduct and the conduct of her enemies, and, as a natural sequence, upon the Revolution, its work and its issues: to do any or all of these things has not been our intention.

This book has a less ambitious aim—that of restoring the picture of a woman, a foreigner, who was brought by chance one day to Versailles on the eve of the catastrophe, whom the Queen honoured with her friendship, and who knew no rest until she had expended all her energy and all her wealth in efforts to procure the liberty not only of Marie-Antoinette herself, but of those belonging to her. How Lady Atkyns set out upon her project, whom she got to help her, what grounds for hope she had, and what hindrances and

disappointments she experienced, the degrees of success and of failure that attended all her attempts—these are the matters we have sought to deal with.

In the maze of her plots and plans, necessarily mixed up with the enterprises of the *émigrés* and of the agents of the counter-revolution—up above the network of all these machinations within France and without—one luminous point shines forth always as the goal of every project: the tower of the Temple. All around the venerable building strain and struggle the would-be rescuers of its prisoners. Its name, now famous, instils into the Royalist world something of the terror that went forth of old from the Bastille. What went on exactly inside the dungeon from 1792 to 1795? The question, so often canvassed by contemporaries, is still where it was, crying out for an answer. However hackneyed may seem the matter of the Dauphin's imprisonment, we have not felt warranted in deliberately avoiding it. Had we been so minded when embarking upon this study (the voluminous bibliography of the subject is calculated to discourage the historian!), we should in any case have been forced into its investigation by a heap of hitherto unpublished documents which we unearthed.

This leads us to the enumeration of the sources whence we have drawn the materials for our work.

All that has been hitherto known of Lady Atkyns amounts to very little. M. de la Sicotière, coming upon her name in the course of his study of the life of

Louis de Frotté, refers to her merely in a brief note, necessarily incomplete.[1] Four years later, M. V. Delaporte, on the occasion of the centenary of Marie Antoinette, published in his *Études* a correspondence in which the name of the Queen's English friend repeatedly appeared. These papers caught our attention. Under the friendly guidance of M. Delaporte we sought to recover the papers which Lady Atkyns left behind her on her death. In the course of systematic researches, into the nature of which we need not enter here, we were enabled by an unlooked-for piece of good luck to lay hands upon the entire collection of Lady Atkyns's correspondence, covering her whole life. This correspondence, docketed and arranged by the notary entrusted with the regulating of the affairs of the deceased, was found lying in the archives of the notary's study, where, by the permission of the present owner of the documents, I was able to consult them.

The letters are all originals. Some of them, of which copies had been made by some one unidentified, had been destined probably for use in supporting claims put forward by Lady Atkyns. Many letters, unfortunately, are missing, having been confided by the too trustful lady to members of the Royal Household or to Louis XVIII. himself.

To know what value to attach to these letters, it was

[1] The particulars given by O. Alger in *Englishmen in the French Revolution*, London, 1889, pp. 125–126, reproducing and condensing information already available, including that which we owe to the Comtesse MacNamara, are not of any interest.

necessary to know something about the writers. Apart from General Louis de Frotté, who has been made the subject of a detailed biography, the characters mixed up with Lady Atkyns's adventures appear for the first time upon the stage of history.

The *Archives Nationales*, and those of the Ministry for War and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, enable us to recall these forgotten worthies with sufficient accuracy. We have made use in the same way of the Municipal Archives of Dunkerque in our account of the flight of the Chevalier de Conterne and his companion out of the kingdom; of the Archives of Lille; and of the Archives of the Grand Duchy of Baden, preserved at Carlsbad.

This bald enumeration suffices to indicate the spirit in which our task has been conceived and carried out. In a question such as this, obscured and confused by any number of dubious second-hand and third-hand testimonies and untrustworthy narratives, it was necessary to get hold of absolutely irrefutable documents. Letters from contemporaries seemed to us to fulfil better than anything else the conditions thus imposed. They have made it possible for us to supplement in large measure the information acquired from the Archives of the State: many of these letters are derived from private family archives which have most generously been placed at our disposal.

Thanks to these friendly helpers, we have succeeded in completing a task undertaken in a spirit of filial affection. We cannot forget her who guided and took

part in our researches and helped with her sympathy and encouragement. To her it is that we must make our first acknowledgment of indebtedness, and then to the historian to whom this book is inscribed, and whose valued and assiduous help we have never lacked.

We have to express our gratitude also to all those who have helped us with their advice and good offices: the Duc de La Tremoïlle, Member of the Institute; the Marquis de Frotté; Comte Lair; General de Butler; our lamented *confrère*, M. Parfouru, archivist of the Department of Ille-et-Vilaine; and to M. Coyecque; M. Lucien Lazard, assistant archivist of the Department of the Seine; M. Schmidt, keeper of the *Archives Nationales*; M. Desplanque, municipal librarian at Lille; M. Georges Tassez, keeper of the Lille Archives; M. Edmond Biré; M. le Dr. Obser, the learned editor of the political correspondence of Karl Friedrichs von Baden; M. Léonce Pingaud; M. Barthélemy Pocquat; our colleague and friend, M. E. L. Bruel; and to Mr. Freeman O'Donoghue, of the Print Room of the British Museum.

PARIS,
March 22, 1905.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

A FRIEND OF MARIE-ANTOINETTE

(LADY ATKYNS)

CHAPTER I

THE CHEVALIER DE FROTTÉ

At dawn, on April 7, 1790, a singular disturbance was going on in the streets of Lille. In the northern districts, not far from the citadel, troops of soldiers stood all along the avenues, filled the squares, ransacked the courtyards of the houses. Shots went off every instant, and the extraordinary thing was that this fusillade from the soldiers was directed against other soldiers. In the midst of the smoke, the deafening noise, and the cries of the awakened townsfolk, were to be seen the blue uniforms, with sky-blue facings, of the Regiment of the Crown, one of the four quartered in the garrison.[1]

[1] Victor Derode, *Histoire de Lille et de la Flandre Wallonne*, 1848, in 8vo, vol. iii. p. 26. For the account of these military disturbances at Lille, we have also made use of a MS. narrative by the Chevalier de Frotté, *Archives Nationales* D. XXIX., 36; and of a statement addressed to the King by the Marquis de Livarot, regarding his conduct, a printed copy of which is at the Bibliothèque Nationale, L.K. 4008.

Every horseman who appeared was greeted with successive volleys; evidently the combat was to the death between the light cavalry of Normandy, who charged upon the pavements or fought on foot with their muskets, and the grenadiers of the Crown and of the Royal-Vaisseaux.

Moreover, there was no order in this street-fight. The officers on both sides were absent, and if by any chance some *had* been present, the excitement and anger visible upon the assailants' faces were a proof that their intervention would have been useless.

Riot, in fact, was reigning in the city of Lille, the capital of the province; and this time law and order were being upset by those whose duty it was to make them respected. But the town, with its 80,000 inhabitants, had for months been going, nervously and anxiously, through a succession of anything but encouraging episodes. The convocation of the States General, the formation of the Garde Nationale, the creation of the Municipality, and, two months earlier (in February), the administrative upset which thrilled the province—all this, added to the distress of the kingdom, to the general misery, to the exaggerated price of food, and to the ruin of commerce, had brought about several outbreaks in this manufacturing town, naturally dependent upon its trade for its well-being. And, at the very moment that there came from Paris the most alarming news—that is, on April 29, 1789 (coinciding almost day for day with the sacking of the Reveillon

factory) pillage had its first innings at Lille also; the bakeries were invaded; and three months later four houses were attacked by the mob and burnt down.

Of the troops which then composed the garrison of Lille, one part had taken up their quarters in the town; these were the regiments of the Crown and of the Royal-Vaisseaux. The other, consisting of the light cavalry of Normandy and the infantry of Colonel-General, the leading French regiment, were lodged at the citadel, that imposing fortress which is Vauban's masterpiece. Certain signs of insubordination had crept into the two former regiments; the revolutionary spirit was working actively in the men, and was favoured by the permanent contact with the inhabitants in which these two regiments lived. More remote from this influence, away off in the citadel, the "Colonel-Generals" cherished sentiments of whole-hearted devotion to the King; moreover, they had over them a body of officers whose unadulterated royalism was to display itself in the events which we shall now endeavour to set forth. As matters were, the least thing would let loose these warring elements in the garrison upon one another. And what finally did it? A mere nothing, a scuffle that broke out on the evening of April 8, between the *chasseurs* and the grenadiers—some say a duel. At any rate, two soldiers were killed on the spot. . . . Instantly cavalry and infantry take sides for their respective comrades. During the night a general attack is talked of, on both sides. The officers get wind of it;

but, unluckily, two of the colonels are on leave. The Marquis de Livarot, commandant of the province, tries to restore peace by holding a meeting of delegates from each corps; he believes he has succeeded, but scarcely has he left them when the fusillade breaks out again in every direction.

The "Colonel-Generals" had remained neutral until then; discipline, so carefully maintained by the commanding officers, had prevailed with the men. But when, in the evening, they saw the *chasseurs* of Normandy falling back on the citadel for refuge, these their comrades of the infantry opened the gates to them, brought them in and joined cause with them, refusing any longer to listen to their officers, who still strove for peace. They carried things, indeed, even further than that. M. de Livarot and M. de Montrosier—that last lieutenant of the King—on coming out of the gate which led into the square, saw that they were surrounded by a group of mutineers, whose attitude was menacing. Despite the efforts of the few officers who were present, these two were dragged into a casemate, where their situation was simply that of prisoners.

During this time the most sinister rumours were circulating in the town, kept alive by the infantry of the Crown and the Royal-Vaisseaux regiments. People expected nothing less than to see the cannons of the citadel open their throats and vomit down grape-shot on the populace. Shortly, on the walls of the houses and in the *cafés*, the uneasy citizens might read a

strange proclamation, at the authorship of which all the world could guess. It opened with this apostrophe :—

"LET US BEWARE, CITIZENS,

LET US BEWARE,

and thrice: Let us beware. We are deceived, we are betrayed, we are sold! . . . But we are not yet ruined; we have our weapons! *The infernal Fitz-James*[1] is gone with all his crew . . . they have contented themselves with keeping back a useless lot.

"*Livaro, the infamous Livaro,* is said to be in our citadel; *Montrosier,* the atrocious author of all our ills, sleeps peacefully.

"The soldiers, whom they have tried to corrupt, offer these men to us. . . . What are we waiting for? Why do we not show all France that we are *Citizens,* that we are *Patriots?* Is it for the orders of our Commandant that we look? But has not the *aristocrat* of *Orgères* already shown us how unworthy he is of the place which we have blindly entrusted to him? . . . He commands us only that he may lead us into the abyss. Seconded by his sycophant, *Carette,* and by the traitors whom our cowardice leaves in command over us; leagued with the heads of all the aristocratic intrigues, he now seeks to alienate from us our brave comrades of the Crown, and of Royal-des-Vaisseaux. Shall we let them go? No; . . . but we will march with them. . . . We will go and seize *Livarot, Montrosier,* and deliver them up, bound hand and foot, to the utmost severity of the august National Assembly!

"Why are not our conscript Fathers convoked? Is the General Council of the Commune a mere phantom? Is the blood of our citizens less precious than vile pecuniary interests? Would not our secret enemies flinch before the enlightenment and the patriotism of our Notables? *Ah! Citizens! Let us beware, and once more let us beware!*"

At an extraordinary meeting at the Maison de Ville, the Municipality had convoked the General Council;

[1] These words are underlined in the text.

and, in the interval they received a deputation from the troops of the citadel, assuring the inhabitants of Lille of their good intentions: "The regiments of the Colonel-General, and of the Chasseurs de Normandie" (said the envoys) "protest to the townsfolk that it has never entered into their heads to cause the least alarm to the citizens, of whom until now they have known nothing that was not admirable;" and they also announced that two delegates had been sent to Paris, on a mission to the National Assembly and to the King.

The whole night went by, and no solution had been found. Towards four o'clock the two regiments which had stayed in town were about to leave it on the persuasion of the town councillors; but the City Guard would not let them go, and thus, on the morning of April 10, the same difficulties had to be faced anew. But this situation could not continue. Messengers are despatched to Paris, and with them are sent denunciators of the "infamous" Livarot, whose conduct is considered suspicious; and for eight days he is kept under surveillance at the citadel, in defiance of the Royal authority with which he is invested.

Meanwhile, the officer delegated by the "Colonel-Generals" was making his way to Paris. Despite the importance of the mission, it was a young lieutenant who had been chosen for it; but the coolness he had shown all through the episode, and his determined and energetic attitude, had designated him at once as the man to be selected. Louis de Frotté was born at

Alençon on August 5, 1766.[1] Of noble lineage (his family had been established in Normandy since the fifteenth century), he had inherited the sentiments of duty and fidelity to his King and of devotion to that King's cause. Left motherless at the age of six,[2] educated first at Caen, then at Versailles, in the school of Gorsas,[3] he had entered as supernumerary sub-lieutenant, in 1781, the regiment of "Colonel-General," then garrisoned at Lille. The young officer attracted every one by his generous, liberal, and affectionate character, and by his strong sense of comradeship. It was in the regiment that he contracted those solid friendships which were afterwards so beneficial to him, such, for instance, as that of the Prince de la Tremoïlle, and of a Norman gentleman named Vallière.

A short stay at Besançon had broken up the long months in garrison at Lille ; then he had returned to that town, where the disturbances of which we are speaking had come to diversify the somewhat monotonous way of existence which is inseparable from garrison life.

Filled with hope for the result of his mission, Frotté rode swiftly to Paris. The prospect of seeing the King, of narrating to him, as well as to the War Minister, Le Tour du Pin, the recent occurrences at Lille, of assuring him of the fidelity of the regiment, of obtaining some

[1] L. de la Sicotière, *Louis de Frotté et les Insurrections Normandes*, 1793–1832, Paris, 1889, two volumes in 8vo.

[2] His father married again, a Dumont de Lamberville, whose brother was one of the best friends of Louis de Frotté.

[3] The future journalist, founder of the *Courrier de Versailles*.

tolerably satisfactory solution of the critical situation—all this was spurring on our cavalier. And the thought of soon getting back to Lille, his mission crowned with success, of reappearing before certain eyes to which he was not insensible—everything combined to make him forget the length of the journey.

His stay at Paris was a short one. The future chief of the *chouans* of Normandy realized one of his greatest wishes in being admitted to an audience with the King; but the position of the Royal Family in the midst of the prevailing effervescence of feeling, and the atmosphere of hostility which surrounded them, filled his heart with foreboding thoughts. Burning with devotion, powerless to make valid offers to the King, Frotté—who had suggested the bringing together at Lille of a nucleus of reliable troops, absolutely to be trusted—regained the garrison at the end of a few days, for it had been made clear to him that Louis XVI. did not wish to share in his youthful ardour and its projects. He had, however, succeeded thoroughly in the official part of his task. When confronted with a deputation from the hostile regiments of the Crown and of the Royal-Vaisseaux, who came in their turn to plead their cause, the representative of the Colonel-Generals had been able to cope with them in defence of his own interests; he came back, bringing with him an order for the alteration of the whole garrison. The Colonel-Generals were transferred to Dunkirk, the three others were sent out of the province. As to the unfortunate

Marquis de Livarot, who was still a prisoner at the citadel, a mandate from the Minister summoned him to Paris, there to answer for his conduct. Needless to say, he cleared himself of every accusation, and was entirely rehabilitated.

Frotté did not spend in idleness the few days which preceded the departure of his regiment. Besides the ordinary arrangements—the giving up of his place of abode, the packing of his affairs, the paying of his debts; besides the friends to whom he had to bid farewell; in short, besides the thousand ties that are contracted during a stay of nine years in a town which is not among the smallest in the kingdom, there was, in the Rue Princesse, at a few minutes' walk from the citadel, a one-storeyed house of unimposing exterior, whose door had often opened to receive the young officer. The prospect of not returning there for a long time filled his heart with distress and regret. For some months this house had been inhabited by a foreigner, an English lady, who had come to Lille with a reputation for grace and beauty which had proved to be not unmerited. At that time there was already in Lille quite a colony of English people, who were attracted there either by the proximity of their own country and the closeness of Paris, or by the commercial prosperity of the place and its numerous industries. In the census returns of the town at the beginning of the Revolution, and also in the taxation assessments, we have come across many names of evident British origin.

But the remarkable thing about the new-comers at the Rue Princesse, was that they had not arrived from England, but from Versailles. They were very soon received by the best society of Lille, and questions began to circulate about them, every one trying to penetrate a certain mystery which hung about their past life.

Let us, in our turn, attempt to lift the veil, and to find out something about the English lady who is to be the heroine of this work.

Charlotte Walpole, who was born probably about 1758,[1] bore a name that in the United Kingdom is illustrious among the illustrious. Was she a direct descendant of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Oxford, the celebrated statesman who administered English politics for some years under George I.? It is difficult to ascertain.

The youngest of three daughters,[2] Charlotte probably passed all her youth in the county of Norfolk, the cradle of her family, under that gloomy sky, in that ever-moist climate, in the midst of those emerald green pastures which make that part of England one of the great agricultural districts. The tranquil, melancholy charm of the scenery there, the immense flocks of sheep and goats

[1] This approximate date is furnished us by the death certificate of Lady Atkyns; but these certificates are known to have been for the most part very inaccurately made out, especially with regard to the date of birth, when they had reference to a foreigner dying at Paris.

[2] Will of Robert Walpole of March 14, 1803, by which he bequeathed all his worldly goods to his wife, Blancy Walpole, and to his three daughters, Mary, Frances, and Charlotte. Inventory after death of the effects of Lady Atkyns.—*Unpublished Papers of Lady Atkyns.*

browsing in the pastures, the wide horizon, unlimited except by the heavy clouds which hang eternally over the land—all this fastened upon the imagination of the girl, naturally of a very enthusiastic temperament, and developed in her that indefinable charm which struck all who knew her. Her large eyes, enhanced by very marked eyebrows, had an infinitely sweet expression. The only existing portrait of her depicts her with her hair dressed in the fashion of the time—her dark curls lightly tied with a slender ribbon, and falling back, carelessly, on her forehead. She had a most original mind, a face which changed and lit up with every passing mood, and an expression all her own, which made her, as it were, a unique personality. All this is enough explanation of why, at nineteen, Charlotte Walpole went to London, with the idea of making use of her talents on the stage.

The capital of England could then boast of only three theatres, of which the most frequented, Drury Lane, which ranked as Theatre Royal, is still in existence, and preserves intact its ancient reputation. It was there that, on October 2, 1777, at the opening of the theatrical season, Miss Walpole made her first appearance in a piece called *Love in a Village*,[1] a comedy probably in the same *genre* as those of O'Keefe, and then very much to the public taste, which was growing weary of the brutal and licentious farces of the preceding centuries. Five days later Miss Walpole reappeared

[1] Genest: *History of the Stage.*

in *The Quaker*, and the week after she was seen in the *rôle* of "Jessica" in *The Merchant of Venice*, one of Shakespeare's masterpieces. After having played, in the spring of 1778, in *The Waterman*, her success seemed assured; on May 2, *Love in a Village* was given again for her benefit, and she then filled to perfection the part of "Rosetta"; the season terminated ten days later with a representation of *The Beggars' Opera*, by John Gay. There can be no doubt that the young actress had found her vocation, and that, moreover, with the consent of her family. But, as a matter of fact, there did not then prevail in England the sort of disfavour that so often attaches to a theatrical career in a certain set of society. Miss Walpole's experience is a proof of this. During the summer, which she most probably spent in the country, she sought to cultivate her talents, and so well did she succeed that in the season, which reopened on September 15, 1778, she was seen again in London, eager to gather fresh laurels. This time she appeared in costume, in a sort of operetta entitled *The Camp*, which had a tremendous success all that winter. The piece, an imitation of Sheridan by Tickell, represented the arsenal and the camp at Coxheath, and Miss Walpole, as "Nancy," took the part of a young soldier, and filled it most admirably, a contemporary author informs us.[1] We have found an engraving which represents her in this costume, doubtless a souvenir of the plaudits

[1] Genest: *History of the Stage*. "This musical entertainment was written for the sake of exhibiting a representation of the camp at Coxheath . . . Miss Walpole, as a young recruit, went through her exercises adroitly."

CHARLOTTE WALPOLE, IN "THE CAMP."

(*After an engraving in the British Museum.*)

[*To face page* 12.

which she then received. In the month of April, 1779, she appears again in other pieces by Farquhar. After this, the bills for us have nothing to say; Miss Walpole's name is not to be found in them.

To what must one attribute this sudden silence, this disappearance from the stage, just when so fair a future seemed opening before the actress? To a determination brought about by her very success itself and by the charm she exercised. Several times during the winter a young man had been seen at Drury Lane, who occupied a front stall and watched very keenly the acting of the graceful young recruit of Coxheath; so that there was no very great astonishment expressed when, on June 18, 1779, *The Gentleman's Magazine*, in its society column, announced the marriage of Sir Edward Atkyns with Miss Charlotte Walpole, of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.[1] "The pretty Miss Atkyns"—that was henceforth to be her appellation in London, and all over Norfolk!

If the Walpoles could boast of an illustrious descent, the Atkyns' in this respect were in no wise inferior to them. In this family, where the Christian names are handed down from generation to generation, that of Edward is, as it were, immutable! Illustrious personages are by no means wanting. An Atkyns had been Chancellor of the Exchequer in the seventeenth century; his son had built a splendid manor-house, Ketteringham,

[1] *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle*, by Sylvanus Urban, Gent., London, vol. xlix., for the year 1779, p. 326.

in the same county of Norfolk; at his death he left it to his grand-nephew, who, in his turn, bequeathed it to the fortunate husband of Miss Walpole.

The young couple took up their abode in this antique mansion of Ketteringham Hall, the name of which will often recur in this narrative. They appear to have lived peacefully there for some years, coming only for a few weeks in mid-winter to London. "Happy is the nation that has no history," says the proverb; and it is equally true that happy folk have none. So we will certainly not, in the absence of any material, create one for these young people.

Nevertheless, it is well to mention the account given of them by a friend of our heroine, the Countess Mac-Namara, who seems to have been very well acquainted with the different particulars of her life. She tells us that the young couple, who, if we are to believe her, had not many friends in England, decided to go to the Continent, and live at Versailles.[1] (The explanation does not seem a very plausible one.) There the charm of the young wife, her pretty voice, the receptions which she soon began to give, and to which, thanks to her husband's wealth, she was able to lend so much brilliancy, opened to her quickly the doors of all the society connected with the Court. In the Queen's set, the beautiful Duchess de Polignac, in particular, took a great fancy to this graceful foreigner; and was desirous, in

[1] *Diaries of a Lady of Quality, from* 1797 *to* 1814, edited, with notes, by A. Hayward, Esq. London: Longman, Green & Co., 1864, pp. 216–219.

her turn, to make her known to her august friend. Thus it came about that Lady Atkyns was introduced into the circle of Marie-Antoinette's intimates. Even more completely than the others, the new-comer fell under the Queen's spell. A current of ardent sympathy established itself between the two women. They were united by a deep and intimate mutual comprehension and sympathy. For any one who knew Lady Atkyns, it was certain that these first impressions would not fade, but that they would prove to be, on the contrary, the first-fruits of an unalterable friendship. These are the only materials one has for the details of that sojourn at Versailles. When exactly did the Atkynses resolve upon this move? Their only child, a son, must have been born before it took place. What were their plans in coming to the Court? All these are insoluble problems.

They were probably at Versailles when the first revolutionary troubles broke out. They were present, perhaps, at the opening of the States General, that great national function; and they were among those who shuddered at the taking of the Bastille. When the October days brought back the Royal family in a mournful procession to Paris, the young couple were already gone—already too far away to enter into the anxieties and sufferings of those whom they loved.

A brief mention, a few words found after patient research, in dusty registers, tell us enough to make us certain of their fate. This is one of the joys of the explorer in this sort—to find buried under the waste

of years of accumulated official papers, a feeble light, a tiny, isolated indication, which opens, none the less, an infinite horizon before him.

In the autumn of the year 1789, an Englishwoman, named by the officials charged with the collection of a special poll-tax, Milady Charlotte, arrived at Lille with one servant.[1]

In December, she installed herself in the parish of St. André, in a house in the Rue Princesse, then numbered 337, which belonged to a gentleman named De Drurez. Of her husband there is no mention, nor is her surname given. Probably she had stayed some time at an inn, before settling down in Rue Princesse; but what is to be concluded from so vague an appellation as "Milady Charlotte"? Why did she conceal half her name? Nevertheless, at Lille there is some information to be had about her. We know that she was pensioned upon the Royal Treasury, since she is described as a French pensioner.

In the following year she increases her establishment, keeping one more servant; her poll-tax, which had been 14 louis, now rises to 16. We may add here that, in order to satisfy our curiosity, we have examined —but in vain—the lists of the pensioners from the Royal Treasury at that period; there is no mention anywhere

[1] "Milady Charlotte, English, pensioner of France, twelve livres; for one servant in 1789, two livres; twelve livres, two servants for 1790, four livres." —*Register of the Poll-tax of the Seven Parishes*, 1790. *Parish of St. André, Rue Princesse, No.* 337, p. 46. *Municipal Archives of Lille.*

either of Milady Charlotte or of Lady Atkyns—not even in those which relate to the Queen's household.[1]

By what right did she enjoy this pension? By the same, probably, as so many of those favoured folk whose names fill the famous *red-books*—the books whose publication was to let loose the fury of the half of France upon the Court and the nobility, because they showed so plainly what treasures had been swallowed up in that abyss.

As we have said, the documents say nothing of the presence of Edward Atkyns at Lille—nothing, that is, with one exception, which, delicate as it is, cannot be passed over in silence. Had disunion already crept into the household? Had the pretty girl from Drury Lane found out too late that he to whom she had given her heart and her life was no longer entirely worthy of her gifts? Perhaps. At any rate, on March 20, 1791, the curate of the parish of St. Catherine at Lille baptized a male child, son "of Geneviève Leglen, native of Lille," whose father declared himself to be Edward Atkyns.[2] Henceforth this last individual disappears completely

[1] "To-day, October 28, 1790, in the Assembly of the General Council of the town of Lille . . . having heard the solicitor for the Commune, the Council proceeded to the continuation of the work of sur-taxation, and of taxation for the patriotic contribution . . . After which, it proceeded to the taxation of those able to contribute, having an income of more than 400 livres, as follows: —Parish of St. André . . . Rue Princesse, Milady Charlotte, because of her pension from the Royal Treasury . . . 300 livres . . ."—*Register No.* 1 *of the Deliberations of the Corporation of Lille. Archives of Lille.*

[2] "On the 20th March, 1791, I the undersigned, Curate of this Parish, baptized Antoine-Quentin Atkyns, born yesterday at 8 o'clock a.m., the illegitimate son of Edward, native of England, and of Geneviève Leglen, native of Lille;

from the scene in which we are interested; we shall merely learn that in 1794 Charlotte Atkyns was left a widow.

* * * * *

This somewhat lengthy digression was necessary in order to portray the lady whom Frotté was to designate as "That heroic and perfect being," and who was to take such a hold upon his life. How did they become acquainted? Probably very quickly, in one of the numerous drawing-rooms where Lille society congregated, at balls, at the theatre, in the concert-hall. The white tunic, with red facings, of the "Colonel-Generals" was eagerly welcomed everywhere. As one of his friends wrote to Frotté: "All the decent people in the town will be delighted to see the uniform, if you wear it there!" And one can imagine the long talks that the young officer had with his fair friend in that winter of '89—talks that circled always around one precious topic. Already full of Royalist feeling, Frotté grew enthusiastic for the Queen's cause, as he listened to the stories about Versailles, to the reminiscences of her kindness, her charm, her affectionate ways—of the thousand characteristics, so faithfully recounted by the friend who had come under her influence.[1]

attested by M. Warocquier, junior, registered *accoucheur*; verified by Derousseaux, clerk. God parents: Antoine-Quentin Derobois, and Therése Cordier, the undersigned,

Signed: "Derobois. Cordier,
"F. Dutheil, Curate."

Civil Registers. Parish of St. Catherine. Baptisms. Archives of Lille.

[1] "After having loved and served the unhappy Marie-Antoinette with a

One can divine all the advice, all the prudent counsels which were impressed upon our young lieutenant on his departure for Paris. Everything combined to make him eager to offer his services to the King and his belongings. We have seen that his efforts were unsuccessful; but the journey had not been entirely fruitless, since it had enabled him to bring back to his friend some news of the woman she so loved.

At the end of April the good folk of Lille were to bid farewell to the regiments which had caused them so much anxiety. While the Colonel-Generals were leaving the town by the Dunkirk Gate, the townspeople were watching the long columns of the Normandy *chasseurs*, the grenadiers of the Crown, and the Royal-Vaisseaux disappearing in different directions. What had been a partial failure in Lille was to break out again three months later, in another part of the kingdom, for the affray there was but the prelude to the revolt of the troops of Chateauvieux, at Nancy, and to many other risings. The army, in fact, was every day becoming more and more infected by the spirit of revolution, which crept in somehow, despite all discipline and all respect for the commanding officers. And the army was no untilled field; it was well prepared for

love that was almost idolatry."—*Mémoires manuscrits de Frotté;* La Sicotière, *Louis de Frotté*, etc., vol. i. p. 49. "O exquisite woman, let our Revolution end as it may, and even if you should have no part in it, you will still and for ever be to me the tender and devoted friend of Antoinette . . . and she to whom I hope some day to owe all my happiness."—Letter from de Frotté to Lady Atkyns, November, 1794. V. Delaporte, *Centenaire de la mort de Marie-Antoinette. Études religieuses*, October, 1893, p. 265.

the seed of the Revolution, which lost no time in taking root there.

This explains the discouragement which nearly all the officers felt. They were gentlemen of unflinching Royalist sympathies, but they perceived the fruitlessness of their efforts to re-establish discipline and to preserve their authority. Frotté was especially a prey to this feeling. We shall see that during his time at Dunkirk he found it impossible to conquer the hopeless lassitude that was growing on him. And yet Dunkirk is not far from Lille, and he knows that he has left behind him there a friend who will console and guide him. But his restless, questioning turn of mind makes it difficult for him to reconcile himself to accomplished facts. He can feel no sympathy for this Revolution, which now strides over France as with seven-leagued boots; he has, indeed, an instinctive repulsion for it. Frotté is an indefatigable scribbler, and in the long idle hours of his soldier-life he confides to paper all his fears and discouragements, while keeping up, at the same time, a regular correspondence, especially with his friends Vallière and Lamberville. It is a curious fact, already commented on by his biographer, M. de la Sicotière, that this intrepid and active officer, this flower of partisans, who spent three-fourths of his time in warfare, was yet the most prolific of writers and editors.

At Dunkirk he encountered among the officers of the regiment Viennois, which shared with his own the

garrison of the place, a very favourable disposition towards his plans. His Royalist zeal, fostered by his friendships, was to find an outlet. Already the National Assembly, eager to secure the army on its side, had issued a decree obliging the officers to take the oath not only to the King, but to the nation, and to whatever Constitution might be given to France. Nothing would induce our young gentleman to take such an oath as that. He never hesitated for a moment, and he succeeded in influencing several of his brother officers to think as he did. It was thus that he announced his decision to his father :—

"You already know, my dear father, that an oath is now exacted from us officers which disgusts every honourable and decent feeling that I have. I *could* not take it. I know you too well, father, not to be certain that you would have advised me to do just what I have done. And of course I did not depend only on my own poor judgment; I consulted most of my brother officers, and amongst those whom I esteem and love, I have not found *one* who thinks differently from myself. Our dear chief, too, M. de Théon, has been just the good fellow we always thought him." [1]

His friend Vallière, on hearing of his conduct and his intentions, wrote to him in enthusiastic admiration.

"I am truly delighted to hear" (he wrote some days before his arrival at Dunkirk) "that the regiment Viennois is almost of the same way of thinking as our own, so that we are sure to get on well with them. Then there *are* still some decent Frenchmen, and some subjects who are faithful to their one and lawful master! Alas! there are not many of them, and one can only groan when one thinks

[1] *National Archives*, D. XXIX. 36.

how many old and hitherto courageous legions . . . have stained irretrievably their ancient glory by this betrayal of their sovereign. Well, my dear fellow, we must hope that you will have some peace now to make up for all that you have been going through. Unfortunately, the immediate future does not seem likely to make us forget the past, or to promise us much happiness. If the scoundrels who are persecuting us, and ruining all the best things in Europe, take it into their heads to disband the Army (as one hears that they may), be sure to come here for refuge. Everything is still quiet here. . . . If their fury still pursues us, we will leave a country that has become hateful to us, and go to some foreign shore, where there will perhaps be found some kind folk to pity us and give us a home in their midst."[1]

The first hint at emigration! Frotté was already thinking of it; often he had envisaged the idea, but, before giving up all hope, he wanted to make one last effort.

The proximity of Lille enabled him to keep up unbroken relations, during the summer and winter of 1790, with the officers of the garrison he had just left. A plot had even been roughly sketched out with Lady Atkyns' assistance; but a thousand obstacles retarded from day to day any attempt at carrying it out, and once more our poor young soldier was totally discouraged. Despairing of success, disgusted with everything, he began to meditate escape from an existence which yielded him nothing but vexations, and, little by little, he ceased to brood seriously over the thought of suicide. He spoke of it openly and at length to his

[1] Unpublished letter to Frotté, May 7, 1790. *National Archives*, D. XXIX. 36.

friend Lamberville, in a strange composition which he called *My profession of faith*, and which has been almost miraculously preserved for us.[1] This confession is dated February 20, 1791. We should have given it in its entirety if it were not so long.[2] After a quasi-philosophical preamble—Frotté was addicted to that kind of thing—he described to his friend the miserable state of mind that he was in, with all his troubles and his griefs. In his opinion, a man who had fallen to such depths of ill-fortune could do but one thing, and that was, to give back to God the life which he had received from Him.

"My ideas about suicide are not" (he added) "the outcome of reading nor of example; they are the result of much reflection. I have long since familiarized myself with the idea of death; it no longer seems to me a sad thing, but rather a certain refuge from the troubles of life. . . . When I consider my own situation, and that of my country; when I think of what I have been, what I am, and what I may become, I can find no reason for valuing my own life. Moreover, I live in an age of crime, and it is my native land that is most subjected to its sway."

And Frotté went on to describe his past life to his friend, telling him of the way he had behaved hitherto, of the principles that had guided him, the hopes he had

[1] In the course of a search made at Dunkirk, in Frotté's dwelling-place (in circumstances of which we shall speak directly), the greater part of the articles seized were sent to the Committee of Research of the National Assembly, and it was in the Archives of this Committee that we discovered them. *National Archives*, D. XXIX. 36.

[2] The entire text will be found, published by M. A. Savine, in the *Nouvelle Revue Retrospective*, 1900, vol. xiii. pp. 217–233.

cherished in the brighter opening days of life; then the disappointments and the discomfitures that had overwhelmed him. The events he had lived through filled his mind with bitterness.

"I was born to be a good son and a good friend, a tender lover, a good soldier, a loyal subject—in a word, a decent fellow. But it breaks my heart to see how my compatriots have altered from kindly human beings to crazy ruffians, and have so accustomed themselves to slaughter, incendiarism, murder, and robbery, that they can never again be what they used to be. They have trampled every virtue under foot; they torture the hearts that still love them. . . . And my own profession, soldiering, is dishonoured; there is no glory about it now; my country is in a state of anarchy which appals me."

Very evident in these pages, written in a delicate cramped handwriting, is the continual bent towards self-analysis, towards minute details of feeling, towards a lofty and remote attitude, so markedly characteristic of Frotté's prose.

Many pages of the thick, ribbed paper, fastened together with a sky-blue ribbon, are filled with the same kind of reflections; then he suddenly breaks off altogether. Had he carried out his intention? Was that why he ceased to write? Not at all; for two months later, on April 10, there is a further confession, and the young soldier-philosopher begins by admitting that he has changed his mind; he defends himself on that point, and says that reflection has made him resolve to give up such gloomy views for himself. First of all, the fear of causing irreparable grief to his father had made

him pause (and yet their relations do not seem to have been so affectionate as of yore);[1] and then the desire to settle certain debts, considerable enough, that he would leave behind him.

"In fact," (he says) "since fresh troubles are overwhelming me, I have decided not to choose this moment for suicide. *I want to be quite calm, on the day that I set out on the Great Journey.* . . . The month of August saw my birth; it shall see my death. . . . But I don't want to play for effect. I try my best to seem just the same and to let no one guess what I am thinking of. . . . Then there's another reason for my going on with life. Since I was born a nobleman of France, I want to do my duty as one. . . . My sword may still be of some use to my King and to my friends; and since I must die, I want my death to benefit my family and my country. . . . I shall fasten up this confession, until the moment comes for me to die. If I have the good luck to fight, and die in the cause of honour, this, my dear Lamberville, will console you a little, for it will prove to you that death was a comfort to me. If disorder and dissolution are still reigning in France when August comes, if there has been no attempt to restore order—then I shall lose all hope, and all the reasons that I give you here will acquire full force. I shall not be able to hesitate. I shall then take up my pen again to add my last wishes, and my last farewell to my tenderest and dearest friend."

In spite of the melancholy tone of these pages,

[1] "You will have got a letter from me, explaining my apparent neglect; I wrote it the day before I went to Vaux, as well as I remember. Your father, who may have told you in a moment of irritation that you were a burden to him (it was only a letter after all), charged me then to send you his love. My sister has often spoken of you with the most sincere and tender affection. You would be most unkind if you did not write to her; she would have every reason to be angry with you; you would pain her, and that would pain your father . . . Dear fellow, don't, *don't* despair; you make me very uneasy by the way you write."—Letter from Lamberville to Frotté. April 5, 1791. *National Archives*, D. XXIX. 36.

their author had finally taken the advice which came to him from all directions, from people who loved him and were in his confidence, and who deeply grieved to hear of such a state of mind. There was none more loyal than that young Vallière of whom we have already spoken. At that time he was on leave in the Caux district. Frotté and he were very intimate, and Vallière knew every step that was made towards the carrying out of the pot which had been arranged simultaneously at Lille and at Dunkirk.

"I am very sorry," he wrote to his friend on November 13, 1790, "that the things you had to tell me could only be entrusted to me verbally. However, in the absence of further knowledge, there was nothing for me to do but simply come here,[1] where in any case I had business, and where I am now waiting quietly for the carrying out of the promises you made me, being, as you know, fully prepared. But, my dear fellow, I see with amazement that nothing as yet is happening to verify your forecast. Can you possibly have been prematurely sanguine, or has the plan miscarried? Perhaps it is merely a question of delay—Well! That is all right, and I hope that's what it is." [2]

Two months later, Vallière, who had doubtless gone to Paris to make inquiries, gave the following account of his journey :—

"I came back on the 3rd instant; and I shall have no difficulty in telling you of all my doings in Paris, for I did nothing in the least out-of-the-way. I lived there like a good quiet citizen, who confines himself to groaning (since he can do nothing better) over

[1] To Fours, in the Eure district, whence the letter comes.

[2] Letter from Vallière to Frotté, November 13, 1790. *National Archives*, D. XXIX. 36.

all the afflicting things he sees. I went from time to time to see our 'August Ones,' and they always put me in a furious temper."

Our "August Ones," as Vallière mockingly called them, were the members of the Constituent Assembly, and they were busied with the elaboration of that gigantic piece of work, the Constitution, which was to substitute the new order for the old traditions of France. Little by little the edifice was growing, built upon the ruins of the past. The sight of it filled with vexation and fury those who, like Frotté, deplored the fallen Royalty, the lost privileges, the dispossessed nobility, of the old order. For the rest, our chevalier, during his stay at Dunkirk, had frequent news about his fair friend at Lille. One day it would be a brother officer who would write, "I played cards yesterday with your fair lady, who looked as pretty as an angel, if angels ever *are* so pretty as we're told they are. She is going to have her portrait painted in oils by my favourite artist. I dare say she'll manage somehow to get a copy done in miniature for her Chevalier!"[1]

Or another time he would be told to come to a concert at which a place had been taken for him. . . . In a word, the time went on; and, kicking against the pricks, our young soldier awaited the moment when he might bring his plans to realization.

From month to month the spirit of insubordination

[1] Letter dated "Lille, December 14" (1790). The address runs: "To M. le Vicomte de Frotté, officer in the Regiment Colonel-General of infantry at Dunkirk." *National Archives*, D. XXIX. 36.

which had crept into the regiment with the events at Lille was gaining ground, and showing itself more and more overtly. The Garde Nationale recently formed at Dunkirk showed signs of it. At the head of this was an enterprising officer, of the "new order," named Emmery, who sought persistently to win the troops of the garrison over to his own way of thinking. But he found his match in the colonel of the regiment, the Chevalier de Théon, a staunch Royalist, who had no intention of pandering with the enemy. In a small place like Dunkirk, shut up between its ramparts—the barracks were in the middle of the town—it was physically impossible to prevent the soldiers from coming in contact with the townsfolk. M. de Théon and his officers (the majority of whom were on his side) had seen that very clearly; and suddenly, in the month of June, they resolved to try a bold stroke. Dunkirk was only five leagues from the Austrian frontier, which was some hours' distance from Brussels, where already the forces of resistance of the anti-revolutionary party were concentrating. They resolved on winning Belgium to their cause, on gaining over the troops, and on offering their services to the Prince's Army, which was forming beyond the frontier.

Before executing this scheme, Louis de Frotté is secretly sent to Brussels. He there sees the Marquis de la Queville, formerly a member of the Constitutional Assembly, and deputy of Riom, who has become agent for the Princes; but little attention is paid to Frotté's

proposals, and no promises of any kind are made. Frotté returns somewhat discouraged to Dunkirk.

Suddenly, like a clap of thunder, resounds the news which is to throw the kingdom into confusion for three days. During the night of June 20–21 the Royal Family have escaped from the Tuileries, despite Lafayette's guards, and the berlin which holds them is driving rapidly towards the frontier. Directly the exploit is known messengers set off in all directions, despatched by the National Assembly; they take chiefly the northerly roads, where everything points to the probable finding of the fugitives. The authorities at Dunkirk, in their turn, receive despatches from Paris, and take extra precautions.

This was quite enough to let loose the thunderstorm that was gathering in the garrison.

On June 23, at 11 a.m., the grenadiers of the Colonel-General, who had been skilfully worked upon by some of the agitators, signed the following protestation, and refused to follow their officers. They actually succeeded in raising the whole garrison.

"When the Commonwealth is in danger" (so one may read in their manifest), "when the enemies of our blessed revolution raise an audacious resistance, when a cherished King abandons his people and flies to his enemies' side—the duty of all true Frenchmen is to unite, to join forces! There should be but one cry—Liberty! Resolute to conquer, we should confront our enemies with a body of men who are ready to dare all at the lightest sign, and to wash off with the blood of traitors the insult done to a free people!"[1]

[1] *Municipal Archives of Dunkirk*, p. 60.

Then came the announcement of a federative compact, to which were summoned the representatives of the municipality, the National Guards, and the Club of the Friends of the Constitution.

And here arises a question. Were Frotté and his friends aware of the King's intentions? It is difficult to be sure; but, hasty as their decision apparently was, it had really been fixed for some time, as is clearly shown by the following lines written by Frotté to his father at that very time:

"It was arranged this morning that I am to go to Furnes with several of my comrades, on Saturday; and there, dear father, I shall await your wise decision as to whether I shall return home to you or go to join the Prince de Condé."

Furnes is a small village about fifteen kilometres from Dunkirk. It was then on Austrian territory, and had been chosen as the rendezvous for the fugitive officers.

On Friday, June 24, in the afternoon, each of these "gentlemen" received a secret message from Colonel de Théon, giving them his instructions.

"Set out for Furnes" (he told them) "immediately on reading this; make no preparations; just take whatever money you may have, and do not worry about your other possessions; they will be seen to later. I invoke the aid of Heaven upon our enterprise—may we all meet that same night at Furnes.

"Your friend for life,

"THÉON."

At the same time, he made to his soldiers a last

supreme appeal, conjuring them to respond to it, and to come back to the path of duty.

"Soldiers, your King was put in irons and the news of his capture is false. Surely it is impossible that the leading regiment should fail to join him, to form his bodyguard, and to shield him from the knives of the assassins who have, of course, been sent after him. We, who bear the ensign of the General of Infantry, shall find all good Frenchmen and true patriots . . . rallying round our colours. Believe me, when that happens, the Royalist party, which is very numerous, will declare itself, and when it sees that it can do so without endangering its sovereign's life, will flaunt the white cockade. Let us, too, wear this as our symbol of France—not the colours of a regicide and factious prince, the scandal of his country and the author of all the evils which are now rending it. Your officers, your real friends, await you at Furnes, where the august brother of your Queen has given orders (as on all the frontiers) that the faithful servants of the unhappy Louis XVI. are to be received, when they arrive there on his service. . . .

"Come there, then—meet there, renew your early oath of fidelity to the most upright of kings. But as for such as you as are infected with the maxims of the Club, such of you as think you are patriots, because you have neither faith, nor law, nor honour—such as these had better stay in their dens. Only those are adjured to come whose hearts still tell them they are Frenchmen. Long live the King!"[1]

But it was too late. The hour for such an appeal had gone by.

Towards five o'clock on the evening of the same day, just as the roll-call was ending in the barracks, the officers of the Colonel-Generals (and several brother-soldiers from the Viennois regiment) left the town in

[1] *Municipal Archives of Dunkirk*, p. 60.

groups of three. They took with them the white *cornette* of the infantry, and the flags of their regiments, which they had torn from the handles. They had not been able to make up their minds to leave their colours behind. When they had passed the ramparts some of them went to the right over the downs which run along the coast, and which the fugitives intended to use as their path to the frontier ; the others struck into the open country, and crossed the canal ; as soon as they were out of sight, however, they rejoined the first lot. At eight o'clock that evening the boatmen on the Furnes ferry took over two more, and these were MM. d'Averton and De La Motte.

Now, at that hour, the Royal berlin and its freight had just left la Ferti-sous-Jouarre, on the high-road to Châlons, and was proceeding slowly through the dust, followed and accompanied by a noisy, drunken crowd, towards Meaux. It was caught at Varennes ; and the fugitives, foiled in their attempt, went back to Paris, from that day forth to be their prison.

The news of their capture, so unluckily contradicted by de Théon in his manifesto, might possibly have altered the plans of the officers from Dunkirk. But we hardly think so. Their arrangements had long since been made, and the Varennes episode gave them, suddenly, an opportunity to carry them out. But imagine their discomfiture when they heard of the dramatic ending of the attempt.

It was again Frotté who had been sent to Brussels,

to carry to his King the standard of the regiment.

He arrived there at night, met the Marquis de la Queville, and learnt the truth from him. Instead of the King, it was the King's brother, the Comte de Provence, whom Frotté found there; for *Monsieur*, more fortunate than the others, had reached the frontier without any trouble.

Thus the affair had partly failed. There was nothing for the fugitive officers to do but go and join the ever-increasing tribe of *émigrés* who lined the frontier. They withdrew to Ath, in Hainault, the rendezvous of many exiles.[1]

What happened at Dunkirk when their absence was discovered? On the 25th, at 5 a.m., a "good patriot," M. François, awoke the commandant of the Garde Nationale, M. Emmery, and presented to him the manifesto of the "Sieur de Théon." The alarm spread instantly through the town; it was with indignation that people heard the news of the desertion of the officers, who had even been so infamous as to carry off the regimental colours. The soldiers chose new officers, and held a meeting on the parade-ground. M. Emmery came to them, and tried to pacify them by offering them one of the colours of the Garde Nationale, to replace those which had been filched from them. He

[1] It was from that place that they addressed, on July 3, 1791, a petition for the restoration of their effects left in the garrison, and also asked for the liberation of their regimental chaplain, whom the Corporation had had arrested, on the charge of having aided the plot.—*Archives of Dunkirk*, p. 60.

was enthusiastically received. Hopes rose high once more. Grenadiers and *gardes nationaux* met in warmest comradeship; and the tricolour was sent for, and presented to the regiment, which was drawn up in battle-array. Vengeance was vowed against traitors and enemies of the Republic. "From that moment there reigned boundless confidence, perfect joy, and assured tranquillity."

But this was not all. It had to be ascertained whether the runaways had left anything behind them. The Justice of the Peace for the Quartier-du-Midi, Pierre Taverne, betook himself to the officers' quarters in the barracks. On the first storey, under the landing, there was a door which led into the room that was known to have been Frotté's. That door was sealed, as were those of all his brother-officers' rooms. Five days later the seals were broken. The inspection brought nothing noteworthy to light. In Frotté's room they found two helmets, a cross-belt, and a gorget. The others were still less exciting; a cap and two portmanteaus, "containing a little music," were found in M. Derampan's quarters; a cap and a double-barrelled gun in M. Metayer's; a trunk in M. de Dreuille's; a cap and a cross-belt in M. Demingin's, and so on. The Royal tent contained a cabriolet belonging to M. de Théon; the stables, "near the fuel-stores," yielded another old cabriolet, the property of M. de Frotté. Everything was confiscated, and taken to the Municipality.

The only thing which interested the authorities was

a trunk full of papers, which had been seized in Frotté's quarters. It was examined, but no proofs were found of the suspected conspiracy. It was then tied up, sealed, and sent to the Research Committee of the National Assembly, with a curt account of the occurrence. On the evening of June 28 this was read to the Deputies of the Assembly, some of whom were very angry on hearing the defiant appeal of de Théon to his soldiers.[1]

* * * * *

Was Lady Atkyns at Lille to hear the issue of the adventure? She had more probably left France by that time, terrified by all that was going on around her, and the more so that she was alone, for her friends on every side had left her.

While her lover was languishing among the *émigrés* (made miserable by their inaction and selfishness) she regained her old home at Ketteringham, uneasy in her mind, but not despairing. She saw plainly what her own path was to be; for her love for the Queen and the Queen's people was henceforth to rule her life, and carry her on from one devoted action to another.

[1] *Moniteur*, June 30, 1791.

CHAPTER II

LONDON

WHILE the Court and the Army of the *émigrés* were being organized at Coblentz and Worms, under the direction of Monsieur, Comte de Provence, of the Comte d'Artois, and of the Prince de Condé, and while rivalry and jealousies and a thousand other causes of dissension were already cropping up in that environment (so often and always so unfavourably depicted), other troops of similar fugitives were leaving the eastern coast and, embarking from the Channel port, or stopping first on the islands of Jersey and Guernsey, were gradually arriving on English soil, there to find an assured refuge. In the last months of 1791, and in the beginning of 1792, they came thither in thousands. Bretons, Normans, nobles, ecclesiastics, journalists, young officers, fleeing persecution, pillage, arbitrary arrests, came hastening to enjoy the hospitality of Great Britain.

London was soon full of refugees; but the majority of these unfortunate folk, despite their illustrious names, were in a state almost of destitution.

The more prosperous ones, those who had been able to rescue something from the shipwreck, succeeded in finding homes in the suburbs—modest boarding-houses, or little cottages—where they installed their families. But these were the exceptions; and in every street French gentlefolk were to be met with who had no property but what they carried on their backs. Many of them knew no English; and still overwhelmed by the dangers they had passed through, and thus suddenly plunged into strange surroundings, without resources, without even a handicraft, went wandering despairingly about the city, in search of bread.

They were not allowed to starve. Most admirably did English charity accept this influx of new inhabitants.

The last years of the reign of Louis XVI., together with the War of Independence in the United States, had markedly chilled the relations between France and her neighbours across the Channel. Revolutionary ideas from the frontiers had at first met with some sympathy amongst this favoured people, who had been in the enjoyment of true liberty for a century. But when English folk came to know of the excess which these ideas had resulted in, of the anarchy which had been let loose in all directions, of the violence which was the order of the day—their distrust, indignation, and horror effaced that earlier sympathy.

King George III., supported by his Minister, Pitt, felt from that time an aversion which grew to implacable

hatred for anything even remotely connected with the French Revolution.[1]

On the other hand, he (and, indeed, almost the whole of the aristocracy) welcomed the refugees, and encouraged their sojourn in the kingdom—glad, no doubt, of the opportunity for displaying his opinion of the new ideas, by helping on the exodus of a part of the inhabitants of France, an exodus which would contribute to the weakening of that country.

Whatever the reason may have been, there is abundant evidence of the inexhaustible charity that the newcomers met with in English society. Benevolent committees were formed, presided over by dukes and duchesses, marquises and marchionesses.[2] When the first necessities of the poor creatures had been provided for by the establishment of cheap restaurants, hotels, and bazaars, their friends sought out occupations for them, so that they might be in a position to earn their own livelihood. The clergy were the first to profit by this solicitude. The decree of August 26, 1792, ordaining the deportation of non-juring priests, had driven them in a body from the continent. It was well for those who were thus driven out, for of their comrades who remained the most part were in the end persecuted and entrapped. The greater number chose England for their place of refuge. They came thither in crowds—so much so that, at the Terror,

[1] Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la Revolution Française*, vol. ii. p. 382.

[2] Forneron, *Histoire Générale des Émigrés*, Paris, 1884, vol. ii. p. 50.

there were as many as 8000.[1] Many were Bretons. One of them, Carron, came to London preceded by a reputation for holiness. He had founded at Rennes a cotton-cloth factory which gave employment to more than 2000 poor people. The famous Decree of August 26 affected him, and thus forced him to abandon his enterprise. He went to Jersey, and recommenced his work there; but left the island at the end of some time, and came to settle in England. There he set up an alms-house for his destitute coreligionists, and acted the part of a sort of Providence to them. Nor was he the only one they had.

Jean-François de la Marche, Bishop of Saint-Pol-de-Léon, had, ever since the early months of 1791, incurred the wrath and fury of the Attorney-General of the department of Finisterre. This prelate, who was profoundly loved in his diocese, refused to give up his bishopric, which had recently been suppressed by the National Assembly. He was accused of fomenting agitation in the department, and of inciting the curés to resistance. He was violently denounced at the National Assembly, and treated as a disturber of the public peace. Summoned to Paris to exculpate himself, together with his colleagues, the Bishops of Tréguier and Morbihan, he took no notice of the order, and to

[1] Abbé de Lubersac, *Journal historique et réligieux, de l'émigration et déportation du clergé de France en Angleterre*, dedicated to His Majesty the King of England, London, 1802, 8vo, p. 12. (The author styles himself: Vicar-General of Narbonne, Abbé of Noirlac and Royal Prior of St.-Martin de Brivé, French *émigré*.)

escape arrest, which threatened him, and for which he was being pursued by the Cavalry Police, he had but one resource—to get right away from Brittany. He came to London in the first batch of *émigrés*. From the outset he had but one idea: to look after his companions in misfortune, to help them in their need, to find employment for them. To this end he served as intermediary between the Government and the priests, pleading the cause of these latter, and keeping registers of the names and qualifications of all with whom he became concerned.

In spite of so many reasons for melancholy, one thing that struck the English people was the extraordinary gaiety of nature displayed by most of the *émigrés* so soon as they found themselves in security. These good folk, many of whom landed half-starved, exhausted and ragged, were somehow not entirely disheartened, and, indeed, on commencing life afresh, displayed an extraordinary spirit and cheerfulness. Very quickly, even in the alien country, they formed into circles of friends who saw each other every day,[1] eager to exchange impressions, reminiscences, and hopes, to get news from the Homeland and from those members of their families who had not been able to leave it; they felt keenly the need of a common existence, in which they could cheer and encourage one another. And what a kindly grace they showed, what a brave spirit, amid all the little disagreeables of

[1] Count d'Haussonville, *Souvenirs et Mélanges*, Paris, 1878, 8vo.

a way of life so different from that of the good old days! At the dinners which they gave one another, each would bring his own dish. "'Twas made," says the Count d'Haussonville, "into a little attention to the visitors of the house for a man to take a taper from his pocket, and put it, lighted, on the chimney-piece!" In the daytime the men-folk gave lessons or worked as secretaries (or bookbinders, like the Count de Caumont, for instance). The women did needlework, which the English ladies, their patronesses, busied themselves in selling at bazaars.[1]

But side by side with the gentlemen who took their exile so patiently and philosophically, there was a whole group of *émigrés* who longed to play a less passive part. These were the men and women who had fled from France and brought their illusions with them—those inconceivable illusions which mistook so entirely the true character, importance, and extent of the Revolution, and could still, therefore, cherish the hope of some kind of revenge. Totally misunderstanding the feelings of the English Government, unable to comprehend the line taken by Pitt and his Cabinet, and blinded by their stubborn hatred, these men and women actually imagined that, to their importunate appeals, Great Britain could respond by furnishing them with arms, soldiers, and money to

[1] Gauthier de Brecy, *Mémoires véridiques et ingenus de la vie privée, morale et politique d'un homme de bien*, written by himself in the eighty-first year of his age, Paris, 1834, 8vo, p. 286.

equip a fleet, form an army, and go back to France as the avengers of the "hideous Revolution." They assailed the Minister with offers, counsels, and schemes —for the most part quite impracticable; were refused, but still cherished their delusion. Some of them were honest, but many were of that class of adventurer with which the Emigration was swarming, and which was the thorn in the side of all the anti-revolutionary agencies. The well-warned Government could give them but one reception. Pitt had not the least idea of listening to the proposals of these gentry and personally intervening in favour of the Royalists of France.[1]

England at that time was deeply concerned with Indian affairs; and, in spite of the lively sympathy inspired by the grievous situation of the Royal Family at the Tuileries, she could not dream of departing, at any rate just then, from an attitude of benevolent neutrality.

In her manor-house of Ketteringham, where she spent the winter of 1791–92, Lady Atkyns was not forgetful of her French friends. The *Gazette* brought her week by week news of the events in Paris, of the troubles in the provinces, of the deliberations of the National Assembly. But what she looked for first of all was intelligence about the inhabitants of the Tuileries, whose agitated and anguished lives she anxiously followed. Separation redoubled her sympathetic adoration of the lady whom she had seen and worshipped at Versailles. Thus we can imagine what her grief must

[1] Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, vol. iii. pp. 288, 289.

have been on hearing the details of that 20th of June—the invaded palace, the interminable line of the people defiling before the King, the attitude of Marie-Antoinette, protecting her son against the ferocious curiosity of the petitioners, and surrounded only by a few faithful allies who made a rampart for her with their bodies. Lady Atkyns' heart had failed her as she read of all this. The day of the Tenth of August, the massacre of the Swiss Guards, the flight of the King and Queen, their transfer to the Temple Prison, and incarceration there—these things redoubled her anguish. She went frequently to London for information, and returned, sad and anxious, to her dear Norfolk home, made miserable by her impotence to do anything that might save the Queen.

With her great love for the Royalist cause, she naturally associated herself warmly with the benevolent efforts of English society to help the *émigrés*. She knew many of the names, and when she heard talk of D'Harcourts, Beauvaus, Veracs, Fitz-Jameses, Mortemarts, all the life at Versailles must have come back to her—the Queen's "set," the receptions, the festivities.

It was during one of her visits to London that she made the acquaintance of a man whom she had long wished to know, and whose articles she always eagerly read—I allude to Jean-Gabriel Peltier, the editor of the *Acts of the Apostles*, that extravagantly Royalist sheet which had such an immense vogue in a certain circle

since the days of '89. Peltier was born near Angers;[1] his real name was Dudoyer—of a business family. After an adventurous youth, and a sojourn at Saint-Domingo (where, it seems, he did not lead a blameless life), he came to Paris at the beginning of the Revolution. According to a police report of doubtful authenticity, he flung himself heart and soul into the revolutionary cause, speechifying side by side with Camille Desmoulins at the Palais-Royal, flaunting one of the first rebel flags, and marching to the Taking of the Bastille. Then, all of a sudden, he turns his coat, becomes a blazing Royalist, and founds a newspaper with the curious title of *The Acts of the Apostles.* For the space of two years he then attacks violently, recklessly, everything and everybody so mistaken as not to agree with his own ideas. The style of the paper is sarcastic, and frequently licentious. The author has been found fault with for his insults and his invectives; his sheet has been styled "infamous;" but when we remember the prevailing tone of the Press at that time, and the condition of the public mind, is it not only fair to grant some indulgence to the quartette—Peltier, Rivarol, Champcnetz, and Sulau — who took in hand so ardently and enthusiastically the interests of the King?

On August 10, when he had dismissed the other editors of the *Acts of the Apostles*, and stopped the

[1] On October 21, 1765, at Gonnord, Maine-et-Loire, *Canton* of Touarcé, *arrondissement* of Angers.

PELTIER.

Peltier

JEAN-GABRIEL PELTIER, 1765–1825.

(*After an engraving in the British Museum.*)

[*To face page* 44.

publication of the paper, Peltier, feeling no longer safe in Paris, took the step of emigrating. He came to London with the idea of founding a new periodical, which was to be called *The Political Correspondence of the True Friends of the King.*

Tall and thin, with powdered hair, and a lofty bald forehead, always inveighing fervently against something or other (so Chateaubriand depicts him), Peltier answered in some degree to the traditional type of journalist in those days, when "journalist" meant at once gazetteer, lampoonist, and pamphleteer. Judging by his writings alone, one can understand the small confidence that his English acquaintances placed in him; but under his somewhat eccentric mode of expression Peltier concealed a very real and deep devotion to the King's cause.

His acquaintance with Lady Atkyns dates from November, 1792. This lady spent a great part of her long leisurely days in the country in reading. She was told of the recent publications by Peltier; she had known only of some of these, and instantly off she writes to the journalist, asking him for the first numbers of the book which he is bringing out. Needless to say, her desire is at once gratified.[1] She devours the writings of the author of *The Acts of the Apostles*; she joins in his anger, shares his admirations, and a regular correspondence begins between these two persons, drawn

[1] Letter from Peltier to Lady Atkyns, dated from London, November 15, 1792.—*Unpublished Papers of Lady Atkyns.*

together as they were by a common sympathy for the Royal Family of France.

When they have exchanged reminiscences of past days, they come to consider the present. Lady Atkyns has been fretting for weeks over her inaction. A thousand thoughts disturb her, all converging towards the same idea: can she do anything to save the King and the Queen? Does she not possess a considerable fortune, and who is to prevent her from arranging to devote a part of it to the realization of her dream? And in truth this woman, who was a foreigner, who was bound by no real tie of any kind to the inmates of the Tuileries, *was* actually to attempt, through the strength alone of her love and her heroic devotion, what no one had yet succeeded in. A superhuman energy sustained her; one thought only was henceforth to rule her life, and not once did she falter, nor doubt, nor lose the ardour of her feeling.

To whom better could she address herself than to him who seemed to understand her so well? Peltier was told of her intentions. Their letters grew more frequent, their project begins to take shape.

"In truth, madame" (Peltier writes), "the more I read you, the more your zeal astonishes and moves me. You are more intrepid and more ardent than any Frenchman, even among those who are most attached to their King. But have you reflected upon the dozen doors, the dozen wickets and tickets that must be arranged for, before you can get into Court? I know that to tell you of difficulties is but to inflame your desire to overcome them; moreover, I do not doubt that your new scheme has taken all these difficulties into account."

When this plan had been modified and approved by Peltier, it stood thus : First of all, to find two safe correspondents in Paris, to whom letters and a statement of the scheme could be sent. And these two men were there, ready to hand—both whole-heartedly Royalists, both tried men. They were MM. Goguelat and Gougenot. The first, who was M. de Bouillé's aide-de-camp, had taken an active part in the Varennes affair, but he had not shown the greatest discretion, for all he had succeeded in doing was to get wounded. The second, who was the King's steward, had been in the secret of the flight. The plotters also meant to get into relations with the two physicians of Louis XVI., MM. Lemonnier and Vicq d'Azyr, who would give most valuable aid in the passing of notes into the Temple Prison, for and to the prisoners. But the great difficulty would be the King. How was *he* to be brought to their way of thinking ? Would he consent to listen to the proposals they were to transmit to him ? "That" (declares Peltier) "is what no one can be sure of, considering the state of prostration that he must be in after such terrible and incessant misfortunes."

Nor was this all. They had to find an intelligent and nimble agent, who could cross from England to France once, twice, many times if necessary ; who could have interviews with the persons indicated, and, above all, who could manage to procure detailed plans of the Temple Prison. An ordinary courier would not do. Well, it just happened that Peltier *had* relations with

a foreign nobleman, Hungarian by birth, whom he had come to know by chance, and who even helped him with his publications. He had, in fact, made this gentleman his collaborator. His name was d'Auerweck, and as he happened to be in France at that very moment, he could easily betake himself to Paris, and, in Peltier's opinion, would fill most admirably the delicate post with which he was to be entrusted.

Finally, throughout the plot, they were to make use in correspondence of a "sympathetic" ink, "which could only be read when held near the fire."

Here is the cost of the first preparations:—

	£	s.	d.
Journey to Paris by diligence	5	5	0
Return	5	5	0
Travelling expenses, etc. (at least) ...	6	6	0
Expenses at Paris for, say fifteen days ...	3	3	0
Tips to servants	6	6	0
	26	5	0

That is a sum of about 650 francs. Needless to say, the journalist *émigré*, like most of his compatriots, was entirely unable to give the smallest contribution to the expenses of the enterprise; but Lady Atkyns was there, ready for any sacrifice; they were to apply to her for everything necessary.

In conclusion, Peltier pointed out again the difficulties of a general escape.

"Above all, madame, do not forget that I foresee a great difficulty in bringing out the three principal members of the family. They

may possibly think themselves safer in the Temple than on the high-road. The personal risk which you are running makes me shudder. Your courage is worthy of the admiration of all Europe, and if any harm comes to you, as the result of so heroic an enterprise, I shall be among those who will deplore it most."

Three days later another letter came to Kettering-ham, telling of the good progress of the attempt. Peltier was going to despatch his servant to Amiens, whither the Baron d'Auerweck had gone, and the latter would in this way receive his instructions.

But there was no time to lose. The storm was muttering in Paris. Pressed by the "Forward" groups, frightened by the redoubled insurrections, the Convention had been compelled to proceed to the trial of the King. "Circumstances are becoming so urgent," wrote Peltier, "that we have not a moment to lose; they talk of trying the King so as to calm down the insurrections that are breaking out everywhere."

And, indeed, it was necessary to make haste. After the discovery of the papers in the famous "Iron Press" in the Tuileries, the Convention had agreed that the King should appear before them. On December 10 Robert Lindet made his report, and the next day Barbaroux presented "the deed enunciating the crimes of Louis Capet." On the same day the King appeared before the bar of the Convention, there to answer the thirty-one questions which were put to him.

Like lightning, this terrifying news crossed the Channel, and reached London in a few hours. Peltier's

rooms filled with horrified people, "who met there all day long to weep and despair."

"I cannot conceal from you, madame," wrote Peltier that evening to his friend, "that the danger to the Royal Family is very great at this moment. Truly I cannot hope that they will still be alive at the end of the fortnight. It is heartrending. You will have seen the English papers. You will have read Robespierre's abominable speech, and how it was applauded by the Tribunes; and, above all, you will have seen about these new documents, which have been twisted into a crime of the unhappy King's because people *will not* see that all the steps he took to regain his authority were taken for the good of his people, and that his sole object was to save them by force if necessary from the evils which are destroying them, now that they no longer have a King."

But even yet all was not lost. If they arrived too late to save the King, there was still the Dauphin, "to whom every one should look." In a few days the Baron d'Auerweck would be in Paris, and they would know exactly how much they might still hope for.

"A Transylvanian nobleman," was the description Peltier had given when writing about this new collaborator.[1] The epithet, although most attractive—suggestive as it was of that land of great forests all wildness and mystery—was not perfectly exact. The family of Auerweck, though perhaps of Hungarian origin, had established itself at Vienna, where the father

[1] "In case of our not being able to find M. Goguelat, I have my eye upon a very useful man whom I have known for many years, and who was, indeed, a collaborator in some of my political works—he is the Baron d'Auerweck, a Transylvanian nobleman, a Royalist like ourselves, of firm character, and very clever."—Letter from Peltier, Dec. 3, 1792.

of our Baron died as a captain in the Austrian service. His wife—whose maiden-name had been Scheltheim—had borne him four children, two boys and two girls. The two latter were married and settled in Austria. The elder son, who was born at Vienna about 1766, was named Louis (Aloys) Gonzago; he added to his family name that of an estate, Steilenfels, and the title of Baron—so that the whole thing, when given out with the proper magniloquence, was quite effective.

"By the particular favour of Marie-Thérèse," Louis d'Auerweck entered very young the Military Academy of Neustadt, near Vienna. On leaving it, he spent four years in a Hungarian regiment, the "Renfosary;" but garrison-life bored him, and, independent and ambitious, he longed to shake off the yoke of militarism which hampered him in his schemes.

Unfortunately, we have only his own record of his younger days,[1] and it is matter for regret that no more trustworthy information is to be had. For very curious and interesting is the life of this adventurer, who was undeniably intelligent and clever, but who was also an intriguer and a braggart; who knew French well, and therefore posed as a finished diplomatist, with pretentions to philosophy and literature; who, in a word, was filled with a sense of his own importance,

[1] In two autobiographical memoirs, one written at Hamburg, June, 1796, and annexed to a despatch from the French Minister there, Reinhard (*Archives of the Foreign Office*, Hamburg, v. 109, folio 367). The other was written at Paris, July 25, 1807 (*National Archives*, F. 6445). Both naturally aim at presenting the author in the most favourable light.

and fatally addicted to "playing to the gallery." Some quotations from his writings will give a better idea of him than any description.

Hardly has he left Austria—his reason for doing so we shall learn from himself—than he sets off on a sort of educational tour, beginning at Constantinople and going on to the Mediterranean. He visits, one after the other, Greece, Malta, Sicily, Spain, the South of France; he even goes so far as Chambéry and Lyons. An opportunity turns up, and off he sets for Paris.

"The innovations made by Joseph II., such as the introduction of the Register and military conscription, caused him to be employed as an engineer, and as a member of the administrative body formed to carry out these different schemes. His independent character instantly displayed itself in a sphere where it was no longer repressed by that duty of blind obedience which is the very being of the Army. He could now venture to have an opinion and to express it, he could criticise the root-idea on the form of an enterprise by displaying its difficulties or foretelling its non-success (forecasts, moreover, which time has proved to be sound); he could speak of the violation of national justice, of a legitimate resistance to arbitrary power. His experiences under fire, his activity, and his oratorical talent gave him a position among the malcontents which he had not sought in any way. In consequence, he ventured on something more than mere speaking and writing. His travels, his qualities, his independent and decided character have won for him friendships and acquaintanceships which have given him the advantage of never finding himself out of place in any important centre of affairs. To this he owes that knowledge of the hereditary prejudices and the sudden caprices of Cabinets, which when joined to an equal knowledge of the character of their chiefs, ministers, constitutes *diplomacy*. To assiduous study he attributes that

understanding of the true interests of Governments, and of their respective powers, which constitutes *international politics*."

Such was the personage to whom Lady Atkyns and Peltier entrusted their enterprise. If they looked after him carefully, granted him only a limited discretion, and took the fullest advantage of his intelligence and his talents, they would probably make something of the Hungarian nobleman. This was not the Baron's first visit to Paris; he knew the capital well. He had come there at the beginning of the Revolution, in 1789, and, if we are to believe his own account, "he saw the results of all these horrors, but was merely laughed at. If all mankind could have been armed against the Revolution, he would have armed them!" Moreover, he had kept up many connections in Paris. By his own account, the Austrian Minister, Thugut, whom he had formerly met at Naples, had taken him into his confidence. In short, his friends in London could not have made a better choice, as he wrote from Amiens to Peltier on the receipt of his proposal.

"I start for Paris at full speed at five o'clock to-morrow morning. I need not tell you that from this moment I shall devote myself to the business of which you have spoken to me, nor need I add that this devotion is entirely disinterested. If I had not already proved those two things to you, I should not be the man you require. But, just because I feel that I *have* the head and the heart necessary for your enterprise, I tell you frankly that it can only be carried out at great expense. The business of getting information—which is only a preparatory measure—is made difficult, if not impossible, unless a considerable sum of money can be spent. . . . I believe

myself authorized to speak to you in this way, because I have the advantage—rare enough amongst men—of being above suspicion with regard to my own interests."[1]

On Wednesday, December 19, d'Auerweck entered Paris, and put up at a hotel in the Rue Coq-Héron, where he gave his name as Scheltheim. He instantly set to work to get the letters he had brought with him delivered at their addresses, and to make certain of the co-operation which was essential to him. But there was a disappointment in store; Goguelat, upon whom so much depended, was away from Paris, and, as it happened, in London. It was necessary to act without him, and this was no easy matter. The excitement caused by the trial of the King enforced upon the plotters a redoubled caution. D'Auerweck got uneasy when he found no letters coming from Peltier in answer to his own. He went more frequently to Versailles, and to Saint-Germain, and kept on begging for funds. On December 25, the day before M. de Sèze was to present the King's defence to the Convention, d'Auerweck wrote to Peltier—

"The persons (you know whom I mean) do not care to arrive here before Thursday, which is very natural, for there is all sorts of talk as to what may happen to-morrow. . . . You promised me to write by each post; but there can be no doubt that you forgot me on Tuesday, the 18th, for otherwise I must have had your letters by this time. One thing I cannot tell you too often: it is that I

[1] Letter from Baron d'Auerweck, December 17, 1792. It is addressed to Peltier under the name of Jonathan Williams.—*Unpublished Papers of Lady Atkyns.*

consider it essential to take to you in person any documents that I may be able to procure." [1]

The documents in question were those which Peltier had alluded to, some days before, in a letter to Lady Atkyns: "I heard to-day that there was some one in Paris who had all the plans that you want in the greatest detail;" [2] and at the end of the month he returned to the subject—

"I am expecting, too, a most exact plan of the Temple Prison, taken in November; and not only of the Temple, but also of the caves that lie under the tower—caves that are not generally known of, and which were used from time immemorial for the burial of the ancient Templars. I know a place where the wall is only eighteen inches thick, and debouches on the next street."

It becomes evident that Peltier and Lady Atkyns, almost abandoning any hope of saving the King, whose situation appeared to them to be desperate, now brought all their efforts to bear upon the other prisoners of the Temple.

"If His Majesty persists in his reluctance to be rescued from prison, at least we may still save his poor son from the assassins' knives. A well-informed man told me, the day before yesterday, when we were talking of this deplorable business, that people were to be found in Paris ready, for a little money, to carry off the Dauphin. They would bring him out of the Temple in a basket, or else disguised in some way. . . . I believe that to save the son is to save the father also. For, after all, this poor child cannot be made the pretext for any sort of trial, and as the Crown belongs to him

[1] Letter from d'Auerweck to Peltier, Paris, Hotel Coq-Héron, No. 16 December 25, 1792.—*Unpublished Papers of Lady Atkyns.*

[2] Letter from Peltier to Lady Atkyns, London, December 7, 1792.—*Ibid.*

by law on his father's death, I believe that they would keep the latter alive, if it were only to checkmate those who would rally round the Dauphin. But, in the interval, things may have time to alter, and circumstances may at last bring about a happy change in this disastrous state of things."

The month of December went by in this painful state of suspense. What anxiety must have fretted the heart of the poor lady, as she daily followed in the *Gazette* the course of the Royal Trial! On New Year's Day she had some further words of encouragement from her friend in London. All was not lost; Louis XVI. could still reckon, even in the heart of Paris, upon many brave fellows who would not desert him; and besides, what about the fatal consequences that would follow on the crime of regicide? The Members of Convention would never dare—never . . .

Fifteen days later comes another missive; and this time but little hope is left. The "Little Baron"—this was what they called d'Auerweck—was not being idle. Peltier had made an opportunity for him of seeing De Sèze, the King's counsel.

"This latter ought to know for certain whether the King does or does not intend to await his sentence or to expose himself to the hazards of another flight; but there seems to be very little chance of his consenting to it. Whatever happens" (added Peltier), "your desires and your efforts, madam, will not be wasted, either for yourself or for history. I possess, in your correspondence, a monument of courage and devotion which will endure longer than London Bridge. . . . A trusty messenger who starts to-morrow for Paris affords me a means of opening my mind to De Sèze for the third time."

But it was too late. On January 15 the nominal appeal upon the thirty-three questions presented to the Members of Convention had been commenced; two days later the capital sentence was voted by a majority of fifty-three.

On January 21, at the hour when the guillotine had just done its work, the following laconic note reached Ketteringham to say that all was over:—

"My honoured friend, all we can do now is to weep. The crime is consummated. Judgment of death was pronounced on Thursday evening. D'Orleans voted for it, and he is to be made Protector. We have nothing now to look forward to but revenge; and our revenge shall be terrible."

Think of the look that must have fallen upon that date, "January 21!" The postmark of the letter still shows it quite clearly, on the yellowed sheet.

Could they possibly have succeeded if the King *had* listened favourably to their proposal? It is difficult to say. But it is certainly a fact, that during the last six months of 1792 there had been on the water, near Dieppe, a cruising vessel which kept up a constant communication with the English coast. The truth was that, finding the Rouen route too frequented, Peltier had judged the Dieppe one to be infinitely preferable. It was that way that the fish merchants came to Paris. If they had succeeded in getting the King outside the Temple gates it is probable that his escape would have been consummated. But the prison was heavily guarded

at that time, and during the trial these precautions were redoubled.

At any rate, there is no doubt that Louis knew of the attempts to save him from death. Some time after the event of January 21, Clery, speaking of the King to the Municipal, Goret, remarked—

"Alas! my dear good master could have been saved if he had chosen. The windows in that place are only fifteen or sixteen feet above the ground. Everything had been arranged for a rescue, while he was still there, but he refused, because they could not save his family with him."

There can be no doubt that these words refer to the attempt of Lady Atkyns and Peltier.[1] The assent of the King had alone been wanting to its execution.

It is well known what a terrible and overwhelming effect was produced in the European Courts by the news of the King's execution. In London it was received with consternation. Not merely the *émigrés* (who had added to their numbers there since the beginning of the Revolution) were thunderstruck by the blow, but the Court of King George was stupefied at the audacity of the National Assembly. The Court went instantly into mourning, and the King ordered the French Ambassador, Chauvelin, to leave London on the spot. Some days later war was officially declared against France.[2]

[1] Narrative of the Municipal, Charles Goret, in G. Lenôtre's book, *La Captivité et la Mort de Marie-Antoinette*, Paris, 1902, 8vo, p. 147.

[2] February 1, 1793.

The King's death caused the beginning of that struggle which was to last so many years and be so implacably, ferociously waged on both sides.

* * * * *

Any one but Lady Atkyns would have lost heart, but that heroic woman did not allow herself to be cast down for an instant. Amid the general mourning, she still cherished her hopes; moreover, those who had been helping her had not abandoned her. The "Little Baron" was still in Paris, awaiting orders, but the gravity of the situation had obliged him to leave the Hotel Coq-Héron, where his life was no longer in safety. Well, they had failed with the King; now they must tempt fortune, and save the Queen and her children. The lady at Ketteringham was quite sure of that.

"Nothing is yet decided about the Queen's fate" (Peltier had written to her at the end of January), "but it has been proposed at the Commune of Paris to transfer her either to the prison of La Force or of La Conciergerie."

Then Lady Atkyns had an idea. Why should she not go in person to Paris and try her chance? Probably the surveillance which had been so rigorously kept over the King would be far less severe for the Queen. And one might profit by the relative tranquillity, and manage to get into the Temple, and then—who could tell what one might not devise in the way of carrying the Queen off, or of substituting some one else for her? She never thought of all the dangers around her, and of

the enormously increased difficulties in the path for a foreign lady who knew only a little French. Peltier, to whom she confided her plan, tried to dissuade her.

"You will hardly have arrived before innumerable embarrassments will crop up; if you leave your hotel three times in the day, or if you see the same person thrice, you will become a suspect."

But his friend's persistence ended by half convincing him, and he admitted that the moment was relatively favourable, and that it was well to take advantage of it, if she wished to attempt anything.

Unluckily, things were moving terribly fast in Paris. There came the days of May 31 and June 2, the efforts of the sections against the Commune, civil war let loose. In the midst of this storm, Lady Atkyns feared that the whole affair might come to nought; her arrangements, moreover, were not completed. Money, which can do so much, decide so much, and which had already proved so powerful—money, perhaps, was not sufficiently forthcoming. Suddenly there is a rumour that a conspiracy to favour the Queen's escape has been discovered. Two members of the Commune, Lepitre and Toulan, who had been won over to the cause by a Royalist, the Chevalier de Jarjays, had almost succeeded in carrying out their scheme, when the irresolution of one of them had ruined everything; nevertheless, they were denounced.[1] Public attention, which had been averted for a moment, now was fixed again upon the Temple Prison.

[1] On this plot, see Paul Gaulot, *Un Complot sous la Terreur*, Paris, 1902, duodecimo.

And the days go by, and Lady Atkyns sees no chance of starting on her enterprise.

We come here to an episode in her life which seems to be enveloped in mystery. One fact is proved, namely, that Lady Atkyns succeeded in reaching Marie Antoinette, disguised, and at the price of a large sum of money. But when did this take place? Was the Queen still at the Temple, or was it after she had been taken to the Conciergerie? The most reliable witnesses we have—and they are two of Lady Atkyns' confidants—seem to contradict one another.[1] A careful weighing of testimony and an attentive study of the letters which Lady Atkyns received at this time lead us to conclude, with much probability, that the attempt was made *after* the Queen had been transferred to the Conciergerie; that is to say, after August 2, 1793.[2]

[1] These are the Chevalier de Frotté and the Countess MacNamara.

[2] In the narrative of the Chevalier de Frotté, who mentions the Temple Prison (published by L. de la Sicotière, *Louis de Frotté et les Insurrections Normandes*, vol. i. p. 429), we consider that a somewhat natural confusion has arisen. It is, in fact, very difficult to assign any date earlier than August 6 for an attempt at the Temple; for on that date there is a letter from Peltier addressed to Lady Atkyns at Ketteringham, and there can be no doubt that if the lady had already left England, Peltier would have been aware of it. On the other hand, the letter published by V. Delaporte (p. 256), and given as written at the end of July, 1793, *must be subsequent to August* 2. These phrases: "They will not promise for more than the King and the two female prisoners of the Temple; they will do what is possible for the Queen; *but everything is changed*, and they cannot answer for anything, and, as to the Queen, they can say nothing as yet, for they have tried the Temple Prison only"—these phrases plainly show that the Queen was no longer at the Temple then. Finally, since in his letter at the beginning of August Peltier once more tried to dissuade Lady Atkyns from coming to Paris, it seems rational to conclude that the lady had not yet carried out her plan.

Some days before this Peltier had again brought her to give up her resolve, assuring her that she was vainly exposing herself to risk—

"If you wish to be useful to that family, you can only be so by directing operations from here (instead of going there to get guillotined), and by making those sacrifices which you have already resolved to make."

It was of no use. The brave lady listened only to her heart's promptings, and set out for Paris. If we are to believe her friend, the Countess MacNamara [1]—and her testimony is valuable—she succeeded in winning over a municipal official, who consented to open the doors of the Conciergerie for her, on the condition that no word should be exchanged between her and the Royal prisoner. Moreover, the foreign lady must wear the uniform of a National Guard. It was Drury Lane over again! She promised everything, and was to content herself with offering a bouquet to the Queen; but under the stress of the intense emotion she experienced on meeting once more the eyes of the lady whom she had not seen since the days at Versailles, she let fall a note which she held, and which was to have been put into the Queen's hand with the bouquet. The Municipal

[1] The testimony of the Countess MacNamara was obtained by Le Normant des Varannes, *Histoire de Louis XVII.*, Orleans, 1890, 8vo, pp. 10–14, and he had it from the Viscount d'Orcet, who had known the Countess. Although we cannot associate ourselves with the writer's conclusions, we must acknowledge that whenever we have been able to examine comparatively the statements of Viscount d'Orcet relating to Lady Atkyns we have always found them verified by our documents.

officer was about to take possession of it, but, more prompt than he, Lady Atkyns rushed forward, picked it up, and swallowed it. She was turned out brutally. Such was the result of the interview. But the English lady did not stop there. By more and more promises and proceedings, by literally strewing her path with gold, she bought over fresh allies, and this time she obtained the privilege of spending an hour alone with the Queen—at what a price may be imagined! It is said that she had to pay a thousand louis for that single hour. Her plan was this: to change clothes with the Queen, who would then leave the Conciergerie instead of her. But she met with an obstinate refusal. Marie-Antoinette would not, under any pretext, sacrifice the life of another, and to abandon her imprisoned children was equally impossible to her. But what emotion she must have felt at the sight of such a love, so simple, so whole-hearted, and so pure! She could but thank her friend with tearful eyes and commend her son, the Dauphin, to that friend's tender solicitude. She also gave her some letters for her friends in England.[1]

On leaving the Conciergerie, one thought filled the

[1] It has been sought to establish a connection between this story and the conspiracy of the Municipal, Michouis (the "Affair of the Carnation"), aided by the Chevalier de Pougevide, which failed by the fault of one of the two gendarmes who guarded the Queen. There may be some connection between the principal actors in these simultaneous attempts, but we admit that we have been unable to get any proof of it. It was necessary to take so many precautions, to avoid as far as possible any written allusions, and to veil so impenetrably the machinery of the plots, that it is not surprising that the documents, curt and dry as they are, reveal to us so few details.

mind of Lady Atkyns: she would do for the son what she had not been able to do for the mother—she would drag the little Dauphin out of the Temple Prison.

Did she return to England immediately afterwards? Probably. For one thing, she had not lost all hope, and, like the rest of her friends, she did not as yet fear instant danger for the Queen's life. This is proved by a note from Peltier, written in the course of the month of September, which reveals the existence of a fresh plan.

"They must set out on Thursday morning at latest; if they delayed any longer, the approach of the Austrian troops, and the movements which have taken place at Paris, might, we fear, determine the members of the Convention to fly and take with them the two hostages whom we want to save. One day's, two days' delay may make all the difference. If they are to start on Thursday morning, and go to Brighton and charter a neutral vessel, they have only Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday to spend, day and night, in getting everything ready. First of all, we must get some louis d'or, and sew them in their belts. Then we must get some paper-money, if it's only for the journey along the coast to Paris, so that they may not be suspected. . . . We must have time to prepare passports that will do for the three persons who are to go. These passports must be made to look like the letters that Mr. Dundas is sending for the Jacobins who are being deported from France. They are thus less likely to be suspected. . . . The Temple affair is all arranged; but, as to the Conciergerie one, nothing is known as yet; the last letters from the Paris agents are dated July 26th. We are sure that the persons interested have taken measures, but we do not know what they are. It would not be a bad plan to have some money in reserve for this purpose. It would be dreadful to think we had missed our chance for the sake of two or three hundred louis, which would make 1500 guineas. Therefore each

man ought to carry on his person about 450 louis, or 200 double-louis, because about 50 louis would be spent in paper-money.

"There will also be a line of communication between France and England, by means of M——, who resides near Dieppe, on the coast, and who up to now has received and passed on constant communications. We shall have to know of all the movements either of the armies, or of the fleets, so as to direct our operations accordingly. . . . Circumstances have made it very dangerous to employ foreigners, since the Decree of August 5 has banished them from France. But what difference is there between doing a thing one's self and causing it to be done? The glory which one shares with others is glory none the less so long as the great purpose is attained . . . How can I be sure if this plan does succeed, it will not be displeasing to the lady who would have liked to carry off her friends with her own hands, and then to lead them in triumph, etc., etc.? . . . But as we are concerned, not with an opera, but an operation, the best proof of affection will be to sacrifice that glory and that joy. And, besides, that lady will not then be running the risks which formerly made existence hateful to me. If my friends perish in this affair, I shall at least not have to listen to a son's and a mother's reproaches for the loss of their Charlotte. . . ." [1]

It is clear from these lines that the communications established with the Temple and outside it were still kept in working order against a favourable opportunity. The agents in question were probably those who have been already mentioned, two of whom were the body-guards of the Queen. But Lady Atkyns' money had also had its effect, even among those "Incorruptibles" which the Revolution created in such numbers; and the events which we shall now read of can only be explained by the co-operation, not only of one or two isolated persons, but of a quantity of willing helpers, cleverly

[1] Note in Peltier's handwriting.—*Unpublished Papers of Lady Atkyns.*

won over, and belonging to a circle in which it could scarcely have been hoped that they were to be found.

In the midst of all this, the Baron d'Auerweck (whom we last saw in Paris), judging, doubtless, that his presence there was unavailing, went back to London. The situation in France was more than critical. The formation of a fresh Committee of Public Safety, the activity of the Revolutionary Tribunals, in a word, the Terror in full blast, rendered any stay in Paris impossible for already suspected foreigners, and our Baron made haste to bring to his friends all the latest information.

Peltier, who was impatiently awaiting him, on communicating his arrival to Lady Atkyns, wrote thus:—

"My heart is too full of it for me to speak to you of anything but the arrival of my friend, the Baron d'Auerweck. He left France two days ago, and is now here, after having run every imaginable risk, and lost everything that could be lost. . . . We have the Paris news from him up to the 23rd; the Queen was still safe then. The Baron does not think she will be sacrificed. Danton and the Cordeliers are for her, Robespierre and the Jacobins against. Her fate will depend upon which of the two parties triumphs. The Queen is being closely guarded—the King, hardly at all. The Queen maintains a supernatural strength and dignity."[1]

It was in London itself, at the Royal Hotel, that Lady Atkyns received these lines. She had hastened there so as to be better able to make inquiries.

But the Decree issued by the Convention, on October

[1] Undated letter from Peltier to Lady Atkyns.—*Unpublished Papers of Lady Atkyns.*

3, ordering the indictment of the "Widow Capet," give a curious contradiction to the assurances given by d'Auerweck. After all, though, who could dare to forecast the future, and the intentions of those who were now in power? The ultra-jacobin politicians knew less than any one else whither Destiny was to lead them. Had there not been some talk, a few weeks earlier, of getting the Queen to enter into the plan of a negotiation with Austria? So it was not surprising that illusions with regard to her reigned in Paris as well as among the *émigrés* in London.

Eleven days later Marie-Antoinette underwent a preliminary examination at the bar of the Revolutionary Tribunal. The suit was heard quickly, and there were no delays. Of the seven witnesses called, the last, Hébert, dared to bring the most infamous accusations against her, to which the accused replied only by a disdainful silence. Then came the official speeches of Chaveau-Lagarde and of Tronson-Ducoudray—a mere matter of form, for the "Austrian woman" was irrevocably doomed.

On the third day, October 16, at 4.30 a.m., in the smoky hall of the Tribunal, by the vague light of dawn, the jury gave their verdict, "Guilty"; and sentence of death was immediately pronounced. Just on eleven o'clock the cart entered the courtyard of the Conciergerie Prison, the Queen ascended, and, after the oft-described journey, reached the Place de la Revolution. At a quarter past twelve the knife fell upon her neck.

All was over this time—all the wondrous hopes, the last, long-cherished illusions of Lady Atkyns. The poor lady heard of the terrible ending from Peltier. Her friend's letter was one cry of rage and despair, more piercing even than that of January 21.

"It has killed me. I can see your anguish from here, and it doubles my own. My anger consumes me. I have not even the relief of tears; I cannot shed one. I abjure for ever the name of Frenchman. I wish I could forget their language. I am in despair; I know not what I do, or say, or write. O God! What barbarity, what horror, what evils are with us, and what miseries are still to come! I dare not go to you. Adieu, brave, unhappy lady!"[1]

Many tears must have fallen on that treasured sheet. And still, to this day, traced by Lady Atkyns' hand, one can read on it these words: "*Written after the murder of the Queen of France.*"

Were all her efforts, then, irremediably wasted? She refused to believe it. And at that moment two fresh actors appeared on the scene, whose help she could utilize. From the friendship of one, the Chevalier de Frotté (who came to London just then), she could confidently hope for devoted aid. The other, a stranger to her until then, and only recently landed from the Continent, was destined to become one of the principal actors in the game that was now to be played.

[1] *Unpublished Papers of Lady Atkyns.*

CHAPTER III

THE ODYSSEY OF A BRETON MAGISTRATE

On December 8, 1740, in the Rue de Montfort, at Rennes, there were great rejoicings in one of the finest houses of that provincial capital. Monsieur Yves-Gilles Cormier, one of the rich citizens, had become the father of an heir the night before; and this heir was to be named Yves-Jean-François-Marie. The delighted father was getting ready to go to the Church of Saint-Sauveur (about two steps from his abode), there to present his son for the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

He had invited to this solemnity his relative, Master (Messire) Jean-François Cormier, Prior and Rector of Bazouges-du-Desert,[1] and his neighbour, the Director of the Treasury in the States of Brittany, M. de Saint-Cristan. Madame Françoise Lecomte, wife of the *Sieur* Imbault, Chief Registrar of the Chamber of La Tournelle, in the Parliament of Brittany, and Dame Marie-Anne Lardoul were also among the guests, who

[1] Bazouges-du-Desert, Ile-et-Vilaine, *arrondissement* of Fougères, district of Louvigné-du-Désert.

enhanced by their presence the splendour of the ceremony.[1] When the bells rang out the *cortège* was entering the church porch; shortly afterwards it reissued thence, and went towards the house attached to the Treasury of Brittany, where Mme. Cormier (formerly au Egasse du Boulay) was impatiently awaiting their return.

The Cormiers were a family highly respected at Rennes. By his own labours, Yves Cormier had made a fine fortune, which placed him and his above any kind of need. Four years later a second child, a daughter this time, was born. She was given the names of Françoise-Michelle-Marie.

Yves-François grew up, a worker like his father, a sage follower of parental advice, and both intelligent and gifted. After leaving school he entered the Law Schools at Rennes, and before he was twenty he had

[1] Here is the baptismal certificate of Yves Cormier:—

"Yves-Jean-François-Marie, son of M. Yves-Gilles and Dame Marie-Anne-Françoise Egasse (*alias* Egace), born yesterday, baptized this day, December 8, 1740, by me the Rector undersigned; and held to the Holy Baptismal Font by M. Jean-François Cormier, Prior-Rector of Bassouge-du-Desert, and by Dame Marie-Anne Lardoul; the father being present, and others undersigned:—

Marie-Anne Lardoul.	Cormier, Prior-Rector of la Baionges.
Perrine Cormier.	Françoise Lecomte—Imbault.
De Saint Cristan.	Cormier.
Mangourit.	P. F. d'Oultremer, Rector."

Municipal Archives of Rennes, series G.G., *Parish of Saint-Sauveur, Register of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials for* 1740. We owe the greater part of our information relative to the sojourn of Cormier at Rennes to the kindness of our lamented *confrère*, M. Parfouru, departmental archivist.

got his degree and been entered (on August 18, 1760) as a barrister. Less than a year later the position of Crown Counsel at Rennes falling vacant, the young barrister applied for it, his youth notwithstanding, and obtained it (by Lettres de provision) on August 10, 1761.

This was a rapid advance in his career, and his parents might justly be proud of it; but fortune meant to lavish very special favours on the young magistrate, for on October 27 in the following year, another position falling vacant in the same department—that of Crown Prosecutor—Yves Cormier, exchanging the sitting magistracy for the standing, obtained the place. Crown Prosecutor at twenty-two! This was a good beginning.

For fifteen years he practised at Rennes. That town was going through troublous times. The arrival of the Duc d'Aiguillon as Governor, and his conduct in that position, created an uproar in the ancient city, jealous, as it had always been, of its liberties. The states proclaimed themselves injured in their rights. Led by La Chalotais, they obstinately fought against the claims of the King's representative, the Duke d'Aiguillon. And there ensued an interminable paper-war—pamphlets, libels, insults—which did not cease even with the imprisonment of La Chalotais and his followers. Ancient quarrels against the Jesuits were mixed up with these complaints of the encroachments of Royal ascendency; and the angry Chalotistes ended

by accusing them of being the cause of all their misfortunes.

It was naturally impossible for the Crown Prosecutor to escape being mixed up in a business which caused such rivers of ink to flow, and created such an endless succession of lawsuits. A police report accused him "of having 'done a job' in the La Chalotais affair." But he had only played a very passive part in it. His name only figures once[1] in the voluminous *dossiers* so meticulously rummaged through of late years; and that is in a defamatory pamphlet (which, moreover, was torn and burnt by parliamentary decree), denouncing him as a participator in those Jesuit Assemblies, upon which the full wrath of the Breton parliamentarians descended.[2] The utmost one can say is that Cormier perhaps inclined towards the Duc d'Aiguillon's party, which, moreover, his position as Crown Prosecutor more or less obliged him to do.

Was it at that time that he began to pay repeated visits to Paris? Very likely. At all events, from 1776 Yves Cormier practised only intermittently. His father was dead. He lived with his mother on the second floor of the Rue de Montfort house. Tired of bachelor life, the young magistrate, who was then entering his thirty-sixth year, resolved to marry. He had met in Paris a young lady from Nantes, who

[1] Barthélémy Pocquet, *Le pouvoir absolu et l'esprit provincial: Le Duc d'Aiguillon et La Chalotais*, Paris, 1900–1901, 3 vols. 8vo.

[2] It was entitled, *Tableau des assemblées secrètes et fréquentes des Jesuites et leurs affilés a Rennes.*

belonged to a family of rich landowners in Saint-Domingo. Her name was Suzanne-Rosalie de Butler; she was a little younger than he, and had rooms in the La Tour du Pin Hotel, Rue Vieille-du-Temple.

On July 10, 1776, in presence of notaries of the Du Châtelet district, M. Cormier and Mademoiselle de Butler signed their marriage contract.[1] By a rather unusual clause, the future husband and wife, "departing in this respect from the custom of Paris," declared that they didn't intend to sign the usual *communauté de biens*, but that each would retain as his and her own property whatever they brought to the marriage.

The husband's property consisted of his appointment as Crown Prosecutor at Rennes, and, further, of different lands and estates which his father had bequeathed to him, at and near Rennes, and, finally, in "his furniture, linen, wearing-apparel, etc., which were stored in his place of abode." The magistrate's wardrobe was remarkably well stocked, to judge by the enumeration we give below.[2] It must have been a difficult matter to choose between the "winter, spring, autumn, and

[1] *Archives of Maitre Motel, notary, of Paris.*

[2] "Memo. of the effects belonging to M. Cormier.—*Winter, spring, and autumn garments:* A coat, vest, and breeches of velvet with figured stripes. A coat, vest, and breeches of reddish-brown satin, with diamond buttons. A coat, vest, and breeches of velvet patterned with large flowers; and also of velvet patterned with small bouquets. Two pairs of black satin breeches. A coat in purple embroidered cloth, with coloured braid, the vest of gold striped cloth, embroidered same. A grey cloth dress-coat, lined crimson satin, vest of gold ribbed cloth. A green cloth dress-coat and vest, braided with gold. A grey quilted coat, vest, and breeches. Two quilted vests, one green, the other fawn. A redingote in best napped cloth. A

summer garments;" the breeches of "velvet patterned with large flowers," or with "little bouquets"; the coats of purple cloth, grey cloth, embroidered *gourgouran*, black-and-olive taffetas, or green *musulmane!* And then there were jewels, and there were carriages for one person called *désobligeantes*, to say nothing of hats, frills, and lace cuffs.

Nor did Mlle. de Butler fall in any way below this standard. Her father, Count Jean-Baptiste Butler, deceased, had bequeathed her, in joint tenancy with her brother, Patrice, a rich state in Saint-Domingo, one of

knitted coat, lined plush; the vest of quilted grey satin. Coat, vest, and breeches in pale yellow velvet. Coat, vest, and breeches in black velvet. A hazel-coloured cloth, coat striped blue, lined blue, vest silver ground, ribbed. A coat of *gourgouran*, embroidered lined marten fur, vest of satin embroidered *en gay*, breeches of *gourgouran*, with garter embroidered. Silk waistcoat, striped blue and white. Two reddish-brown pelisses, one with gold bugles, lined white fur. Riding-coat and vest of Silesian cloth, embroidered in gold, steel buttons. *Summer garments:* Black-and-olive silk coat and embroidered vest. Coat of *musulmane*, vest and breeches embroidered gold. Blue lustrine coat, vest, and breeches, silver buttons. Grey *musulmane* dress-coat and breeches, lined pink-and-green muslin, embroidered gold. Dress-coat grey-and-blue ribbed cloth, embroidered silver and lilac, and two pairs of breeches. Dress-coat grey *musulmane, ditto* breeches, vest of *gourgouran*, embroidered lilac, and muslin vest, embroidered gold, lined lilac. Reddish-brown dress-coat, lined green; *ditto* breeches.... Grey camlet dress-coat, embroidered bronze spangles, white vest, embroidered black. Coat in lilac *éternelle*, white dimity vest, embroidered and piped cold. White-and-lilac silk vest. Coat, vest, and breeches crimson *gourgouran*, embroidered white, with tassels. Dress-coat, purple *gourgouran*. Grey-and-white striped camlet riding-coat. Two vests and two pairs breeches. Striped *circaça* (old). Two vests and two pairs breeches white *circaça*, striped white. White quilted vest. Vest and breeches, yellow-and-white *circaça*. Pair of trousers, grey cotton ribbed. Grey silk trousers. White cotton-cloth trousers. Damask dressing-gown and vest. Taffetas dressing-gown and vest. Three hats."—*Archives of Maître Motel, notary, of Paris.*

the most flourishing colonies at that time. This state was the farm and dwelling-house of Bois-de-Lance in the parish of Sainte-Anne de Limonade, "with the negroes, negresses, negro-boys and negro-girls; pieces of furniture; utensils, riggings, horses, beasts, and all other effects of any kind whatever, being on the said estate." This document recalls the state of slavery in which the Colony then was. By a second marriage Comte de Butler had had a son, Jean-Pantaléon, who was thus the half-brother of the future Mme. Cormier, and who had also some liens on the property in question.[1] Suzanne de Butler further brought her husband some estates in France, arising from her father's succession; and a very complete array of household furniture, which was enriched by articles in "mahogany, tulip-wood, and the wood peculiar to the island," etc.

The marriage was celebrated some days later. Once settled at Paris, it became difficult for the Crown Prosecutor to keep his appointment at Rennes. Nevertheless, he did not resign it until January 23, 1779. Two years earlier their first child had been born, a boy, who

[1] Jean Baptiste Butler had married firstly, at Rochelle, in 1741, his wife being Suzanne Bonfils, by whom he had one son, Jacques-Pierre-Charles *Patrice* (born at Rochelle, 1743, died 1793, married in 1769, Germaine-Marie-Félicité de Butler); and one daughter, Marie-Anne-Suzanne-Rosalie Butler, who became Mme. Cormier. He married, secondly, at Saint-Domingo, Julie de Trousset d'Héricourt, by whom he had a son, Jean Pantaleon, born at Saint-Domingo, 1753; captain of dragoons in the Militia of the Colony from 1768 to 1772; musketeer, 2nd company, May 24, 1772; sub-lieutenant, January 14, 1777; captain, February 28, 1778, promoted December 5, 1784; captain commanding, May 1, 1788; chief of squadron, June 12, 1790.—*Archives of War Office.*

was baptized at the Madeleine in Paris, and named Achille-Marie. The parents were probably at that time living in the enormous house which Mme. Cormier bought in the following year, No. 15 in the Rue Basse-du-Rempart. It was a handsome house with a court-yard and several entrances.

On March 10, 1779, arrived another son, who was called Patrice, after his maternal uncle. His godmother was a sister of Mme. Cormier, married to a former naval officer.

The management of his own estates, and, more particularly, those of his wife, occupied the greater part of Cormier's time in the years preceding the Revolution. Of middle height, inclining to stoutness, with greyish hair and an energetic type of face, the sometime Breton magistrate was quite a personality, for he spoke remarkably well, and, besides being most intelligent, had a real gift of persuasion. The times that were now at hand seemed likely to provide him with a prominent position on the revolutionary scene.

We know that, in view of the elections to the States-General, a Royal Ordinance of April 13, 1789, had decreed the provisional division of Paris into sixty districts.[1] A year later this mode of division, being no longer useful, was replaced by a division into forty-eight sections—those sections which, from August 10 onwards, were to exercise so potent a political influence. Cormier

[1] Ernst Mellié, *Les sections de Paris pendant la Revolution française*, 1898, p. 7.

was active from the very first. The section of the Place Vendôme had scarcely been formed before he occupied a prominent position therein. We see him first as Commissary of the Section, then as President of its Civil Committee. The General Assembly held its meetings in the old Church of the Capuchins in the Place Vendôme ; and Cormier, whose home was close by, took part in the deliberations. He would have played a more active part if other business had not taken up most of his time.

Amongst the numerous monarchical clubs which then sprang up in Paris, one had just been founded whose members, for the most part rich planters from Saint-Domingo, used to meet in the Place des Victoires, at the Hôtel Massiac. Their object was to counterbalance what they held to be the pernicious influence exercised by a new society originating in England. This was the *Friends of the Blacks*, and had for its principal object the amelioration of the coloured race.[1] The movement, begun by Wilberforce across the Channel, met with many adherents in France, for it accorded well with the new ideas of enfranchisement and liberty proclaimed by the National Assembly. This very soon became clear to the landowners of the Leeward Islands, who lived on the labour of their slaves, and whose whole well-being depended on their continued existence as such. Saint-Domingo was then in a state of astonishing

[1] A. Challamel, *Les clubs contre-revolutionnaires*. A collection of documents relating to the history of Paris. Paris, 1895, 8vo, pp. 67 *et seq.*

prosperity. The sugar plantations and the cultivation of indigo and cotton had made it one of the chief colonies. If Wilberforce's theories were to prevail there, it was all over with the planters and the white people, who formed the minority of the population.

Founded on August 20, 1789, the Hôtel Massiac Club intended to oppose with all its strength the current of sympathy for the blacks, which threatened to overflow the Assembly. Its members meant to prevent at any cost the concession of rights to the mulattos inhabiting the island, which would be the preliminary to granting similar rights to the slaves. And for three years the planters devoted all their energies to this task.

Cormier, as a landowner in Saint-Domingo, was, of course, in accord with his compatriots. On August 24, 1789, he was made a member of the club, and a fortnight later he was occupying the position of vice-president. After a period of absence—his name disappeared from the proceedings for several months—he reappeared at the sittings at the commencement of 1791. From that time forth he played a foremost part in the club; had charge of all its correspondence and papers; and these, now lying in the National Archives, have yielded us a quantity of letters and speeches, and many memoranda covered with his microscopic handwriting. In the spring he was made president of the club; and the position was no sinecure. Tragic news arrived from Saint-Domingo during the summer. At the end of August there was a rising of the mulattos and negroes, and the angry

populace burned and pillaged the plantations, and massacred the white folk, male and female.

The Colonists, very inferior in numbers as they were, were powerless to resist them, and clamoured for help from their compatriots and for support from the Assembly. Letters came to the club, more terrifying every day; the planters were in despair. Many of them had their families out there, and they shuddered to think of their dear ones at the mercy of the blacks.

The club held many extra meetings and discussions, but every effort that was made by its members met with furious opposition in the Assembly. At last, in desperation, they resolved to write and despatch an address to the King, pointing out to him the deplorable state of the Colony, and appealing for his intervention. The address, which was probably the work of Cormier, after having depicted the calamities which were overwhelming Saint-Domingo, hinted at the cause of these woes; they were (it pointed out) a direct sequence from the recent Decrees of the Assembly.

"For three years it has been the untiring aim of the Assembly to sow broadcast in our midst the seeds of trouble and revolt. In vain we multiply our efforts to escape their snares; and now a society founded by foreigners and cranks for our ruin and the humiliation of France, and using ignorance and credulity for its pernicious ends, is inundating us with incendiary writings, and flaunting its emissaries in our very workshops."

The planters, for all their impassioned denunciation, had proved powerless to avert the detested action of

the Friends of the Blacks; therefore they now brought the King to take their part.

"Our cause is that of all the American Colonies; our cause is that of French Commerce, which must inevitably be ruined if we are ruined; our cause is that of the creditors of the State, whom these events will bring to bankruptcy; our cause is that of six millions of men employed directly or indirectly in the navigation, the commerce, and the victualling of the Colonies; our cause is that of the monarchy, which will lose all splendour when we are no longer wealthy, which will lose all power on the sea if we are to perish. Sire, you are the Supreme Head of the Executive, you are the preserver of the Public Peace, and the guardian of the public rights. We beseech your Majesty to take the French Colonies under your protection. We beseech you, while our total ruin is not yet consummated, to oppose your authority to the new designs of these men, who will never be satisfied until they have filled our cup of misery to the brim. We ask for powerful aid for our almost despairing brethren; we ask for the most searching inquiries, and the most elaborate justice upon the authors of these cabals."

There were a hundred signatures of Colonists and members of the club to this bold and convincing manifesto of Cormier's, when it was read at the session of November. First, it was decided to print 3000 copies to be sent broadcast throughout France.

On the next day, Wednesday, towards eleven o'clock a.m., a group of black-garbed men assembled at the Tuileries Palace, in the Hall of the Nobles. As each arrived, he was presented by one of their party—a broad-shouldered, energetic-looking personage—to a gentleman before whom each bowed respectfully: this was M. Bertrand de Molleville, Minister of the King,

and head of the Naval Department. The men thus severally presented to him were none other than the members of the Massiac Club, *headed* by their President, M. Cormier. When every one had arrived, they set off towards the Royal apartments. The King was in his study. The Colonists were permitted to enter, and were then presented one after the other to His Majesty, after which Cormier began to speak:—

"Sire, the news from Saint-Domingo has caused consternation among the Colonists of that unhappy land. But confident of your Majesty's sentiments towards them, and assured of that fatherly solicitude of which France has already enjoyed so many touching evidences, they have set forth their fears and their desires in the address which they have the honour to present to you. They implore your Majesty's gracious consideration of it."

The King, when he had been informed of the calamitous events in the Colony, tried, in a voice full of emotion, to calm the anxiety which he saw in every face. "I still hope, gentlemen," he said to them, "that the evils are not so great as rumour would have them. I shall see that all measures are taken to give powerful help to the Colonists in the shortest possible time." And in speaking privately to one or two of the delegates he reaffirmed these promises of succour.

Their business finished, the planters were about to withdraw, when somebody suggested a further appeal, this time to the Queen. The proposal was eagerly acclaimed, and Count de Duras brought almost directly an affirmative reply. Without going back to the

courtyard, but by way of the Royal apartments, the visitors were conducted to the ground-floor, and found themselves in presence of the Queen. Cormier spoke—

"Madame, in our time of great misfortune, we felt the need of seeing your Majesty, that by so doing we might both find consolation and study an example of lofty courage."

Marie-Antoinette, more moved than even the King had been, replied in a broken voice, striving to repress her tears—

"Gentlemen, be assured of the interest that we take in your misfortunes, and assure . . . the Colony also . . . that the King will leave no stone unturned to send them——"[1]

She was unable to finish; the anguish of those before her, the thought that they also were watching in agonizing uncertainty the ruin of their dearest hopes—such a communion of kindred suffering was too much for the Queen. Moreover, what now could be done by the fugitives of Varennes? Every day it was growing clearer that they were prisoners in this Tuileries Palace.

The Queen left them, to hear Mass. During her absence Mme. de Tourzel, the Dauphin's governess, happened to enter the apartment where the planters still lingered, thrilled and touched by the scene that had just taken place. She presented the little Dauphin to them. He opened his eyes wide at the sight of all

[1] *Mémoires de Mme. la Duchesse de Tourzel*, published by the Duc Des Cars, Paris, 3rd edition, 1893, vol. ii. p. 16.

the black coats. "Monseigneur was very, very sorry," said Mme. de Tourzel, "when he was told of all the sad things that are happening in the Colony; he feels very deeply for all the sorrows of the gentlemen."

"Yes, indeed I do," said the Dauphin, in his little voice.

One can imagine the impression which would have been left by this picture upon these serious men, come to invoke their Sovereign's aid, and most of whom were ardent defenders of the Royalist cause. Their president, in particular, was never to forget this reception; and the vision of the little Duke of Normandy, with his fair curling hair, his clear eyes, and his ineffably sweet expression, was to remain for ever in the man's heart. Perhaps he heard, later on, the charming story that Mme. de Tourzel tells in her memoirs, of how, when the delegates were gone, and the Dauphin alone with his mother, he was told in a few words of the Colonists' misfortunes, and forthwith begged her to give him their address.

"What are you going to do with it?" the Queen asked him.

"I want to put it in my left pocket, because that's the nearest to my heart."

Before finally withdrawing, the delegates went also to Mme. Elizabeth, who received them with equal sympathy. They were leaving the palace, when, on passing in front of the chapel, they met with the Queen, who was returning to her apartments, after having

heard Mass. "Gentlemen," she said to them, "I was not able to answer you just now, but the cause of my silence will have spoken to you eloquently enough."

On the evening of the same day, in their night-session, the planters broke into applause at the reading of the account of their visit to the Tuileries. What a memory it was! And yet, how much they had still to fear! They had been able to read between the lines of the kindly Royal speeches; they knew that the good-will of their Sovereigns would have to encounter the hostile intentions of the National Assembly, and that the promised help would be long in coming. And, in fact, the Decree of December 7, while ordering the despatch of troops, put a very stringent limitation to their powers, and confirmed the rights accorded to the coloured races.

Nevertheless, the club did not lose heart. Its activity during the winter and spring of 1792 is proved by a copious correspondence, and many reports of sessions, presided over with praiseworthy care and regularity by the sometime magistrate of Rennes. These strenuous functions, however, did not prevent him from fulfilling his civil duties. We find him mounting guard, like others, at the guard-house of the head-quarters of his section,[1] and attending the meetings of

[1] "Section armed with pikes.

"National Guard, fourth legion, seventh section, second company.

"Citizen and dear comrade—

"You will be good enough to report yourself at headquarters on

that section where he is a member of the Civil Committee.

Another winter, that of 1792, goes by, and alarming symptoms in the spring of '93 seem to indicate that the year is not to end tranquilly. In Paris political life is the only life; the effervescence grows and grows. The difficulty of provisioning the capital, the dearness of food, and the consequent great distress, bring about a state of instability and demoralization which is bound to express itself in action, and which will break out on the slightest pretext. Moreover, the people, already indignant, are exasperated by the flight of so many nobles from the kingdom—a flight which serves to reinforce the *émigré* contingent.

Cormier perceives the gravity of the situation. Two alternatives present themselves to him—either to leave Paris and the country and join those who are working at the frontiers for the restoration of the Monarchy, or to win over the Western Department, in which, however, revolt is already brewing. If this breaks out it will be a most formidable insurrection. The second plan will have the advantage of taking him to the neighbourhood of Rennes, where he still has interests; and, after a period of waiting, he can, according to the

Friday, March 29, at eleven a.m., to mount guard for 24 hours in the guard-room there. I am, dear comrade, your fellow-citizen,

Signed: "THOMAS.

"Paris, March 27, 1792.

"You are informed that, according to law, this service must be performed personally, and punctually. To the Citizen Cormier, 15, Rue Basse."—*National Archives*, F⁷ 5152.

course of events, either place his abilities at the service of the Royalist cause, or retire definitely from active life.

And there is nothing to keep him in Paris. The members of the Massiac Club are the objects of daily-increasing suspicion on the part of the "patriots." These "aristocrats" have got themselves detested for their obstinate self-defence, for their tenacious hold upon their properties, and for their continued struggle for the maintenance of slavery. If things go on as they are doing now, in a few months the club will be so universally attacked that its only course will be to close its doors. In these circumstances Cormier does not hesitate. He will leave his wife at Paris; she is a sensible woman, full of resource—*she* will know how to take care of the house in the Rue Basse-du-Rempart, and, supported by her younger son, she may in the future be of the greatest assistance to the party.

Desirous of completing their elder son's education, the Cormiers had sent him, a year before this, to Hamburg; he there spent six months with a worthy citizen of the Place Schaarmarkt;[1] and then left, to go to the

[1] "To the Administrative Citizens of the Municipality of the 1st *arrondissement*:—

"9th Messidor, year VI.

"Marie-Achille Cornier, junior, informs you, in compliance with his parents' wishes, and in pursuance of his own desire of acquiring knowledge which will enable him to be independent of his family (whose property was situated at Saint-Domingo), he left France in the month of March, 1791, and has now gone to Holstein, in order to learn the German language there and to continue his other studies, which he hopes will afford him the opportunity of becoming useful to his family, whose estates in the Colonies had been burnt down almost immediately before his departure."—*National Archives*, F^{7} 5621.

little town of Itzehoë, in Holstein, where he continued his studies.

So everything seemed to confirm Cormier in his intention. On June 25, 1792, he begged his colleague, M. de Grandchamp, to represent him as President—"for a fortnight;" and, by way of excuse, he pointed out that it was the first time he had been away for four years. We then lose sight of him for some days, and when we next encounter him, he is settled, from the end of July onwards, in Brittany, at Gaël, near Montfort. It would be difficult to account for this sojourn in a remote locality if we did not recollect that the sometime Crown Prosecutor had inherited several estates from his father in that neighbourhood; and where could he have found a safer or more tranquil retreat than in one of these, during that troublous period which followed June 20, when the proclamation of the "Country in Danger" disturbed the whole of France, and drums were beating in all the towns and countrysides—when, in a word, the *Tenth of August* was at hand? Just before that bloody dawn, there arrived at Madame Cormier's house an official-looking personage, escorted by a quartermaster of the National Gendarmerie. She had been anticipating something of the kind for so long that she knew at once what her visitors wanted. In reply to her questions, the stranger, who was no other than a Commissary of the Place Vendôme section, displayed a warrant for arrest from the Surveillance Committee of the National Assembly, issued in due form against the

President of the Colonial Club. "He had not expected any such visit, and was away from home, at Calais," answered "the lady his wife;" and that being so, the Commissary, to make up for it, had to request that he might be taken to M. Cormier's room, and, once there, proceeded to make a thorough search in every corner of it. When he had made a clean sweep of all the papers he found, tied them up in bundles, and deposited them in two band-boxes, he took it into his head to move away the fire-screen. In the grate a heap of blackened paper was still smoking. He had been too late for that, also.

Cormier had clearly been happily inspired to get off in time. Although he could not exactly have been accused of conspiring against the public safety, still the mere fact of his position makes it doubtful that, once arrested, he would have escaped the "Septemberers," who in a few weeks' time were to commence the chapter of their exploits.

He judged it prudent not to leave his retreat at Gaël before the spring of 1793. At Paris, the tempest still raged, most assuredly not calmed by the King's death; in the provinces—added to other causes, such as the general rising and the application of the Civil Constitution to the clergy—the execution of "Louis Capet" led to an outbreak of "Chouannerie:" it was at that very moment, indeed, that the Insurrection in La Vendée exploded, captained by those brilliant chiefs, Stofflet, Cathelineau, Bonchamp, and Larochejaquelein. At the news of their rapid successes, Cormier, called on by them, quitted Gaël;

and if we are to believe the certificates "of presence" given by the Vendean generals, it was he who directed the correspondence of the Royalist Army during the early operations.[1] The former President of the Massiac Club was very much in his element among such active and varied functions, requiring a systematic brain. His pen never rests; his letters, addresses, orders, teem in the insurgent districts, and yet his name remains unknown; one scarcely comes across it even in the abundant publications devoted to the history of Chouannerie. The defeat of Mans in December, 1793, when a part of the Catholic and Royal Army was routed, did not cool Cormier's zeal. The theatre of war was altered, that was all. He went nearer to Rennes, and "worked" in the districts of Fougères and of Rennes. If we believe

[1] Literal copy of a certificate given to the Cornouaille, on the 3rd Prairial, 4th year of the Republic, on paper stamped in red with the stamp of said 4th year, by the citizen Scepeaux to the citizen Yves-J.-F.-M. Cormier:—

"We, the inhabitants of the lands formerly insurgent, but now tranquil, and subject to the Laws of the Republic of France, certify to all whom it may concern, that the Citizen Yves-J.-F.-M. Cormier, native of the Commune of Rennes, Department Ile-et-Vilaine, born December 7, 1740, height 5 feet 2 inches, grey hair, medium mouth, round chin, full face, has constantly been entrusted with correspondence of the Vendean Army, from its formation to its defeat at the town of Mans; and that, since then, he has held consecutively the same office in those Communes formerly insurgent, classed under the head of 'Chouans;' and we further declare that the Citizen Yves . . . Cormier has never hindered submission to the Laws of the Republic, in virtue of which we give him the present certificate to be to him of whatever use and value it may with the constituted authorities, the misfortunes of the country making it impossible to procure any other testimonials. . . . (Executed at the Cornouaille, the 3rd Prairial, 4th year of the Republic) [May 22, 1796]. Given in duplicate, at Paris, 10th Messidor, VIII.

Signed: "D'Autichamp. Scepeaux."

(*National Archives*, F^{7} 5152.)

the aforementioned certificates, he did not desist from his labours during the months and years that followed. Both before and after the pacification of La Mabilais, Cormier, according to them, had continued to live in the revolted departments, fighting in the ranks of the Chouans. But we must not confide too much in these testimonials, which were for the most part written and produced for a certain very definite purpose—that of clearing the subject of them from a charge of emigration. By proving his share in the operations of the Vendean Army, he proved also his presence in France. Now, the famous "lists of the *émigrés*" contained the name of "Cormier, father and son." So the necessity is evident for our magistrate to insist in any and every fashion upon the part which he had taken in the rising at La Vendée, even if this insistence were in absolute opposition to the truth.

By a lucky chance there is other testimony to be had (and that of undoubted authenticity), which enables us to get at the truth of the matter. It consists of Cormier's own letters, written at that time. While he, some years later, maintained that he had never quitted French soil, we know for certain that, at the beginning of 1794, perhaps soon after the Queen's death, he landed in England, and, instantly joining the restless throng around the Princes, was soon playing a prominent part in its midst.

We meet him with de Puisaye, with the Bishop of Arras, with Dutheil, hovering around the English

Ministers and associating himself with the leaders of the *émigrés* in trying to induce England to agree to an effective, that is to say, an armed, intervention.

The history of these attempts is inextricably complex. Ministers' halls and corridors were crammed with unemployed soldiers, needy nobles, agents, spies—each with a scheme more dazzling than the others. There were many adventurers who were never taken at any other valuation, and whose incessant activity deceived nobody. But there were also personages of considerable importance, and of illustrious name, who came there with undeniable reputations, and who could not easily be repulsed. In the variety of their schemes and the abundance of their offers, it is necessary to disentangle and take into consideration all kinds of secret motives, petty views, personal grudges, or even jealousies, against their compatriots. Every one wanted to act, and every one wanted the best part; and as their various rivalries displayed themselves, the general confusion increased.

One of the favourite meeting-places of this set of people was the office of Peltier, the journalist. All the news came there; they could get the latest information from France, and discuss the chances of the parties, the military operations on the frontiers, and, above all, the intentions of the British Government.

A quartette was soon formed in the office of the sometime editor of the *Acts of the Apostles*. It was made up of Peltier and his second in command, the

Baron d'Auerweck (whom we have already met); of Cormier, and of a fourth arrival, who is no stranger to us—the Chevalier Louis de Frotté.

After his exploits at Dunkirk, the ex-officer of the Colonel-Generals had spent many months in the Army of the Emigration. Accompanied by his friend and inseparable, La Tremoïlle, he had taken part in the first campaign of 1792, under the Duke of Brunswick. The inexplicable retreat of this last with his 80,000 men, the lack of sympathy that the two officers felt with the Austrians, and the incessant squabbles that went on, disgusted them with the whole affair. They left for Italy, and reached Milan and Turin—not without adventures on the way; then, in the spring following, they re-entered Condé's army, which was now in the Emperor's pay.[1] Fresh vexations awaited them there—for the general Royalist rising that had been arranged to come off simultaneously at Lyons, in the South, and in the Jura, fell through in a pitiable fashion. And from La Vendée there came, on the other hand, the news of many successes by the Chouans.

Frotté made up his mind. He would go and rejoin his compatriots; he would come to France itself and fight the Revolution there. To do this, a short stay in England was indispensable. He could obtain resources there, and he had none at the moment. Who could say that he might not even be entrusted with an

[1] L. de la Sicotière, *Louis de Frotté*, vol. i. pp. 34, *et seq.*

official command? At any rate, that was how, in the early months of 1794, the Chevalier de Couterne came to disembark at London like the rest. We shall not be surprised, knowing as we do his relations with Lady Atkyns, and *her* relations with Peltier and d'Auerweck, to find Frotté very quickly made free of that little circle of intimates.

His admiration for his fair friend of Lille was far from having decreased; and he now listened to the details, by her own lips, of her repeated offers for, and her unalterable devotion to, the Royal family. He even came, under her influence, to share the hopes which she, brave lady! still cherished.

CHAPTER IV

THE MYSTERY OF THE TEMPLE

Amidst the medley of feelings produced upon her mind by all the events happening in Paris—all the insurrectionary outbreaks, all the plottings and arrests—neither Lady Atkyns nor her friends withdrew their gaze from the prison of the Temple. As though this edifice with its four towers exercised some mysterious attraction, extending far and wide, their thoughts returned persistently to this one spot, hidden away in the enclosures of the old palace and closed in by a network of other structures. What news was there of the happenings within those sinister high walls? Baron d'Auerweck, who was the best-informed, having just come from the Continent, retailed all that he had gathered from public rumours and from personal inquiries which his relations with people inside the prison enabled him to make.

Madame Elizabeth and her niece still lived in the suite occupied by the Queen. The little Dauphin had been snatched away from his mother on the night of

July 3, 1793, and handed over to the care of the bootmaker, Antoine Simon. Simon and his wife—as a recent work has made quite clear—were very far from being guilty of the cruelties to the child attributed to them by tradition. Chosen for his task by Chaumette, whose authority at the Temple was supreme, and looking up to him as his master, Simon was a rough specimen, uncouth somewhat in his ways, and too fond of the bottle, violently republican in his sentiments, but at bottom a decent fellow, and not wantonly cruel nor ill-natured. His wife is shown to have had a good heart; she had been seen at the bootmakers' hospital, where her conduct won the praise of all, working very actively and thoroughly at her task. She was known to be a great chatterbox. Such as she was, Madame Simon undoubtedly felt much sympathy with the child confided to her care.

What did Simon and his wife do with the young Dauphin? Did he fade away in their hands, into the living spectre, the martyr succumbing to blows and bruises that the Eckards and de Beauchesnes and Chantelauzes would have us believe? Assuredly not. Doubtless the complete change in his existence, the sense of being closed in and confined, must have told upon the small prisoner. After the splendours of Versailles, it must have been hard upon him to be subjected at once to so severe a *régime* and to have for company a household of vulgar, common people, without education. And tears must have coursed down his

cheeks. But there is a gulf between this and the stories of systematic cruelties, and we may well refuse to believe in anything of this kind until ample proof is forthcoming.

Suddenly, on January 19, 1794, it became known in the Temple *quartier* that the Simons were giving up their functions and settling down somewhere else.[1] What was the reason of this? Explanations differ. It is certain that Simon had no heart for his duties, and that he must have emitted a sigh of satisfaction when he left the Temple. He showed the child before he quitted to the four men who were told off to replace him, and received from them a voucher to the effect that he was in good health.

Henceforth, for the next six months, the Dauphin is to be immured in his prison, and no one is to penetrate within; the door of his cell is to be bolted and barred, and food is to be ministered to him through a grille. The four Commissioners of the Commune entrusted with his care will take it turn about to spy at him through the peep-hole in the door, but none of them will set foot inside.

What are we to think of this confinement? What was the meaning of it? We feel that it is out of the question at this time of day to formulate any clear-cut explanation of it. So great an air of mystery hangs over all that happened in the Temple during this year of 1794 and down to June 8, 1795, that it would be vain

[1] G. Lenôtre, *Vielles Maisons, Vieux Papiers*, 2nd series.

to attempt to elucidate this imbroglio of deeds plotted in the dark, and performed by actors each of whom played his part independently of the others. The various personages mixed up in them were so situated that they could not see the goal towards which they were called upon to work. What we desire to do, with the help of the correspondence at our disposal, is to show that Lady Atkyns was the leading spirit of a Royalist Committee, formed for the purpose of securing the Dauphin's escape, and that not only his escape was practicable, thanks to the intervention of people high in authority—probably of Barras—but that it was, in fact, carried out.

A sort of bureau had been instituted at Paris for turning to account the sources of information contrived within the Temple, and for keeping *au courant* with the prison regulations and the methods adopted for watching over the Royal captive. There was a house in Rue Basse-du-Rempart in which M. Cormier lived formerly, and which, on setting out for La Vendée, he left to the care of his wife.[1] In this house they had a *pied à terre* ready to their hands, and in Mme. Cormier, *née* de Butler, a person on whom they could absolutely rely, active-minded, enterprising, the very person of all others to help the projects of the Royalists in London. It is she who, during these first weeks of the year 1794, will be keeping her husband and his friends *au courant*

[1] A curious plan of this house is to be found at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Print Department, Paris topography, the Madeleine quarter.

with all she can find out about the Dauphin and his gaolers, and the way in which he and his now numerous partisans in Paris are kept under watch. It is impossible for her, we may be sure, to correspond direct with London, and we are in the dark as to her methods of communication; but in these days there are any number of couriers carrying news and despatches from the Continent to England. Soon, to avoid suspicion and work in greater safety, Mme. Cormier, henceforth referred to always by her maiden name, will secure a decree of divorce from her husband on the ground that he is *émigré*, thus apparently breaking up all connection with the former president of the Club Massiac.[1] Had she not had her name removed already, a year earlier, from the ill-fated list of *émigrés?*

It is time for us now to make fuller acquaintance with the members of this circle of intimate friends surrounding Lady Atkyns, and concentrating all their efforts upon the furthering of her plans.

Two figures stand out conspicuously: M. de Cormier and the Chevalier de Frotté. These alone have been let into the secret of the first operations; these alone can claim to have full knowledge of the desires and hopes of the Queen's friend. Cormier, "our big

[1] The decree of divorce of Marie-Anne-Suzanne-Rosalie Butler, forty-nine years old, born at La Rochelle, resident in Paris, Rue Basse, section des Piques, daughter of Jean-Baptiste Butler and of Suzanne Bonfils; and Yves-Jean-François-Marie Cormier, aged fifty-six, born at Rennes, department d'Ile-et-Vilaine, son of the late Yves-Gilles Cormier and of Marie-Anne-Françoise Egasse.

friend," as he is designated in their correspondence, is a strong support. His experience, his good sense, his relations with the English Government, inspire confidence at first sight in all who are brought into contact with the corpulent Breton, and all are quickly won over by the charm of his fluent and persuasive speech. Despite authentic certificates of residence, according to which his son has not quitted Holstein, where he is by way of pursuing his studies during this and the following year, the ex-magistrate has not been willing to forego his son's companionship, and there are constant allusions to him in his letters. A prey to frequent attacks of gout, Cormier requires to have some one at hand to look after him affectionately.

Frotté, a man of some intellect, with a fine presence and a martial air about him, and with the advantage of being acquainted with the recent happenings in Normandy and La Vendée, is well fitted for helping Lady Atkyns in her plans. He also has been able to get into intimate relations with the Government, to secure a hearing for his views, and thus to acquire real influence. In these two men Lady Atkyns possesses powerful lieutenants, who henceforth will be indispensable to her, and to whom she will have to unfold her ideas impartially and equally. For while each of them is eager to devote himself entirely to her enterprise, little by little, imperceptibly almost, and according as difficulties crop up in their path, feelings of jealousy and envy will make themselves evident between the two.

By length of service, and by reason of so many tender remembrances therewith connected, Frotté considers himself entitled to the premier place in the confidence and regard of his fair friend. His letters are full of burning affection and admiration for her, to whom he is ready to sacrifice everything.

"It is only in your society," he writes, "that I am my real self. You are in possession of all my secrets, and you share all those feelings which cause me to have any joy in life and for which none the less I should be ready to die. Adieu! Do you understand me? What am I to think of the heroine to whom I devote my entire future and who may make all my life's happiness? Do you understand me? Adieu! If I speak to ears and to a heart that refuse to listen to me . . . then I am not at the end of my troubles. Oh, most charming of women, whatever may be the outcome of this Revolution of ours—even though you should have no share in it—you will ever be in my eyes the tender and devoted friend of Antoinette, the woman who would have sacrificed everything for the Queen's son, the woman to whom I would fain owe all my happiness."[1]

Side by side with these two men we find a third individual, whose name recurs very often in the conversation, and who will also play his part. The Baron d'Auerweck, the "little baron," comes to offer his services to Lady Atkyns, and to profit by her generosity, which he knows to be inexhaustible. He is not to be admitted into all the secrets of the committee—he is to be spoken to in general terms. D'Auerweck, with his philosophical whims and unceasing chatter, bombards his benefactress with his letters, in which he retails to

[1] V. Delaporte, article already quoted, *Études*, October, 1893, p. 265.

her all the rumours current in London regarding the child in the Temple. On intimate terms with the journalist Peltier, d'Auerweck acts as his collaborator, so to speak, keeping him *au courant* with the progress of the enterprise as far as he is in a position to do so.

Finally, there is the Bishop of Saint-Pol-de-Léon. The bishop has not broken off his relations with the indefatigable lady, for whom he professes an immense admiration. His assistance is by no means to be despised, for among the ever-increasing crowds of *émigrés* now pressing to London there are quite a number of persons who are under obligations to him. When Lady Atkyns leaves Ketteringham and comes to stay for a time among her friends, we find the venerable prelate visiting her on several occasions.[1]

She entertains him with an account of the steps she is taking. Little by little her money will be exhausted; but what matter provided she succeeds? Not content with seeing her gold dispensed at Paris by her paid supporters, the generous Englishwoman has made up her mind to acquire a ship which she has had secured for herself by an *émigré*, the Baron de Suzannet, and which had been entirely rigged out at her expense.[2] This vessel plies continually between the English coast and the continent, after January, 1794; her captain is instructed to communicate by means of signs agreed

[1] *Unpublished Papers of Lady Atkyns.*

[2] Note in Lady Atkyns' own handwriting at the end of a letter of Cormier's, dated March 24, 1794.

upon with people stationed along the French coast, generally at Dieppe. In this way news can always be conveyed from Paris, while the ship will be ready at the right moment to pick up the young Dauphin and carry him off into security.

This was the condition of things at the beginning of 1794, when, on Monday, March 24, Cormier received a piece of news which at first unbalanced him. His wife had been arrested in Paris, and there was nothing to indicate how this mishap had come about.

"What terrible news, Madame!" he wrote to Lady Atkyns; "my wife has been arrested! I am inconsolable. I know no details as yet."

On reflection, however, he realizes that the nature of his former duties, taken in conjunction with his present position as an *émigré*, suffice to account for what had taken place.

"There is every reason to believe," he proceeds, "that nothing has been discovered regarding our plot, and that it is merely as the wife of the President of the Massiac Club that she has been put under arrest. At least, I flatter myself that this is so. If I get no news here, I shall set out for the place where news will be forthcoming soonest. Nothing will ever make me abandon our project and the object of our desires. You shall have my news at the earliest possible moment, either from here or from Choram."

Now, on this very day Hébert was mounting the scaffold, a victim to the accusations of Robespierre, whose despotism was triumphant. He who had been to a great extent responsible for looking after Louis XVII.

had now fallen in his turn, to be followed a few weeks later (April 13) by his friend Chaumette. Here is what Cormier had to say on the subject—the news had reached him with wonderful speed—

"Robespierre has triumphed over the others, and he has had Hébert, Vincent, etc., arrested and guillotined. Robespierre had declared himself anxious to stop the flow of blood . . .; he had spoken up for the prisoners in the Temple. Fresh letters are arriving here. It is certain, I think, that my wife has not yet been charged with anything, or even suspected of anything in regard to the prisoners."

The event was inopportune. Cormier had just decided to leave London for the coast, where he was to receive certain information and to take counsel with his agents. Now his plans were all upset. He would have to postpone the journey and redouble his precautions.

At the end of five days there was ground for taking a hopeful view of things. There was every reason to believe that Mme. Cormier's arrest would not have any grave results.

"What annoys me most," writes Cormier to Lady Atkyns on March 28, "is the fact that the news had got back to Paris, with commentaries which may do harm both to my wife and to our affairs."

As a matter of fact, Peltier and d'Auerweck hastened, on hearing of what had happened, to convey their sympathy to their friend, and, like true journalists, spread the tidings in every direction, thus intensifying Cormier's uneasiness.

"But I must only try and put aside this anxiety," he continues, "as I have so many others. I have not yet started; I shall not start before Monday or Tuesday, because I must wait for replies from Dieppe, which cannot arrive before Sunday or Monday. Have no fears; my courage will not fail me—indeed, at present it is taking the shape of a feeling of rage, which I am trying to keep down. You will have learnt from the public prints that the statement has gone out that the King has been carried off to the army of the Prince of Saxe-Coburg. This false report has troubled me a good deal. I don't want attention to be directed that way just now, especially as something has happened which would increase our confidence—something which I cannot at present confide to paper. Do not exert yourself too much, madame; do not measure your efforts by your courage. Your friends beg this of you."

In all these letters of the Breton magistrate there is a real ring of sincerity. The admiration he feels for this interesting woman resolves itself into a whole-hearted devotion to her cause, and if, later, her large fortune and her generosity seem to have too large a part in Cormier's thoughts and too great an influence upon his actions, at least he must be credited with absolute frankness throughout.

The death of Sir Edward Atkyns on March 27, 1794, gave Cormier an opportunity for expressing his sympathy with the widow, and of enlarging still further upon his feelings. The scant mention made of Sir Edward, indeed, in the correspondence of this little circle suggests that the relations between husband and wife must have become perceptibly colder of late. It is probable that the baronet looked with disfavour upon his wife's schemes and the heavy outlay they entailed.

"A score of times," writes Cormier, "I have taken pen in hand this morning to express to you the intense interest with which I have learnt of the sad event which occurred, and as often my courage has failed me. Truly you have been the victim of many misfortunes. Will the Fates never have done pursuing you? You must only make use of the great qualities Providence has given you to bear up against what has befallen. Your courage is exceptional. Make the most of a quality which is rare with men, but rarer still in women. As for me, I vow I shall not give in under my misfortune, and shall not be put off by any perils. . . . I have not started yet, and shall not start to-morrow, not having yet received the letters I was expecting. If they come to-morrow, I shall start on Thursday. So that this delay may not cause you anxiety, I may mention that in the last letters which have come to me, he who left last . . . asks me not to start until I heard again from him. He has not been beyond D(ieppe), and the others have returned from P(aris) to take counsel with him—I don't know on what."

These last words show that something was already happening on the Breton coast, and that it was desired to send news of interest to Cormier. But the departure postponed so often was still impracticable, and Cormier began to lose patience.

"I am still kept here," he writes. "It is becoming incensing. I feel as though I were being chained up, but prudence and common sense keep me quiet. I get news regularly from D(ieppe). I have just received a third letter enjoining me to make no movement until they give me the word, and insisting that the success of our project and the safety of him who is so precious to us depend upon this. I don't understand, however, their not telling us why and how. . . . I have lost patience, and have sent one of these gentlemen.[1] (That is not the same as myself.) I am afraid that Hamelin may really have been killed; I can't make it out at all."

[1] M. M. de Corbin (note on the letter in Lady Atkyns' handwriting).

Who was Hamelin? It is difficult to guess. It is difficult to identify a great many of the individuals of whom there is question in these letters, and who are designated by borrowed names. The most elementary prudence called for absolute secrecy concerning the names of the agents who were working for our committee, and although the messages were carried by the most trustworthy emissaries, it was always possible that one of them might be arrested *en route.* This doubles our difficulty in clearing up the imbroglio, and enhances a mystery already sufficiently troublesome.

Failing Mme. Cormier, who was still under arrest, and whose absence had been making itself felt more and more, another arrangement had been made for securing news from Paris. At what expense? Heaven knows! But once again money had set tongues going and procured the needed help. Cormier, coming back to the question of his departure, writes again (April 14, 1794) to his friend to tell her of the messages he has sent from England :—

"I shall not start until this evening," he tells her. "You can guess why. I have just despatched two messengers. Things are moving, but very slowly. However, let us not lose heart. If we go slowly we go all the more surely, and every day achieve something which helps to advance our schemes and to keep us in security. Therefore do not be impatient."

The weeks passed by, and that fateful day "9th Thermidor," which was to bring with it such a *bouleversement* in Paris, was drawing nigh. At the Temple

there had been no change—the Dauphin was still sequestrated from the outside world.

On May 11, 1794, Robespierre visited the prison, and had a brief interview with Marie-Therèse, but we have no information as to what happened.

The 9th Thermidor arrives and throws the dictator down from his pedestal, thereby proclaiming the end of his reign of terror. General Barras, invested with the command of the armed forces within the city, begins to take an important part in the management of affairs. One of his first acts, it will be remembered, after he had triumphed over Robespierre's party, was to go to the prison of the Temple, on July the 28th, accompanied by his brilliant staff, bedecked with gold. The miserable aspect of the child after being shut up for months caused the general to take immediate steps, and by his order of July 29, 1794, a special guardian, chosen by himself, named Laurent, a native of Martinique, was brought to the prison, there to be entrusted with the sole care for nearly five months of the young Capet.

A careful study of the documents bearing upon this period of the captivity of the Dauphin makes it quite clear that in the hands of his new guardian he was looked after in a fashion which contrasted strongly with the previous neglect, and that he soon became attached to Laurent, who proved himself good-natured, kind, and even affectionate in his attitude towards his charge. If strange things came about in the Temple at that time,

we may be certain that Laurent knew about them, and we may assume that Barras was the prime mover in all that happened.

It is impossible, as we have said before, to recapitulate all the arguments which tend to bring home to the general some complicity in the fate of Louis XVII., and which implicate a large number of persons, most of them people of influence in the world of the Convention. Other writers, notably M. Henri Provins,[1] have done this so conscientiously and thoroughly that there is no need for us to attempt it. We may content ourselves with making public a series of documents and newly ascertained matters, the gist of which bears out exactly all that we knew already of Laurent's conduct at the Temple. Lady Atkyns and her friends could not have done without him. It is true that his name never appears in their communications, for reasons already given, but the striking connection between the events within the prison walls and their effects in London upon the Royalist Committee proves beyond doubt the relations subsisting between them. Between the lines of these documents we get to understand what Cormier meant by "new combinations." Lady Atkyns has been at pains to say it herself in one of her notes which she used to make upon her correspondence, and which often serve to explain her actions.

In his anxiety about the future, did Cormier entertain fears lest all remembrance of his heroine's devotion

[1] Henri Provins, *Le dernier roi légitime de France*, Paris, 1889, 2 vols.

would vanish with her if by some mischance her enterprise should fail, or if she herself should lose her life? Who knows? However that may be, it is the case that on August 1, 1794, he had two statements drawn up (the text of which, unluckily, is not forthcoming), in which Lady Atkyns recorded all that she had achieved down to that date for the safety of those who were so dear to her.

"These records are to my knowledge the absolute truth," attested Cormier at the foot of the deposition, "and I declare that ever since I first knew Lady Atkyns, she has always shown the same purity of principles, and that all she has here stated is true in every particular."

These documents were to have been handed over for preservation, with a number of others, to a solicitor or some trustworthy person in London.

Meanwhile, renewed efforts were being made to bring about a good service of news to the Continent and Paris. As time passed, Lady Atkyns' friends realized more and more that it would have been madness to proceed with a regular attempt at a sudden rescue in the actual conditions of things. In truth, the calm which had followed the 9th Thermidor, and which gave Paris time to take breath, was making itself felt within the Temple. Laurent's nomination was evidence of this. Any attempt to act at once would have been sheer folly. What was to be done was to "get at" those who had any kind of influence within the Temple or without, whilst taking care not to let too many

people into the secret of the enterprise. Here, again, unluckily, the wise secretiveness of all their papers prevents us from ascertaining any names. Those who were tempted by Lady Atkyns' gold to compromise themselves in any way, took too many precautions against being found out.

Lady Atkyns, however, was not idle. Two sailing vessels were continually plying between different points on the French coast. A third, which she had recently purchased, had orders to keep close to land between Nantes and La Rochelle, ready at any moment to receive the Dauphin.[1]

The cost of keeping these three ships was considerable, and Lady Atkyns had great difficulty in providing the money. She was in the hands of agents whose services, indispensable to her, could be depended upon only so long as the sums they demanded were forthcoming. We can imagine the feelings of anxiety and despondency with which she must have read the following letter from Cormier. What answer was she to make to him? (The person to whom she had applied for financial help appears on several occasions in their correspondence under the designation of "le diable noir.")

"Your *diable noir's* reply is very little consolation to me," writes Cormier; "he has promised and postponed so often. For Heaven's sake, see to it that he does not promise us this time also to no

[1] Note in Lady Atkyns' handwriting at the foot of a letter from Cormier, dated June 3, 1795.

purpose! . . . I gather that you were to have two definite replies to-day—I shall be in Purgatory until five o'clock. Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! I wonder what you will send me, or rather what you will be able to send me? Our own courage alone does not suffice—we have to keep up the courage of others, and they are losing heart. Worst of all, there is that avaricious Jew of a captain! We are absolutely dependent upon him. If we lost him where should we get another to take his place? I beg of you, in the name of the one you know, to do all you possibly can, to exert all your resources, to prevent his having to leave me empty-handed."

And to excuse the ultimatum-like tone of his letter, Cormier adds—

"Forgive the urgent persistent style in which I write! But when one is writing about business matters and matters of this importance, one has to forget one is writing to a woman—especially when it is a question of a Lady Atkyns, who is different from the rest of her sex."

The occasions for entering into communication with their agents on the Continent are more propitious now than ever, but many efforts are frustrated owing to the sharp watch which is kept along the coast.

"They have tried eleven times to land since Saturday last," writes Cormier, "and failed every time. There were always either people in sight or else there were transports sailing from Havre to Dieppe or from Dieppe to Saint-Valery, etc., etc. There has been a lot going on evidently, for signals have been given on fifteen or twenty different occasions. That shows how important it is to effect a landing. They returned simply to make this fact known to me, and went back again without coming on shore—except the captain, who came for an hour and who is positive they have something to hand over to him. I believe this myself, for I learn also this morning that the Government boat which plies along the coast

of Brittany has made thirty vain attempts during the last three weeks."

We can imagine the mental condition of poor Lady Atkyns on receiving letter after letter in this strain. She no longer goes away from London at this period, feeling too remote in the country from the centre of news. She stays either at the Royal Hotel or else with friends at 17, Park Lane. Here it is that she receives Cormier, Frotté, Peltier. When there is a long interval between their visits her fears grow apace. What would she not give to take an active part herself in the enterprise! "No messenger arrived—no news, therefore, from France," that is the message that comes to her only too often. And Cormier writes, full of excuses for his persistent appeals—

"Forgive my tone," he writes. "I apologize a thousand times for being such a worry to you, but I can't help it in regard to so important a matter, calling for so much energy and hurry. You have voluntarily abandoned the position ensured you by your sex and great advantages in order to play the *rôle* of a great and high-minded statesman. There are discomforts and disadvantages attached to this new estate, and it is my misfortune to have to bring this home to you. I can but console myself with the thought of your goodness and of the great cause which we have embraced and which is the subject of all our anxieties. May God prosper it, and may it bring you glory and me happiness!"

In the mouth of any one but Cormier these protestations would arouse one's distrust; but what we already know of him, and what we are to learn presently of his later conduct, serve to reassure us in regard to him.

In spite of all his good will, however, Cormier is constantly being interrupted in his work. Now it is the health of his son, Achille, which disquiets him, now he is a prey to terrible attacks of gout which will give him no rest.

"I have been bent double for two nights and a day," he writes to his friend on September 1, 1794, "without being able to change my position. It takes four persons to move this great body of mine. I am a little more free from pain at present, and I take up my pen at the earliest possible moment to send you this explanation of my silence."

It is at this moment that Louis de Frotté, who has been a little in the background, comes again to the front of the stage. Since his arrival in London, the young officer, without neglecting the society of the Royalist Committee, has been spending most of his time in the offices of the English Government, endeavouring to impress upon Windham "the desirability of carrying out his ideas, and the ease with which they may be brought to fruit, as he has made up his mind to devote himself to them." One project he has specially at heart, that of receiving some kind of official mission from the Government which will enable him to land in Normandy with adequate powers and to give new life there to the Royalist insurrection. Should he succeed, the help he "would thus obtain would lead to the execution of our cherished plans," he writes to Lady Atkyns, and she will reap at last "all the honour that will be due to the generous sacrifices that she has made."

But in his interview with the Minister he does not think it necessary to speak of their relations with the Temple. This secret is too important for him to confide it to any one. "Too many people know it already." These words, hinting a delicate reproach, are meant, perhaps, to put his fair friend upon her guard. Perhaps they mean more than that. Read in the light of subsequent letters from the young *émigré*, they serve as a key to his private feelings—to his dislike at having to share her confidence with so many others, and to his jealousy later of the man who has so large a place in her heart. These feelings, still slight, soon become more marked, and presently we find that they are reciprocated.

For the time being, however, both Frotté and Cormier worked with the same ardour at their allotted tasks. Frotté, proceeding with his negotiation with Windham, counted now upon support from Puisaye, his famous compatriot recently come to England. Cormier writes to her to report that, despite apparent dilatoriness, their agents have not been inactive.

"I have received letters through the captain," he tells her on October 1, 1794, "which satisfy me, brief as they are. Here is what they have to tell me: 'Be at ease in your mind; they imagine they are working for themselves, and really they are working for us, and we shall have the profit. Be patient and don't lose trust.' The captain had orders to return at once to-day, but he will not start until to-night or to-morrow morning, and we have news by the packet-boats meanwhile that order reigns in Paris."

Day after day passed by, bringing new reports, none

of them positive, of the death of the little Dauphin. Lady Atkyns knew not what to make of the situation. Presently—eight days after the last—there came another letter from Cormier, to reassure her.

"I have great faith in your judgment," he declares, "and your presentiments are almost always right, but I really do not think that you have ground for disquiet now. Three agents of ours at the Temple are either at work silently or else they are in hiding. All we know for certain is that they have not been guillotined, as they have not been mentioned in any of the lists."

His wife was still unfortunately detained, but there was prospect of her being shortly at liberty, and then she would write to him. If the agents had taken it upon themselves to modify their project — the one thing that was to be feared—they could not possibly have succeeded in sending particulars yet of this. But an explanation of the mystery was soon to be forthcoming.

"The Dauphin is not to be got out by main force or in a balloon," Cormier had once written. Any attempt at carrying him off under the very nose of his warders and of the delegates of the Commune would have been madness. All idea of such a rescue had long been put aside. How, then, was the matter to be dealt with? By such means as circumstances might dictate—by finding a substitute for the young prisoner, a mute who should play the *rôle* until an occasion should offer for smuggling away the real Dauphin, concealed meanwhile

somewhere in the upper chambers of the Tower. Mme. Atkyns did not herself approve of this plan.

"I was strongly opposed to it," she notes at the foot of a letter from Cormier dated June 3, 1795, "as I pointed out to my friends that it might have an undesirable result, and that those who were being entrusted with the carrying off of the Dauphin, after getting the money, might declare afterwards that he had not been got out of the Temple."

She saw reason to fear that at the last moment she would be done out of the recompense of all her efforts, and that the Royal child would not be entrusted to her care.

However, it was clear that once the plan was agreed upon it was necessary in order to carry it out to secure the help of the gaoler Laurent, who had had the Dauphin under his charge during the last four months. Laurent's complicity may be traced through the documents bearing upon the whole episode.

Let us examine first of all Laurent's own famous letters, the first of which, dated November 7, 1794, synchronizes with the events we have been following.

It is well known that only copies of these letters are in existence—the originals have never been discovered. They were published first in a book which appeared in 1835, *Le Véritable Duc de Normandie*, the work of an adherent of the pretender, Nauendorff, Bourbon-Leblanc, whose real name was Gabriel de Bourbon-Russet, dit Leblanc. From the fact of the originals being missing, the authenticity of these letters has long been a matter

for debate. A close examination of them, side by side with all the other documents upon which we have come in the course of our researches, results, we think, in justifying our belief in their genuineness.

Cormier, then, was not mistaken in supposing that his agents had modified their plan. The letter in which he confided his suspicion to Lady Atkyns was dated October 8, 1794. On the last day of the same month he wrote to her again :—

"I have to thank you cordially for your kind letter of yesterday. I have had no time to answer it properly, not because of the gout, for that has left me. In fact, my mind is so fully occupied that I have no time to trouble about any kind of malady, and am, in fact, at my wits' end with excitement. However, I must just send you this brief note in haste (for it is just post time) to bid you not merely be at rest but to rejoice! *I am able to assure you positively that the Master and his belongings are saved! There is no doubt about it.* But say nothing of this, keep it absolutely secret, do not let it be suspected even by your bearing. *Moreover, nothing will happen to-day, or to-morrow, or the day after, nor for more than a month, but I am quite sure of what I say, and I was never more at my ease in my own mind.* I can give you no details now, and can only tell you all when we meet; but you can share my feeling of security. I am glad to say I have good news of my wife, but I must continue to keep a sharp look out all round me."

This letter evidently alludes to what had happened at the Temple. The young Dauphin, we may conclude, was halfway on his road to liberty. Lodged in the garrets of the Temple tower, and with the little mute as his substitute down below, he was not yet out of

peril. But an important step had been taken towards the ultimate goal.

It seemed clear that Laurent, *l'homme de Barras*, was having a share in this, and had at least rendered possible the execution of the project. The letter which he wrote eight days later to a general, whose identity has never been established, bore out exactly what Cormier had said; here it is :—

"General,

"Your letter of the 6th came too late, for your first plan had been carried out already—there was no time to lose. To-morrow a new warder is to enter upon his duties—a Republican named Gommier, a good fellow from what B—— tells me, but I have no confidence in such people. I shall find it very difficult to convey food to our P——. But I shall take care of him; you need not be anxious. The assassins have been duped, and the new municipal people have no idea that the little mute has been substituted for the Dauphin. The thing to be done now is to get him out of this cursed tower—but how? B—— tells me he cannot do anything on account of the way he is watched. If there were to be a long delay I should be uneasy about his health, for there is not much air in his *oubliette*—the *bon Dieu* would not find him there if he were not almighty! He has promised me to die rather than betray himself, and I have reason to believe that he would. His sister knows nothing; I thought it prudent to pass the little mute off on her as her real brother. Meanwhile, this poor little fellow seems quite happy, and plays his part so well, all unconsciously, that the new guard is convinced that he is merely refusing to speak. So there is no danger. Please send back our faithful messenger to me, as I have need of your help. Follow the advice he will convey to you orally, for that is the only way to our success.

"The Temple Tower, November 7, 1794."

The contents of this letter, taken together with its

date, accord in a remarkable way with Cormier's communication to Lady Atkyns.

There is another striking argument in favour of the authenticity of Laurent's letters. When they were produced by the pretender Nauendorff, they were for the most part in complete contradiction to all that was known of the Dauphin's captivity and the testimonies of those connected with it. Certain facts to which they made allusion were known to nobody. Thus Laurent states clearly on November 7 that a new warder—whom he calls Gommier instead of Gomin—is to come to the Temple next day and to be associated with him. Now, in 1835, when this letter was published, what was known of Gomin? Next to nothing, and the little that was known did not tally with Laurent's statements. Simeon Despreaux, author of a book entitled "Louis XVIII.," published in 1817, did not even know of Gomin's existence. Gomin himself made a formal declaration before the magistrates that he entered the Temple about July 27, 1794, before Laurent was there at all. Many years later it was found, on examining all the documents referring to the Temple that were kept in the National Archives, that Laurent's statements were quite correct.

Some days after this letter to Lady Atkyns, Cormier informed Frotté of the great news, in the course of a visit paid him by the latter.

"I know all about it," he said, according to Frotté's account of the interview afterwards in a letter to Lady Atkyns, "because they

could do nothing without me; but everything is now ready, and I give you my word that the King and France are saved. All the necessary steps have been taken. I can tell you no more. . . . Do not question me, don't try to go further into the matter. Already I have told you more than I had any right to, and from Mr. Pitt down to myself there is now no one who knows more about it than you do. So I beg of you to keep it absolutely to yourself."

From November 8, then, Laurent is no longer sole guardian of the young Prince. His duties are henceforth shared with Gomin. What kind of relations subsisted between the two? It is hard to say, for it is even more difficult to find out the truth about the Temple during the subsequent months than during those which went before.

We find one innovation introduced during these months which is worth noting. It is no longer the delegates of the Commune who have to pay the daily visit to the prison, but the representatives of the *Comités Civils* of the forty-eight divisions of Paris. Now, among all those who visited the Dauphin none left any record, with one exception, to which we shall come presently. All that we can learn from Gomin's own statements, so often contradictory, is that throughout the period the child placed under his care uttered no word. The warder takes no further notice of this strange conduct, Laurent having satisfied him that if the Dauphin will not open his mouth it is because of the infamous deposition against his mother that he was made to sign. It is unnecessary to point out how improbable was this explanation, the Dauphin's

examination having taken place on October 6, 1793, and Laurent not having come to the Temple until July 29, 1794. Gomin, however, asked no further questions, and Laurent experiencing no further anxiety in regard to him, sought what means he could of bringing about the desired end.

Six weeks pass, however, without further progress, and then on November 5 Laurent hears, to his great satisfaction, that his master has become a member of the Committee of Public Safety. This new office would surely enable the general to carry out his plan and relieve the anxious guardian from the heavy responsibility lying on his shoulders.

It was, therefore, not without surprise that on December 19 Laurent and Gomin saw three Commissioners of the Committee of Public Safety make their way into the prison and up the stairway of the Tower to the Dauphin's cell. These three visitors—Harmand la Meuse, Matthieu, and Reverchon—asked to see the Dauphin, so that they might question him and satisfy themselves as to the way in which he was kept under supervision. At a time when there were so many rumours current about the Temple, and when rescues were openly talked about, when every day brought forth some new sensational report, it was only natural that the Convention, in order to silence these rumours and calm public opinion, should institute an official inspection of the prison in this way.

In a work which he published twenty years later,

Harmand de la Meuse tells us all that we know of this visit, and of the impression made upon the delegates by the little mute ushered into their presence. Suffice it here to record that this narrative (written with an eye to the good graces of Louis XVIII.) makes it quite clear that it was a mute whom they saw, and that all efforts to extract replies were quite in vain.

Harmand repeats the explanation of this persistent silence which had been furnished by Laurent. He ignores the fact that the Dauphin had talked with the Simons, had been interviewed by Barras, and had been heard to speak on several other occasions.

Assuredly, Harmand and his colleagues—his narrative allows it to be seen on every page—very soon realized that they were not in the presence of the Dauphin. This is proved by the fact that, despite the very distinct terms of the resolution of the Committee entrusting them with this mission, and the object of which was to dispel the rumours current in Paris, "they decided they would make no public report, but would confine themselves to a secret record of their experience to the Committee itself."

However natural and intelligible all this may have been to those who knew what was in the mind of the Convention and the exigencies of the situation at this period, to Laurent it was a matter of stupefaction. Barras had sent him no warning, and his position was getting more and more difficult, for his colleague, who had, of course, to be taken into his confidence, was

beginning to be nervous about participating any further in the intrigue, and might betray him any day. At last he loses patience, and expresses himself as follows to his friend the unknown general :—

"I have just received your letter. Alas, your request is impossible. It was easy enough to get the 'victim' upstairs, but to get him down again is for the moment impossible, for so sharp a watch is being kept and I am afraid of being betrayed. The Committee of Public Safety sent those monsters Matthieu and Reverchon, as you know, to establish the fact that our mute is really the son of Louis XVI. General, what does it all mean? I don't know what to make of B——'s conduct. He talks now of getting rid of our mute and replacing him by another boy who is ill. Were you aware of this? Is it not a trap of some kind. I am getting very much alarmed, for great care is being taken not to let any one into the prison of our mute, lest the substitution should become known, for if any one examined him they would discover that he was deaf from birth, and in consequence naturally mute. But to substitute some one else for him! The new substitute will talk, and will do both for our half-rescued P—— and for myself with him. Please send back our messenger at once with your written reply.

"The Temple Tower, February 5, 1795."

Let us note the date of this letter—February 5. Therefore the visit referred to must have taken place before February 5. Now, Eckard, one of the earliest biographers of the Dauphin, having in the first edition of his book made the date December 2, 1794, altered it afterwards to February 13, 1795. De Beauchesne makes it February 27. Chantelauze, February 26.

On referring to the original documents at our disposal, however, we find that Laurent's letter is borne

out. In his book, *Le dernier roi legitime de France*, M. Provins shows that the visit must have taken place between November 5, 1794, and January 4, 1795, as it was only during this period that the three delegates were all members of the Committee. A recent discovery of documents in the National Archives establishes the fact that it took place on December 19, 1794.

CHAPTER V

THE MYSTERY OF THE TEMPLE (*continued*)

MEANWHILE the feelings of jealousy and suspicion which had sprung up between Cormier, still Lady Atkyns's principal lieutenant and confidant, and the Chevalier de Frotté were becoming more and more marked. At the beginning of October, 1794, Cormier learns of a correspondence in progress between Lady Atkyns and a person whom he imagines to be his rival (but who turns out to be merely the "little baron"), and his ill-humour breaks out in the form of reproaches.

"Chance has willed that I should become acquainted with the fact that some one has been getting up a correspondence with you," he writes to Lady Atkyns, "in such a way as to prevent me from hearing of it . . . You will admit that I am justified in assuming there are reasons why this correspondence is being kept secret from me."

But he proceeds to assure Lady Atkyns that she still retains all his admiration and respect, and to protest that he only acquaints her with the discovery that he has made because of his attachment to her. Filled with mistrust of Frotté, Cormier withholds from him

particulars as to the progress of affairs at the Temple, and only vouchsafes his information now and again in vague terms. "I refused to give Frotté the names of the agents," he wrote to Lady Atkyns some months later. "Please remember that. I shall always be proud of that."

It is not astonishing that Frotté should show some surprise at the way in which he was being treated, though he was prevented by other causes of annoyance —his failure to get any satisfaction out of the British Government and the repeated postponements of his departure—from taking his position in this respect too much to heart.

Lady Atkyns herself was keeping him at a distance at this time and avoiding him when she came to London. When he asks for an interview, she refuses on the pretext of her widowed state and public opinion.

"I wished to avoid seeing or writing M. de Frotté," she herself records at a later period, "as I was not in a position to talk to him about the means being taken for the rescue of the King."

However, on the eve of setting out from England into the unknown, the Chevalier makes one more effort to see her.

"You do not write to me," he begins his letter (December 27, 1794), "and I should be angry with you if I could be angry with any one, now that I have all my wishes fulfilled. In three days everything has changed, and I have nothing more to ask for in England. The longed-for moment has come. P[uisaye] wants me. I go with him, and all my requests are granted. We start on

Thursday at latest. It is important that I should see you. I beg of you to set out at once and spend twenty-four hours here, but without any one knowing of your journey, lest its object should be suspected. Try to be here by Monday evening, and let me know where I could see you."

This time the appeal was too strong to be resisted. It was in the depths of winter, and the letter arrived at Ketteringham in the evening; but Lady Atkyns hired a post-chaise at once, and set out a few hours later, and travelled all night in stormy weather to London, arriving there in the morning. She seems, however, to have resisted the temptation to let Frotté into the secret of the Temple doings. Perhaps she had a presentiment that the Chevalier, for all his protestations of fidelity now, would fall away later and pass into the camp of some other pretendant to the throne.

We have spoken already of the endless intrigues which were being hatched round the British Government by the hordes of *émigrés* and broken-down exiles from the Continent. For these gentry, mostly penniless and forced to beg their livelihood, no resource was too base by which they could get into favour with the Ministers. Besides scheming in a thousand different fashions against the common enemy, the Revolution, they stuck at nothing in their efforts to throw suspicion upon each other. The little court which had gathered round the Comte D'Artois on the Continent was also a hotbed of plots and schemes, the influence of which made itself felt in London. Every one spied on every one else.

In the midst of this world of intruders a sort of industrial association came into being in the course of the year 1794, for the purpose of inundating France with false paper-money. It was hoped that in this way a severe blow would be dealt at the hated Jacobins and their friends. These nefarious proceedings soon became known, and called forth the indignation of some of the better class of *émigrés*, among them the honest Cormier.

His position among his compatriots was not at this time of the best. They had no love for this man of firm character, faithful to his principles and incapable of lending his countenance to such doings. He himself soon came to realize this.

"One doesn't know whom to trust," he wrote to Lady Atkyns. "I am sure some one has furnished the Government with a long report upon my projects. I am on the track of the man who I think is guilty. There is no reason for you to be anxious on the subject. I shall soon know what has been done, and both the traitor and the Government shall be outwitted."

About this time a flood of memorials of all sorts poured in by mysterious channels upon the British Government, maintaining that "the general desire of the French was for a change in the ruling family." Cormier discovered that they all were traceable to the same source, and we find him declaring energetically that "the blasphemous scoundrels" who were responsible for them all belonged to one clique.

His indignation, in which he found few sympathizers,

made him a number of enemies, and the disfavour with which he was already regarded in French circles soon changed into downright hatred. The fact that he denounced the false paper-money to the British Government—and not in vain—was a cause of special bitterness against him. By way of revenge, they could think of nothing better than to accuse him of being himself guilty of the very offences against which he had set his face.

"They are trying to make out that I am the owner of ships which I use for the purpose of conveying this false paper-money to Brittany," he writes to Lady Atkyns. "They have stated this to the Government. Fortunately, my whole conduct and reputation, and all that I have done to destroy this shameful traffic, serve to show the improbability of such accusations."

But, in spite of all his energy and determination, Cormier's enemies were too strong for him. It was in vain that he demonstrated his good faith. Calumny had done its work.

The British Government had decided, in concert with the Comte d'Artois, to send an important mission to the Netherlands, with a view, doubtless, to establishing relations with the Stadtholder, whose position was becoming critical owing to the sequel to the Revolution. The man to be entrusted with this mission would have to be some one who had given proof of his qualifications. Cormier seemed cut out for the post, and he stood in readiness for it, enjoying the prospect of thus getting into touch again with France, and of perhaps being able

to serve the interests that were so dear to him. But he had reckoned without his foes. Their efforts were redoubled, and in the course of November Cormier learnt that another had been entrusted with the mission. His anger and disappointment can be imagined. He decided that, in spite of all, he would leave England and betake himself to Holland on private business. Doubtless he imagined also that it would be an advantage to be near the French frontier, and that he would be the better able to follow the course of events at the Temple. It was a risky step to take, for there was nothing to guarantee his complete security in the Netherlands.

However that might be, his decision was taken, and on November 25, 1794, Baron d'Auerweck wrote to Lady Atkyns to acquaint her with the news of Cormier's departure, conveying to her at the same time many apologies for his having himself neglected to write to her to take farewell. During the months that follow the "little baron" replaces the Breton magistrate as principal correspondent of Lady Atkyns.

It is a strange personality that stands revealed in these letters of Baron d'Auerweck. Keen and resourceful, the baron lays himself out to exploit to the utmost the valuable friendship of the English lady, thus bequeathed to him, as it were, by Cormier. Trained by Peltier, d'Auerweck seems to have modelled himself upon his master, and to have become in his turn the accomplished publicist, plausible, fluent, supple, with a

gift of raillery and sarcasm, together with a turn for philosophy. Lady Atkyns, though not unappreciative of his copious epistles, shows clearly that she estimates him at his real value, and is careful not to take him too much into her confidence. It must be enough for him to know that there is still reason to hope that the Dauphin may be saved. D'Auerweck himself is not in a position to give her much information in return. His letters consist rather of a bright and lively commentary upon the political situation and the course of events generally in France.

Upon Cormier's decision to leave England the Baron expresses himself in downright language, and makes it a text for a disquisition upon his elder's character.

"Cormier's departure has disturbed me a good deal," he writes to Lady Atkyns, "the more so that, with a little prudence, he could have spared himself this unpleasantness, and might have succeeded in getting what he wanted. A man who has passed his whole life in the magistracy ought, at the age of fifty-six, to know something about men, but Cormier has never got further than the A B C of such knowledge. I have had some rather hot disputes with him over his rash confidence, his purposeless explosions, his sudden friendships that ended in ruptures, thus increasing the number of his enemies. . . . But we both of us felt the parting. I must do him the justice of admitting that there is a lot of kindness and sympathy in his character. I think he has the same feeling of friendship for me that I have for him. It is my wish to serve him whenever the opportunity may arrive."

By an unfortunate coincidence, the political situation in Holland was undergoing a disquieting change at the moment of Cormier's arrival. Until then England had

exercised a decisive influence there, both by reason of the presence of her army and through counsels of the Stadtholder. But in the autumn of 1794 a popular feeling in favour of the Revolution began to make itself felt, fanned by the hostility aroused against the undisciplined English troops, with their looting and pillaging, and intensified by an unlooked-for piece of news: the French, led by Pichegru, had crossed the frontier and were advancing by long marches, and seizing all the places they passed through on their way. In a few weeks the power of the Stadtholder would have gone! Though clothed in rags, the soldiers of the National Convention were welcomed with transports of delight. Never did troops show such discipline, it should be added.

But Pichegru was not alone. Beside him marched representatives of the Convention, eager to institute in the United Provinces the principles of the Revolution and to establish the guarantees of order and security inseparable therefrom.

Therein lay the danger for those who, like Cormier, were to be found in *flagrante delicto* of emigration. On November 8, 1794, an order came from the Committee of Public Safety to the representatives with the army, commanding them to seize the Stadtholder, together with his wife and children, as well as to arrest immediately all *émigrés* who might fall into their hands.

Knowledge of this important decree had not come to London on December 15, for on this date we find

d'Auerweck writing to Lady Atkyns that he has had news of Cormier, "who is now at La Haye in good health and spirits."

The extreme cold which prevailed this year contributed in a remarkable degree, as is well known, to the success of Pichegru's operations in Holland. Shut in by the ice, the powerless fleet was obliged to surrender to the French cavalry—a memorable incident in the military annals of the Republic. The famous dams, which were to be opened and to flood the country and submerge the French, became useless by reason of the frost. In short, Pichegru triumphed throughout. He made his entry into Amsterdam on January 10, 1795, and eight days later the Stadtholder embarked for England. The Dutch Republic had come into being.

Cormier's fate throughout this period must have been a matter for anxiety to Lady Atkyns, but the absence of anything in the shape of definite news from Paris as to the state of things at the Temple continued to be to her a source of far greater disquietude. The vague assurance as to the Dauphin's well-being, which d'Auerweck transmitted to her from time to time, counted for nothing, as she knew herself to be better informed as to what had been under way.

What had been happening? A third letter, addressed by Laurent to his correspondent, under date of March 3, 1795, enlightens us a little :—

"Our little mute has now been smuggled away into the palace of the Temple and well concealed. There he will remain, and if

need be can be passed off as the Dauphin. The triumph is altogether yours, general. You can now be quite at ease in your mind—send me your orders and I shall carry them out. Lasne will take my place now as soon as he likes. The best and safest steps have been taken to ensure the Dauphin's safety. Consequently I shall be able to get to you in a few days, and shall be able to tell you all further details orally."

These lines herald a momentous alteration in the *régime* of the prison. First of all, there is the question of Laurent's leaving it. Presumably his presence is no longer needed there. This suggests that success is assured. And Lasne—how is it that his name makes its appearance here for the first time? We shall find him declaring in 1834 that his service in the Temple began in Fructidor year II., that is to say, between August 18 and September 16, 1794.[1] In that case Laurent would have had him as his colleague for several months already! The Temple documents preserved in the National Archives, and examined fifteen years later, establish the fact that Lasne did not, indeed, enter upon his duties until March 31, 1795, thus bearing out the accuracy of Laurent's statement.

We see, then, that the little mute has been transferred to the palace of the Temple—that is to say, into one of the many empty suites in the great maze of buildings that surrounded the Tower. Here he has been, or perhaps will soon be, joined by the Dauphin himself, for means of retreat from this labyrinth of

[1] His deposition at the Richemont trial.—PROVINS.

buildings are infinitely greater than from the fourth storey of the Tower.

To replace the mute, another substitute has been found, a scrofulous boy who may be expected soon to die. All barriers to the Dauphin's escape will thus be removed. So much we gather from Laurent, and all his statements are borne out by documents which have been left by Royalist agents.

This second substitution effected, Laurent was able to quit his post with an easy mind, and we find that he did actually leave the Temple on March 29, 1795. His successor, Lasne, arrives two days later. Gomin, who perhaps knows part of the truth through Laurent (and, moreover, his *rôle* is more especially to attend to Marie Thérèse), is careful not to confide in him, knowing well the risk he would run by so doing. Lasne finds in the prison a boy who is evidently very ill, in great suffering, whose death is soon to be expected. What would be the use of asking questions? It is enough for him to attend to the child as best he may during the few weeks of life that still remain to him.

Spring had passed and June had arrived before Lady Atkyns was again to see the familiar handwriting, rounded and minute, of her friend the Breton magistrate. The letter bore the postmark of Hamburg. What was Cormier doing on the banks of the Elbe? He would seem to have had some perilous adventures. Probably he had been arrested as an *émigré* and had escaped the

guillotine by some happy chance. However that may be, the news he had to tell of events in France came as a great relief to his correspondent.

"We have been better served, my dear friend, than we ourselves arranged. Our agents have not kept to our plan, but they have done wisely. . . . But we must have patience. Things are in such a condition at present that they can be neither hastened nor delayed. A false move might have very bad results."

Within a week of the arrival of this letter, an announcement, that came to many as a surprise, found its way round London. It was officially reported that the Dauphin had died in prison on June 8, 1795. Had not Cormier's assurances come in time to buoy her up, so categorical a statement might well have given Lady Atkyns a severe shock. She knew now, however, that it could not be of *her* boy that there was question.

Some weeks pass in silence, and Lady Atkyns, impatient for news, urges the "little baron" to set out for Hamburg. He starts in the first week of July, but is delayed at Ocfordnese, whence he writes to her on the 16th. At last he reaches his destination, but means of communication are so uncertain that several more weeks elapse before she hears anything further. September finds d'Auerweck returning to London with a letter from Cormier to Lady Atkyns. In October, again unable to curb her anxiety, she had just decided to send d'Auerweck to Paris, when, to her deep grief and dismay, she learnt suddenly from Cormier that everything had gone wrong—that "they had all been

deceived, shamefully deceived." The child that had died on June 8 was, indeed, the second substitute, and the Dauphin had undoubtedly escaped, but others had got possession of him, and the boy handed over to Lady Atkyns' agents was the young mute.

"Yes," he writes, "we have been taken in totally and completely. That is quite certain. But how have they managed to do it? And did we take every step that could be taken to make this impossible? These are matters you will want me to go into in detail, and I shall not fail to do so; but I must wait until I have time to trace the sequence of events from a diary day by day for a year past. The entries for the first two months are missing for the present—the least interesting period certainly, since down to that time, and for several months afterwards, only the project of carrying off the Dauphin was being kept in view, the project which had to be abandoned afterwards in favour of another which seemed simpler and more feasible, as well as less perilous."

Cormier's long letter left Lady Atkyns completely in the dark as to what exactly had happened. They had been tricked somehow—that was all she knew.

To us, as to her, the names of most of the many participants in this mysterious intrigue remain unknown. Laurent went off to San Domingo in the following year, where he died on August 22, 1807. Gomin, to some extent his accomplice in the matter of the substitution, followed Marie Antoinette's daughter to Austria, and was careful to keep what he knew to himself. As for our three friends, Cormier, Frotté, and d'Auerweck, we shall learn presently the reasons for their silence.

The one person who has tried to clear up the obscurity

of these happenings inside the Temple is the wife of the bootmaker, Antoine Simon, the Dauphin's first warder. Considerations of space prevent us from entering here upon any detailed examination of her evidence, but we must not pass it by without a word. Mme. Simon, after her husband's death during the Reign of Terror —he was guillotined in Thermidor—withdrew to the asylum for incurables in the Rue de Sèvres, where she was to spend the remainder of her existence. Here she was heard on many occasions to assert that she was convinced the Dauphin was alive, having seen him carried off when she and her husband were leaving the Temple, on the evening of January 19, 1794. If this were true, it would result that that child looked after by Laurent was not the Dauphin at all! This does not fit in with the version that we have put together from Laurent's own letters and the various other documents which we have been able to examine. But even if it were true, the poignant question would still call for an answer—what became of the young Dauphin after his escape? Into whose hands did he fall?

CHAPTER VI

THE FRIENDS OF LADY ATKYNS

What was the Chevalier de Frotté doing all this time? What steps was he taking towards the realization of what he had called so often the goal of his life, and towards the execution of the promises he had made with so much ardour and enthusiasm?

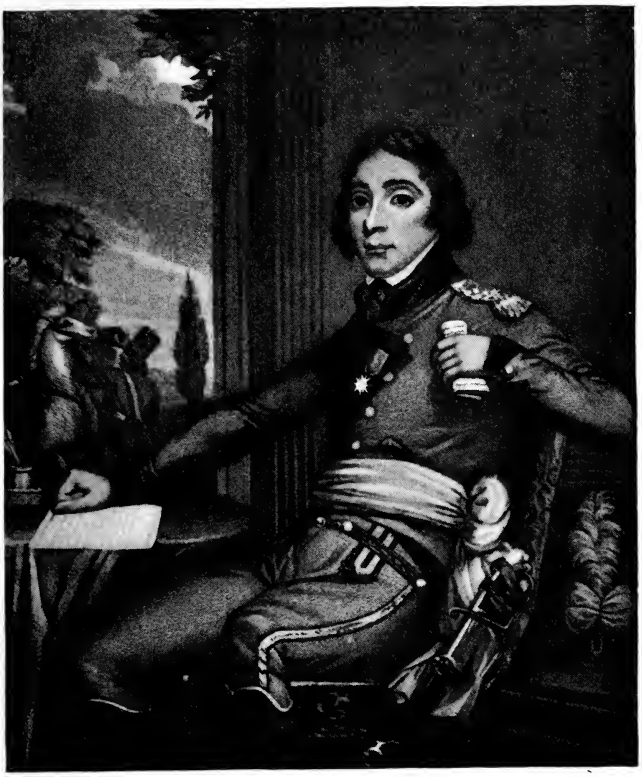
Transported with joy on hearing that the British Government at last contemplated listening to his projects and sending him to Normandy, Frotté, when leaving London, betook himself with four comrades-in-arms to Jersey—the great *rendezvous* at that time for the insurgents engaged in dangerous enterprises on the Continent, and seeking to find landing-places on the French coast.

It was the middle of winter—snow was falling heavily, and there were strong winds. Several weeks passed, during which the patience of our *émigrés* was severely taxed. Nothing was more difficult than to effect a landing in Normandy under such conditions. Apart from the difficulty of finding a vessel to make

the crossing, it was necessary to choose some spot where they might succeed in escaping the vigilance of the troops stationed all along the cliffs, whose forts presented a formidable barrier. In short, Frotté and his friends found themselves confronted with serious obstacles.

On January 11, 1795, they were observed to leave Guernsey in a small sailing-vessel manned by English sailors, taking with them three *émigrés* who were to act as guides. What happened to them? No one knows exactly. Certain it is merely that the boat returned rudderless and disabled, with Frotté and his four companions. According to their own account, they took a wrong direction in the dark, and sailed along the coast in the midst of rocks. Their guides landed first, and disappeared from sight under a hail of bullets, and it was with great difficulty that they themselves had been able to get back to Guernsey.

At the beginning of February they made another effort, and succeeded in landing near Saint-Brieuc. Frotté at once made his way inland to join the insurgents, but ill fortune followed him. He had not been a fortnight in the country when he learned, to his surprise, that the Chouans under Cormatin had just concluded a truce to prepare the way for peace. His feelings may be imagined. To have waited so long for this! So much for his hopes and castles in the air! But there was no help for it. On February 17, 1795, the treaty of Tannaye was concluded, and a month



MARIE-PIERRE-LOUIS, COUNT DE FROTTÉ, 1766–1800.
(*After a portrait belonging to the Marquis de Frotté.*)

[*To face page* 140.

later Frotté, who had kept moving about over La Vendée and Normandy unceasingly to survey the ground, established himself at Rennes, where he assisted at the conference of La Mabilais, which was to confirm the truce already agreed to.

If the turn taken by events had led him off temporarily in a different direction, his mind never abandoned the secret purpose which had brought him to France. Nevertheless, a change, at first imperceptible, but afterwards obvious enough, was coming over him.

The reader will not have forgotten the way in which a feeling of antagonism had grown up between Cormier and the Chevalier. The ill-will cherished by the latter for his quondam friend had not disappeared. On the contrary, the belief that Lady Atkyns was keeping him deliberately at arm's length had intensified the jealousy. The result was inevitable. Chagrined at being thus left on one side, and at being supplanted, as he felt, in his fair lady's affections, he soon began to devote himself entirely to his new *rôle* as a Chouan leader, and ceased to interest himself any longer in the drama of the Temple. In truth, he was not without pretexts for this semi-desertion of the cause.

On March 16, anxious to explain himself to Lady Atkyns, he writes to tell her just how he is feeling on the subject. He would have her realize that there is no longer any ground for hopes as to the Dauphin's safety. When in touch with the representatives of the Convention who took part in the conference at La Mabilais, he

had taken one of them aside, it seems, and questioned him frankly as to whether the Republican Government would consent to listen to any proposal regarding the young Prince, and whether he, Frotté, would be allowed to write to the Temple. The member of the Convention made reply, after taking a day to consider the matter and to consult his colleagues, that what Frotté suggested was out of the question.

"Your devotion," he said, "would be fruitless, for under Robespierre the unhappy boy was so demoralized, mentally and physically, that he is now almost an imbecile, and can't live much longer. Therefore you may as well dismiss any such idea from your head—you can form no notion of the hopeless condition the poor little creature has sunk into."

These lines, reflecting the view then current among the official representatives of the Convention, stand out strikingly when we recall the situation at the Temple in this very month of March, 1795, and the absolute order given to Frotté not to allow the child to be seen. They tally at all points with what we know of the substitution that had been effected. To this substitution, indeed, Frotté himself proceeds to make an explicit allusion towards the end of the letter.

"Perhaps the Convention is anxious," he writes, "to bring about the death of the child whom they have substituted for the young King, so that they may be able to make people believe that the latter is not really the King at all."

As for himself, he has made up his mind. He will

make no further efforts for the deliverance of the Dauphin.

On April 25, 1795, the La Mabilais Treaty was signed, and Frotté, who refused to subscribe to it, went off again to Normandy, confident of seeing the struggle recommence, and impatient to set going a new insurrection. Had he received any reply from Lady Atkyns to his outspoken missive? Assuredly not. If she gave any credence to his statements at the time, they must soon have passed out of her memory, for, thanks to Cormier, June found her quite confident again of the success of their plans. Not knowing, therefore, what to say to her old admirer—Cormier having forbidden her to tell him the names of their agents—she determined to keep silent.

Shortly afterwards, on the day after June 8, the report of the Dauphin's death reached Normandy. The proclamation of the Comte de Provence—for how many weeks must he not have been waiting impatiently for it to be made—as successor to the throne of France in his nephew's place was read to the insurgents. Frotté, who for some time already had been responding to the advances made to him by the pretendant, now formally placed his sword at the service of the new King.

What would have prevented him from taking this step? Would a personal interview with Lady Atkyns have had this effect? Perhaps; but devoted now to his new mission, passing from fight to fight, Frotté was no longer his own master.

Nevertheless, at the end of 1795, some feeling of remorse, or else the desire to renew his old place in the goodwill of Lady Atkyns, who had twice asked him to write and tell her about himself, moved Frotté to take pen in hand once again. He had been engaged in fighting for several months, concerting surprises and ambuscades, always on the *qui vive.* He had twice narrowly escaped capture by the enemy. In spite of this he managed to keep up an interesting correspondence with his companions operating more to the south and to the west, in La Vendée and in Le Bocage, and with the chiefs of his party in London, who supplied the sinews of war, as well as with Louis XVIII. himself, in whose cause he had sworn to shed the last drop of his blood. There is no reason to be astonished at finding our "Général des Chouans" expressing himself thus, or at the changed attitude adopted by him, dictated by circumstances and the new situation in which he has now found himself. Here is how he seeks to disabuse Lady Atkyns of the hope to which she is still clinging :—

"No, dear lady, I shall not forget my devotion to you before I forget my allegiance to the blood of my kings. I have broken faith in no way, but, unfortunately, I have none but untoward news to give you. I have been grieved to find that we have been deceived most completely. For nearly a month after landing I was in the dark, but at last I got to the bottom of the affair. I was not able to get to see the unfortunate child who was born to rule over us. He was not saved. The regicides—regicides twice over—having first, like the monsters they are, allowed him to languish in his prison, brought about his end there. He never left it. Just reflect how we have all been duped. I don't know how it is that without

having ever received my letters you are still labouring under this delusion. Nothing remains for you but to weep for our treasure and to punish the miscreants who are responsible for his death. Madame alone remains, and it is almost certain that she will be sent to the Emperor, if this has not been done already."

These lines but confirmed what Frotté had written in the preceding March, after his talk with the representative of the Convention. The news of the Dauphin's death having been proclaimed shortly after that, there had been no longer any difficulty in persuading the Chevalier to take up arms in the service of the Comte de Provence. He discloses himself the change that has come over his sentiments.

"How is it," he writes to Lady Atkyns, "that you are still under the delusion, when all France has resounded with the story of the misfortunes of our young, unhappy King? The whole of Europe has now recognized His Royal Highness, his uncle, as King of France. . . . The rights of blood have given me another master, and I owe him equally my zeal and the service of my arm, happy in having got a number of gallant Royalists together. I have the honour of being in command of those fighting in Normandy. That is my position, madame. You will readily understand how I have suffered over the terrible destiny of my young King, and nothing intensifies my sorrow so much as the thought of the sadness you yourself will feel when you learn the truth. But moderate your grief, my friend. You owe yourself to the sister not less than to the brother."

And to enforce this advice, Frotté recalls to her the memory of the Queen, which should serve, he thinks, to remove all scruples.

"Remember the commands of your august friend, and you will be

able to bear up under your misfortunes. You will keep up your spirits for the sake of Madame. You will live for her and for your friends, to whom, moreover, you should do more justice. Adieu, my unhappy friend. Accept the homage of a true Royalist, who will never cease to be devoted to you, who will never cease either to deplore this deception of which we have been victims. Adieu."

Was this farewell, taken in so nonchalant a fashion, to denote a final sundering of two hearts united by so many memories in common? It would appear so. Lady Atkyns was so strong in her convictions that the only effect of such words would be to make her feel that all was over between her and the Chevalier. Later, when he made an effort to renew relations with her and asked her to return the letters he had written to her, she would seem to have refused point blank, from what she wrote to a confidant.

He must, however, have got hold of some portion of their correspondence, for on his return to his château of Couterne, this indefatigable penman, in the scant leisure left him by his military duties, filled several note-books with reminiscences and political reflections tending to justify his conduct. In one of these note-books, which have been carefully preserved, he transcribed fragments of his letters to his friend—fragments carefully selected in such a way as not to implicate him in the affair of the Temple, once the death of the Dauphin had been announced. Had he lived, he would doubtless have learned what had really happened, as set forth in the documents we have been studying; but his days were numbered.

His end is well known: how, having fallen into an ambush, he and six of his companions were shot by Napoleon's orders, in despite of a safe-conduct with which he was furnished, on February 18, 1800, at Verneuil. If in the course of these five years he did learn the full truth about the Dauphin, he doubtless abstained from any reference to it out of regard for the King. He carried his private convictions in silence to the grave.

The news of his death was received with emotion in London. Peltier, who had had good opportunities for forming an opinion of him, gave out a cry of horror. "This act," he wrote in his gazette, "covers Bonaparte for ever with shame and infamy."

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The small circle of Lady Atkyns' London friends lost thus one of its members. Meanwhile, Lady Atkyns had been making the acquaintance of a French woman who had been living in England for some years, and whose feelings corresponded to a remarkable degree with her own. This lady had found a warm welcome at Richmond, near London, on her arrival as an *émigré* from France.

Pale, thin, anxious-looking, the victim of a sombre sorrow which almost disfigured her face, Louise de Chatillon, Princesse de Tarente, wife of the Duc de la Tremoille, had escaped death in a marvellous way. A follower of Marie-Antoinette, from whom she had been separated only by force, she had been arrested

on the day after August 10 as having been the friend of the Princesse de Lamballe. Shut up in the sinister prison of l'Abbaye, she had felt that death was close at hand. From her dungeon she could see the men of September at their work and hear the cries of agony given forth by their victims. At last, after ten days of imprisonment, she was liberated, thanks to an unexpected intervention, and in the month of September, 1792, she succeeded in finding a ship to take her to England.

Hers was a strikingly original personality, and it is not without a feeling of surprise that one studies the portrait of her which accompanies the recent work, *Souvenirs de la Princesse de Tarente*. The drama in which she had taken part, and the bloody spectacle of which she had been a witness, seem to have left their mark on her countenance, with its aspect of embittered sadness. Her eyes give out a look of fierceness. Save for the thin hair partially covering her forehead, there is almost nothing feminine in her face. Seeing her for the first time, Lady Atkyns must have received an impression for which she was unprepared. They took to each other, however, very quickly, having a bond in common in their memories of the Queen. Both had come under the charm of Marie-Antoinette, their devotion to whom was ardent and sincere. The Queen was their one great topic of conversation. Few of their letters lack some allusion to her.

Knowledge of Lady Atkyns' devotion to the Royal

House of France, of the sacrifices she had made, was widespread in the world of English society, and the Princess, having heard of her, was anxious to meet the woman, who, more fortunate than herself, had been able to afford some balm to the sufferings, to prevent which she would so willingly have given her life. The Duke of Queensberry brought about a meeting between the two ladies. What passed between them on this occasion? What questions did they exchange in their eager anxiety to learn something new about the Queen? Doubtless the most eager inquiries came from the Princess, and bore upon the achievements of Lady Atkyns, her visit to the Conciergerie, her talks with the illustrious prisoner. For weeks afterwards there was an interchange of letters between the two, in which is clearly disclosed the state of affectionate anxiety of the Princess's mind. They address each other already by their Christian names, Louise and Charlotte. Lady Atkyns shows Mme. de Tarante the few souvenirs of the Queen she still possessed, the last lines the Queen wrote to her. It is touching to note, in reading their correspondence, how every day is to them an anniversary of some event in the life of the Queen, full of sweet or anguishing memories.

"How sad I was yesterday!" writes the Princess. "It was the anniversary of a terrible day, when the Queen escaped assassination only by betaking herself to the King's apartments in the middle of the night. Why did she escape? *To know you*—but for that the Almighty would surely have been kind enough to her to have let her fall a victim then."

For all the affection which surrounds her, Mme. de Tarente constantly bemoans her solitude.

"I am in the midst of the world," she writes, "yet all alone. Yesterday I longed so to talk of that which filled my poor heart, but there was none who would have understood me. So I kept my trouble to myself. I was like one of those figures you wind up which go for a time and then stop again. I kept falling to pieces and pulling myself together again. Ah, how sad life is!"

In the summer of 1797 the Princess came to a momentous decision. The Emperor and Empress of Russia, whom she had known formerly at the French Court, having heard of her trials and of the not very enviable condition in which she was living, pressed her to come to Russia, where she would be cordially greeted. After long hesitation she decided to accept, but it was not without genuine heartburnings that she separated from her English friends, from her Charlotte most of all. She left London at the end of July, and arrived at St. Petersburg a fortnight later. Very soon afterwards she wrote Lady Atkyns an account of the journey and of her first impressions of her new surroundings.

The Emperor and Empress received her in their Peterhof palace with the utmost consideration. Appointed at once a lady-in-waiting on the Empress, she found herself in enjoyment of many privileges attached to this post. The house in which she was to live had been prepared for her specially by the Emperor's command. Finally, she was decorated with the Order of

St. Catherine, and the Empress on her *fête* day presented her with her portrait. Different indeed is her position from what it had been at Richmond.

"I never drive out without four horses, and even this is my own doing, for I ought not, as a lady-in-waiting, to have less than six. They tell me I shall be obliged to get myself made the uniform of the Order of St. Catherine, and that would cost me 1200 roubles, that is, 150 louis."

But the very marked favour met with by the Princess could not but disquiet some of the courtiers at the Palace. Within a week of her arrival, one of the ladies in attendance upon the Empress, Mme. de Nelidoff, at the instigation of Prince Alexandre Kourakine, hastened to represent Mme. de Tarente's conduct and the unusual honour that had been shown her under the most unfavourable light to her Majesty the Empress; and her jealousy thus aroused (so one of Mme. de Tarente's friends tells the tale), she had no difficulty in settling matters with her husband, and when the Princess next entered the imperial presence, the Emperor neither spoke to her nor looked at her.

The snub was patent, but the Princess seems to have taken it nonchalantly enough. The friendly welcome accorded to her by St. Petersburg society, the kindness and affection she met with from the Golowine family, in whose house she soon installed herself, there to remain until her death, enabled her speedily to forget the intrigue of her enemies at the Court. The incident is barely alluded to in her letters to Lady Atkyns,

which continue to be taken up chiefly with reminiscences of their beloved Queen.

Towards the end of 1798 the two friends are sundered by Lady Atkyns' decision to return to France, impelled by the desire to be near those who had played so important a *rôle* in her life, and to meet again those friends who had co-operated in her work—perhaps also to meet and question those who might be in a position to enlighten her regarding the fate of the Dauphin. This decision she communicates to the Princess, who opposes it strongly, warning her against the imprudence she is about to commit. Lady Atkyns persists, and the Princess at last loses patience. "I have so often combated your mad idea," she writes nobly, "that I don't wish to say anything more on the subject."

In the spring of 1814 the news came to St. Petersburg of the defeat of the armies of Napoleon and the accession of Louis XVIII. Immediately large numbers of exiles, who were but waiting for this, made haste back to France. Mme. de Tarente contemplated being of their number, but before she could even make arrangements for the journey, death came to her on January 22, 1814.

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Hamburg, where our friends Mme. Cormier and the "little Baron" took refuge in 1795, was already a powerful city, rich by reason of its commerce, and its governing body, conscious of its strength, were not the less jealous of its independence. Its unique position,

in the midst of the other German states, the neutrality to which it clung and which it was determined should be respected, sufficed to prevent it hitherto from looking askance at the ever-growing triumphs of the armies of the French Republic, and the Convention, too much taken up with its own frontiers, had done nothing to threaten the independence of the Hanseatic town.

This fact did not escape the *émigrés*, who were finding it more and more difficult to evade the rigorous look-out of the Revolutionary Government, and soon Hamburg was filled with nobles, ecclesiastics, Chouans, conspirators, Royalist agents, just as London had been some years earlier. Safe from surprises, and in constant communication with England, Germany, and Italy, this world of wanderers had discovered an ideal haven in which to hatch all their divers plots. Clubs were started by them, called after celebrated men. Rivarol was the centre of one set, noted for its intellectual stamp and its verve and wit. The publications also that saw the light in Hamburg enjoyed a wide liberty, and this it was that opened the eyes of the Republican Government to the state of things.

On September 28, 1795, there arrived at Hamburg, Citoyen Charles-Frédéric Reinhard, official representative of the Convention, formerly head of a department in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Paris. There could be no mistake about the nature of the instructions with which this personage was provided. If the condition of the commercial relations between the two states was

the official pretext for his embassy, an investigation into the affairs of the *émigrés* was its real object. The Senate of the town were quick to realize this. However, Reinhard's conciliatory bearing and his expressed dislike for the police duties imposed upon him by the Directoire prevented his mission from having too uncompromising an aspect. He could not shut his eyes, of course, to what was going on, and, in spite of his repugnance to such methods, he was forced to employ some of the tale-bearers and spies always numerous among the *émigrés*. In a short period a complete system of espionage was organized. It did not attain to the state of perfection secured by Bourienne later under the direction of Fouché, but its existence was enough to enhance the uneasiness of the Hamburg Senate. Their refusal to acquiesce in certain steps taken by the Directoire forced Reinhard to quit the town previously, in the month of February, and to take up his abode at Bremen, afterwards at Altona. This suburb of Hamburg, separated from it only by an arm of the river, was yet outside the limits of the little republic, and suited his purpose excellently as a place from which to conduct his observations. Everything that went on in Hamburg was known there within a few hours.

It was at this period that Reinhard received a visit from a somewhat sinister individual, named Colleville, who came to offer his services to the Directoire. He volunteered to keep Reinhard informed as to the doings

of the *émigrés*, to whom he had easy access. On March 5, 1796, he turned up with a lengthy document containing a wealth of particulars regarding one of the principal agents of the princes—no other than our friend d'Auerweck, for the moment a long way from Hamburg, but soon expected back. "He is one of the best-informed men to be met anywhere," Colleville reports. "He has travelled a great deal, and is *au courant* with the feeling of the various courts and ministers."

It must be admitted that the spy was well informed as to the character and record of the "little Baron." D'Auerweck would seem in intimate relations with a certain Pictet, "Windham's man." Through him he was in correspondence with Verona. He was known to be the "friend of the Baron de Wimpfen and of a M. de Saint-Croix, formerly Lieutenant-General in the Bayeux district. In his report upon d'Auerweck, Colleville had occasion inevitably to mention his friend Cormier. He stated, in fact, that at the moment d'Auerweck was located at Mme. Cormier's house in Paris in the Rue Basse-du-Rempart.

Colleville could not have begun his work better. D'Auerweck was not unknown to Reinhard, who, five months before, in a letter to Delacroix, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, had mentioned the fact of his presence in London, "where he was in frequent touch with du Moustier and the former minister Montciel."

By a curious coincidence, on the same day that Reinhard got his information, the Minister of Police in

Paris, the Citoyen Cochon, had been made aware that a congress of *émigrés* was shortly to be held at Hamburg. The agent who sent him this announcement drew his attention at the same time to the presence at Hamburg of a person named Cormier.

"It should be possible to find out through him the names of those who will be taking part in the Congress. He is a magistrate of Rennes who has been continually mixed up in intrigue. His wife has remained in Paris. . . . The correspondence of this Cormier ought to be amusing, for he is daring and has *esprit*."

Reference is made in the same communication to "the baron Varweck, a Hungarian, passing himself off as an American, living in Paris for the past five months."

This was enough to arouse the attention of the Directoire. The persistence with which the two names reappeared proved that their efforts had not slackened. By force of what circumstances had they been drawn into the great intrigue against the Revolutionary Party? It is difficult to say. For some months past Cormier's letters to Lady Atkyns had been gradually becoming fewer, at last to cease altogether. Having lost all hope in regard to the affair of the Temple, the ex-magistrate, placing trust in the general belief as to what had happened, came to the conclusion that it was vain to attempt to penetrate further into the mystery, and he decided to place his services at the disposal of the Princes.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs lost no time about

sending instructions to Reinhard, charging him to keep a sharp watch on the meeting of the *émigrés* and to learn the outcome of their infamous manœuvres. He should get Colleville, moreover, to establish relations with Cormier, "that very adroit and clever individual." In the course of a few days Reinhard felt in a position to pull the strings of his system of espionage.

Two very different parties were formed among the *émigrés* at Hamburg. That of the "Old Royalists," or of the "*ancien régime*," would hear of nothing but the restoration of the ancient monarchy; that of the "new *régime*" felt that it was necessary, in order to reinstate the monarchy, to make concessions to Republican ideas. Cormier would seem to have belonged to the former, of which he was the only enterprising member. His brother-in-law, Butler, kept on the move between Paris and Boulogne, and Calais and Dunkirk, with letters and supplies of money from England. D'Auerweck had left Paris now and was in England, eager to join Cormier at Hamburg, but prevented by illness.

Cormier was now in open correspondence with the King, to whom he had proposed the publication of a gazette in the Royalist interest. He was in frequent communication, too, with the Baron de Roll, the Marquis de Nesle, Rivarol, and the Abbé Louis, and all the "monarchical fanatics." Despite his age, in short, he was becoming more active and enterprising than ever. Too clever not to perceive that he was being specially watched, he was not long in getting the spy into his

own service by means of bribes, and making him collaborate in the hoodwinking of the Minister. The report that had got about concerning his actions, however, disquieted the Princes, and at the end of June Cormier is said to have received a letter from the Comte d'Artois forbidding him "to have anything more to say to his affairs," and reproaching him in very sharp terms. At the same period, Butler, to whose ears the same report had found its way, wrote to rebuke him severely for his indiscretion, and broke off all communication with him. Meanwhile, he was in pecuniary difficulties, and borrowing money from any one who would lend, so altogether his position was becoming critical. Soon he would have to find a refuge elsewhere.

When, in the autumn, Baron d'Auerweck managed to get to Hamburg, he found his old friend in a state of great discouragement, and with but one idea in his head—that of getting back somehow to Paris and living the rest of his days there in obscurity.

The arrival of the "18th Brumaire" and the establishment of the Consulate facilitated, probably, the realization of this desire. There is no record of how he brought his sojourn at Hamburg to an end. D'Auerweck we find offering his services to Reinhard, who formed a high estimate of his talents. His offer, however, was not entertained. At this point the "little Baron" also disappears for a time from our sight.

It is about this period that Cormier and d'Auerweck fall definitively apart, never again to cross each other's path.

Reassured by the calm that began to reign now in Paris, and by the fact that other *émigrés* who had returned to the capital were being left unmolested, Cormier made his way back furtively one day to the Rue Basse-du-Rempart, where the Citoyenne Butler still resided. The former president of the Massiac Club returned to his ancient haunts a broken-down old man. Like so many others, he found it difficult to recognize the Paris he now saw, transformed as it was, and turned inside out by the Revolution. Wherever he turned, his ears were met with the sound of one name—Bonaparte, the First Consul. What did it all matter to him? His return had but one object, that of re-establishing his health and letting his prolonged absence sink into oblivion. The continual travelling and his ups and downs in foreign countries had brought him new maladies in addition to his old enemy the gout. He had lost half his fortune, through the pillaging of his estates in San Domingo. Thus, such of his acquaintances as had known him in the old days, seeing him now on his return, sympathized with him in his misfortunes and infirmities.

He seemed warranted, therefore, in counting upon security in Paris. The one thing that threatened him was that unfortunate entry in the list of *émigrés*, in which his name figured with that of his son. In the hope of getting the names erased, he set out one day early in November, 1800, for the offices of the Prefecture of the Seine. There he took the oath of fidelity

to the Constitution. It was a step towards getting the names definitely erased. His long stay in Hamburg was a serious obstacle in the way, but both he and his son looked forward confidently now to the success of their efforts.

Suddenly, on August 21, 1801, a number of police officials made their appearance at Cormier's abode to arrest him by order of the Minister of Police. His first feeling was one of stupefaction. With what was he charged? Had they got wind of his doings in England? Had some indiscretion betrayed him? He recovered himself, however, and led his visitors into all the various apartments, they taking possession of all the papers discovered, and sealing up the glass door leading into Achille's bedroom, he being absent at the time. This investigation over, Cormier and the officials proceeded to the Temple, and a few hours later he found himself imprisoned in the Tower.

What thoughts must have passed through his mind as he traversed successively those courts and alleys, and then mounted the steps of the narrow stairway leading to the upper storeys of the dungeon!

In the anguish of his position had he room in his mind for thoughts of those days in London when the name of the grim edifice was so often on his lips?

Three days passed before he could learn any clue as to the cause of his arrest. At last, on August 24, he was ordered to appear before a police magistrate to undergo his trial. An account of this trial, or

interrogatoire, is in existence, and most curious it is to note the way in which it was conducted. The warrant for his arrest recorded that he was accused "of conspiracy, and of being in the pay of the foreigner." These terms suggested that Cormier's residence in England, or at least in Hamburg, was known to his accusers. Had not the Minister of Police in one of his portfolios a *dossier* of some importance, full of all kinds of particulars calculated to "do" for him? Strange to relate, there is to be found no allusion to this doubtful past of his in the examination.

After the usual inquiries as to name, age, and dwelling-place, the magistrate proceeds—

"What is your occupation?"

"I have none except trying to get rid of gout and gravel."

"Have you not been away from France during the Revolution?"

"I have served in the war in La Vendée against the Republic from the beginning down to the capitulation. You will find my deed of amnesty among my papers."

"What was your grade?"

"I was entrusted with correspondence."

"With whom did you correspond abroad?"

"With the different agents of the Prince—the Bishop of Arras, the Duc d'Harcourt, Gombrieul, etc."

"Did you not keep up this correspondence after you were amnested?"

"I gave up all the correspondence eight months before peace was declared."

"Do you recognize this sealed cardboard box?"

"Yes, citoyen."

And that was all! Cormier's replies, however, so innocent on the surface, seem to have evoked suspicion,

for on August 30 (12 Fructidor) he was brought up again for a second examination.

"With whom did you correspond especially in the West?" he was asked.

"With Scépeaux, d'Antichamp, Boigny, and Brulefort."

"And now what correspondence have you kept in this country?"

"None whatever."

"What are your relations with the Citoyen Butler?"

"I have had no communication these last two years, though he is my brother-in-law."

"Where is he now?"

"I have no idea. I know he passed through Philadelphia on his way to San Domingo. I don't know whether he ever got there or whether he returned."

"When was he at Philadelphia?"

"He must have been there or somewhere in the United States not more than two years ago."

Thus no effort was made in the second inquiry any more than in the first to search into his past. It should be mentioned that immediately on his return Cormier had made haste to destroy all documents that could compromise him in any way.

After a detention of three weeks he was set free, his age and infirmities doubtless having won him some sympathy. He and his son—for Achille had been arrested at the same time—were, however, not accorded complete liberty, being placed *en surveillance*, and obliged to live outside Paris. On September 20 they were provided with a passport taking them to Etampes,

whence they were not to move away without permission from the police.

At this period Fouché had immense powers, and was organizing and regulating the enormous administrative machine which developed under his rule into the Ministry of Police. The prisons overflowed with men under arrest who had never appeared before the ordinary tribunal, "on account of the danger there was of their being acquitted in the absence of legal evidence against them." He was reduced to keeping the rest under what was styled "*une demi-surveillance.*" His army of spies and secret agents enabled him to keep *au courant* with their every step.

The reports furnished as to Cormier's behaviour seem to have satisfied the authorities, for at the end of a certain time he was enabled to return to Paris. Having learnt by experience how unsatisfactory it was to be continually at the mercy of informers, he now set himself energetically to trying to secure a regular and complete amnesty. His petition was addressed to the First Consul on June 18, 1803, and in it he described himself as "crippled with infirmities," and it was covered with marginal notes strongly recommending him to the mercy of the chief of the state.

At last, on October 10, the Minister of Police acceded to his request, and Cormier received a certificate of amnesty, freeing him henceforth from all prosecution "on the score of emigration." With what a sense of relief must not this document have been welcomed in

the Rue Basse-du-Rempart! Bent under the weight of his sufferings, Cormier enjoyed the most devoted care at the hands of his family. His younger son, Patrice, had returned to Paris after an existence not less adventurous than his father's. He had thrown himself into the insurrection in La Vendée, and for three years had served in the Royalist army of the Maine. Benefiting, like his father, by the general amnesty, he found his way back to the paternal roof in Paris, and went into business, so as to throw a veil over his past, until the day should come when he might appear in uniform again.

Achille, the elder, devoted himself entirely to his father, but the old man was not to enjoy much longer the peace he had at length secured for himself. The loss of almost all his income forced him, moreover, to quit his residence in the Rue Basse-du-Rempart, and to betake himself to a modest pension in the Faubourg Saint Antoine, in which he occupied a single room, in which he kept only a few items from the furniture of his old home—some rose-wood chairs, a writing-table, a desk with a marble top, a *prie-dieu*, and a small wooden desk, "*dit à la Tronchin.*" The rest of his furniture he sold. It was in this humble lodging that he died on April 16, 1805, aged sixty-five. Some months later Mme. Cormier died at the house in Rue Basse-du-Rempart.

It is strange to reflect that Lady Atkyns, in the course of her many visits to Paris, should not have ever

sought to meet again her old friend. The Emperor's rule was gaining in strength from day to day. Of those who had played notable parts in the Revolution, some, won over to the new Government, were doing their utmost to merit by their zeal the confidence reposed in them; the others, irreconcilable, but crushed by the remorseless watchfulness of a police force unparalleled in its powers, lived on forgotten, and afraid to take any step that might attract attention to them. This, perhaps, is the explanation of the silence of the various actors in the drama of the Temple, once the Empire had been established.

CHAPTER VII

THE "LITTLE BARON"

CORMIER'S departure did not for a single moment interrupt the fiery activity of Baron d'Auerweck, nor his co-operation in the most audacious enterprises of the agents of Princes and of the Princes themselves. He lost, it is true, a mentor whose advice was always worthy of attention, and who had guided him up to the present time with a certain amount of success; but the ingenious fellow was by no means at the end of his resources. The life which he had led for the past five years was one which exactly suited him. A practically never-ending list might be drawn up of acquaintances made in the course of his continual comings and goings, of encounters in this army of emissaries serving the counter-Revolution, and of particularly prosperous seasons. Besides the d'Antraigues, the Fauche-Borels, and the Dutheils, there was a regular army of subordinates, bustling about Europe as though it were a vast anthill.

Amongst them d'Auerweck could not fail to be prominent, and he was soon marked as a clever and

resourceful agent. His sojourn in Hamburg also continued to arouse curiosity and observation on the part of the representatives of the Directoire. They recognized now that he was employed and paid by England. "He serves her with an activity worthy of the Republican Government," Reinhard wrote to Talleyrand; and it was well known that Peltier's former collaborator, always an energetic journalist, assisted in editing the *Spectateur du Nord.*

An unlooked-for opportunity to exploit his talent soon offered itself to d'Auerweck.

The Deputies of the ten states, which at that time formed the Empire, had been brought together by the congress which opened at Rastadt on December 9, 1797, and for eighteen months there was an extraordinary amount of visits to and departures from the little town in Baden. The presence of Bonaparte, who had arrived some days before the commencement of the conference in an eight-horse coach, with a magnificent escort, and welcomed throughout his journey as the victor of Arcole, increased the solemnity and scope of the negotiations. All the diplomatists, with their advisers, their secretaries, and their clerks, crowded anxiously round him. Agents from all the European Powers came to pick up greedily any scraps of information, and to try to worm out any secrets that might exist. Rastadt was full to overflowing of spies and plotters, and the name of this quiet, peaceful city, hitherto so undisturbed, was in every one's mouth.

From Hamburg the "little Baron" followed attentively the first proceedings of the Congress through the medium of the newspapers, but the sedentary life which he was leading began to worry him. In vain he wrote out all day long never-ending political treatises, crammed with learned notes on the European situation, wove the most fantastic systems, and drew up "a plan for the partition of France, which he proposed to a certain M. du Nicolay;" all this was not sufficient for him. D'Auerweck was on friendly terms with the Secretary of the French Legation, Lemaître by name (who, by the way, had no scruples about spying on him some years later, and informed against him without a blush), and, giving full play "to his romantic imagination and to his taste for sensational enterprises," he one day submitted to his confidant a scheme to "kidnap the Minister, Reinhard, and carry him off to London; his attendants were to be made intoxicated, his coachman to be bribed, ten English sailors to be hidden on the banks of the Elbe!" At the back of these schemes of mystery there figured a certain "Swiss and Genevan Agency," which at the proper time would, he declared, generously reimburse them for all their expenditure. But, for all these foolish imaginings, d'Auerweck displayed a knowledge of the world and a sound judgment which struck all those who came in contact with him, and it was certain that with strong and firm guidance he was capable of doing much good and useful work. In the winter of 1798 we are told that "he left Hamburg

secretly" for an unknown destination. Lemaître believed that he had buried himself "in the depths of Silesia," but he had no real knowledge of his man. For, as a matter of course, d'Auerweck was bound to be attracted to such a centre of affairs as Rastadt then was, in order to make the most profitable use of his ingenuity, seeing that, according to report, the British Government, which was making use of his services, in fear of being kept in the dark as to what was going on, had begged him "to go and exercise his wits in another place."

He made Baden his headquarters, for the proximity of Rastadt, and his intimacy with the de Gelb family, which has already been mentioned, led him to prefer Baden to the actual field of battle, at which place he must have come under suspicion as an old English agent. One of the Austrian envoys at the Congress was Count Lehrbach; and d'Auerweck managed to get into relations with him, and even to be allowed to do secretarial work for him, on the strength of the connection which he declared he had possessed with Minister Thugut during the early days of the Revolution and the confidence which had lately been reposed in him. He had reason to hope that with the help of his ability and his gift of languages he would soon be able to secure active employment. And, indeed, it was in this way that d'Auerweck succeeded in re-establishing himself at once, to his great satisfaction, as an active agent, with a footing in the highest places, ferreting

out the secrets of the Ambassadors, and carrying on an underhand correspondence openly. His intention was, doubtless, to return to Austria as soon as the Congress was over, by the help of Count Lehrbach, and there to regain the goodwill of his former patron, the Minister Thugut.

But the sanguinary drama which brought the Conference to such an abrupt conclusion completely spoiled his plans and undid his most brilliant combinations. We can realize the universal feeling of consternation throughout the whole of Europe which was caused by the news that on the evening of April 28, 1799, the French Ministers, Bonnier, Roberjot, and Debry, who had just made up their minds to betake themselves to Strasburg, along with their families, their servants, and their records—a party filling eight carriages—had been openly attacked as they were leaving Rastadt by Barbaczy's Hussars; that the two first-mentioned gentlemen had been dragged from their carriages and treacherously murdered, and that the third, Debry, had alone escaped by a miracle. Even if the outrage of Rastadt was "neither the cause nor the pretext of the war of 1799," its consequences were, nevertheless, very serious.

One of these consequences, and not the least important, was that Bonaparte's police, magnificently reorganized by Fouché, redoubled its shepherding of *émigrés* and agents of the Princes, who swarmed in the country-side between Basle, the general

headquarters of the spies, and Mayence. Once an arrest took place, the accused was certain to be suspected of having had a hand in the assassination of the plenipotentiaries, and if by any bad luck he was unable to deny having been present in the district, he found it a very difficult task to escape from the serious results of this accusation.

A few months after this stirring event, Baron d'Auerweck, tired of such a stormy existence, and seeing, perhaps, a shadow of the sword of Damocles hanging over his head, determined himself to break away from this life of agitation, and to settle down with a wife. During the last days of the year 1799 he was married at Baden to Mademoiselle Fanny de Gelb, a native of Strasburg, whose father had lately served under Condé; she also had a brother who was an officer in the army of the Princes. But, in spite of a pension which the mother, Madame de Gelb, was paid by England on account of her dead husband's services, the available resources of the future establishment were very meagre indeed, for the "little Baron" had not learned to practise economy while rushing about Europe; so, as soon as the marriage had been celebrated, the turn of the wheel of fortune forced the young wife to leave the Grand Duchy of Baden and to wander from town to town in Germany and Austria.

They travelled first to Munich and then to Nuremburg, but d'Auerweck's plans were to establish himself in Austria close to all his belongings. He had the fond

hope of obtaining employment from Minister Thugut, to whom he reintroduced himself. But he experienced a bitter disappointment, for his on first attempt to submit to his Excellency the greater part of his last work (in which he had embodied, as the result of desperate toil, his views on the present political situation, the outcome of his conversations with the representatives of the different European states, his reflections and his forecast of events) d'Auerweck found himself unceremoniously dismissed. Thugut flatly refused, if the story is to be believed, to have anything further to do with a man who was still suspected of being an English emissary. Consequently he was obliged to abandon his idea of establishing himself in Austria, and to hunt for other means of existence, more particularly as Madame d'Auerweck had just presented him with his first child at Nuremburg. He turned his steps once again in the direction of the Grand Duchy, and after successive visits to Friburg, Basle, and Baden, he decided to make his home in Schutterwald, a village on the outskirts of the town of Offenburg. There he determined to lead the life of a simple, honest citizen, and renting a very humble peasant's cottage, he installed his wife and his mother-in-law therein. He himself set to work on the cultivation of his garden, devoting his spare moments to writing, so as not to lose the knack, the sequel to his *Philosophical and Historical Reflections.*

He soon got to know his neighbours and all the inhabitants of the country very well. He was considered

to be a quiet, unenterprising man, "with a positive dislike for politics, although loquacious and vain." It was impossible to find out anything about his past life, for the prudent Baron considered it inadvisable to talk of this subject, but he was always looked upon "as an argumentative man, who wanted to know all that was going on, whether in reference to agriculture, to thrift, or to politics." In spite of the apparent tranquillity in which he was allowed to remain, d'Auerweck followed with a certain amount of anxiety all the events which were happening not far from him, on the frontier of the Rhine. Troops were continually passing to and fro in this district; the French were close at hand, and their arrival at Offenburg inspired a feeling of vague unrest in him, although he never recognized, to tell the truth, the danger which threatened him. He had taken the precaution to destroy, before coming to Switzerland, his vast collection of papers: all that mass of correspondence which had been accumulating for the last few years, those reports and instructions, all of which constituted a very compromising record. At last, after a residence of some months, to make matters safe, he contrived, thanks to his marriage, to be enrolled as a freeman of the Grand Duchy; for it seemed to him that as a subject of Baden he would be relieved of all further cause of alarm.

But all d'Auerweck's fears were reawakened by the much-talked-of news of the Duc d'Enghien's arrest on March 15, 1804, and by the details of how the Prince

had been captured openly in the jurisdiction of Baden, at Ettenheim, that is to say, only a short distance from Offenburg. He absented himself for some days from Schutterwald, so the story goes, and took himself to the mountains.

Just at the same time there arrived at the offices of the Ministry of Police in Paris a succession of memoranda, mostly anonymous, referring to Baron d'Auerweck, and to his presence in the neighbourhood of the Rhine.

Some of them came from Lemaître, Reinhard's former secretary at Hamburg. Many of them, inexact and inaccurate as they were with regard to the details of the alleged facts, agreed on this point, viz. that the individual "was one of those men, who are so powerful for good or bad, that the security of every Government requires complete information as to their resting-places and their doings." Then followed a medley of gossiping insinuations, the precise import of which it was difficult to discover.

"I shall never forget," said one, "that, when d'Auerweck left Hamburg two months before the assassination of the French Ministers in order to take up his quarters only three leagues away from Rastadt, he said: '*I am about to undertake an operation which will make a great sensation, and which will render great service to the cause of the Coalition.*'"

"Now supervenes a whole year, during which his doings and his whereabouts are most carefully concealed," wrote another; "however, I am certain that he is acting and working pertinaciously against the interests of France. I have heard him make this remark: '*We shall take some time doing it, but at last we shall conquer you.*'" A third added: "His tranquillity and his silence are but masks for

his activity, and I, for one, could never be persuaded that he has all of a sudden ceased to correspond with *Lord Grenville* in London, with the *Count de Romanzof*, with a certain *Nicolai* in St. Petersburg, with *Prince Belmonte*, with the *Chevalier de Saint-Andre*, with *Roger de Damas* in Italy, with *Dumoustier*, who is, I believe, a Hohenlohe Prince in Berlin, and directly with the Count de Lille." Finally, d'Auerweck, according to the same report, "complaisantly displayed a spot in the shape of the fleur-de-lys, inside his fist, declaring that 'this is a sign of descent; it is a mark of predestination; I of all men am bound to devote myself and assist in the return of the Bourbons!'"

It would be a fatal mistake to believe that these fairy tales, all vague and absurd as they often were, remained lost and forgotten in the despatch-boxes of the Ministry of Police. The region, near as it was to Rastadt, where d'Auerweck was reported to have made his appearance, was a valuable and important indication, which of itself was sufficient to make the man an object for watchful suspicion. The ominous nature of the times must, of course, be remembered. Fouché, who had just been restored to favour, and had been placed for the second time at the head of the Ministry of Police, was anxious to prove his zeal afresh, to please the Emperor and to deserve his confidence, while his mind was still troubled by the execution of the Duc d'Enghien, by the exploits of Georges Cadoudal, and by the discovery of the English Agency at Bordeaux, which were all fitting reasons for attracting the Minister's attention and for exciting his curiosity. So, when on October 11, 1804, his Excellency decided to make further searching investigations into d'Auerweck's case, and gave precise

orders to the prefects of the frontier departments of the Grand Duchy, it is doubtful whether he was careful to note in his charge the principal reasons for attaching suspicion upon the Baron, viz. those which had to do with the assassination of the plenipotentiaries at Rastadt.

It was some time before the required information could be obtained, and though the first inquiries about d'Auerweck made by Desportes, the prefect of the Upper Rhine, added little in the way of news, they agreed, nevertheless, in certifying that the Baron lived very quietly in the outskirts of Offenburg—

"that he there devoted himself entirely to his agricultural occupations, and that the kind of life he led did not foster any suspicion that he kept up his old campaigns of intrigue."

Six months later, Desportes, in returning to the subject, showed himself more positive than ever, for he affirmed—

"that no active correspondence can be traced to d'Auerweck, and that he saw scarcely any one. He is a man of a caustic and critical turn of mind, who often lets himself go in conversation without reflection in his anxiety to talk brilliantly. A point which is particularly reassuring about him is that he is without credit, without fortune, and of no personal account, and that if he wanted to mix himself up afresh in intrigues he would choose some other place than Offenburg, where there are now only three *émigrés*, the youngest of whom is seventy-seven years of age."

But, in spite of these very positive statements, the Minister preserved his attitude of mistrust, which was

strengthened by the arrival of fresh notes, in which the same denunciations of the "little Baron" were repeated. He was described as being "restless by inclination, violently fanatical in all his opinions, and longing to make himself notorious by some startling act." But his position was made worse by the information which was received, that in the autumn of 1805 d'Auerweck had absented himself from home for several days, frightened, no doubt, by the proximity of the French armies, which were dotted about on the banks of the Rhine. How could this sudden flight be accounted for? And his alarm at the sight of the Emperor's soldiers at close quarters? Such conduct struck Fouché as being very suspicious. He ordered a supplementary inquiry, and this time he did not content himself with the information afforded by the prefect of the Upper Rhine, but let loose one of his best bloodhounds on his scent. At the time, two years ago, when preparations were being made for the kidnapping of the Duc d'Enghien and for watching his residence at Ettenheim, recourse was had to the services of the Commissary of Police, Popp by name, who was stationed at Strasburg. In this frontier town near Basle an active and intelligent man was needed, who could maintain a constant watch on the underhand practices of the Royalist agents. Commissary Popp seemed to be made for the job. His handling of the Duc d'Enghien's affairs earned the approval of Napoleon; and Fouché, since his reinstatement in the Ministry, recognized in him a clever

and expert functionary, on whom he could always count.

This was the man who was charged with the task of spying on d'Auerweck, and throughout the whole of 1806 Popp was hard at work on this mission. His original authentications differed very little from what Desportes had written, and there was nothing to prove that the Baron had in any way departed from his passive attitude.

"I have not discovered," wrote Popp on April 22, 1806, "that he is in correspondence with the English agitation, or that he shows any inclination to excite and embitter people's tempers. I believe that he, like many others, is more to be pitied than to be feared."

Some weeks later Popp managed to loosen the tongue of an ecclesiastic, a dweller in those parts, and from him he got information about the business and movements of the Baron. "He is quite absorbed in rural economy, which is his chief thought to all appearances," he reported to Fouché; but then, stung to the quick by the repeated orders of his chief (who never ceased from impressing upon him the necessity for the closest watch on d'Auerweck's traffickings), Popp, impatient for an opportunity to prove his zeal, began to magnify his words by introducing subtle insinuations.

By this time d'Auerweck had come to the conclusion that his stay at Schutterwald was too uncomfortable, and having heard of a bit of land at a reasonable price in Elgersweier, which was not far from Offenburg, indeed about the same distance from the town, he made

up his mind to take shelter there and to build a little house, which would be his own property. The question was asked how could he, whom every one looked upon as a penniless man, obtain the funds required to complete this bargain? Without doubt he borrowed from his mother-in-law, Madame de Gelb, who had always lived with him, and whose modest income was so pleasantly augmented by the pension which she received from the English Government. And so, in the middle of the summer of 1806, the "little Baron" transported his penates to Elgersweier, where he settled his belongings very comfortably. By this time two other sons, Armand and Louis, had been added to the one born at Munich, and shortly after arriving at the new home Madame d'Auerweck gave birth to a daughter, who was named Adelaide.

Commissary Popp knew all about these happenings, and his supervision never slackened for an instant. Encouraged by his success in arranging the preliminaries for the affair at Ettenheim, he was perfectly prepared to repeat the operation. With this in view, he began to show the Minister, in ambiguous language at first, his very good and sufficient reasons for desiring d'Auerweck's presence in France. If necessary, he urged, we could easily get permission from the Grand Duke of Baden to arrest him in his own home. This suggestion was expressed very cautiously at first, but was soon made more explicit, although there was not the slightest shadow of an excuse for such violence, for all his

statements agreed in demonstrating the perfectly peaceful nature of the "little Baron's" existence.

"It would be advisable to make certain of his person," wrote Popp, "and my opinion will always be the same if certain difficulties with the House of Austria happen to be renewed; for d'Auerweck, posted as a sentinel on the opposite bank, and doubtless possessing friends on our side, would be one of the very first bearers of information about our military position and political topography."

About the same time, Bourrienne, one of Minister Reinhard's successors at Hamburg, arrested an *émigré* who had lately landed from London, and who was supposed to be in possession of important secrets. This was the Viscount de Butler, Cormier's half-brother, who, after having "worked," as we have seen, for the Royalist Committee in London, now found himself stranded in Hamburg in the greatest misery. It was decided to send him to Paris, as he offered to give up certain documents. He was imprisoned in the Temple, and there questioned by Desmarets, who extracted from him all kinds of information with regard to his missions. Naturally, Butler related all he knew about d'Auerweck, how he had made his acquaintance, and what sort of terms he was on with Dutheil and with Lord Grenville. As his answers proved satisfactory he was sent back to Hamburg, where Bourrienne continued to make use of him for many years.

Finally, to complete the bad luck, the police were warned of a certain Sieur de Gelb, a former officer in the army of the Princes, whose behaviour had been

discovered to be very mysterious, and who paid frequent visits to the frontier. Now, this *émigré* was no other than Baron d'Auerweck's brother-in-law.

All these stories, cleverly made the most of and carefully improved upon, served to greatly excite the curiosity of the Minister of Police, all the more as the Royalists were showing much increased activity in many places. To add to the effect, Normandy became the theatre of several audacious surprises, such as coaches being robbed, convoys plundered, and attacks on the high road, many of which were the handiwork of the inhabitants of the castle of Tournebut, led by the Viscount d'Aché and the famous Chevalier. Besides, the Emperor was waging war in Prussia at the head of his armies, a thousand leagues from Paris, and in his absence the conspirators' audacity redoubled; but he did not lose sight of them, and from his distant camps he kept so closely in touch with all that was happening in France that he compelled Fouché's incessant vigilance. An event which took place next year, when war with Germany broke out afresh, clearly demonstrated once more the danger of attracting for too long the attention of his Excellency the Minister of Police.

One evening, in the month of June, 1807, a policeman on his rounds noticed in one of the squares in the town of Cassel a young man behaving very strangely, and speechifying in the middle of a crowd. He drew near, and ascertained that the individual, who was very excited, was pouring forth a stream of insults and

threats against Napoleon, whom he went so far as to call "a good-for-nothing scamp." This was quite enough to decide the representative of public order upon arresting the silly fellow. He was taken off to the police station and questioned. He stated that his name was Jean-Rodolphe Bourcard, "formerly a ribbon manufacturer," aged twenty-three years, and that he was a native of Basle, in Switzerland. In the course of his examination it was discovered that he had arrived the same day from Hamburg, and that he was full of some very suspicious projects. His story caused him to be suspected, and a report was promptly drawn up for transmission to Paris. Cassel was destined before very long to become the capital of the new kingdom of Westphalia, created for Jerome Bonaparte, and the police supervision of *émigrés* was exercised as strictly there as in every other part of France. While waiting for orders a search was made in the lodging-house whence the prisoner had come. Nothing much was found in his scanty luggage; some papers, one of which was "a plan and a description of the battle of Austerlitz," and besides this two or three apparently mysterious notes. One of them contained the words: "*Must see Louis—without Louis nothing can be done.*" Everything was minutely collected together, and some days later Bourcard was sent off for a compulsory visit to Paris.

He was put in the Temple, and, although it was easy to see from his talk and his strange behaviour that he was a madman, subject to fits of violence, Fouché could

not make up his mind to let him go. The examination of his record and the papers which were found in his possession had suddenly given the Minister an ingenious idea. Who could this *Louis* be who was obviously connected with Bourcard? Certainly a Royalist spy, since the man of Basle had just come from Hamburg, the headquarters of these people. And the Record Office of the Ministry contained many notes referring to a "well-known agent of England and of Austria," Baron Louis d'Auerweck of Steilengels, who was known to be living on the banks of the Rhine. There was no room for doubt: this person "had assumed the name of Louis in the various missions which he had undertaken." Was not this the man who was denoted by Bourcard's note?

Fouché was fascinated by this solution, and, anxious to have it verified, he seized upon the unhoped-for opportunity which had presented itself. And that was why an order was sent from Paris on July 17, 1807, to immediately effect the arrest of the "little Baron." It would, however, have been impolitic and almost impossible to make use of the same violent measures which had been employed in the Duc d' Enghien's case. Besides, Massias, the French Chargé d'Affaires at the Grand Duke of Baden's court at Carlsruhe, when he received Fouché's letter, considered it necessary, in order to carry out his chief's commands, to obtain the Grand Duke's permission and assistance before moving in the matter.

"But," he wrote to Fouché, "my seven years' experience had firmly convinced me that, if I ask for this person's arrest by the ordinary process of an official letter, he will be warned and will manage to make his escape, so I think I should set off the same day for Baden, where the Baron de Gemmingen, the Cabinet Minister, is now staying with his Royal Highness, for I have on several occasions received proofs of his kindly disposition towards me."

Massias was not mistaken; his application to the Sovereign of Baden met with immediate and complete success. For the latter, who knew none of the details of the case—not even that d'Auerweck was his own subject—and did not want to offend the Emperor, listened to his representative's petition, and the same day issued orders, from his palace of La Favorite in the outskirts of Baden, to M. Molitor, the Grand Ducal Commissary, to act in concert with Massias, and with the help of the police of Baden to arrest Baron d'Auerweck. For Massias had pointed out that if the order were sent in the first place to the bailiff of Offenburg, "where d'Auerweck must have formed many friendships," there were a thousand reasons for fearing that the latter would receive warning, "for he is a vigilant man and is on his guard. At Elgersweier no one had the slightest inkling of the impending danger. The "little Baron" had just returned from one of those expeditions which the police were watching so carefully, and had gone in to see his wife, who had lately given birth to her fourth child. For d'Auerweck had settled down a short time before in his new home, and was perfectly content to enjoy the peaceful existence,

which allowed him to move about and finish his *Historical Notes on Hugues Capet*, and his *Dissertation upon the Secularization of Germany under French Methods.*

So it can be imagined what a crushing blow was dealt him when Commissary Molitor and his assistants appeared at Elgersweier unexpectedly on the evening of July 23, 1807. We can picture the "little Baron's" agitation, his distorted face, as he went himself to admit the police officers; his wife's despair; the house rummaged from cellar to garret; the cries of the children woken up by the hubbub; Madame de Gelb's indignation; and then the setting forth, in the midst of the police, of the unhappy head of the family, in spite of his useless protestations, and the broken-hearted family, overwhelmed by stupefaction, in their ravished home.

The prisoner soon recovered his presence of mind, and at Offenburg, where he was taken, he set to work to prepare his defence to the best of his ability, and he soon drew up a justificatory document, which was designed to confound his accusers. At the same time —luckily for d'Auerweck—the Grand Duke found out that it was one of his subjects who was concerned, and he withdrew the authority for arrest which he had given, and issued orders to keep the Baron and his papers for his disposal. The preliminary examination of these documents plainly demonstrated the flimsy nature of the charge, and that there was no justification for the outrage which had been committed.

The day after the fateful event, Madame de Gelb went to La Favorite, and, throwing herself at her Sovereign's feet, implored him to protect her son-in-law. She described the falsity of the charges brought against him, the distress of the mother and of the four children. The Grand Duke could not but be touched by this petition, although he was anxious not to displease M. Fouché.

"I am transported with delight," Massias said to Councillor Gemmingen, "at having so successfully executed the commands of the Minister of Police, for they were not easy of accomplishment;" and he added, in order to appease the Grand Duke's fears and regrets, "This affair seems to have taken a turn, which is very fortunate for the prisoner; and I have already advised his Excellency the Minister about it. You can assure his Royal Highness that I will do my very best to finish off the case in a way that shall be agreeable to both Governments."

But such a result seemed very unlikely, for it would have required very strong compulsion to make Fouché renounce his plan, more especially now that the arrest was an accomplished fact. It seemed absolutely necessary to him to extradite d'Auerweck and to fetch him to Paris; and he had already, by August 5, warned the Prefect of the department of Mont Tonnerre and Moncey, the Inspector-General of Police, to be in readiness "to take charge of and to escort Lord d'Auerweck."

It was just at this time that Commissary Popp, whose assistance had not been utilized as much as he hoped it would be, began to be worried by the silence

which was observed as far as he was concerned, and he entreated his Minister not to allow the Baron to slip out of his hands.

"It was very distasteful to have to make this arrest," he said, "and it was only effected because it was necessary; and you can guess how carefully, under these circumstances, we have examined his papers, which it was of supreme importance to lay our hands upon."

However, these papers, which Popp so confidently reckoned would expose the Baron's intrigues, were found to consist only of purely private correspondence, altogether wanting in political interest; besides the historical works undertaken by d'Auerweck, the search of his house had only brought to light some insignificant letters, amongst which were "a bundle of love letters which d'Auerweck had exchanged with a young *émigrée* now settled in London. It appears that this entanglement did not meet with the approval of the young lady's uncle, the girl having lost her parents when she was fifteen years of age."

The Grand Duke, having heard these particulars, was all the more unwilling to hand over his unfortunate subject to Fouché and his myrmidons. He was convinced "of his perfect innocence." Therefore the Baron de Dalberg, his Ambassador in Paris, was charged "to urge His Excellency, Minister Fouché, most forcibly to cease from troubling these persons, who were very sincerely to be pitied." But he only encountered the most obstinate resistance. Fouché had received the

plea of exculpation, which d'Auerweck had drawn up two days after his arrest, but he decided it was insufficient, "because it only touched lightly on many of the principal details of his intrigues, and it did not refer at all to his doings before 1800," and in the margin of the sheet he recorded his sentiments in a kind of cross-examination.

"With whom had he had dealings since his second journey to Paris? Where did he lodge? To whom in London had he written? Did he not hide himself in a house in the Rue Basse-du-Rempart?

"What commission had he been charged with at Rastadt? Had he not made this extraordinary remark to some one before he left Hamburg: '*I am going to Rastadt; you will soon hear of a great event, in which I shall have had a hand*'"?

And Fouché went on to allude to the Baron's hurried flight at the time when the French troops were drawing near.

"Why did you fly at the time of the commencement of hostilities? You are not a Frenchman? If you had not intrigued against France, or even if you had ceased to intrigue, why did you leave your wife because our troops were about to arrive, since you were a German and settled in Germany on the territory of a Prince, who is on good terms with this same France? But we have reason to believe that you were still carrying on your intrigues. We have reason to think that you came secretly to Paris five or six months ago. You were seen in the Rue de Richelieu. Further, we have reason to think that, stationed as you were on our frontier, you were perilously inclined by your long experience as a spy to continue to spy on us, and that you did not confine yourself to a correspondence with our enemies, but actually controlled men of the class of those whom you directed at Rastadt according to your own acknowledgment."

Such were the complaints formulated by the Minister, and they were sufficient, it must be admitted, to convince him of the importance of his capture. Even if the Baron's past life since 1800 could be voluntarily ignored—although this past life could not fail to arouse a host of just suspicions—there still remained his complicity in the drama of Rastadt, and also the coincidence —though not a very convincing one—of Bourcard's arrest with the Baron's presence on the banks of the Rhine. So Fouché, in his reply to Baron de Dalberg, who had begged him to comply with his requests, wished to show that he had made up his mind.

"You understand, monsieur, from what has passed," he wrote on August 29, "that Baron d'Auerweck cannot be set free, and that it is necessary to convey him to Paris in order to give his explanation of the fresh and singular information which has been received about him. Your Excellency may rest assured that his examination will be conducted with perfect impartiality, such as he may desire, and that he will obtain the fullest justice, if he can clear himself."

The unfortunate Baron had now been kicking his heels for more than a month in the jail at Offenburg, where he was kept under observation day and night by a sentinel. The heat was intense, and d'Auerweck, suffering as he was from an internal complaint, which made his detention all the harder to bear, cursed his bad luck. He reproached his Sovereign in picturesque language with having allowed him to be imprisoned without any proof of crime upon "knavish accusations," him—

"a citizen, a man of valour, whose honour no man doubts; whose fair dealing every one confides in; who is not ashamed to show his love of religion, and whose life is by no means a useless one; who has sufficient brains to have principles, and sufficient heart to sacrifice himself for his principles when they demand it; whose head and heart are in harmony; who has taken no part in political events except according to his oath and his duty; who, in short, has for the past five years lived as a peasant in a little house, which he had built himself, there tending his garden and rearing his children."

The Grand Duke, touched by the truth of these reproaches, did his best to avoid granting Fouché's demand. He believed he had hit upon an expedient when he proposed to the Minister to send the prisoner only as far as Strasburg, where the French Justiciary could examine him comfortably. But Fouché showed himself unmanageable, so fifteen days later the Grand Duke, tired of the struggle, and with the excuse of "the ties of friendship and the peculiar harmony which existed with the French Court," at last consented to the extradition of Baron D'Auerweck, although—

'His Highness considered that he had the right to expect to be spared the unpleasantness of having to hand over to a foreign jurisdiction one of his subjects, against whom there did not exist any properly established suspicions, and whose papers furnished no proof against him."

Once again the wrathful spectre of Napoleon, ready to crush the man who opposed his will, had succeeded in triumphing over everything which could be hoped for from justice and good laws.

On September 22 Commissary Molitor took d'Auerweck out of the prison of Offenburg and brought him to Strasburg to hand him over to the French police. In order to preserve precedent and to save his face, the Grand Duke had ordered his councillor to announce that—

"although His Royal Highness, in his particular condescension, had allowed his subject Auerweck to be extradited so as to facilitate the information and accusations which were brought against him this was done in full confidence that he would be treated as considerately as possible, and that he would not be subjected to any unpleasant or harsh treatment in consideration of the peculiar circumstances of his case."

But what M. Fouché's instructions were was well known, and no one had any misconception on the subject, least of all the Grand Duke. The pitiful letter which Madame d'Auerweck sent to him next day, and in which she appealed to his kind heart and his pity, must certainly have aroused some feeling of remorse.

After a stay of forty-eight hours in Strasburg, d'Auerweck started on his journey on September 25. In the post-chaise which carried him were a junior officer and a policeman, charged with his care. After crossing the Vosges, they travelled by way of Nancy and Chalons, and reached Epernay on the 28th; in a few hours they would arrive in Paris. Taking advantage of a short halt in the inn, the Baron hurriedly scribbled the following note, which was intended to reassure his family :—

"I have arrived here, my good and tender friend, as well in health as I could hope to be, and much less tired than I feared. I write these few words to you to calm your mind, and to beg you again to take care of yourself. To-morrow, by eight o'clock in the morning, we shall be in Paris, whence, as I hope, I shall be able to write to you. I embrace you, and beg you to kiss Charles, Louis, Armand, and your mother for me.

"May God guard you.

"Epernai, 28th September."

The post-chaise entered Paris in the morning of the 29th, and passed along the quays till it stopped in front of the general office of the Minister of Police, where the prisoner had to be delivered. Where would they take him? For certain to the Temple tower, where at this time political prisoners were kept. And there it was that d'Auerweck was conducted and locked up. The order in the gaol-book directed that he should be placed in solitary confinement until further notice. It was now the Baron's turn to enter the gloomy dungeon, which he had so often, twelve years before, gazed at curiously from afar. It was his fate, like his "big friend" Cormier, to closely inspect this building, the name of which evoked such reminiscences of mystery.

Six days were allowed him in which to prepare, without disturbance, his reply to the questions which were to be put to him. On October 5, 1807, a commissary, sent by the Minister of Police, came to see him and to hear what he had to say. A curious thing was that the same proceeding which was

employed with Cormier at the time of his imprisonment was renewed for d'Auerweck's benefit; no reference whatever was made to the whole period antecedent to 1800. Whatever might have been d'Auerweck's conduct during the Revolution and under the Directoire, what his actions were, in what direction he went and came, who were his friends, all these points were held of no importance by his Excellency M. Fouché, and by Desmarets, who was on special duty in connection with the case. What they were most concerned with was to find out the object of d'Auerweck's frequent absences during the last few years, and to extort a confession from him of his participation in the murder of the plenipotentiaries of Rastadt. They came to the point without any concealment, but d'Auerweck was on his guard. He flatly denied that he had paid a visit to Paris in the months of April and May, as was alleged.

"I did not travel at all in France, and I have not been in Paris since the year when the Directoire was installed. I can furnish the clearest proofs of this fact. I was warned two years ago that the French police were watching me, and that they accused me of a number of intrigues, the greater part of which I had nothing whatever to do with, for I declare most solemnly that since the July or September of 1799 I have taken no part in any matter against France. I challenge the world to allege a single proceeding of mine, or a single line, against the interests of the French Government. The person who warned me that the French were watching me was the late Abbe Desmares, who lived in Offenburg; the warning was conveyed in an anonymous letter, to which he never owned up, but which I am convinced came from him."

As regards his sudden flight from Baden at the time of the approach of the French armies, the Baron explained that it was due to his desire to appease the fears of his mother-in-law, Madame de Gelb. Besides, they had only to question the authorities of Rothemburg, of Ulm, and of Nuremberg, and to obtain from them the counterfoils of his passports, in order to find an absolute confirmation of his statements. Then there was the question of his connection with Bourcard. What could the accused reply to that? Was it not at Ulm itself that he had met "Monsieur Bourcard, the father, who was an official from the Canton of Basle?" D'Auerweck's answer was ready:—

"I have not spent more than twenty-four hours in Ulm. I had my dinner and supper there. The Austrian army had not at that time been forced back upon the town, which was being fortified. I only saw three officers at the *table d'hôte*, two of them Croatians and one German captain. I had no kind of business with any one. The man called Bourcard, a Swiss official, is quite unknown to me."

All his denials were very precise—and they were easily to be verified by the means he had suggested—so that there was now very little left of the terrible evidence which weighed so heavily upon the "little Baron," or of "the crime of conspiracy against the security of the State," with which he was charged. The slight clue, indicated by Bourcard's arrest, but damaged by the papers seized at Elgersweier, was completely destroyed when the latter was declared to be mentally afflicted. In short, the tragic adventure which had

overtaken d'Auerweck seemed to have been the result of the most vexatious misunderstanding; at least, that is what his cross-examiner expressed to him when he left him.

"You can now consider your case to be finished, and you can see how it is possible to find one's self compromised by unfortunate coincidences, *without any one being to blame.*"

Encouraged by this assurance, the Baron suffered patiently in spite of the passing of much time. He knew that he was not forgotten at the Grand Duke's Court. Dalberg, the Ambassador, had already managed to convey to him some money, with which to defray the first expense of his visit to the Temple, and yonder, at Elgersweier, Madame d'Auerweck was in receipt of assistance from Carlsruhe; for, as a matter of fact, the mother, grandmother, and children, robbed as they were of the head of the family, had been suddenly plunged into the most terrible state of want.

The poor woman, in spite of her condition, desired only one thing: to obtain a passport so as to be able to get to Paris. With this object she overwhelmed the Ambassador of Baden with letters, in which she also implored him to help to set her husband free.

"I know that he is innocent, your Excellency," she continually wrote to him, "and if your Excellency wants any more proofs of my husband's peaceful habits, I will rout out all the available evidence to prove it. My husband can only benefit by the search . . . and I am sure that your Excellency has pity for my terrible plight and that of my poor little children."

Dalberg ended by getting annoyed with these letters.

"I receive frequent epistles from Madame d'Auerweck," he wrote to Carlsruhe; "but this *wifely impatience* is waste of time, because I can do nothing as long as the presence of the prisoner is necessary for the conduct of the case."

In the mean time, the Baron, by way of killing time, drew up a second justificatory memorandum, which must doubtless have staggered Desmarets. In it he exposed all the hiatus in his cross-examination, and the absence of any proof against him. Why was it that he was not set at liberty, now that the falsity of the accusations brought against him had been so completely demonstrated? For he had just heard that the Minister of Police had received a very detailed report, which proved his residence, in succession, in the Grand Duchy of Baden from 1798 to 1800, in Offenburg from 1802 to 1803, and in Schutterwald up to September, 1806; it mentioned his journey to Rothenburg and to Nuremberg in 1805, and declared that—

"wherever the said d'Auerweck had lived, he had always conducted himself peacefully and with decency, and had never meddled in politics; that, on the contrary, he had always been occupied with building, agriculture, botany, and rural economy, which had been partly proved by many of the papers found upon him at the time of his arrest."

So M. Desmarets and his master were in possession of an unquestionable justification of the Baron's protests. It was, indeed, inconceivable that they would continue to keep him in confinement, and, what is worse, without putting any fresh questions to him.

However, early in the month of March, 1808—and d'Auerweck had now been nearly seven months in the Temple—Baron de Dalberg was informed that Fouché's intervention was not enough by itself, and that a pardon for the prisoner had been submitted to the Emperor, who was about to leave Paris for a campaign in Spain, but he had refused to sign it. The situation became serious. Dalberg fully recognized the difficulty which he would experience in delivering the unfortunate Baron from prison; for he was looked upon as "an English Agent," and, as such, infinitely more an object of suspicion than if he had been an emissary of any other Power. The hatred of England was then at its height, and Napoleon's sentiment was that an English spy deserved to be taken care of, and, indeed, well taken care of. D'Auerweck could not deny that he had at one time been in the service of the hated nation; for all that, he laid claim to being a subject of Baden.

The weeks rolled by, and d'Auerweck began to despair. He had, perhaps, a momentary glimmer of hope that his deliverance was at hand, when he became aware of an unexpected confusion and tumult in the Temple. What had happened? Was Paris once more agitated by a change of Government? Had the Emperor met with defeat? Alas! It was nothing of the kind. But Napoleon had ordered the Temple tower to be demolished, and the seventeen prisoners who were kept there had to be carted off to another lodging. They were taken to Vincennes, and d'Auerweck's faint

hope was blighted. He was more miserable than ever, and, as soon as he had settled down in his new quarters, despatched a vehement protest to Desmarets.

"What is the reason, in the name of God, that I find myself dragged from one place to another six months after the arrival of written statements which ought to have proved my innocence? If my character had again been blackened by spite, at least give me the opportunity of fixing the lie. I cannot think that any one in this world has ever been placed in a more unhappy case than I. My eyesight is impaired, my health ruined, and my wits are worn out. I can only think of my unfortunate children, ruined and deprived of every necessity, and this in the case of a man who is absolutely innocent of all wrong-doing."

It never once occurred to him that his rigorous imprisonment might be due to some indiscretion connected with his past and with his conduct in 1795, or with the part which he had taken in the "Temple affair." Why should these old times, which were wrapped in a mist of obscurity, be remembered? And, besides, there was no reason for suspecting anything of the kind.

Neither the Grand Duke nor his Ambassador in Paris relaxed in any degree their efforts to help the Baron, and a voluminous correspondence was carried on between Paris and the Court at Baden about him during the following years; but, to all Dalberg's demands, Fouché replied that no one denied Baron d'Auerweck's "perfect loyalty;" the matter depended on the Emperor's will, and he refused to pass any final order. In order to soften Madame d'Auerweck's affliction—for she never left them alone—supplies were regularly sent to the

prisoner at Vincennes, and he was assured that his family were not being neglected or in want.

"My detention is the outcome of a lengthy series of slanderous informations," the Baron declared over and over again, "which has been woven and pieced together, more or less cleverly, but the falseness of which has already been demonstrated to those who have been bribed to utter it."

He was then informed that yet another accusation had been added to the former charges against him: an accusation of having published in the *Moniteur*, in 1799, certain letters dated from Naples, which were insulting to the First Consul: Now, the *Journal Politique de l'Europe* had at once, in the name of d'Auerweck, given the lie direct to these statements. But what had he to say for himself?

"You know perfectly well, monsieur, that for the last two years, less ten or twelve days, I have only heard the voice of the Government through the medium of the bolts which have been shot in my face."

In this way three years slipped by, in the course of which Madame d'Auerweck (who, by the way, does not appear to have led a very virtuous life in her husband's absence) never stopped pestering the Ambassador of Baden in Paris with her entreaties; de Ferrette, who, on his arrival in France, had succeeded Baron de Dalberg, took up the unfortunate Baron's case, and determined to bring it to a conclusion. So as to increase the authority of his demands, he managed to interest the Minister of the King of Bavaria on d'Auerweck's behalf, and the two combined to present

a very urgent memorandum, in the summer of 1810, to the Minister of Police. This was not Fouché, for he had been degraded for the second time, and his post was occupied by Savary, the Duc de Rovigo. The two Ministers made their application to the latter.

"Yesterday, at this unpleasant ball," Ferrette wrote on July 2, "I importuned the Duke of Rovigo to let Lord Auerweck out from Vincennes; this was just before the Emperor arrived. He said to me: 'His case is not unpardonable, but you may rest assured that we are not keeping him locked up like this without very good reasons. You must wait.'"

At last, on October 16, Savary presented to Napoleon the anxiously-looked-for report, which advised the prisoner's discharge. To every one's astonishment, the Emperor only made the following observation: *Better keep him until universal peace is declared.* There was nothing to be done but to submit to this merciless imprisonment, and to accept the explanation which was given, viz. that d'Auerweck was "a bold intriguer, who was to be found everywhere: sometimes in the interests of Austria, sometimes in England's."

Afterwards, as though to find an excuse for this prolonged detention, the Baron was brought in contact with one of those persons who are known as *Moutons;* his line of action was to get on friendly terms with the prisoner, and to try to get him to talk, the result of these conversations being handed on to the police. A man called Rivoire was chosen for this purpose. He was formerly a naval officer, but had been arrested and

imprisoned for conspiracy; he escaped, but was caught and put in prison for the fourth or fifth time. The "Chevalier de Rivoire" was at the end of his resources, and hoped to obtain a remission of his sentence by spying on his companions in misfortune. It was impressed on him that he must specially pump Baron d'Auerweck on the subject of the Rastadt assassination. The two reports, which he sent to Desmarets during the year 1811, give a rather amusing account of the success of his enterprise: a success, of course, skilfully exaggerated.

"D'Auerweck is very suspicious when one begins to put questions to him, so I adopted the ruse of contradicting him and of only grudgingly giving in to him. Then, after having started him in the right direction, if I resign myself to listening patiently, he obligingly begins to overwhelm me with confidences, both false and true, and with all the rubbish which his conceit and his insatiate garrulity inspire in him. . . . He boasted of having rendered the most important services to the English, both on the Continent and in their own country, where he had exposed and baffled many plots, and had been the cause of the arrest and punishment of many French agents. . . . When we began to talk about the Rastadt affair, he at first repeated the story which had been manufactured in order to divert suspicion from the real culprits.

"*Rivoire*: 'Only children will believe such a fairy tale.'

"*D'Auerweck* (laughing): 'That's true; but we must always tell it, and by dint of many repetitions they will begin to believe it. The matter concerns other people's interests. I only left Austria when I saw that its Government was fatally weak; so much so that it has to be treated like a spoilt child that does not want to take its medicine. Besides myself, there are not more than two people who are acquainted with the correct details of this affair.'

"Seeing that he had said too much, he then, like a fool, began to

retract, saying, 'Besides, I was attached to a certain Prince's Minister, who was not there with reason, and I was perfectly neutral in all that happened.'"

Rivoire concluded by saying, "D'Auerweck was the leader, or one of the leaders, in this crime, which was committed at the instigation of the English Government; and he forthwith went off to give his report; and he was at this time in London, travelling *viâ* France."

These fresh accusations, however flimsy their foundation, were not neglected, and succeeded in so increasing the gravity of the Baron's case that his durance was prolonged indefinitely. At the same time they served to maintain the harshness of his imprisonment. Using the Ambassador of Baden in Paris as the go-between, d'Auerweck, who declared himself to be seriously ill, had begged that he might for the time being be sent to a private hospital, where he could be attended to. But they questioned whether his illness was only a pretext, and that he was plotting some plan of escape. Accordingly the Minister of Police refused his request.

"The reasons for the detention of this prisoner," the Duke of Rovigo declared to his colleague of Foreign Affairs, "do not admit of his being transferred to a private hospital. But I have just given the adequate order that the doctor, whose business it is to attend the invalids in the prison of Vincennes, should visit this prisoner as often as his state of health may require it."

On May 31, 1812, d'Auerweck was told that no instructions as to his fate had been given, so, bearing his troubles patiently, he sent a fresh request, couched in the following humorous style, to Desmarets:—

"The regular annual announcement that I am still to be kept in the dungeon of Vincennes was made to me yesterday; will you at least have the condescension to pass an order that it may not be in this celler, in which I have lived for three and a half months."

Two more years passed before the tribulations of d'Auerweck were completed. But in 1814, when the now victorious Allied Armies drew close to Paris, it was decided to send the inmates of the prison of Vincennes to Saumur. How d'Auerweck must have prayed for his countrymen's speedy arrival, and that this second change of residence might be the prelude to his deliverance!

He had not been two months at Saumur when he heard a rumour that the Allies had entered Paris on March 31. He was not forgotten in his dungeon, for three days later the Grand Duke urgently demanded that his subject might be given back to him, "one of the many victims of the reign which has just come to an end;" and the next day the Minister replied that the order to set the Baron at liberty had been issued three days ago. April 16 was a day never to be forgotten by d'Auerweck and his companions. They were overcome with emotion, as can be guessed from the following lines, written by Baron de Kolli, the most extraordinary adventurer of the Imperial epoch. This person had been confined for four years at Vincennes on account of an attempt to deliver King Ferdinand VII. from Valençay, and at Vincennes he no doubt met our Hungarian. The two of them could exchange their impressions as captives by the good pleasure of the

Emperor, both imprisoned without trial, and condemned to an endless captivity, thanks to regular *lettres-de-cachet* dug up for this occasion only.

"I will try, though in vain, to describe this scene, which will be for ever engraven upon my heart," Kolli relates. "In the intoxication of happiness and in tears, each one throws himself upon any one he meets, and clasps him in his arms; there are forty persons, all strangers to each other, and in a second they are united by the bonds of the most tender friendship. As we emerge from our tombs, the townsmen press around us, and, undismayed by the sight of our miserable state, drag us to the bosoms of their families. In a single day we pass from want to opulence."

Those who witnessed d'Auerweck's return to Elgersweier, prematurely aged as he was by these seven years of misfortune, could hardly recognize in him the talkative and active man of former days. They all had a vivid recollection of that night in the month of July, 1807, when trouble hurled itself upon this family.

However, in spite of confinement and the want of fresh air, the Baron's health was not as severely injured as one might have imagined. He lived on in his village for fourteen years, and delightedly took up again the old tasks of an agriculturist, a botanist, and a husbandman. . . . In his leisure hours he related episodes of his strange past to his family and his neighbours, and, when bragging got the upper hand of him, he recalled the happy time when he had been raised by Fortune to the post of "Ambassador to his Majesty the King of Great Britain!"

He left Elgersweier in 1828 to return to Offenburg,

where he had formerly resided, and there he died two years later, on June 8, 1830. Three of his children survived him. Charles, the eldest, had a distinguished military career; as general in the army of Baden, he was governor of the fortified town of Germersheim. Adelaide d'Auerweck lived to be a very old woman, as she only died in 1881, at Munich. Finally, Armand d'Auerweck left four children, one of whom, Ferdinand, emigrated to America, where he is still living.

The descendants of the "little Baron" cherish the memory of this life, so rich in incidents, so extravagant, and so surprising; but the part which he played in the Temple adventure at the time of the great Revolution would have been for ever hidden had not an unforeseen chance served to connect him with one of the threads of this astonishing intrigue, which attracted so much curious attention.

CHAPTER VIII

AFTER THE STORM

We have seen that in spite of the announcement of the Dauphin's death, and of all that the Chevalier de Frotté had written to her on the subject, Lady Atkyns still held persistently to her conviction that the real proof of the matter had yet to be discovered, and remained still determined to solve the mystery. If, as she continued to believe, the young King had been spirited away, it might still be possible to find him.

But there were new difficulties in the way. Money, for one thing, was lacking now, and she knew only too well how necessary money was. Now, too, she was alone. To whom was she to apply for assistance? Of all her old associates, Peltier alone was accessible, and he was absorbed in his work, as journalist and man of letters.

Why, she asked herself, should she not seek the help of a member of the Royal Family of France? The Comte d'Artois, who had taken in his turn the titles of *Monsieur* and of Comte de Provence, since his brother's proclamation as King, was living in England. Why not apply

to him? The ingenuous lady did not think of the very weighty reasons why such an appeal must be in vain. Convinced that the Dauphin still lived, she imagined that she could convert the Comte to her way of thinking, and induce him to join her in her search after the truth.

Encouraged by the attitude taken up by the British Government towards her project of inquiring minutely into the matter on the Continent, Lady Atkyns decided before leaving England to approach the Comte, hoping to secure not merely his approval, but also some material assistance. Had she not sacrificed a large portion of her own worldly goods for the benefit of his family? Thus reasoning, she did not conceive the possibility of a refusal. But *Monsieur* could not regard as anything short of fantastic the supposition upon which her project was based—the supposition that his nephew still survived. To present this hypothesis either to him or to his brother the King was to put one's self out of court at once.

We can imagine how her application was received. She chose as her intermediary with the Prince the Baron de Suzannet, who had facilitated the purchase of the ships and equipages which were procured in readiness for the rescue of the Queen and the Dauphin.

Having the *entrée* to the Court, and being one of the most notable of the *émigrés* in London, he consented to submit his friend's request to *Monsieur*. Did he foresee the issue? Apparently not. Here is what he writes to her on August 19, 1797 :—

"After the decision *M*[*onsieur*] has come to, my dear lady, not to give his countenance to your affair until it has been taken up by others, and after speaking to him so often on the subject, I cannot carry the matter any further, and could not ask him for money. But I see no reason why you should not yourself write to him more or less what you have told me, viz. that you were about to return to France with the consent of the Government, that you ought to be provided with the same amount for returning as you have been for going, but that fifty louis is very scant provision for that—especially considering that you have had to hide yourself away here so long—and that you are afraid you will not have sufficient to enable you to remain long enough in Paris to get together all the particulars required by the Government, and to pay the messenger for bringing them here; and you might point out that you have acted throughout entirely in the interests of the Royal Family, that you do not regret the £1000 [1] which your attachment has cost you, or regret them only because you no longer have the money to devote to the cause; and that if *M*[*onsieur*] for his part could give you £50, it would free you from anxiety as to ways and means. . . .

"I shall tell *M*[*onsieur*] that I am aware you have written to him, and that I shall convey his answer to you. He has been taking medicine to-day and can see no one. To-morrow he is to see some people at the Duc d'Harcourt's, if well enough. He will not be going away before Wednesday. His address is 55, Welbeck Street. I think you would do well to send your letter to him by hand, sealed and addressed '*À Monsieur Seul*,' enclosed in an outer envelope with his ordinary address: '*Son Altesse Royale Monsieur, frère du Roi.*' Send me a line to tell me what you have done. *Adieu.*"

It was not till after a long delay that Lady Atkyns at last succeeded in meeting the Prince at an inn, only to meet with a point-blank refusal. But she was not to be discouraged. The very next day she wrote again to the Comte asking for an audience. This time it was

[1] This is far below the actual figure.

another member of his suite, the Bishop of Saint-Pol de Léon, who replied to her communication—

"The moment I saw *M*[*onsieur*] yesterday, my dear lady, he told me about your letter, which gave him great pleasure, though it is a matter for great regret to him that he is quite unable to do as you wish, and as he himself would wish. Since his recent attack he has been unable to dress or go out; he has not been able to receive any ladies, anxious though he is to welcome those who are here and who were attached to the Princess. He could not receive one without its being known, and then he would be expected to receive a number of others. You know how things get about and what a close watch is kept on Princes, and how careful our Prince must be to do nothing that would lay him open to criticism or even to suspicion. If his stay here were prolonged, and he found he could see other ladies also, the thing might be managed; but there would be difficulties even then, in view of your secret being perhaps of a compromising nature. I am but expressing to you the Prince's own views. I hope to see you to-morrow between midday and three o'clock."

The great of this world are never at a loss for pretexts for refusing requests. *Monsieur* was particularly anxious to evade an interview which he felt to be undesirable, and therefore confined himself to sending her these amiable phrases.

About the same time M. de Thauvenay, one of the King's most devoted courtiers, who happened to be in London, seems to have promised to use his good offices with his master on her behalf, telling him of her record and perhaps of her hopes.

Having exhausted all the means at her disposal in England, Lady Atkyns saw that she must manage

her journey as best she could from her own resources, and resolved to make yet another sacrifice to this end. She had obtained a considerable loan already once upon a mortgage on her beautiful estate of Ketteringham. As this was her only source of revenue, there was no alternative to raising a further mortgage on it, and this she managed, though with greater difficulty than before. (The property was not, in fact, her own at this time, being entailed on her son Edward.)

She seems to have raised in all about £3000 in this way in 1799 and the three following years.

Some weeks before the "18th Brumaire" and Bonaparte's *coup d'état*, she set out for the Continent. What exactly was her purpose? What use was she going to make of her money? It is impossible to say. To clothe her errand in the greater mystery, she decided to land in France under an assumed name, and to veil her personality under the designation of the "Little Sailor" (*le petit matelot*).

"I feel I must again send my good wishes for a pleasant journey to the charming 'Little Sailor,'" some unidentified friend writes to her on September 7, "and I cannot too often beg him to bear in mind that he leaves behind him in England friends who take a deep interest in his welfare, and who will learn with pleasure that he has arrived safely at his destination, and, above all, that after fulfilling his mission he has escaped all the unpleasantness and dangers to which his truly admirable devotion and zeal will expose him. I hope one day to prove to the 'Little Sailor' how he has long filled me with the most genuine sentiments—sentiments which I have refrained from expressing for reasons of which the 'Little Sailor' will approve. I cannot say too often to the amiable 'Little

Sailor' what pleasure I shall have in repeating to him in France—and in France preferably to elsewhere—the assurance of eternal and tender attachment that I have vowed him for ever and ever."

It is difficult to know what the "Petit Matelot" did on arriving in Paris. It was a moment of crisis, for the Consulate was being established. Most of those who had been mixed up in the Temple affair were inaccessible, and yet it was important to get into touch with them if anything was to be ascertained about the Dauphin. It would not have done, however, to provoke suspicion, or Fouché would have been on her track.

Certain only it is that for several months she seems to have disappeared from sight. At last she was run to earth and hunted out by Fouché's agents, and was obliged to make away to the Loire, where she had devoted friends.

The Verrière family lived in the country six miles from Saumur, in Anjou, where many nobles, fleeing from the storm, had found a safe refuge. The vicinity of the forest of Fontevrault enabled them to gain the Vendée, and thus escape the fury of the Revolutionists. Mme. Verrière had met Lady Atkyns in Paris years before, perhaps during the golden days of Versailles. Recalling their former friendliness, Lady Atkyns went to them in her trouble. The welcome they extended to her justified her hopes, and she dwelt with them for some time, until the police had lost all trace of her.

About this period, vague reports began to be spread about with reference to the imprisonment of the

children of Louis XVI. in the Temple. The obscurity which had cloaked the last hours of the Dauphin was still keeping certain brains at work. And a book which was published in 1800 helped to reawaken public curiosity. In *Le Cimetière de la Madeleine*, a romance written by an author until then little known, Regnault-Warin deliberately questioned the alleged death of the Dauphin, and, in fact, based a story of adventure upon the supposition of his being still alive. Written in the fashion of the time, full of surprising episodes, and bristling with more or less untrustworthy anecdotes touching on the captivity of the Royal Family in the Temple, this novel had an immense success. If it came before Lady Atkyns it must have served to stimulate her anxiety to solve the problem she had so much at heart.

In the summer of 1801 Lady Atkyns appears to have addressed herself to Louis XVIII., unwarned by her failure with *Monsieur*. In this case also failure was to be her portion.

"Your letter," ran the reply, signed by M. de Thauvenay (whom she had met some years before), and addressed, as a precaution, to Monsieur James Brown, dated October 2, "would have been enigmatic to me had I not placed it before my master, who, by a curious series of accidents, had received only a few days before the communication you sent him on the 12th of July. In requesting me to reply to you, monsieur, he charges me to express to you his recognition of your constant interest and indefatigable zeal for his welfare, and his regret that he is prevented by his present position from learning the particulars of the speculation that your heart has formed, and that he cannot have any share in it."

Six weeks later Lady Atkyns received a second letter, despatched, like the first, from Varsovie, reinforcing the above :—

"I wish," writes M. de Thauvenay, "that I could convey to you the deep and tender feeling with which my dear and venerated master has read these new and touching testimonies of your interest and friendship, and his deep regret at being unable to enjoy the consolations that your sympathetic and generous nature has proffered him! No, monsieur, I swear to you, no other house has offered him any kind of interest in the speculation you have proposed to him. I should add that there is no one with whom he would rather have shared the chances than with you; but his position is such that, for the moment at least, he can only display passive courage in the face of misfortune. I need not remind you, monsieur, that the most appreciative and most generous of hearts has eternal claim upon a heart such as yours. Never, I feel convinced, will your noble and moving sentiment be modified by time or place. This conviction is sweet to me, and it is with the utmost sincerity that I render you once again my tender (if I may use the word) and admiring respect."

It is not easy at first to understand what M. de Thauvenay means by this "speculation," in which the King refuses to take part. On reflection it seems probable that Lady Atkyns's proposal, thus described, had reference to the affair of the Temple, for it seems impossible that she should have flattered herself that she could see a way to the return of the exiled King.

However that may be, these two letters convinced her that it would be useless to prolong her stay in France, and she returned to Ketteringham, after an

absence of three years, without having effected her purpose.

Two tragic events occurred in the year 1604 to startle the French who were still taking refuge in England. The first was the arrest and shooting of the Duc d'Enghien at Vincennes. If Bonaparte had punished one of the many schemers who had plotted against him on English soil, his action would have found defenders. But this execution of a Prince, who was absolutely innocent and who had held apart from all political intrigues, aroused the same kind of horror that had been evoked eleven years earlier by the death of Louis XVI. and Marie-Antoinette.

The Prince de Condé, the Duc d'Enghien's grandfather, was staying in England at this time, like *Monsieur*, the King's brother, and their residences were naturally the centre of the excitement over this event. The Baron de Suzannet describes the state of things in their *entourage* in a letter to Lady Atkyns :—

"It would seem, madame," he writes to her on April 14, "that the murder of the Duc d'Enghien has horrified not merely all true Frenchmen, as was to be expected, but also Englishmen of every class, the perfidy as well as the cruelty of it is so revolting to all in whom the sentiment of justice and honour is not extinct. I shall not speak of the courageous and heroic death of this ill-fated Prince, but of the condition of his unhappy relatives. Since the day when *Monsieur* carried him the terrible news, the Prince de Condé (save for two journeys to London necessitated by his anxiety) has not left his room or been down to dinner. Plunged in grief,

he sees no one, and it is much feared that his death may follow that of the Duc d'Enghien. He loved the Duc as his grandson and his pupil, and perhaps even more as one qualified by Providence to add still further to the glory of his illustrious name. The sorrow of the Duc de Bourbon is not less deep and intense."

At the same moment, the news of the arrest of Cadoudal in Paris, the discovery of his plot, the sensational trial of his twelve accomplices, together with a number of insurgents—forty-seven prisoners in all—and finally the execution of the famous brigand on the morning of June 25, came to intensify the agitation of the French in England.

Of these events Lady Atkyns heard particulars from the Comte de Frotté, father of her friend the General. Throughout five years the venerable Comte had followed with joy or anguish the career of his son as a leader of the insurrection in Normandy. Repeatedly he had come to his aid with money and encouragement. Suddenly the fatal bullet had ended everything. Henceforth the unhappy father had followed eagerly everything that could bring back the memory of the Chevalier, and he had been drawn to Lady Atkyns by his knowledge of the long-standing friendship that had existed between her and him.

To add to his sorrow, Charles de Frotté, half-brother to Louis, had been arrested and imprisoned by Napoleon's police soon after the execution at Verneuil. He was kept at the Temple for two years, without apparent reason, then sent to the Fort of Toux, in Jura.

"I learnt yesterday," writes the Comte de Frotté to Lady Atkyns, "that my unhappy son has been transferred from the Temple to a château in Franche Comté. How cruel is this persecution! How terrible this imprisonment, not only for himself, but for us who are bound to him by ties of kinship and for his friends."

Thus Lady Atkyns, though in the seclusion of the country, far from London and the Continent, remained bound in thought to her life of earlier days. She had no one now to love except her son, who was an officer in the first regiment of Royal Dragoons. Owing to the delicacy of his health, young Edward Atkyns had been obliged to go on leave for a time, and his mother invited the son of Baron de Suzannet to Ketteringham to keep him company. But the visit did not come off, and two months later the young soldier died of the malady from which he had been suffering for some years.

Two years earlier a somewhat strange incident had occurred in France. On February 17, 1802, the police court at Vitry-le-Françoi had to sit in judgment upon a young man named Jean-Marie Hervagault, charged with swindling, passing under a false name, and vagabondage. This individual, arrested and imprisoned for the first time in 1799, claimed to be the Dauphin, escaped miraculously from the Temple. The son of a tailor of Saint-Lo, Hervagault, in the course of his wanderings, had managed to convince a certain number of people that he really was the Prince. Public curiosity was aroused. Many people went to visit the youth in

prison. To put a stop to this movement, the Vitry Tribunal condemned the adventurer to four years' imprisonment. His trial disclosed the fact that amongst his dupes were many persons of distinction, including M. Lafont de Savines. Some weeks later the Vitry sentence was ratified at Rouen, and Hervagault was incarcerated in the prison of Bicêtre in Paris. But the feelings of sympathy and pity that had been called forth, Hervagault's assertions and his circumstantial accounts of the way in which he had been carried off from the Temple—all these things attracted the more attention by reason of the appearance a short time before of Beauchamp's work, *Le faux Dauphin actuellement en France.*

Lady Atkyns was quick to secure details as to the story of the prisoner at Bicêtre. There were many contradictions in it that must have come home to her. And Hervagault mentions the name of the General Louis de Frotté as that of one of his liberators, whereas, in his letters to her, the Chevalier had made it quite clear that this could not be so. However, it seemed worth her while to write to the old Comte de Frotté on the subject.

"I have just received your letter," he replies, August 16, 1804, "and I hasten to send you a line. I have spent a whole week rummaging among papers. I can assure you that what is stated in the book you have sent me is all fiction. Louis and Duchale are mentioned in 1802 because they were both dead. I am almost certain that in 1795 (in the month in question) Louis was fighting in Normandy, and that he did not leave his companions once all

that year. But we shall go into all this on your return, and no doubt will be left in your mind. If you arrive towards the end of the month, tell me at once. I shall call on you and tell you all I can, and make you see why I am convinced that this fellow is a puppet in some one else's hands."

Lady Atkyns was reluctant to give up the faint hope that there might be something in this Hervagault narrative, but after some conversations with the Comte de Frotté, and after comparing the pretender's statement with documents left by the Chevalier, she was at last convinced that the whole thing was a fraud.

We hear of her again in October, 1809, taking a prominent part in the celebrations being held in her neighbourhood in honour of the jubilee of George III. Then we lose sight of her until 1814, and the triumphant return to Paris of Louis XVIII. Lady Atkyns hastens now to secure the good offices of the Duc de Bourbon, with a view to drawing attention to all her sacrifices and the sums of money she has expended.

She is delayed, however, over her contemplated journey to France for this purpose, and Napoleon's escape postpones for two years more all hope of accomplishing her return to Paris.

When at last the monarchy is restored once more, she finds that her aspirations are destined to be disappointed, despite all the kind words with which she was soothed in England, and we find her uttering the word "ingratitude," which is henceforth to be so often on her tongue. There were so many who held themselves

entitled to gratitude and recognition at the hands of Louis XVIII.—*émigrés* returned to France after twenty years of sorrow and indignities, and now counting upon the recovery of their possessions or on being reimbursed in some way by the act of the Sovereign. What an awakening they met with when the time came to formulate their applications and they found themselves obliged to condescend to the drafting of innumerable documents, and to put up with interminable delays!

On September 27, 1816, Lady Atkyns writes to her friend Mme. de Verrière an account of her disappointing experiences. She had been well received at Court, but that was all.

"The kind of ingratitude I have been meeting with is not very consoling. They give me plenty of kind words, but nothing more. I have written a long letter to the man of business, begging of him to get the employer to reimburse me a little for the moment, but I have received nothing yet, and this puts me out greatly. Perhaps something will turn up between now and the end of the week. If not I must go and see my poor mother and beg to get my affairs into order."

The state of her affairs, for long precarious, was now giving the poor lady very serious anxiety. By recourse to various expedients she had managed to hold out until the return of the Bourbons, and to stave off her creditors. But she was now at her last gasp. If the King refused to help her, to "reimburse" her, she was ruined. The Comte de la Châtre had assured her that her application was under favourable consideration, that the King regarded it approvingly, that the Comte de

Pradel, the head of the King's household, had it in hand; but, in spite of this, there was a series of delays.

At last, worn out with waiting, she writes in her naïve style to the Comte on October 10, 1816—

"I beg of you to be good enough to get the King to decide this matter as soon as ever possible. I must get away to England in three weeks to see my mother, who is ill, and I can't possibly do this until I know the King's decision in regard to me. I know his Majesty is too good to injure one who has given so many proofs of boundless devotion to the Royalist cause and to the entire Royal Family. Although I have a splendid estate in England, I am now in great difficulties by reason of this devotion. I tell you all this, Monsieur le Comte, so that, like the good Frenchman you are, you may do me this kindness of getting the King to give you his orders. I have run every conceivable kind of evils during these twenty-four years. I beg of you to excuse all the trouble I am giving you, and I have the honour to be, Monsieur le Comte,

"Your very obedient servant,

"CHARLOTTE ATKYNS."

This appeal seems to have been no more successful than the preceding ones, for three months later we find Lady Atkyns still awaiting the promised audience. To distract her thoughts from the subject, she goes about Paris—a new city now to her—is present at sittings of the Chamber of Deputies, and hears the speech from the Throne. On All Souls' Day she joins in the solemn pilgrimage to the Conciergerie. Who could have been more in place on such an occasion? But with the sad thoughts evoked by the sight of the Queen's prison were mingled regrets that the sanctuary had not been left as it was. The place had been enlarged, and a

massive, heavy-looking tomb stood now where the bed had been.

"I knelt before this tomb," she writes to Mme. de Verrière, "but I should have preferred to have seen the prison room unaltered, and the tomb placed where the Queen used to kneel down to pray. The place has been made to look too nice, and a simple elegance has been imparted to it which takes away all idea of the misfortunes of that time. I would have left the bed, the table, and the chair. There is a portrait of the Queen seated on the bed, her eyes raised heavenwards with the resignation of a martyr. This portrait is very like, especially the eyes, with that look of angelic sweetness which she had. There is another tomb with a crucifix on it, as on hers, upon which are inscribed the words: '*Que mon fils n'oublie jamais les derniers mot de son père, que je lui répète expressément; qu'il ne cherche jamais à venger notre mort.*' You go in by the chapel, and behind the altar, to get to where the Queen used to be. . . . I repeated on the tomb what I vowed to the Queen—never to abandon the cause of her children. It is true that only Madame remains now, but she one day will be Queen of France, and if she has need of a faithful friend she will find one in me."

These last lines seem a strange avowal. Lady Atkyns seems to be renouncing her faith. What is the explanation? It is simple enough. She has realized that as long as she puts forward her inopportune plea regarding the child in the Temple she must expect to find nothing but closed doors. Yet she has by her proofs of what she alleges, and she is prepared in substantiation of her memorials to hand over a selection of the precious letters from her friends which she has received in the course of her enterprise. These, doubtless, would be accepted, but would never be given back. What, then,

is she to do? Threatened on the one side by the distress which is at her heels; a prey, on the other hand, to her inalterable conviction, the luckless lady comes for a moment to have doubts about her entire past. However, this disavowal, as it seems, is but momentary; a calmer mood supervenes, and she returns to her former point of view, unable ever to free her mind from doubts as to the real fate of the Dauphin.

The King's generosity in this year, 1816, does not appear to have given her much satisfaction.

"At last I have received a little money," she writes to Mme. de Verrière just before Christmas, when preparing to return to England, "but so little that it is really shameful."

The following spring she is back again in France, still carrying on her campaign. From 1817 to 1821 her letters pour in upon the Ministry of the Royal Household. Did they contain indiscreet allusions to the affair of the Temple? Perhaps. In any case, with a single exception, all these letters have disappeared.

We find a curious reference to Lady Atkyns in a letter dated January 11, 1818, preserved in the archives of the Comte de Lair—

"She is still in Paris," says the writer. "For the last two months she has been going every week! She declares now she will start without fail on Tuesday morning, but the Lord knows whether she will keep her word. . . . She is still taken up with the affair in question, and passes all her time in the company of those who are mixed up in it. I assure you I don't know what to make of it all myself, but it is certain that a number of people believe it."

The "affair in question" was the detention at Bicêtre of an individual about whom the most sensational stories were current. A maker of *sabots*, come over—no one quite knew how—from America, Mathurin Bruneau, playing anew the Hervagault comedy, had been passing himself off as the Dauphin. Arrested and imprisoned on January 21, by order of Decazes, the Minister of Police, Bruneau had for two years been leading a very extraordinary life for a prisoner.

He was by way of being in solitary confinement, but there was in reality a never-ending succession of visitors to him in his prison. A certain Branzon, formerly a customs-house officer at Rouen, who had been condemned to five years' imprisonment with hard labour, had become his inseparable companion. With the support of a woman named Sacques and a lady named Dumont, Branzon got together a species of little court round the adventurer, issuing proclamations, carrying on a regular correspondence with friends outside, and playing cards until three o'clock in the morning—finally composing, with the help of large slices out of *Le Cimetière de la Madeleine*, a work entitled *Memoires du Prince.* Some unknown painter executed a portrait of the prisoner as "a lieutenant-colonel or colonel-general of dragoons," and a mysterious baron, come from Rouen to set eyes upon his Sovereign, took the oath of fidelity to him on the Holy Scriptures in the jailer's own room! On April 29, 1817, the walls of Maromme, Darnétal, and Boudeville, near

Rouen, were covered with placards calling upon France to proclaim its legitimate King. And all this happened under the nose of Libois, the Governor of Bicêtre.

There seems, in fact, to be no room for doubt that, as has been well said, "in this prison, in which there has been a constant procession of comtes and abbés, and a whole pack of women, there has been enacted in the years 1816–1818 a farce of which his Excellence Decazes is the author." The object of this mystification was simply to baffle the Duchesse d'Angoulême in the first instance, and to prevent public opinion from being led astray in another direction. Bruneau did not stand alone. Six months earlier another pretendant, Nauendorff, a clockmaker at Spandau, had written to the Duchesse d'Angoulême to solicit an interview. It was all important to put a stop to this dangerous movement. Therefore when on February 9, 1818, the proceedings were opened at Rouen, no pains had been spared to give the affair the appearance of a frivolous vaudeville. On February 19 Mathurin was condemned to five years' imprisonment. The court was crowded with all kinds of loafers and queer characters, many of them from Paris, drawn by the rumours so industriously spread about.

Lady Atkyns would seem to have given some attention to this new alleged Dauphin without being carried off her feet. She lost no opportunity of endeavouring to get at the truth, it is clear, and this, as we learn from a police report, involved a number of visits to the

house in which Gaillon was imprisoned, and to which Bruneau was transferred after his condemnation. It was even stated that she had offered sums of money to enable Bruneau to escape. She soon had her eyes opened, however, to this new fraud.

The accession of *Monsieur* to the throne, in 1824, does not seem to have had any favourable result for Lady Atkyns, for we find her at last reduced in this year to taking a step, long contemplated but dreaded—the handing over of Ketteringham to her sister-in-law, Mary Atkyns, in consideration of a life annuity.

She continues, however, to make her way every year to France, buoyed up by the assurances of interest in her which she has received from officials of the Royal Household. At first she stays with friends, the Comte and Comtesse de Loban. Then in 1826, when her mother dies, aged eighty-six, she establishes herself definitively in Paris, taking up her abode in a house in the Rue de Lille, No. 65, where she rents a small *appartement* on the first floor. Here she gets together the few souvenirs she has saved from Ketteringham—some mahogany furniture covered with blue cloth, a sofa covered with light blue silk, and portraits on the walls of the Dauphin, his father, his uncle, and the Duc de Berry.

It was while residing here that Lady Atkyns lived through the revolution of Italy, after witnessing in turn the reign of Louis XVI., the Terror, the Empire, the Restoration, and the reign of Charles X. What an

eventful progress from the careless, happy days when she played her part in the dizzying gaieties of Versailles!

Some weeks before the fall of Charles X., Lady Atkyns drew up yet another petition for presentation to the chief of the King's household. She did not mince her words in this document.

"I little thought that lack of funds would be advanced as a reason for delaying the execution of the King's orders. I will not enlarge upon the strangeness of such an avowal, especially as a reimbursement of so sacred a character is in question, sanctioned by the Royal will. I would merely point out to you, Monsieur le Marquis, that I have contrived to find considerable sums (thereby incurring great losses) when it was to the interest of France, and of her King, and of her august family. Failing a sufficiency of money to liquidate this debt, I have the honour to propose to your Excellency that you should make out an order for the payment, and I shall find means of getting it discounted. In your capacity as a Minister to the King, your Excellency will be able, without delay, to obtain the amount necessary, minus a discount, from the Court bankers. Will you not deign, monseigneur, to ask them to do this, and I shall willingly forego the discount that may be stipulated for. . . . Finally, monseigneur, I beg of you to tell me immediately the day and the hour when I may present myself at the Ministry to terminate this matter. I must venture to remind you that the least delay will involve my ruin, and therefore I cannot consent to it."

Lady Atkyns's persistence and the King's procrastination seem intelligible enough when one learns that the sums expended by her, from the time when Louis XVI.'s reign was projected down to the last year of the Consulate, amounted to more than £80,000. The Englishwoman might well speak of the sacrifices she

had made and the loss of her fortune at the dictates of her heart.

One other letter we find amongst Lady Atkyns's papers—a letter notable for its fine, regular penmanship. It evidently reached her about this date. The writer was yet another *soi-disant* Dauphin, the third serious pretendant. The Baron de Richemont—his real name was Hebert—had published in 1831 his *Memoires du Duc de Normandie, fils de Louis XVI. écrits et publiés par lui-même*, and he was not long in convincing a number of people as to his identity. He probably owed most of his particulars as to his alleged escape from the Temple to the wife of Simon, whom he had visited at the Hospital for Incurables in the Rue de Sèvres. Possibly it was through her also that he heard of Lady Atkyns. At all events, he thought it worth while to approach her.

"Revered lady," he writes to her, "I am touched by your kind remembrance. . . . The idea that I have found again in you the friend who was so devoted to my unhappy family consoles me, and enables me the better to bear up under the ills that Providence has sent me. I shall never forget your good deeds; ever present to my memory, they make me cherish an existence which I owe to you. I cannot tell what the future may have in store for me, but whatever my fate you may count upon all my gratitude. May the Lord be with you and send prosperity to all your enterprises! He will surely do so, for to whatever country you may take your steps, you will set an example of all the virtues.

"We shall see you, I hope, in a better world. Then and in the company of the august and ill-fated author of my sad days, you will be in enjoyment of all the good you have done, and will

receive your due recompense from the Sovereign Dispenser of all things.

"There being no other end to look for, I beg of God, most noble lady, to take you under His protection.

"LOUIS CHARLES."

Richemont shows some aptness and cleverness in the way he touches the note of sensibility, and attains to the diapason appropriate to the *rôle* he is playing. Had his letter the effect desired? It is hardly likely, but it is the last item in Lady Atkyns's correspondence, and we have no means of finding an answer to the question.

In the night of February 2, 1836, Lady Atkyns died. By her bedside one person watched—her devoted servant, Victoire Ilh, whose conduct, according to her mistress's own statement, "had at all times been beyond praise."

The few friends who could attend gathered together in due course to pay the last honours to the dead. Her remains were conveyed to England for burial at Ketteringham, in accordance with the wish she herself had expressed.

Time passed inexorably over her memory, and twenty years later there was nothing to recall the life of love and devotion of this loyal and unselfish Englishwoman.

EPILOGUE

Not more than two or three generations separate us from the period through which we have seen come and go the various actors involved in the enterprise of which the prisoners in the Temple were the stake. The *rôle* that was played by Lady Atkyns and her confidants, forming as it did a minor episode in the changeful story of the emigration and of the fortunes of the Royalists during the Revolution, deserved to be set forth. But the interest attached to such narratives becomes greatly intensified the more completely the records of those mentioned in it can be traced to the end. It seems well, therefore, to see what became of the principal performers who have passed before our eyes in this slight study.

Of Cormier's two sons, Achille, the elder, disappears from the scene completely, and all our efforts to trace him have been in vain. In the case of his brother we have been more fortunate. Having served as an officer in the army of Vendée, Patrice de Cormier, from the moment of the Restoration, sought to return to active service. Being on terms of intimacy with Prince de la Tremoïlle, Frotté's old friend, who was then presiding

over the commission inquiring into the claims of Royalist officers with a view to according recompense to them, Cormier petitioned for employment in the company of light horse. His loyalty was not in doubt, for a memorandum supporting his application recorded that "when the allies entered Paris, he secured a drum of the National Guard by purchase, and beating it in front of a white flag, made his way through the streets of Paris." The "Hundred Days" interfered with his ambitions, and he was obliged to betake himself to England, whence he made his way back to France in July, 1815. The warmth with which Prince de la Tremoïlle recommended him to the favour of Louis XVIII. showed what value he attached to his friendship.

"He has accompanied me constantly as my aide-de-camp," said the Prince, "on my mission, at the time of my arrest and during my escape, and he has never failed to give me new proofs daily of his intelligence and zeal, of his boundless devotion to the King, and of his capacity. If ever services rendered could justify me in recommending any one to the favour of the King, this estimable officer would be the first I should venture to recommend."

These words produced their effect. On February 24, 1816, Cormier was appointed "*chef de bataillon*" in the first regiment of infantry of the Royal Guard. Three years later he became a lieutenant-colonel, and as such he took part in the Spanish expedition of 1823, under the command of the Duc d'Angoulème. Charged with the carrying out of an order to the Royal Spanish

troops before Figuières, he fell into an ambuscade of thirty Constitutional soldiers, and received their volley at a distance of a few yards. By a miracle he escaped with a wound on the hip, and succeeded in fulfilling his mission.

Promoted to the rank of colonel, November 1, 1823, Cormier was stationed at the Garrison at Rochefort at the outbreak of the Revolution of July. Refusing to serve under the new *régime*, he sent in his resignation to the Minister for War, August 5, 1830. This is the last we hear of him. He died in a suburb of Paris.

His uncle, de Butler, after living for some time in Hamburg, where he doubtless was regarded by the other *émigrés* with suspicion by reason of his intimate relations with Bourrienne, Minister to the Emperor, returned to England, where he is lost sight of. He died at Gothenburg in Sweden in 1815.

Bereft of his two sons, Comte Henri de Frotté remained in England entirely alone for a time, but returned to France on the restoration of the Bourbons, obtained the rank of *maréchal de camp*, and died in Paris, February 28, 1823. An enthusiastic Royalist, active and keen, the Comte de Frotté had never ceased to interest himself in the welfare of the *émigrés* in England, and came to be regarded as their benefactor.

The career of Jean-Gabriel Peltier was of a more singular description. This energetic pamphleteer had been editing in London ever since 1802 a journal

entitled *L'Ambigu*, in which he unceasingly vented his spleen against the "Premier Consul." His violence went to such lengths that in 1803, on the reiterated demand of the incensed Napoleon, he was brought before an English tribunal. He was defended by the famous counsel, James Mackintosh, and received only a mild sentence, with the result that he left the court in triumph, and attained wide celebrity throughout Europe over the affair. In addition to his newspaper work, Peltier was interested in a number of publishing enterprises, which helped to make a livelihood for him.

Some years later the Fates made him *chargé d'affaires* to the Emperor of Haïti. The amusement produced by this strange appointment may be imagined. What made the thing still funnier was the fact that His Haïtian Majesty paid his representative not in money but in kind, transmitting to him cargoes of sugar and coffee. Peltier negotiated these from time to time for the benefit of his creditors.

On the return of the Bourbons, Peltier returned to France, hoping, like every one else, for his share of recompense, but only to be disillusioned. He consoled himself with the reflection that if his King treated him like a nigger, at least his nigger (the Emperor of Haïti!) treated him like a king—

> "Mon roi me traite comme un nègre
> Mais mon nègre a son tour me traite comme un roi."

Unfortunately, the "*nègre*" soon had enough of his

epigrams, and abandoned him, and this brought about his ruin. Having lost all his means of subsistence, he went back once more to Paris to implore pity from the King, but in vain, and on March 29 he died miserably in an attic in the Rue Montmartre, aged sixty-five.

APPENDIX

We print here a certain number of letters and documents found for the most part among the unpublished papers of Lady Atkyns, not used in the body of this book, yet too interesting to be entirely omitted. The letters of the Princess de Tarente, in particular, seem to deserve inclusion in their entirety.

Letter from Jean-Gabriel Peltier to Lady Atkyns.

"London, January 1, 1803.

"I have the honour of sending you, Madame, a letter which I received yesterday from my friend.[1] The ferment Paris is now in makes me fear that he may have been obliged to leave the night of December 27–28, and it must have been very stormy.

"I have at last managed to get at Mr. Burke in the House of Commons. He has promised me an interview at as early a date as possible. I introduced M. Goguelat to him, and he seemed very glad to make his acquaintance. He had been driving the evening before with M. de Choiseul, Mr. Pitt, Lord Grenville, and Lord Loughborough, at Lord Hawkesbury's. We had time only for a word.

"I cannot close my letter, January 1, without sending you *à la Française*, my good wishes for the New Year. I know well what the object is that you yourself would wish most to see achieved."

[1] Baron d'Auerweck.

Letter from Louis de Frotté to Lady Atkyns.

"London, December 10, 1794.

"Lovers and Ministers who don't realize their opportunities often regret them afterwards when they are gone, never to be found again. This is what I fear is happening to us . . . for your Government is allowing precious days to pass by without profiting by them, and by its dilatoriness may perhaps lose all the advantages that are calculated to put an end to our troubles. Could you believe, dear friend of mine, that it is proposed to put off the expedition for some weeks! . . . However, I feel less disquieted over it all when I reflect that we must have a great many supporters, and very powerful ones, among those who are playing the *rôle* of the enemy, for all these troubles in the interior not to have produced more effect in the Assembly. Indeed, if some advantage is not derived from this, those at fault in the matter should be placed in a lunatic asylum. For myself, without knowing Puisage, I should certainly give my vote for his being made Constable if he succeeds in spite of all that can be said, because it will be to him that the King will be under the greatest obligations. And if any one were to ask me the name of the woman whom the King has most reason to love, I should tell him to become my rival, and should declare that, King though he was, he could never repay the heart that has suffered so much for him.

"I have seen M. W[indham], and after giving me a number of evasive replies, at last, on my insisting that I wanted to be off, he answered rather warmly: 'Oh, I can send you off at once if you like; but what do you propose to do? I have nothing definite to put in your hands. I have others to carry my packets, and I have no one except yourself to carry out the mission I have in my mind for you. Do have a little patience, and if you follow my advice you will be all right. Be sure that I have my eye on you all the time.' So you see I am still in this state of suspense. If only you had been able to remain I should not have found the time so long. Unable to get away to serve my King, I should have consoled myself as much as possible in the presence of Madame. . . ."

Letter from Reinhard, Representative of the Directoire in the Hanseatic Towns, to the Foreign Minister, Delacroix.[1]

Very private.
Extract to be made for the
Directoire and Police;
name of Colleville to be
kept secret.

(14th Prairial)

Citizen Giraudet
To be sent at once to
the Minister of Police.

Altona. This 1st Prairial, Year IV. of the French Republic, one and undivisible. (May 20th, 1796).

"Citizen Minister,

"I hasten to reply to your despatch, dated the 20th floréal, which accords remarkably with one I sent you from here on the 21st. It even seems that we have had the same sources of inspiration, and I shall not be surprised to find that the same Baron d'Auerweck, whom I denounced to you, had been in his turn the denouncer of Le Cormier. From the impressions I have been given of his character and principles, it is quite possible. However that may be, I have lost no time in having an interview with Colleville, who had already told me of the arrival of the Bishop of Arras, and who then further informed me (before he knew what my business with him was) that this person had written to him yesterday that his arrival was postponed, and that perhaps it would not take place at all, on account of the prolonged stay of the King of Verona with Condé's army. The King (Colleville assured me) would not leave this army, as it had been averred that he would.

"I began by telling Colleville that I had had a favourable reply from you about his affairs. He assured me of his gratitude, and at once spoke to me of his favourite idea of obtaining permission to serve you elsewhere than at Hamburg—a very natural desire, whether one explains it by his conviction that he would play a more

[1] *Foreign Office Archives*, Hamburg, V. 109, fol. 382.

active part somewhere else, or by his possible apprehension that his relations with us may be in the end discovered.

"I thought it better not to tell the man all I knew. I told him that before leaving Hamburg he would have to throw some light upon the things that were going on in that town; and I said enough to him to explain what I meant and to put him on his mettle. He replied that he knew nothing whatever of the meeting I had mentioned; that he was sure that if there was a question of it, Le Cormier, whom he saw every day, would have told him; and that the latter had been thinking for some days past of going into the country with M. de Bloom (who was formerly Danish Minister in Paris), but that it seemed that he would not now go. He added that he knew enough of the emigrants at Hamburg to be certain that, with the exception of Le Cormier, there was not an enterprising man in the 'Ancien Régime' section; that if such a plan had existed, he thought it was more than likely that the King of Verona's change of position would have caused another to be substituted for it; and that, in any case, he would investigate and explain, and might depend on his giving me all the information he could get. He further said that the Prince of Carawey, whom he knew privately, was expected at Hamburg from Lucerne within the fortnight, and if there was anything to be learnt from him, he (Colleville) would make it his business to learn it. I asked him what Lord Mc. Cartally had come here for. He did not know. I hope that I shall have found out whether he has left or not before the courier goes.

"In fact, Citizen Minister, Colleville's absolute ignorance of the meeting you speak of leads me to have some doubt of its reality. But I shall not leave it at that. I have already taken measures to get hold of my man, and also to have the plotters whom you indicate to me well watched from other quarters. I am aware that with men of Colleville's stamp there is always the evil, if not of being spied on in our turn—which is easily avoided with a little prudence—at any rate of being given information with a double purpose. It was as such that I regarded what he told me of a general plan of the *émigrés*, which was to operate in the very heart of the Republic, and to re-establish the Monarchy by the organs of

the Law itself. He thought himself sure of a man in the Legislative body (he told me his name was Madier). He knew all the details of the system they were to follow, and the details of the prosecution of the 2nd of September were actually to enter into it. As to the 2nd of September, I answered, every Frenchman regards it with horror, and the scoundrel ought to be punished. The Government will certainly take care that an act of justice does not become an anti-revolutionary instrument.

"Le Cormier has a brother-in-law called Buter (*sic*), who goes and comes from Paris to Boulogne, Calais, and Dunkirk, carrying despatches and money from England. Dr. Theil, who is settled in London, continues to serve as go-between for the Princes' correspondence. At Hamburg a man named Thouvent does the business.

"The prime mover in the new Royalist manœuvres, and the designer of the plan they are conducting in the interests of the Republic, is (so Colleville says) the Duc de le Vanguyon. Maduron, that brother of de la Garre, whom I once denounced to you, said that he had been arrested once or twice at Paris, and taken before the police, but that he had got out of it by means of his Swiss passport. It is certain that the *émigrés*, when they talk of a journey to France, do not anticipate any more dangers than if they were going from Hamburg to Altona. An Abbé de Saint-Far, residing at Hamburg, has, it is said, a quantity of arms in his house. I told you some time ago that he had contracted for some millions of guns. I suppose it was at that time for England. My next despatch, Citizen Minister, shall contain more positive information on the matter you desire me to investigate. If the meeting is actually to take place, I think I shall certainly be able to solve the problem you suggest to me.

"Greetings and respects,

"REINHARD."

Letter of the Princess de Tarente to Lady Atkyns.

"St. Petersburg, August 14-25, 1797.

"To-day, dearest Charlotte, is, by the old style, the birthday of the King of France, and also that of one of his most devoted, though

least useful subjects—myself. This month is one of sad memories. It was in this month that *her* birthday also fell; that she left the Tuileries and entered the Temple prison; indeed, August is filled with dates unforgettable at all times to the faithful, remembered the more poignantly when the day itself recalls them. I had your letter yesterday: it gave me pleasure, dear Charlotte. When I read it I was nearly asleep, for it was three in the morning, and I had come back from a stupid ball that I had been obliged to go to.

"You are always talking to me about a diary, my dear, but I have not the courage to tell you the wretched history of my life. I am just a machine wound up. I go on for ever, but without pleasure or interest in what I do. I live on in anguish, and my letters would be very doleful if they were a faithful portrait of myself; but we are so far apart, my dear, you and I, and letters pass through so very many hands, that we must only guess at one another's meaning—we cannot speak out. You know my heart—it will always be the same, and despite appearances, my feelings have not altered, I swear to you. But one has to be careful, when one can't speak face to face. It is a sacrifice; but who has not sacrifices to make? How many I've made in the last two months! I've left everything to come to a country where I know nobody. Here I am friendless among strangers; naturally I am criticised, and severely. All the kindness of LL.MM.II. has aroused great expectations in society; I feel that, and, shy as I always am, I get shyer and shyer. But indeed I ought to be grateful, for I am received and treated with consideration by many people here; they take a pleasure in showing their admiration for my conduct. My conduct! Ah! when fate brought one into contact with *Her*, was it possible to help adoring her? What merit was there in being faithful to Her, when one could not possibly have been anything else?

"I am sorry, dear Charlotte, for all the worries that the storm caused you on shore; to tell the truth, I felt best at sea. Do believe that I am not a coward, and that I was scarcely frightened at all. The weather was rough only twice, when we were entering the Cattegat, before the Sound; I think it must have been a tribute to the shock caused by the encounter of the two seas. Then on

Friday, or rather Thursday the 27th, when we were arriving at Cronstadt, the weather was very bad, and I must confess that that evening and night I did feel uneasy. It wasn't cowardice. The captain himself was anxious, and, indeed, the heavy rain and the darkness of the night, besides the number of small rocks that stick out of the water here, and could not be seen at all on account of the darkness, made our situation pretty serious, I assure you. Thank Heaven, though, I got on very well. When the captain came to say we were at anchor, I felt a wonderful gladness, and yet, all of a sudden, I began to cry, for I could not help saying to myself: 'Yes, I'm here! And what have I come for? Where shall I find any friends?'

"Well, Heaven has not forsaken me. If it had not found friends for me, at any rate it *has* found benefactors, and I am as comfortable as I could possibly have expected to be. At Court, while I stayed there, every one, beginning at the very top, was eager to show me respect and interest; and, here in the town, many people help to make my life happy and tranquil. There are little groups in which I am certain I shall enjoy myself when I am more at my ease. I am received most cordially and flatteringly; it seems a kindly, quiet sort of set; every one is eager to be nice to me, and there are not too many people. Ease, without which there is no such thing as society, is the dominant note in this set. But, Charlotte dear, don't imagine that I'm already devoted to these folk. I shall never care deeply for any one again, nor make any other close friendship. It was *She* who drew us together, Charlotte; my love for you shall be my last and dearest devotion, I promise you. Good-bye, my dear; I think of you a thousand times a day; I am happy now, for I am doing something for you, and to prove my love for you is one of the ways to make me happy. If you see H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, lay my respectful homage at his feet, and tell him that my prayers follow him always. Yesterday I bought a carriage which is really quite new, and yet it only cost me 115 louis; I drove to my ball in it last night (about 13 miles from here) over a pavement that no one could imagine if they had not driven over it! My dear, in one minute I spent as much money as I did in the whole of the last year I lived in England. I use only four

horses, and that shows how moderate I am, for a lady in my position ought not to have less than six. They threaten me with having to order the 'St. Catherine' liveries, which would cost 1200 roubles, that is, 150 louis. Compare this picture, dear Charlotte, with that of two months ago, when, with my linen frock tucked up under my arm, I was going about alone in the streets, knocking at Charlotte's door—and now, driving about in my own carriage, drawn by four horses, with two lackeys behind, dressed out, feathers in my hair—in short, a lady of fashion! Doesn't it seem like a dream, Charlotte? I assure you it does to me; and I assure you also, my dear, that the idea of coming seemed impossible—this world is not like the one we lived in then. The sacrifice was necessary; it had to be made; that was inevitable for both of us. I believed, at any rate, that I had to make it; and every minute I congratulate myself on having done so. Adieu! I hope you will have noticed the date of one of my letters; I am the more particular about this, since receiving yours of yesterday. Send my letters under cover to M. Withworth, your Minister here; and don't let them be quite so thick, so as not to tax your Government too severely.

"P.S.—A thousand loving remembrances to your mother and your son. What a mania for marriage you've got, all of a sudden, and where are all your husbands? You hid them very well from me, for a whole year. I never beheld one of them; and you have two, my dear! I *had* a good laugh, I can tell you! What are their names? And when is either of the two marriages to come off?"

St. Petersburg, October 15, 1797.

"I am alone to-day, my Charlotte; a year ago this very day I was with you; I had the relief of speech, but I could not feel more deeply than I do now the terrible anniversary which this shameful day marks for us. At this hour we were on the Richmond Road. Yes, Charlotte dear, I am thinking sadly of *her*, whom I loved more than all the world besides, to whom I would have sacrificed anything. That thought is my one solace now; that thought stays with me still, the thought of *Her*, of *Her alone*. . . . It is eleven o'clock now. Where was *She* then? I evoke it all—the whole

scene, afresh ; I have read again the lamentable story of her final sufferings, and my heart is oppressed—I feel almost crazy—I know not what I want to say! I assure you, Charlotte, that it makes me happier to tell you all this ; particularly to-day, when I'm so miserable, my friendship with you is a consolation—ah! you see I cannot write coherently. I feel so ill I wish I could talk to somebody, and tell them about myself; but how can I? There is no one at all to listen to me. For who can understand all that we feel about *her?* No one, no one. It's better to say nothing, and I have said nothing ; I haven't spoken of the anniversary, not even to M. de C. If I wasn't feeling so serious, I'd tell you that he bores me to death. He's the most exacting creature in the world, and I am only sorry that I brought him with me. He has done not a bit of good here, and he is going back to you. Don't tell him that I've spoken of him like this ; he would be horrified. Now enough of him!

"For a whole week I've been thinking sadly of to-morrow. The little circle of people I know best were to play a little comedy for the King of Poland. I thought that the 16th was the day they had fixed on. The idea came into my head at a party—a supper-party, on Thursday evening, at the Prince Kowakin's. I never like to speak of my feelings and my memories ; one must suffer in silence. I was quite determined not to go, Charlotte ; you won't, I hope, imagine that I debated *that* for a moment; but I was worried, for I didn't quite know how I was going to get out of it without saying why. A lady, who is always very very kind to me, saw by my face that I was unhappy about something. 'What is it, *chou?*' she said to me. 'You're sad.' I said, 'Oh no! it's nothing.' 'But I see you; I see there's something wrong.' And at last I *had* to tell her. . . . The little entertainment came off yesterday. It was charming, but it made me so sad that I could not hide my sadness. All things of that kind have a most curious effect upon me quite different from what they have of other people. Still, I must admit (the Comedy was well acted, by people whom I see a great deal of), I was interested—very much insulted; and yet, when it was over, there was nothing but melancholy in my heart. I came home to bed, and to thoughts of Her and you ; and

this morning, I had an immense letter from you which I'll answer to-morrow. I have read it; and I was very near being late for a long long mass—it took two hours. This evening, I had intended to spend here, all by myself. I refused a supper invitation from a kind young woman of whom M. de Cl. will tell you; and I meant to return here. Another lady (the one I mentioned first) sent her husband to tell me that she was ill, and that she would be alone and would I not come? So when I had been to a tea-party that I was engaged for, I did go there, but indeed I was very sad, and more silent than usual. (How people can treat me as they do in this country, I don't know—they are certainly most kind). I was determined, at any rate, to leave the party before ten o'clock. They tried to prevent me, but I insisted. At ten o'clock I put on my gloves, but they said: 'You shan't go!' and at last the mistress of the house, thinking of what I had confided to her a couple of days before, said to me: 'What day is to-day?' . . . Seeing that she had guessed, I said, turning away with my poor heart swelling: 'Don't speak to me of the day!' . . . I came back here alone to weep for my Queen, and to implore God to make me worthy to be with her again, and that soon—if he will indeed permit me to see her again, where *she* surely is. I have much to atone for—I feel it, know it; but I *do* in truth even now atone for much. I swear to you, Charlotte, I have never dared to put into words with you what you speak of to me to-day,—and with an '*again*,' underlined. Do you think that *I* wished it to be so—tell me, *do* you? No, no; Charlotte could never think that! If I *did* ever tell you, Charlotte, all that I could tell you, it's because I love you with all my heart, and because I'm sad, and haunted by memories. . . . To-morrow, I shall be alone all day; I won't see my brother-in-law, or any one else. My door will be fast shut, and I shall return to you, and tell you all I am feeling."

St. Petersburg, October 16, 1797.

"The date, my dear Charlotte, will be enough to tell you what I am mournfully thinking of. I began my day by going to church to hear a mass for Her; and to listen there to those dear sacred names of Hers. The mass was said by two Trappists, and I was

very sorry that I had not asked the Abbé to say it. . . . What odd incidents there are in the history of our revolution! I await the portrait with a respectful interest, and I thank you in advance for all the pleasure it will give me. Ah, my dear Charlotte, what a sad day! My heart aches so deeply and feels so heavy that it's as if I were carrying a load, and if I don't think clearly, I am soon enough reminded of everything by the pain of it. I can't speak of anything but Her. To-day is mail-day; so I must defer until next time my answer to your last letter, for I must go and talk about her to some other friends, who loved her too. I have the dress, and it's charming. That's all I can say about it, Adieu. I love you for Her and for yourself, with all my heart."

St. Petersburg, October 16, 1797.

"When I stopped writing to you last night, I went to bed and to rest my poor head. I read for half an hour that lovely romance of *Paul and Virginia*. My candle went out. Just like that, four years ago, some hours earlier—one of the world's choicest treasures went out to. . . . I gave myself up to sad thoughts; I imagined to myself all that she, so lowly tormented, must have suffered then. But somehow I fell asleep, and I slept on until the fatal hour when *She* must have realized how few more hours were left to her on that earth where she was so worshipped. All my thoughts were fixed on her, I lay awake for several hours in great agitation; then I went to sleep again, and at eight o'clock I was awakened so as to go to hear the mass where her loved name should fall once more upon my ears. I set off, accompanied by a French nobleman, whom I love and esteem, because he regrets his Sovereigns as I do. His kind heart comforted mine; the time I spent with him instilled solace into my soul, and I was not so unhappy when I came back from mass. I constantly read over with him all that I have written, especially all that I remember *her* having said in and before the days of her long martyrdom. He will put it all in order, and make these fragments as interesting as they ought to be. I was interrupted in this occupation by a man who belongs to this place, and whom I met in France, when LL.MM.II. came there to see the objects of my love and sorrow. This man—whom I like better than

any other I have met here—has given me a thousand proofs of his interest in me, which I prize as coming from a heart like his. He knew the anniversary, and spoke to me reverently of it; he is the only person I have seen to-day. But my dear Charlotte, I must shut out all extraneous thoughts and think only that She exists no more, and that her end was hastened by the villany and foul revenge of human beings, formerly her subjects, formerly her worshippers, beings with hearts—no! they had no hearts, since they shed . . . since they put an end to that existence . . . when her rank, her character, her face. . . .

"Last year I was with you all through this day; we wept together for the Queen of Love; to-day, alone with my sad heart, I can only write to you. Distance separates our bodies; but our souls and our thoughts and our feelings are the same, and I know that Charlotte and Louise are together to-day.

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After dinner.

"I dined alone. I ate little, Charlotte. Last year, I dined at your bedside, and I remember that when our dinner had been served, you told me an anecdote about the little Prince which made me cry. This year I did not cry at dinner; but I felt even sadder than I had felt then. The solitude and isolation, and the want of intimate friends, made be doubly sad. But I must not let myself think of myself. A voice ordered me to do as I did and I was bound to follow it—'twas the voice of Right and Well-doing."

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Before going to bed.

"I want to talk to you one moment longer about this sad day, now that it is wrapped in night's shadows. The crime is committed, and I bury it in the bottom of my heart; the memory of it lives there for ever; but I will speak no more of it, Charlotte. All to-day I was Her's alone; I forgot every one else, and I lived only for my old friends, just as if I were not in Russia at all. M. de Crussol came while I was at supper, and at half-past eleven he told

me, without my in the least wanting to know, where he had supped. . . .

* * * * * *

Morning of the 17th.

"Many things have happened to distract me since I came here, my Charlotte, as you may see from the fact of my having written to you on the tenth, 7th August, without noticing the date. I should never forgive myself for it, if I had really forgotten, if those events had not been as present to my poor heart as they always are, and always will be, I should be angry with myself; and I should tell you the truth quite frankly, even if I were to lose by doing so what I should not wish to have on false pretences—but that fault (if it was one) was not through want of heart. No! I can answer for my heart; it is good and true. Since you wished it, I wish I had written to you on St. Louis' day; but I would swear that I never *did* write to you unless it was mail-day; and that that was the first time I wrote to you several days running. The sad circumstance was certainly enough for one to do something out of the way. Don't scold me, if you can help it. You're really too fond of scolding. To-day it's about a watch; the next, about yourself! My dear, you are very good at curing one of little fancies; you've quite cured me of mine for my little watch, and I no longer think at all of the pleasure it used to give me; but only of what it gives you, since it comes from me. You must admit that that's a very nice way of speaking about a sacrifice, for I won't conceal from you that it *was* one for me. And as to your watch, Charlotte, I think the watchmaker must have sold it—I've been vainly asking for it, for the last six weeks. When you write several sheets *do* number them. . . ."

"St. Petersburg, November 6 (1797).

"Mr. Keith has arrived, my dear Charlotte, and the morning of the very day of his arrival (Friday) he sent me your letters; and this evening he sent the case, which I think charming, especially the top. I assure you that it gave me intense pleasure; but what sacrifice have you made me—where did you get all that hair? It can't be of

recent cutting; there are so few white hairs that I should scarcely recognize them for those dear tresses. In London you showed me only a tiny bit. Where did you get these? I thank you most gratefully for such a sacrifice; I confess that it would have been beyond me, and so I feel all the more grateful. I'm so afraid of breaking either of the glasses; the case is so high. I must have seen her like that, but I do not remember it; the earliest memory I have of her is seeing her twenty-one years ago at some races; and I remember her dress better than her charming face. The copy is very well done, and I have had the pleasure of examining it twice. It was given to me by artificial light, and next day it seemed quite different, the daylight improved it ever so much; I thank you a thousand times. It is the most delightful gift I could have had. The cameo is very pretty. I imagine it would fain be your portrait, and is really the portrait of Thor's daughter; she is rather elongated, poor little lady, but apparently the qualities of her heart atone for the defects of her face. My dear, you're mad with your 'fashions'! Let me tell you that, except when I go to Court, I'm just as I was in London, almost always in black-and-white linen gown. All the women, you know, dress themselves up, if you please, nearly every day. I never cared about that kind of thing—indeed, I detested it; and having to dress myself up four times a week makes me incredibly lazy on the days that, with joy untold, I can rest from all that bother. My friends are always laughing at me for my dowdiness—so you see what I've come to. As to having to wear warm clothing in Russia, as you think one has, you are quite mistaken. Once inside the street door, the houses are so warm that a very thin dress is by far the best to wear. So muslin is better than warm materials. One has to wear fur-cloaks, and well padded ones too, when one is going out, even from one house to another. That is necessary here; but indoors one would be suffocated in padded clothes. I used to think the same as you. I had a dress made in London, and I've only worn it once or twice, and then I thought I would die of heat; so you see it will hang in my wardrobe for a long time.

"Yes, I like caricatures; why not? I don't see anything wrong about them. And I don't care whether they're of Bonaparte, or any

other of those gentlemen. To tell you the truth, I wish they would do something worse to them than only make fun of them; but now, with the way Lord Nelson of the Nile has disposed of Bonaparte, one certainly can have a good laugh at him. *He* doesn't carry the austerity of his principles as far as you do, my dear Charlotte.

"I shall have the inscription of the Queen's portrait changed; her name is wrong. It ought to be 'M. A. de Lorraine, Archduchess of Austria.' The portrait is charming, but all the same it is not the Queen *we* knew; and I loved her so much better than when that portrait was done. Adorable lady! She was always beautiful and sweet. My dear, I'm ashamed to say I've forgotten to tell you that the portrait, though it didn't come on our day of mourning, did arrive on November 2, her natal day. I thought of Her all day long; and when Mr. Keith came, it quite distracted me, for everything that reminds me of England puts me in such a state of mind. I talked to him about the case; and he tells me that he had given it to the captain and begged him to put it in his pocket, and that he was to see him again in the afternoon. Imagine my uneasiness and impatience! I made a lackey wait at my house all day, and about eight o'clock the precious case was brought to me. I thank you for it with all my heart. I wish I could send you something as precious, but I haven't an idea what to send. For the rest, I haven't got anything, not even the black glass for my friend. My dear Charlotte, you will never cure yourself of giving little *coups de patte;* you know that I never guess anything; but still . . . ! That black glass must be for some one who draws, and since I take the trouble of doing your commissions, it must be for some one I like. Adieu, my dear! Forgive this small reflection. But though you're so used to liberty, you don't allow me many liberties, I think. Well, it's better to give them back than to have them stolen—and so I do, you see! A thousand kisses!"

Letter from Count Henri de Frotté to Lady Atkyns.

"Tuesday, January 1, 1805.

"Nobody does you more justice than I do, madame; nobody reveres you more. The devotion which the French people displayed

during the Revolution was no more than their duty. They owed the sacrifice of their lives to the cause of the restoration of the Monarchy, and of order to the country.

"But you, madam, a native of England, *you*, with your feeling heart, have undertaken for this just cause more than could have been hoped for from a lady, and a lady who was a foreigner, and whom nothing bound in any way to our sovereigns, our country, and our troubles. By risking your life, as you have done several times, you have acquired a right to the respectful gratitude of all honourable Frenchmen.

"My own present troubles may make me more unhappy in certain circumstances, but shall never make me unjust. Appearances may be against me. On your return I shall open my heart to you, and you shall judge. All I can say here is, that I have lost everything. I have a son still, but he is in the enemy's chains, and that enemy has means of intelligence everywhere, which informs him both of what is and of what is not. I ought to be more circumspect than others; but, all the same, no consideration shall prevent me from keeping my promises. If I meet unjust men as I go along, so much the worse for the master whom they serve, and for the faithful subjects who may have relations with them, particularly in these critical times. What I now have the honour to write to you, will be an enigma to you for the present. I will explain to you when you return, but I think I may presume that your discernment will have given you an indication to the solution. No, madam, it was not because the money was not delivered to me at the time you arranged that I had ceased to ask for it. I remember very well that you were kind enough to say you would lend the 200 francs which I asked you for, if it was possible for you to do so. The impulse which moved me in that matter was natural in an unhappy father, deserted and mourned for by those who ought to have protected him. I added, in speaking to you then, that I had inherited some means from my father, which would put me in a position to be able to pay this debt; but that heritage was in reality such a small affair I dare not run the risk of embarrassing my friends if God were to cut short my career. And *that* is why I ask you not to do anything further in that affair.

"Accept my deep regrets for having troubled you at a moment which must be so painful to you. I have shared your too-just regrets, and all through my life I shall sympathize with anything that concerns your affections. It is the natural consequence of my respectful and undying attachment for the friend of my unfortunate son.

"My friend assures you of his respect, and of the sympathy he felt in the cruel loss which you have suffered."

Will of Lady Atkyns.

"January 6, 1835.

"I, Charlotte Atkyns, give to Victoire Ilh, my maid-servant, at present in my service, all effects of furniture, linen, wearing-apparel and silver that I possess; and, generally, all objects which may be found in my room, in my house, or lodging, at the date of my decease, whatever they may be; and also my carriage. I give moreover to the said Victoire Ilh, the sum of £120 sterling, which is due to me to-day from Nathaliel William Peach, of 13, Saville Street, London, and of Ketteringham in the County of Norfolk, or from his heirs, which sum shall be payed on demand to the said Victoire Ilh, after my decease. I further give to Victoire Ilh the sum of £1000 sterling, which shall be paid to her within three months of my death.

"I charge these gifts on the Norfolk property, which is at present in the possession of the said Nathaliel W. Peach as a guarantee for all my debts, I having mortgaged the said property in favour of my sister-in-law, the late Mary Atkyns, for £18,000 sterling, and in addition for an annuity of £500 sterling payable quarterly each year; and as in consequence the freehold belongs to me, I charge it with the payment of my lawful debts, and of my funeral expenses.

"I desire that my body be taken to Ketteringham and interred in the family vault; and that my name and age be inscribed on a plain marble stone, near the monument of my late dear son. I have mentioned in another will the names of some friends from whom I beg acceptance of some souvenirs of my consideration and esteem. I give the box which I have left with Messrs. Barnard

and Co., N. Bankers, Cornhill, London, to Mr. Nathaliel W. Peach. It contains some pieces of silver. I left it there, I think, on November 10, 1832. I give the freehold of all my properties in Norfolk to Nathaliel W. Peach for the payment of all charges and debts, present and future. I give £100 sterling to my servant, Jean-Baptiste Erard, native of Switzerland, who has served me faithfully for five years, and whose conduct has always been regular. As to that of Victoire Ilh, ever since she came into my service, it has been beyond all praise. This girl was not born to wait upon others; she belonged to a very respectable family of Munich. I appoint Nathaliel W. Peach my executor. I request that immediately after my death the Counsel for the British Embassy, Mr. Okey (or whoever may be Counsel at the time) be sent for; and I desire him to be good enough to act for Mr. Nathaliel W. Peach here at Paris.

"In the name of God, I sign the present testament."

THE END

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