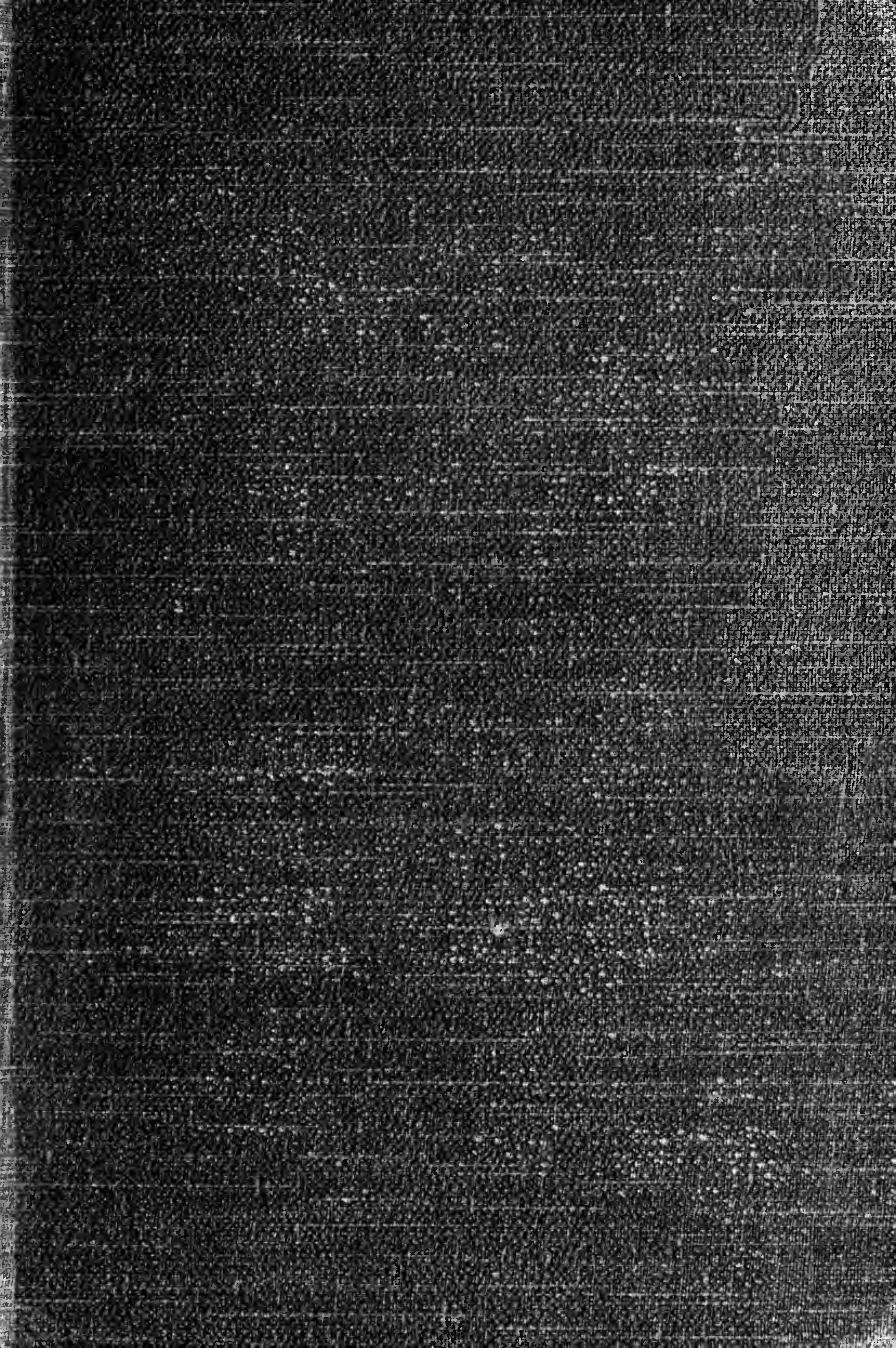

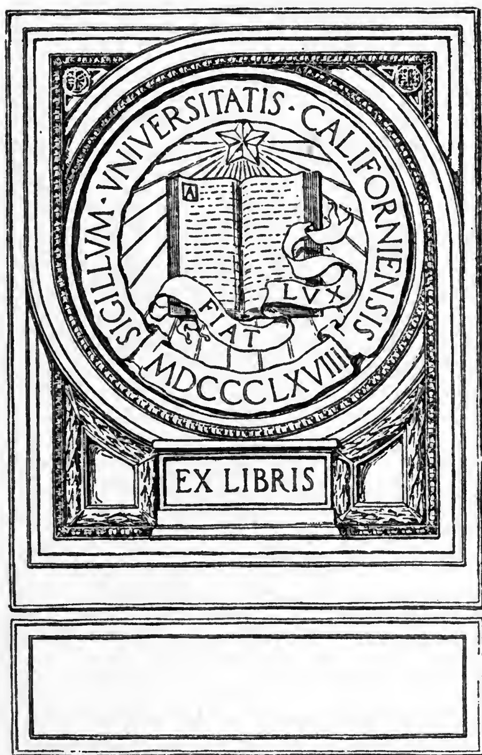
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LOVE AND LOVERS
OF THE PAST

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CHARLOTTE CORDAY

LOVE AND LOVERS OF THE PAST

BY

PAUL GAULOT

TRANSLATED BY

F. CHARLES LAROCHE, M.A., LL.D.

WITH A FRONTISPIECE

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PREFACE

THE friendly reception that the readers of the 'Revue Hebdomadaire' accorded to the series of historical studies which were published in it between 1893 and 1901 has induced me to collect and publish them in the form of a book. Although they may be individually devoted to distinct historical characters, they are nevertheless connected with each other by a common bond. All, in fact, show, in different ways, what love and passion were in that charming though terrible eighteenth century, which is notwithstanding credited with having reduced the first to a synonym for mere pleasure, and with having scarcely known the second.

Combining the recital of facts with that of the most secret feelings of the human heart, these studies have both psychological and historical value. Moreover, is there not at least as much interest in studying the souls of our forefathers as in analysing the souls of our contemporaries, inasmuch as, in the first instance, written documents, such as official papers and private letters, take the place of personal observation, which is subject to so many errors?

In an historical narration it is expedient to reproduce these papers as closely as possible, in order to reflect the spirit of the epoch and the character of society at the time, as well as to enable such of our readers as may be so disposed to refer to the original documents.

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The National Record Office contains real riches; it is from them that I have extracted the material for 'Love and Lovers of the Past.' If in some few places I have considered it necessary to omit certain matters, it has only been in order to remain prudent even when dealing with indiscretions. But I have been careful to add nothing, while confining myself to the truth alone. I have not introduced into the studies any romance other than that which the heroes and heroines, in their adventures, themselves furnished.

PAUL GAULOT.

PARIS: *October* 6, 1902.

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LOVE AND LOVERS OF THE PAST

THE DUCHESSE DE BERRY:

THE REGENT'S DAUGHTER[1]

How strange was the fate of this princess, who for two years had every reason to believe she would one day be Queen of France! Yet death found her the wife of a nobleman of no importance. In fact, the whole of her life was odd. One might think that she foreknew her early death—she was carried to her grave at the age of four-and-twenty—as she passed her days making the most of her time. Public opinion she heartily despised, scandalising the world by her low tastes and immorality. She has left a name in history, it is true, though scarcely one to be admired.

Yet, is not the explanation of her failings to be found in her birth? The regent's daughter! Was not atavism at the bottom of her sins? Were not her actions those of a madwoman? They were; and this is her excuse; for this reason, one feels unable to condemn this unfortunate, restless creature. To her might be applied, with slight adaptation, the words

[1] *Correspondance de Madame Duchesse d'Orléans, née princesse Palatine*—published by M. G. Brunet. *Mémoires du duc de Saint-Simon.*—*Mélanges*, by Boisjourdain.—*Mémoires de Maurepas.*—*Biographie universelle, &c.*

which Madame de Milleraye, wife of the field-marshal, uttered concerning the Chevalier de Savoie: 'For my part, I believe God must think twice over before sending a man, born of such parents, to the nether regions.'

Marie Louise Elisabeth d'Orléans was born on August 20, 1695. She could not be called the offspring of a love union, since her parents were a most ill-assorted couple. Pride alone, not love, had presided at their marriage.

Her father was the duc d'Orléans, son of King Louis XIV.'s brother, a worthless prince who married the Princess Palatine, Elisabeth Charlotte, after the death of his first wife, Henrietta of England. And yet, according to Saint-Simon, he was not fond of women, nor did he profess to be. His master was the Chevalier de Lorraine, whose disciple he remained until his death. In connection with this, it must be borne in mind that Louis XIV. would not allow even his illegitimate children, such as those borne to him by Madame de Montespan, to occupy a secondary rank in the royal family ; and when he wished to marry his daughters, he chose their husbands from among princes of the blood royal. His daughter by Madame de la Vallière he gave to Prince Conti; the eldest, by Madame de Montespan, to the duc de Bourbon; and the youngest, Mademoiselle de Blois, to his own nephew, who was then duc de Chartres. This last marriage was not easy to settle, especially on account of Madame—the Palatine, as she was called—wife of the duc d'Orléans, and mother of the prince whom the king wanted for a son-in-law. The princess felt very reluctant to have a bastard foisted on her as daughter-in-law, and raised what she hoped would prove an insurmountable obstacle to the marriage. It was the king who sent for the Chevalier de Lorraine and promised him the order of the Saint-Esprit if through his agency he obtained the duc d'Orléans' consent, which he duly did.

The young duc de Chartres dare not disobey his father

or his uncle, and he was fain to submit to the union, however repulsive it might be to himself. The Princess Palatine was likewise forced to give in and to endure that which she could no longer prevent. But she showed her feelings openly, and did not even disguise her anger. The wedding ceremony having been performed, all the court was waiting in the great gallery for the king after mass ; the young duke approached his mother in order to kiss her hand, but she spitefully slapped him in the face by way of openly displaying her feelings. The bridegroom, ashamed, beat a hasty retreat, leaving the witnesses of the scene in silent astonishment.

Strange to say, although Mademoiselle de Blois was married into so high a rank, she seemed to consider that it was she who made a *mésalliance*. She was oblivious to the shame of her birth ; she could only think of her father—the Roi Soleil—whose splendour and majesty filled Versailles, and, in the opinion of his courtiers, not France only, but the whole world as well. Indeed, so proud did she feel of having such a father, that there was no room left in her heart for humiliation at having such a mother.

The first-fruit of this strange union was the princess, the chief features of whose history we are about to relate.

Her father loved her madly. She bore a strong likeness to him, and from the cradle seemed to share all his faults. At the age of seven Elisabeth d'Orléans had a dangerous illness. The duke, who possessed some medical knowledge, nursed her with devoted care, and succeeded in saving her life. This illness only increased his fondness for the child; it grew into a real passion, which seemed almost extraordinary in such a man. He painted her portrait, but as an antique goddess : thus showing off her beauty without inspiring modesty in the young princess. This incident gave rise to certain rumours which may be calumny, but which readily obtained credence on account of the dissolute, immoral, and notoriously irreligious life which the duc de Chartres, who became duc d'Orléans in 1701, led.

Voltaire, who for many years kept a stock of verses for the aristocracy—verses of praise as well as of insult—is said to have rhymed the accusation in the following lines :

> Un nouveau Loth vous sert d'époux,
> Mère des Moabites ;
> Puisse bientôt naître de vous
> Un peuple d'Ammonites.
>
> A new Lot is your husband,
> You, the mother of the Moabites ;
> May you soon give birth
> To the Ammonites.

The Princess Palatine, grandmother to the Princess Elisabeth d'Orléans, evidently shared the general opinion concerning her son and his daughter. In one of her letters she writes : 'I sympathise with your grief for the loss of your niece. But it is wrong to regret so deeply the death of a granddaughter. Dear me ! what a blessing it would have been for my son had he lost his three eldest daughters in their childhood ! [1] I will say no more.'

Meanwhile, the young princess grew up a complete stranger to her mother, from whose influence she was withdrawn ; and, owing to the excessive leniency and indulgence of her father, she acquired an extremely independent nature, and could bear no restraint. As she was approaching fifteen, it was thought time to find a husband for her.

Tall, strong, with a good figure, although rather stout, the princess was handsome, if not graceful. The brilliancy of her eyes reflected her love of pleasure and foreshadowed what she was to become in after years. Gifted with an appetite worthy of the Bourbons, she was known not only for her gluttony but also for her love of drink. She was not a woman to deprive

[1] The Princess Palatine was alluding to the eldest daughter of her son, Marie Louise Elisabeth ; to Mademoiselle de Chartres, afterwards Abbess of Chelles ; and to Mademoiselle de Valois, who married the duc de Modena, and whose private life was marked by many a scandal.

herself of anything; she gave way to all her inclinations, none of which were refined. Where was the prince to be found who would prove fit for such a wife?

There lived at Louis XIV.'s court, where he occupied a brilliant position, a very influential nobleman who thought it his duty and his interest to be mixed up in every affair concerning the royal family; we mean the duc de Saint-Simon, a son of one of Louis XIII.'s favourites. Extremely religious, a sincere Christian, he would not admit that all men were equal. They might be equal before God—his religion taught him to believe that—but equal before men, that was another thing. In his opinion, the king and princes of the blood royal were superior beings; between them and the nobility, which was not to be put on the same footing as the rest of humanity, there were the dukes—a class to whom he ascribed a special rank, and whose privileges were dear to him.

Saint-Simon was very intimate with the duc d'Orléans; they were about the same age. The prince valued the qualities of Saint-Simon, who forgave the prince's failings, not only because of the latter's real kindness, but also because such a friendship honoured him. Still, those considerations alone could not have induced Saint-Simon to enter into a matrimonial intrigue; personal interest came to the rescue.

In 1710, after the successive defeats which marked the war for the succession to the Spanish throne—after Ramillies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet—the glory of the Roi Soleil had been thrown into the shade; Europe no longer considered an alliance with the French royal family as a blessing. Moreover, the state of the ruined treasury made it impossible to endow the princes richly.

As wives to the ducs de Bourbon and Anjou no one could be found except princesses of the House of Savoy, a family which, though it could boast long descent, was neither powerful nor wealthy. The princesses' dowries had not been

fully paid, and what had been given was given under pressure. Besides, Victor Amédée had no more daughters to marry, and the duc de Berry was evidently destined for a princess royal.

Thus thought the duchesse de Bourbon, the wife of Condé's grandson—Condé, the hero of Rocroi. The duchess, Mademoiselle de Nantes, was an illegitimate daughter of the king by Madame de Montespan. If only she could secure the duc de Berry for her own daughter, she would achieve the acme of her ambition; thus her descent would then really become part of the legitimate royal family, instead of remaining one whose ignominious origin was due to royal caprice.

Saint-Simon was on the worst of terms with the duchesse de Bourbon, and he never missed an opportunity of showing his animosity. He soon saw that if her plans were successful she would thus crown the favour she enjoyed from Monseigneur the Dauphin. Her success also meant the crushing of the Orleans, and consequently Saint-Simon's own fall.

He loved the duc d'Orléans truly, but he loved himself still more; so that his personal interest was his sole guide. 'I found myself,' he says, 'in a sorry plight. I saw what was against my immediate as well as my future interest. I saw those whom I loved best, successively on the pinnacle and in the abyss, with the consequences each state might have for me, independently of the despair I might experience whilst avoiding a fall, or the triumph which would certainly be mine if I helped them to rise. It was more than enough to excite a highly sensitive man, one who loves as deeply as he hates. This has been my fate all my life.'

He at once urged the duc d'Orléans to solicit for his daughter an alliance with the duc de Berry. He found a powerful ally in the duchess, a sister of the duchesse de Bourbon, both of whom were daughters of the king by Madame de Montespan. Both had cherished the same dream—both

wished to see their children members of the royal family. The splendour of the match, the honour he would derive from it, easily brought the duc d'Orléans into the combination. It was not long before both parties planted their batteries—Orleans and Bourbons laid siege to the heir to the French throne. Perhaps the most remarkable part of the whole affair is that the one who was most concerned with it was not considered in the least. He was treated as a mere child, who had only to obey the behests of others. Notwithstanding he was four-and-twenty, all were ready to take advantage of his bashfulness, his gentle and somewhat nervous disposition, and his physical weakness. Indeed, he who had so many examples easy to follow was still a novice in love affairs.

With regard to the Orleans, their main obstacles came from the king and, above all, from the Dauphin. His Majesty did not say openly what he thought, but he was more likely to be opposed than favourable to the marriage. One day the duc d'Orléans broached the subject, adding, that it would atone for many painful frictions caused by the favours granted to bastards—meaning the duc du Maine and the comte de Toulouse. 'I should think so,' replied the king curtly, with a bitter and sarcastic smile.

As for Monseigneur, he did not conceal his opposition; on the contrary, he showed it very plainly one day when the duchesse de Bourgogne, having praised Mademoiselle, added that she would be a suitable wife for the duc de Berry. Monseigneur thereupon lost his temper, and referring to the desire of the duc d'Orléans to become King of Spain in the place of Philip V., he added, that it would be a just reward for the part the duke had played across the Pyrenees. After which he left the room abruptly.

There was not much hope that the prince would alter his view. His intellect was very narrow. In his residence of Meudon he divided his time between feasting on fish and the company of Mademoiselle Choin, his mistress, 'who was known

to have the largest bosom ever seen.' He could not resist the attraction of her 'kettledrums.' Indeed, he would hardly steal a few minutes from his two occupations to glance over the 'Gazette de France,' where he looked at the only matter of interest for him, the notices of births, marriages, and deaths.

The duc de Saint-Simon saw at once that in order to overcome these tremendous obstacles he must needs seek for aid among the mighty, and enlist the sympathies and interest of as many people as possible, with a view to bringing the king to declare himself in favour of the marriage, and thus render void the Dauphin's opposition. He gained the duchesse de Villeroy (who had influence over both Madame de Maintenon and the duchesse de Bourgogne), the duc de Beauvilliers, and Marshal de Boufflers ; lastly, he tried to obtain the assistance, not of Heaven itself—it was beyond his reach—but of the Jesuits, who spoke in the name of Heaven.

This latter aid was not very difficult to obtain, since at the time the Jesuits were not on good terms with the duchesse de Bourbon ; on the contrary, they were on friendly terms with the duc d'Orléans. Although that prince never went to confession, he had chosen as father confessor a Jesuit, Father du Trévoux. Born in Brittany of gentlefolk, this priest was vulgar in his tastes, narrow-minded, and rather stupid ; his sole merit was that of being a friend to Father Tellier. Thus he could be used to report to Father Tellier all that was necessary to be told to win the latter to the Orleans party, so that in due time he might exercise his influence over the king.

Yet, Saint-Simon did not trust in Father du Trévoux alone. He also gained the good-will of Father Sanadon, another but more intelligent friend of Father Tellier. He spoke to the Jesuits of his plan as of one which would be most profitable to their order, and, as he said himself, 'he brought them to wish for their own sake that the marriage of Mademoiselle with the duc de Berry should come to pass.' He was soon convinced that he had won the Jesuits to his cause. 'The Jesuits, to

whom nothing is indifferent, important things less so than minor ones—and by the Jesuits I mean Father Tellier and that very small and very secluded committee which is unknown even to the other members of the order, who alone have a voice in every important affair—took this marriage as much to heart as if Mademoiselle had been one of their own. They found means to settle everything with us, give their share of advice, and take an active part in the working out of the whole plan. They became powerful instruments for us. . . .

'Such were the forces and combinations of forces which love for my friends, hatred for Her Grace [the duchesse de Bourbon], care of my own welfare in the present and in the future, enabled me to discover, adjust, and set in motion with as much regularity as if it had been an engine. Lent gave me full time to work and perfect my plan. I ignored no step, no difficulty; I was acquainted with the daily progress, and was able from day to day to set my machine in motion with perfect regularity.'

Results were almost immediate. As Lent came to a close, Madame de Maintenon looked favourably on the marriage, and his Majesty was no longer averse to it. Yet it was urgent to keep both in such good dispositions, and to frustrate opposition. Rumours of incestuous relations between father and daughter were already afloat. They came to the ears of Saint-Simon, who informed the duchesse d'Orléans. Both agreed that no time must be lost in bringing the duke to speak to the king.

But the duke bristled up. No arguments could convince him; and when they begged him to go to his Majesty, he answered that he would neither have the face nor the courage to speak, and that if he were to do so in his present frame of mind, he would speak so awkwardly that he would only spoil the business.

This answer grieved the duchess, who saw in it the ruin of her hopes—but Saint-Simon did not despair. He prepared a letter to his Majesty for the duke, thinking wisely that if he

had not to speak, the prince would yield. Nor was Saint-Simon mistaken, for the duke agreed to copy the letter, which ran thus:

'Sire,—For a long time my mind has been filled with thoughts which I can no longer hide from Your Majesty, as I know they will not displease You. Lately, many events have enhanced the feelings of my heart, and I lay them at Your Majesty's feet with the confidence that not only your past favours, but, if I may say so, the ties of blood have given me. I write what I feel; for were I to speak, I might do it in so lengthy a manner as to weary Your Majesty.

'Two years ago Your Majesty raised in me flattering hopes of a Marriage between the duc de Berry and my daughter. . . .'

Then followed a long list of favours granted by the king to members of the royal family, except to the duke himself. What is the reason of it? Has he done anything to merit his being in disgrace? The silence of the king concerning this marriage causes him great misgivings. The only means to put a stop to grievous family discord, which threatens to divide the royal family, is to resume this plan, which seems to have been given up.

'It is, Sire, out of deep and respectful affection for Your Majesty, and devotion to the Dauphin, that I desire so ardently to come nearer Your Majesty and tighten the bonds which unite us, thus putting an end to all unfriendliness. I shall then, thanks to my daughter, regain the favour of Her Grace my mother, as the honour which an alliance with the duc de Berry will reflect on her son will be also reflected on mine.'

This letter, once written and copied, had to be handed to the king. This was not an easy matter, as a favourable opportunity had to be chosen. The particulars are rather amusing. Father du Trévoux had to question Father Tellier on the moral frame of mind of the king, whilst Saint-Simon

questioned his physician, Maréchal, on his physical condition. A week later, Saint-Simon having heard that his Majesty was in good health and had been rather lively at the *petit lever*, he urged the duke to hand in the famous letter.

The king, a little surprised, took it, read it attentively in private, and approved its contents ; he would, however, not come to any decision before seeing Father Tellier. Of course, the latter expounded all the advantages such a marriage would offer, and strongly advised Louis XIV. to exert his own will over his son, who could not be brought to give his consent.

The king gave up all hesitation. He intimated to the Dauphin that his own will was that the duc de Berry should marry Mademoiselle ; and the Dauphin, upset, moved, afraid, gave in very plain words the consent which his Majesty demanded. This took place on June 1, 1710.

The next day his Majesty asked the duc de Berry if he would like to be married. The young duke, who, as we said, was of a rather shy disposition, thought he would be more successful with a wife than with a mistress, and longed to be married. Besides, his brother and sister, their Graces the duc and duchesse de Bourgogne, having adroitly prepared him in favour of Mademoiselle, he answered that he would obey his grandfather with pleasure. Thus everything was going on well. Even Monseigneur refrained from casting a shadow on this picture of happiness; and when the duc and duchesse d'Orléans came to Meudon to offer their congratulations, he thought he would never find a better opportunity to 'lift his elbow,' and so toasted the prospective father-in-law, mother-in-law, daughter-in-law, and finally the whole company in general. In fact, he never had been so merry. Alone, the duchesse de Bourbon was unable to hide her spite, and showed it plainly to her sister—her insolence only adding to the pride of the duchesse d'Orléans.

The wedding took place on July 6 at twelve o'clock; Cardinal Janson, grand almoner, officiating. The king,

members of the royal family, princes and princesses royal, were present. A few of the bastards, who attended every function as if they had belonged to a recognised class, were also in attendance. Supper for twenty-eight was served at the duchesse de Bourgogne's residence.

Saint-Simon relates that, after supper, his Majesty went into the new wing to the young couple's apartments. All the courtiers, ladies and gentlemen, had formed a line in the gallery, and with the other guests followed the king. Cardinal Janson blessed the nuptial bed. The bride and bridegroom were soon placed in it. His Majesty having handed the duke his nightdress, the duchesse de Bourgogne performed the same office for the bride, who was introduced by Madame de Saint-Simon, and to whom the king kindly expressed his best wishes. Once the young people were in bed, M. de Beauvilliers and Madame de Saint-Simon drew the curtains simultaneously; but they could not help smiling at the idea of performing this office together.

Saint-Simon was justly proud of the shrewdness he had displayed, and the success of his manœuvres. His joy, however, was mingled with the bitterness caused by an unexpected blow. No one who has not fathomed his unbounded vanity can realise the bitterness of the wound. Madame de Saint-Simon was chosen as lady in waiting to the young duchess—a terrible falling off, in the duke's opinion; it was putting her in a secondary place, quite beneath her birth and dignity. The duke resisted with remarkable firmness, refusing time after time, always giving some good reason or other; but every one was against him in the matter. The king plainly stated his will; and as the Dauphin had yielded for his son, so had Saint-Simon to yield for his wife.

It poisoned his triumph. Yet, for us it is almost impossible not to smile at the candidness of his complaints. 'We felt how blind we had been in the passionate pursuit of our wish; our success gave us more work and trouble than it

brought joy; . . . we grieved at having succeeded; and had I known what was to be, instead of having undertaken this affair and followed it closely as I did, I should have been as eager to thwart it, even if Mademoiselle de Bourbon had benefited by it and ignored what I had done. . . . And,' he adds, 'had I known the quarter, no, the thousandth part of what we witnessed!' It is not saying too much to declare that he deplored above all the fact that he and his wife were too close witnesses.

The newly wedded pair formed one of the most singular couples history speaks of. And yet at first sight they seemed to be made for one another. The duc de Berry was rather handsome; he was tall, not too stout, with fair hair, good complexion, and splendid health. He was kind, yet dignified, but his intelligence had not been developed. Being the third son of the Dauphin, and having only a very remote chance of ever mounting the throne, his education had been sadly neglected: as a matter of fact, he could scarcely read or write.

He was, nevertheless, no fool; he knew his inferiority with regard to intelligence, and it increased his shyness, even making him awkward, and almost stupid at times. He complained of it, and did not forgive the king nor M. de Beauvilliers, his tutor. One day he confessed his grief before Madame de Saint-Simon. 'They had only one thing in view—to stifle my intelligence,' he said, with a groan. 'They did not want me to have any brains. I was the youngest, and yet dared to discuss with my brother. Afraid of the consequences of my boldness, they crushed me; they taught me nothing but gambling and hunting; they succeeded in making a silly fool of me, one incapable of anything, and who will yet be the laughing-stock of everybody'!

The duchess was only fifteen years old; but, being extremely clever, she soon judged her husband, and consequently despised him, and as he was passionately fond of

her, she exercised absolute sway over him. A week after their marriage she gave vent to her pride, showing her love for command, her violent temper, her unscrupulous and unrestrained disposition.

She despised her mother on account of her birth, and her father for his want of will. She thought so much of herself that she resented the duchesse de Bourgogne having precedence over her. Disregarding her sister-in-law's kindness, and without mercy for the two brothers' love, she neglected nothing to bring about a quarrel between the duc de Bourgogne and her husband. The duc de Berry was not strong-minded enough to resist this overbearing will, and accordingly a coolness soon sprang up between the two brothers. Just at that time, however, an unexpected event overthrew all her plans, for the Dauphin died (1711). The duc de Bourgogne was now heir to the throne, and the duchess was Dauphiness! Her intrigues were turning against the young duchess; her anger knew no bounds! Yet, it was still possible for her to draw back. She pretended to be deeply grieved, and tried her best to drown in the insincere tears, which she profusely shed at this death, the remembrance of her unwise plotting. The brothers' love was strong enough to make a reconciliation possible.

Pride was not the only failing of the duchess; she had others more degrading. Eating and drinking were among her passions. Her grandmother has left us some singular details on this subject: 'Madame de Berry does not eat much at dinner. How could she? Before getting up she has all sorts of eatables brought to her in bed, which she never leaves before noon. At two o'clock she sits down to dinner, and does not rise from the table much before three. She takes no exercise whatever. At four o'clock she eats again—fruit, salad, cheese, &c. At ten she has her supper, and goes to bed between one and two in the morning. She likes very strong brandy.'

She liked it so much, indeed, that many a time she was helplessly drunk ; wherever she might be upon such occasions, she vomited. Nor was she afraid of scandal, neither the presence of her husband nor of her father exercising any restraining influence over her.

Worse than all, her morals were disreputable. Openly dissolute, she compromised herself in the vilest intrigues ; she made a boast of it, so that the duke could not ignore his wife's conduct. He was in a terrible situation for the son of a king. To put an end to the scandal, he must create a worse one. Timid and kind in the extreme, and still retaining some fondness for the woman he had passionately loved, he dared not complain too openly. Many a time he confided in Madame de Saint-Simon, who heard more than one strange confession. From time to time he actually broke into revolt. Betrayed, openly flouted, he could not ignore the relations between father and daughter. Saint-Simon speaks of one violent scene, the cause of which is all the more apparent owing to the writer's discretion. 'Her daily and endless conversations with the duc d'Orléans,' he says, speaking of the princess, 'were dull enough when her husband was present. They exasperated him beyond measure. Between them there were frequent and violent scenes. The last one took place at Rambouillet, and, by a regrettable mishap, ended in the duchess receiving a kick ! . . . The duke threatened to shut her up for life in a convent.'

But threats had no effect on the duchess ; albeit, she well knew that her husband might, in his rage, inform the king : he might get his support, in which case she would have the worst to dread. Yet, chance favoured her. Tired of his proud, treacherous, and guilty wife, the duke compromised himself with a chambermaid of the duchess, the girl becoming *enceinte*.

When the duchess heard of this, she bethought herself of the best means to turn it to advantage. She accordingly told

her husband that she was fully aware of his conduct, and added, that she would never mention it. She also assured him that he was perfectly free to do as he liked, provided he gave her equal freedom. If not, she would acquaint the king, and obtain from him the dismissal of the chambermaid, who would be sent so far away that he never could see her again. The poor prince dared not fight; once more he bowed his head and gave in to her. After this affair the young duchess felt quite at ease; her imagination, excited by the enormous amount of brandy she consumed, conceived the most extravagant fancies, to the despair of her family. Thus, one day she fell in love with one of her husband's equerries, of the name of La Haye. She appointed him chamberlain, but could not make him handsome, for Saint-Simon describes him thus: 'He was tall and bony, with an awkward gait, an ugly face; vain, stupid, lacking in wit, and looking well only when on horseback.'

The duchess was not content with having him for her paramour. She wished for something more uncommon, and, having decided upon an elopement, she proposed that they should go to Holland. La Haye was frightened at such a proposal, and still more frightened to see the duchess's wrath at his not accepting the offer readily. So he hastened to her father's, and told him of the duchess's strange fancy.

'What in the world does my daughter want to go to Holland for? It seems to me that she has a pretty good time of it here!' said the duc d'Orléans. He afterwards went to see her, and tried to dissuade her from carrying out her extravagant idea.

All these ridiculous or shameful incidents of her life did not prevent the duchess from becoming pregnant. However, she had a miscarriage; she had made no change in her diet, either regarding food or drink, and, seven months after, gave birth to a boy, the duc d'Alençon. He lived only one month, from March 26, 1713, to April 26 of the same year.

Yet, at that time the duchess had still a chance to become queen. The royal family had been wonderfully reduced in number. The great Dauphin, son of Louis XIV., had died on April 14, 1711; the following year, his eldest son, the duc de Bourgogne, was carried to his grave a few days after his wife (February 12–18, 1712). Philip V. having become King of Spain, had renounced his rights to the throne of France. The next heir to the crown was a child three years old, the son of the duc de Bourgogne. If this delicate child, in fact, happened to die, the duc de Berry would become Dauphin, and the duchess the future Queen of France.

Fate preserved the life of the young duc d'Anjou, who was afterwards Louis XV.; whilst the duc de Berry died before his grandfather, Louis XIV. It cannot be said that France gained much by it. Had the duc de Berry ascended the throne, his reign could not have been worse or more fatal than Louis XV.'s; but his death saved France from counting among its queens a duchesse de Berry. Scandal was not so open at the court of Louis XIV.; and, save a few exceptions which are not too well authenticated, and which at least were kept very quiet, adultery, like the crown, was governed by the Salic law, and remained a privilege of the men.

Is it true that at the end of his life the duc de Berry fully knew the shame that his wife had brought upon him? He was aware of his wife's unfaithfulness—but her incest he perhaps ignored, despite the fact that Maurepas writes to the contrary in his 'Memoirs.' 'Her conduct with her father was made so public that his Grace the duc de Berry, disgusted with all the talk about it, forced the duc d'Orléans to fight a duel on the terrace at Marly. They were, however, soon separated, and the whole affair was hushed up and kept secret.'

This may be true, but it is the only testimony we have. *Testis unus, testis nullus.* What is certain is that the duke, tired and ashamed of his wife's conduct, was ready to appeal to

the king to be released from such a spouse, when death overtook him.

Many reasons have been given to explain his unexpected demise. Saint-Simon asserts that he was poisoned; but there does not seem much ground for this version. It is more natural to attribute it to a hunting accident. The duke fell from his horse, broke a blood-vessel and lost a good deal of blood. Thinking that it was not serious, and anxious not to alarm the aged king, who was weeping over the large harvest death had made among his children, the duke forbade his servants to speak of the accident. 'When he confessed his illness,' writes the Princess Palatine, 'it was already too late; besides, the doctors, knowing nothing of his fall, thought he was suffering from indigestion, and prescribed a strong emetic, which only hastened the end. He said himself to his father confessor, Father de la Rue: "Ah! reverend father, I am myself the real cause of my death." He repented his carelessness; but it was too late.' Bowls full of blood were found under his bed and hidden beneath the furniture.

He died on Friday, May 4, 1714, in his twenty-eighth year, at four o'clock in the morning. The duchess had again become *enceinte*; but having met with an accident in her own room, she gave premature birth to a daughter, who lived only twelve hours (June 18).

Her husband's death left the duchess quite free; but the king was still living, and he had to be considered more than ever—he was no longer obliged to spare his granddaughter for the sake of his grandson. But this last obstacle in the duchess's path soon disappeared, for Louis XIV. died at Versailles on September 1, 1715. The duc d'Orléans, her father, was appointed regent during the minority of Louis XV. Who would now dare to find fault with the wildness of her conduct, being, as she was, the regent's favourite daughter?

Nobody really expected her to mend her ways; no one

supposed that she would lead a life more in keeping with her station, and more suitable to the widow of the king's grandson. Still, everybody was taken aback by her violent outbursts of the vilest passions, her licentiousness and wantonness soon surpassing all expectations.

She had with her a sort of favourite, a pretty woman with a good figure, clever, even shrewd, and fond of intrigues. Her parents were a man called Forcadel and one of the duchess's chambermaids. The latter, after her husband's death, had lived for many years with a married man. The Princess Palatine, referring to them, used a German proverb: '*It is old butter and rotten eggs.*' The duchesse de Berry did not inquire too closely into other people's private lives when she liked themselves. Wishing to find a rich husband for her favourite, she discovered an old nobleman, M. de Mouchy, who was in every way fit to marry such a woman. Weak in mind and body, he was well suited to be ruled by his wife. His title covered his wife's extraction, and his respected name was soon dishonoured.

Madame de Mouchy, having looked around her, fixed upon a grand-nephew of the duc de Lauzun, a younger son of the Aidie family, the comte de Riom, and chose him for her paramour. Not that he was handsome; far from it, if we are to believe the portrait the Duchess Palatine traced of him: 'He has neither figure nor beauty,' she says; 'he is more like a sea phantom than a man, for his face is a greenish yellow; his nose, mouth, and eyes would not ill become a Chinaman; in fact, he might be taken for a baboon rather than the Gascon he is in reality; he is vain and stupid; his large head seems to rest on his broad shoulders, owing to the extreme shortness of his neck; moreover, he is shortsighted, and altogether an extremely ugly man.' She adds: 'He looks so ill, that one might fancy him to be suffering from some bad disease.' Saint-Simon dared not speak so plainly. He describes Riom in the following words: 'He was a stout, short fellow, with a large

pale face, covered with so many pimples that his countenance looked like one large abscess.' By what secret charm did he win the Mouchy? It was whispered that he was physically very powerful, and people said that he remained once closeted with Madame de Polignac for two whole days.

The duchesse de Berry was attracted by such fame; she was tired of La Haye, and had vainly tried to satisfy her fancy with divers lovers. She too wanted to test the man, and asked Mouchy to give her her place at one of her *rendez-vous*. Madame de Mouchy was too shrewd to be jealous; less so of a princess who had made her what she was. She agreed to the request, and warned Riom, who complied easily, feigning to be duped. The following day he went about saying, 'Look at Madame de Mouchy; she is no fatter than a lark, and yet how much room she takes up!' From that time the Luxembourg, which the regent had given his daughter for her residence, became the most scandalous abode in France, and sheltered the most extraordinary trio that could be seen in any palace. Orgies followed one another; and, as if to add to their depravation, one of the regular guests was a Jesuit, Father Ringlet, who did not hesitate to take part in the gatherings. Let us charitably hope he was satisfied with holding somewhat free conversations. He was past master in that gentle art.

M. de Mouchy was a silent witness while Riom sat proudly between his two mistresses, as proud as a peacock, as impudent as a *parvenu*. Condescending towards Madame de Mouchy, he was as vulgar as could be with the duchess. He enjoyed treating her like a low woman, ridiculed her dress, disapproved of her plans, and crossed her in every way. The more exacting he was, the harder she tried to please him; despair is said to have brought tears to her eyes at times, when she would beg her rival to smooth matters between her and the scoundrel whom she loved even to adoration.

Madame de Mouchy never refused, for she was certain she

would not lose Riom, and equally certain the princess would reward her.

The duchess had given orders that the public should no longer be admitted to the Luxembourg gardens. She thought that nothing would thus leak out concerning her doings and those of her associates. Yet, the latter did not keep them secret; and although the gates were shut, the scandal had become public property. Verses of a nature impossible to print were even published.

The duc d'Orléans, who was at the head of the state, saw how prejudicial to him and to the government his daughter's scandalous conduct was, and several times tried to remonstrate with her and exercise a parent's authority. But he had not the knack of it, never having accustomed the duchess to see him play that part. She answered curtly, and thus took her revenge for all Riom's impudent remarks. Rudeness was for family use.

The duchess's pride had not been daunted a jot, no woman ever seeming to have realised her fall less than she. She acted as if she had a perfect right to do anything and everything, the only reflection which sometimes cast a cloud over her mind being the thought of dying. She had a horror of death—death with all that may follow—hell and eternal damnation. Like many of her contemporaries, she was an atheist only when in good health. The least feverish attack brought her back to God.

At such times she would leave her palace and retire for a few days to a Carmelite convent in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, where she studiously attended every service, prayed, fasted, and endured mortification. But the world was never long in regaining its power over her, and then she would hasten back to Riom.

For three years she led the same life. The summers she spent at Meudon, which she preferred to Amboise. Order was unknown in her house, and debts increased rapidly

She had been a widow for five years, when what might have been expected happened—she once more became *enceinte*; but, as it was rather late to give an heir to her deceased husband, she endeavoured to conceal the fact. Unfortunately for her, she ate and drank to excess, as usual; so that when the time of her delivery came, although she had kept in good health throughout, her friends began to be very much alarmed; her life seemed endangered. To live a sinful life was a princely game; but to die a sinful death was different. Superstition came to the rescue of religion, and the unfortunate princess ardently desired absolution and the Holy Sacraments. The Luxembourg is in the parish of St. Sulpice; the priest was summoned. The Abbé Languet was an honest man, impressed with the sacredness of his office. He went at once; but, being anxious in the circumstances to avoid a supreme scandal, he demanded, before giving absolution, that the palace should be purified—Madame de Mouchy and Riom were to depart at once. He spoke plainly to the duc d'Orléans.

The regent, who knew his daughter, foresaw the opposition such a measure would meet with on the part of the duchess, and tried, but in vain, to move the vicar. Then he proposed to place the decision in the hands of the Cardinal Noailles. The abbé agreed to refer the case to his bishop, reserving to himself the right to explain the reason of his conduct in the affair. The cardinal was accordingly sent for.

Whilst the discussion was going on, those who were with the duchess had brought in a Franciscan friar, who, being without scruples, and glad to play a trick upon the vicar of St. Sulpice, received the patient's confession. It would, they thought, settle the question of the Holy Communion. Already the duc d'Orléans was rejoicing over a favourable issue, when the cardinal arrived.

He listened to the regent as well as to the priest; the latter having loudly proclaimed his right to refuse the absolu-

tion, the cardinal dare not give it. He approved entirely the vicar's conduct, requested him to persist, and to take precautions lest the Sacraments should be administered by surprise.

Meanwhile the duchess, having confessed to the Franciscan friar, was waiting for the completion of the absolution he had given her. It was necessary to inform her of what was going on. The regent, the cardinal, and the vicar were still discussing as to who should be the bearer of the message. At last the regent hit on a solution. He opened the door of his daughter's apartment, thrust his head into the room, and told Madame de Mouchy their quandary, and the conditions imposed by the priests.

It is easy to imagine what the woman answered. She railed against what she was pleased to term the ridiculous demands of those canting bigots, and spoke of the shame of submitting to such an insult. She went to speak with the duchess, and soon returned, saying that Madame de Berry positively refused to part with Madame de Mouchy and Riom.

The scandal was approaching a crisis. The father had no authority over his daughter, and was trying to avoid fulfilling a duty which he felt was beyond his power; in this dilemma, the cardinal decided to speak to the duchess. He tried to enter her room, but the regent prevented him, fearing lest a direct intervention might have a bad effect on the patient, and requested that she should be informed of the cardinal's wish. Again the door was half opened. The answer of the duchess was not one to please the assistants.

Her pride and her ungovernable temper had not forsaken the princess; she showered abuses on her father, calling him a silly fool for listening to those 'blackbeetles' who took advantage of her present state and her temper to bring dishonour on her. The poor duc d'Orleans came back piteously to the cardinal, and, urging as an excuse the weakness of the royal patient, begged they would kindly wait.

They were, however, armed with patience. The cardinal

waited for two hours, and did not leave the palace until he was satisfied that his presence was no longer needed, but left stringent instructions with the vicar to be ever vigilant. In this he was scrupulously obeyed; and it would be difficult to believe the scene which took place, had not Saint-Simon given an account of it. He was in a good position to know what went on, as Madame de Saint-Simon was lady-in-waiting to the duchess. 'The duc d'Orléans,' he says, 'hastened to inform his daughter of the cardinal's departure, which relieved him greatly. But as he was coming out of the room he was surprised to find the vicar close to the door, and refused to believe his ears when the priest told him that he had chosen this place, and no power on earth would induce him to leave it, as he would not be deceived with regard to the Sacraments. And there he remained four days and four nights, with the exception of a few moments when he went home for his meals or to take a little rest. On those brief intervals, moreover, he was careful to leave two curates on guard until his return. He raised the siege only when all danger was over.

The duchess survived the crisis, giving birth to a girl, and soon seemed to recover. The shameful and ridiculous scenes which had taken place, however, had left a vivid impression on her mind, and she saw the necessity of preventing a possible recurrence of them. She first thought of atonement for the past. She made a vow that she and her household should be dressed in white for six months. To begin with, she ordered a coach in which silver replaced steel; then, to quiet her conscience, she planned a marriage with Riom.

It was indeed a splendid dream for this younger son; but at the same time he was a grandson of Lauzun, who had often told him of his love affair with the Grande Mademoiselle. He was not astonished at the denouement which brought him to the height of fortune. Madame de Mouchy raised no objection. What mattered a marriage which would change nothing between her and Riom, but would, on the contrary, ensure

their position? The duchess made up her mind, and by a secret marriage became the wife of this country nobleman, whose fortune was due to the fear of Satan and of the Abbé Languet.

The Luxembourg palace was too full of unpleasant remembrances. As soon as the duchess could be moved, she left it for Meudon. There she was free, and resumed her old life, although she was in a constant state of fever. Her grandmother, the Princess Palatine, shows her anxiety in one of her letters: 'I am afraid that the duchess's excesses in eating and drinking will kill her.' Madame de Mouchy, who shared her feasts, brought her all sorts of food during the night—fricassees, patties, melons, salad, milk, plums, figs; as well as giving her iced beer to drink.

Such a diet must inevitably have fatal consequences. Whether she felt this, or whether it was merely her indomitable pride that induced her to reveal the most foolish action of her life, the fact remains that the duchess made her secret marriage public. After all, was she not a widow, wealthy, and the mistress of her own actions?

It was a new blow for the regent. He had tried his utmost to bring his daughter to give up such an extravagant idea; but nothing could prevail against her stubbornness. Goaded at last to resolute action, he ordered M. de Riom to at once join his regiment, which served under Field-Marshal Berwick and was stationed in Navarre. Riom durst not disobey. He left; and the duke gained time.

The young duchess did not say much. Trusting in her influence over her father, she felt sure she would win him to her purpose sooner or later; so she invited him to supper on the terrace at Meudon. It was a dangerous thing to do in the then state of her health; her friends tried to remonstrate, but in vain. Supper began at seven o'clock and lasted till late in the evening. The same night she was taken seriously ill.

Tired of Meudon, she thought a change would do her

good, and decided to go to the Muette. She was driven there in a coach, on an improvised invalid bed, on a Sunday —May 14. How changed she was! She was now as thin as she had been fat, being worn out by constant fever. The following Sunday the Princess Palatine visited her. 'I found her,' she writes, 'in a sad state; she was suffering such terrible pains in her toes and under the feet that tears came to her eyes. I saw that she durst not cry in my presence, so I left her. She looked so very bad, that three doctors were called in consultation. They resolved to bleed her on the feet; but it was difficult to bring her to it, for her pains were so intense that the least touch of the sheets made her shriek. . . .'

The illness grew daily worse, and there was no hope of recovery for a woman already worn out by so many excesses. Madame de Mouchy saw the end was drawing near, and sought to provide against the future while there was yet time. She obtained a ring-case worth 200,000 crowns from the princess. For once, however, she overstepped the mark, for the duc d'Orléans, irate at such great cupidity and such audacity, conquered his usual gentleness, and sent Madame de Mouchy and her stupid old husband out of the house.

This vixen gone, she lost all ascendency over the duchess, and the Luxembourg scandals ceased. The dying patient received with piety the last Sacraments on July 15.

She lived but two days longer. Her own doctor having declared that he could do nothing more, a quack named Garus was called in. He gave her an elixir of his own composition, which appeared to relieve her for the time being; but the good effects did not last long, and she died in the night of July 16–17, 1719, between two and three o'clock in the morning. She passed away so quietly that she seemed to fall asleep. She was not yet twenty-five.

The post-mortem examination proved that she could not have been cured. Her head was full of water, and she had

one abscess in the stomach and another in the hip. The rest of her body was like pap, her liver being in an especially diseased state. Her funeral took place secretly during the night, in the basilica of St. Denis.

At the very time this ceremony was being conducted Madame de Mouchy was giving a grand dinner party, drinking champagne, and not even having the decency to hide her mirth. What, indeed, could she regret? She had got all she could expect from her mistress; she had even induced Riom to entrust her with the gems, jewels, and other presents the duchess had given him, for the woman had no scruples to prevent her from robbing her paramour.

Of him it must be said that he had at least the good taste to behave differently: he showed how much this death grieved him. It is said that he actually thought of committing suicide. It was going too far. His friends had not much difficulty in persuading him to give up such an unreasonable idea. He gradually forgot his grief and resumed his gay life.

The duc d'Orléans was the only one who really mourned his dearest daughter's death. He had nursed her through the whole of the last night and had closed her eyes. 'My son is grieved in his heart,' writes the Princess Palatine; 'the more so that he is convinced that, had he not been so extremely lenient, had he acted as a father, his daughter might still be alive and in good health.'

Nevertheless, it is difficult to be moved by such grief. One would like to be certain that the tears he shed were the tears of a father only.

A ROYAL COUPLE

THE chronicle relates that one day, early in January 1776, M. de Saint-Germain, the Minister of War, was dining with the king, Louis XVI. The queen was throwing little balls of bread at his Majesty. 'What would you do, you, a brave soldier,' said Louis, laughing, to his minister, 'under such a fire?'

'Sire, I would spike the gun.'

The queen, the guests, even the king, laughed heartily at this sally; as will be seen from what follows, the answer was witty in more ways than one.[1]

The comte de Saint-Germain's smart reply was doubly effective owing to the relationship which existed between the royal couple. The situation was known not only to their Majesties' household, but to the people at large; and it might be called in question, so unlikely does it appear, had we not, to substantiate the truth of it, the confidential confession of the queen who for so many years was only a nominal wife.

It is evident that the king did not relish the joke as much as his consort or the persons present; still, he laughed with them. Was it not better to laugh than to frown? Besides, he was used to unpleasant allusions; many songs had been written on the same subject—some witty, some coarse—and he certainly must have heard them. When he ascended the throne, the choice he made of a man of seventy-three to be at the head of the government had given free scope to the

[1] *Anecdotes secrètes du XVIIIe siècle*, par P. J. B. N. (Nougaret), 182.

wit of song-writers. We give here two couplets which show plainly how freely the new king was spoken of.

The first, sung to the same tune as *V'là c'que c'est qu' d'aller au bois*, runs:

Maurepas revient triomphant,
V'là c'que c'est qu' d'être impuissant :
Le roi lui dit, en l'embrassant,
'Quand on se ressemble,
Il faut vivre ensemble.'
Les mœurs vont régner à présent.
V'là c'que c'est qu' d'être impuissant.

The other one was no less disrespectful. Tune: *Annette à l'âge de quinze ans.*

Maurepas était impuissant,
Le roi l'a rendu plus puissant.
Le ministre reconnaissant
Dit: 'Pour vous, Sire,
Que je désire
D'en faire autant.'

It was going too far; if the jokes were justified by the fact, the cause was not the one given. Why, then, did this young, vigorous prince show so much indifference towards his youthful and beautiful wife? The fault lay evidently in his education. Louis XVI.'s father had an extremely narrow range of intellect; he was a man who practised religion with strict devotion, verging on bigotry. He thought he was doing a marvellous thing in placing his eldest son under the care of the duc de la Vauguyon.

This gentleman, a vain fool, had obtained this envied post by a manœuvre which succeeded only because it was directed against a poorer schemer than he. He had bribed one of the king's servants, who told him every day what book the prince was reading. Vauguyon hastened to buy the book, read it, and remembered only what he knew would be in conformity with the moral, political, and religious ideas of the prince.

He carefully brought the conversation to bear on the subject of the book, thus leading people to believe that he was a well-read man. The prince looked upon him as perfectly fitted to bring up his son.[1]

This strange tutor did so well that his pupil thought of nothing but physical exercises, was fond of hunting, and loved manual work: this prince, who ought to have been a gifted monarch, was a first-rate locksmith. Nor was this all; a prince or a locksmith can be a husband in the full sense of the word, but the Dauphin was not.

Bad education alone could not produce such a meagre result; nature itself must first have been inclined to accept such an education. In the case of this monarch we have proof of the fact that the prejudice which obliged all the kings of France to seek their consorts in foreign courts was most fatal to their race. How much French blood, indeed, remained in the veins of Louis XV.'s descendants? Since Henri IV., who was the son of a Frenchwoman, every Bourbon had married an Italian, Spaniard, Austrian, or Pole. Little by little they had lost their native characteristics; vigour, generosity, bravery were no longer to be found in France's princes. Courage was even unknown to some of them, such as the comte de Provence and the comte d'Artois. Louis XVI., after so many foreign graftings on the original stock, was far from resembling Henri IV. He possessed none of the qualities of his predecessors, and it would be very difficult to say from whom, if not from Louis XIII., he inherited his excessive chastity, which was counted as a virtue in him merely because no other could be ascribed to him. It is certainly pure flattery to describe as virtuous the conduct of a prince who resisted the passions he scarcely felt.

Louis XV. having lost his son (1769), his grandson, the duc de Berry, became Dauphin at the age of fourteen. In

[1] *Mémoires secrets du Comte d'Alonville.*

order to make sure of an heir for the throne, Choiseul was entrusted with the task of finding a wife for the young duke. He obtained for him the hand of Marie Antoinette, the daughter of Maria Theresa, Empress of Germany and Queen of Hungary.

The marriage took place at Versailles, May 16, 1770.

At supper, on the evening of the wedding, the bridegroom, who did not look at all shy, ate with greater appetite than usual. Louis XV., quick to notice the fact, could not help saying to his grandson, with a smile, 'Do not overload your stomach to-night.' 'Why?' the Dauphin answered quietly. 'I always sleep well after a good supper.'

In fact, supper over, the duc de la Vauguyon's pupil took his young wife by the hand, led her to the door of her room, and there, without the least affectation, bade her good-night, and retired to bed by himself. Early next morning, the Princesse de Guéménée, who was mistress of the robes, came into Marie Antoinette's apartment. There was no Dauphin; the princess was alone.

'God forbid!' she cried. 'He has got up at his usual hour.'

'What do you mean?' said Marie Antoinette. 'I have heard a great deal about French politeness, and I really believe I have married the most polite of all Frenchmen.'

'What! He is already up!' repeated the bewildered princess.

'No, no,' the bride replied; 'he could not get up from this bed, at least, for he did not sleep in it. We parted at the door of my apartments; he held his hat in his hand, and left me hastily, as if I were in his way.'

As a matter of fact, the young princess did not see her husband before luncheon that day.

'I hope you slept well!' he said.

'Very well! There was nothing to prevent me sleeping,' she replied.

The extreme youth of the bride—who was fifteen—and of the bridegroom—who was not yet sixteen—might to some extent explain the Dauphin's conduct. But, apart from the attitude he adopted towards her, the young bride might at least have expected that, even though the prince did not act like a man, he should not behave like an overgrown child. He was always thinking of eating. In consequence, he very often gave himself indigestion, which he was careful to record in his diary.[1] On May 31, a fortnight after his wedding, he enters: 'I had indigestion.' This sort of entry recurs often. Marie Antoinette writes to her mother: 'My husband had a fit of indigestion, but it did not prevent him going to the hunt.' (July 9, 1770.)

Apart from such trifling incidents as these, which would not be worth while recalling except for the importance they had for the parties concerned, as is evidenced by the care they have taken to record them, the Dauphiness's life was very monotonous. Here is an account of her days as she described them to her mother.[2] 'I rise at ten o'clock, sometimes at nine or half-past, and when I am dressed, I say my morning prayers; then I have my breakfast, after which I go to my aunts,[3] where I generally meet the king. This occupies me till half-past ten; at eleven, I have my hair dressed. At twelve the household is called, and then any one who is not a commoner may come in. I put on my rouge and wash my hands in the presence of everybody. When this is done, the gentlemen leave my room, the ladies alone remain and see me change my dress. At twelve, mass. If his Majesty is at Versailles, I go to mass with him, my husband, and my aunts; if he is not there, I go alone with the Dauphin, but always at

[1] The original is in the *Archives nationales.*

[2] *Correspondance secrète entre Marie-Thérèse et le Comte de Mercy-Argenteau, avec les lettres de Marie-Thérèse et de Marie-Antoinette, publiées par M. le chevalier Alfred d'Arneth et M. A. Geoffroy*, i. 17.

[3] Mesdames, daughters of Louis XV.

the same hour. After mass we dine together in the presence of the household; but it is over at half-past one, as we both eat very quickly. After dinner I go to the Dauphin's apartments; if he is busy I come back to my own, where I read, write, or do some work. I am embroidering a waistcoat for the king; but it does not get on very fast; still, I hope that, with the grace of God, it may be finished in a few years! At three o'clock I go again to my aunts', where the king is sure to be at this time; at four the abbé[1] comes to me; at five my music or my singing master, who remains till six; at half-past six I almost invariably return to my aunts' unless I go for a walk; I must tell you that my husband almost always accompanies me to my aunts'. From seven to nine we have a game; when the weather is fine I go out, and on those occasions there is no playing in my apartments; but they play at my aunts' instead. At nine we have supper; if the king is out, my aunts come to supper with us; but when the king is present we go to them after supper; we wait there for the king, who generally puts in an appearance at about a quarter to eleven; as for me, I lie on a large sofa, where I sleep until his Majesty's arrival. When he does not come we retire at eleven. This is how we spend the day.'[2]

Nevertheless, although the little princess slept on a sofa until the king came, and would not wear stays like a woman, she viewed her situation in a very different light from her good fat husband, and she was beginning to find his coolness very strange. She was not quite ingenuous, for she had not been left in ignorance. She remembered her mother's recommendations, who as sovereign had impressed upon her the necessity of her giving heirs to the throne; and she meant to fulfil that duty. With her womanly acuteness she was not long in discovering that the main obstacle, as far as her husband was

[1] Abbot de Vermond, a Frenchman who was entrusted with Marie Antoinette's education

[2] *Correspondance secrète*, i. 19, 20.

concerned, came from the duc de la Vauguyon; so she endeavoured to throw discredit on him in her conversation with the Dauphin, missing no opportunity for doing so. In one of her letters to her mother she relates an incident not at all favourable to the duke. 'I was alone with my husband when my Lord de la Vauguyon ran to the door to listen. A varlet, who is either a fool or a very honest fellow, opened the door and disclosed the duke planted there and unable to withdraw. I told my husband how uncomfortable it was to have eavesdroppers, and he took it very well.'[1]

It was probably after a similar incident that she mentioned to the Dauphin what was preying on her mind. The explanation was 'very violent,' from what Count Mercy-Argenteau wrote to Maria Theresa. He goes on to say that, according to the confidences of the Dauphiness, the 'result was that the Dauphin replied to the archduchess that he ignored nothing concerning marriage; that from the beginning he had made out a plan for himself, and he was not willing to depart from it. Now the time he had fixed had come, and he would henceforth live at Compiègne with the Dauphiness in the complete intimacy of the marital state.'[2]

This was a strange resolution for a young man to form, and the delay in carrying it out was stranger still. But the Dauphin was boasting when he announced that a change was about to take place; for, though the journey to Compiègne was duly accomplished, things went on as before. The prince, in fact, did not like to change his habits, and he proved it once more. There was a hunt; he followed it with his usual eagerness, and at night returned with a formidable appetite. But, as a few days before he had had a bad attack of indigestion through eating too much pastry, the Dauphiness was careful to have it removed from the supper table and to forbid pastry of any kind to be served until further orders from her. It appears

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, i. 17.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 25, 26.

that the prince smiled when he noticed the precaution, and even regarded it as a kind attention on the part of his wife.[1]

Yet, all her precautions failed to make him change his method of living. Vainly did the Dauphiness beg of him not to return so late from the hunt. He could not resist his passion for the chase, and, in spite of all his promises, he often kept her waiting.

One day, however, she lost patience with him and reproached him bitterly for his neglect. She pointed out to him 'all the disadvantage of his wild life; she told him that none of the gentlemen of his suite could stand it, his rough looks and manners being anything but encouraging to his friends; and she pointed out that if he went on so much longer, he would end by ruining his health and being generally hated.'[2]

The Dauphin used to answer in a few words which his courtiers tried to think kind; but he resumed his old ways immediately after, so that the same scenes recurred again and again, and poor Marie Antoinette was obliged to write constantly the same thing to her mother: 'My husband took a dose of medicine to-day, having suffered from an attack of indigestion the night before last. He vomited a good deal, and fainted twice in the morning as he was going up to his apartments.'[3]

When Maria Theresa received such strange information concerning her son-in-law, whom, for the sake of the French name, she liked to picture as being very different, she could not conceal her astonishment. 'I fail to understand his manner towards his wife,' she wrote to Mercy-Argenteau on March 15, 1771. 'Is it due to the wrong principles he has received?'

On June 6 she referred again to the same subject: 'The colder the Dauphin, the more guarded must be my daughter's conduct. The advice you gave her is perfect, and you cannot but repeat it again and again. Besides, Van Swieten's[4] opinion is that if a young girl with so good a figure as the Dauphiness

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, i. 32, 33. [2] *Ibid.* p. 94.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 171. [4] The famous doctor of the Imperial family.

does not succeed in attracting the Dauphin, there is no cure for it. It is better to give up troubling, and await the change that time will surely bring in such extraordinary behaviour.'[1]

As one may well imagine, Louis XV. was still more astonished. That monarch, whose morals were so different, wondered how he could be grandfather to such a grandson. He questioned the prince, and remonstrated with him on his inexplicable coldness; and it is easy to imagine the king's bewilderment when the prince answered him that he thought '*his wife charming*,' he loved her, but must wait, as he had not been able to conquer his bashfulness.[2]

The comte de Provence being like his elder brother the Dauphin, the sovereign dared not hope to have any posterity save through the comte d'Artois. It was indeed a sad outlook for a king whose countless love affairs had made him father to so many of his subjects.

The two brothers were equally badly brought up, and gave many proofs of it even in presence of the young archduchess. One day there was a scene in the count's own room. He had on his mantelshelf a very artistic piece of china; the prince had a mania for touching it every time he went to his brother's room; and as the latter did not trust the awkward and rough manners of the prince, he openly expressed his fears for the safety of his treasure. Just as Marie Antoinette was teasing her brother-in-law on his fears, the Dauphin let the vase fall. It broke into a thousand pieces. The comte de Provence, angry, flew at his brother, and both began a regular fight. Much annoyed, the Dauphiness tried to interfere. She succeeded at last in separating them, but not without having received a scratch on her hand.[3]

On another occasion she was playing piquet with her brother-in-law. The Dauphin had a stick in his hand, and began to strike his brother on the arm. Impatient, the count

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, i. 139–167.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 78.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 313.

asked the prince to stop a game which he did not like; but the Dauphin refused. The count thereupon jumped up, tried to catch the stick and to take it from the other. A fight seemed inevitable, when Marie Antoinette interfered, got hold of the stick, and thus put a stop to a painful and vulgar scene.[1]

This occurred in August 1772; they had been married more than two years. Marie Antoinette, who was nearing seventeen and her husband eighteen, was beginning to be deeply wounded in her womanly pride, as well as in her dignity as a wife, by the ridicule which her nominal husband's attitude drew upon her. The royal couple's life had too many witnesses for their absence of intimacy to remain a secret—a secret which could be summed up in the word *nothing*.

An old diplomat like Mercy-Argenteau was too shrewd not to notice the state of the princess's mind; and though she endeavoured to hide her feelings with regard to the Dauphin under polite phrases, praising his honest nature, his gentle manners, his attentions—always passing over the burning question—he saw plainly that she was grieved by secret thoughts which she dared not utter.[2] When Maria Theresa read these stories, she could not help feeling anxious about her daughter. In such circumstances, could the poor girl ever love, or at least esteem, such a husband? Besides, the comte de Provence was said to be clever, witty, and most attentive to his sister-in-law, trying to interest and amuse her, telling her stories, jokes, and even the court scandals. Would he not acquire too great an ascendency over her? Maria Theresa was all the more anxious because she knew that the moral qualities of this prince were not equal to his physical ones; no scruples would stop him. She wrote on this matter to her faithful ambassador, afraid for her daughter of an intimacy with a prince 'whose nature was to all appearance not frank. . . . As he is better-looking

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, i. 335.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 338.

than the Dauphin, and as great a flatterer as the other is rough,' she adds, 'the comparison which my daughter must inevitably make between the two brothers cannot be favourable to her husband.' [1]

Her apprehensions were groundless; Mercy was able to pacify the empress by sending her further particulars concerning the count. They add no beauty to the picture which the royal family presented at that time.

'The comte de Provence's health is always unsatisfactory. He is so weak that any exercise which might strengthen him is forbidden. The doctors have made up their minds to close a surgical wound which had been opened in his youth. The consequence of this is that the humours are poisoning his blood, and he suffers through it. He has dandriff on his hands, and his hair is falling fast.' [2]

Between brother-in-law and sister-in-law there was nothing more than an interchange of chattering anecdotes concerning royal persons and courtiers. Marie Antoinette, when she was informed of her mother's wish, was not so eager to hear the court scandals; and the comte de Provence found another confidante.

The main political difficulty in the situation of the young couple arose from the presence at court of Madame du Barry. This royal favourite, who was powerful enough to send Choiseul into disgrace, was all the more jealous of regards and honours in that she was not entitled to them by birth. For his part, Louis XV. was completely smitten by his new mistress. Indeed, her beauty and graceful figure justified the enthusiasm of her royal lover, who would countenance no criticism of his choice, and allowed no one to treat the countess coldly.

Maria Theresa was fully aware that a certain amount of leniency with regard to morals is necessary for those who live at courts; she had strongly urged her daughter to be careful

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, i. 362. [2] *Ibid.* p. 353.

not to displease the king in any way—thus indirectly advising her never to behave rudely or unkindly to Madame du Barry.

Such advice was not always strictly followed. The Dauphin, who had certainly some right to find fault with his grandfather for his too loving disposition, showed anything but respect for the favourite. Unfortunately, the prince was not always so severe. His conduct in the matter depended very much on his temper; consequently, he and his young wife acted like two children: they were either abominably disagreeable or extremely pleasant to the countess. Mercy relates a curious instance of their inconsistency. Following his (Mercy's) advice, 'Marie Antoinette urged her husband to treat the favourite in such a manner as to please the king, thus putting an end to the everlasting complaints and quarrels which divided the royal family. The Dauphin took her advice to heart, and on the first day of January [1773], the countess having called on him, he was as amiable as possible; to the wonder of everybody, he even spoke to her. But, by a most singular contrast which I did not expect, it occurred that when Madame du Barry called on the Dauphiness she met with a cold reception.'[1]

This shows how inconsistent both were. Sometimes the Dauphin was excessively rude. One day, when a discussion took place over the presentation of a gentleman related to Madame du Barry, the Dauphin said that if he met him he would box his ears.

All this increased the displeasure of the favourite, who revenged herself as best she could. It was easy for her. She was constantly joking about the supposed physical weakness of him whom she called a 'stout and ill-bred fellow.' When she spoke of the Dauphiness, it was in so free a manner as to be quite indecent: '*Prenez garde que cette rousse ne se fasse trousser dans quelque coin*,'[2] she used to say to Louis XV., who, forgetful

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, i. 401. [2] *Les Fastes de Louis XV*, ii. 704.

of his dignity both as king and grandfather, listened passively to such remarks. True, he was incapable of the slightest effort in his feeble and decrepit old age. But these remarks, being carried from mouth to mouth and commented upon, must needs have hurt the feelings of royal persons and caused many a jar.

Everything tended to aggravate day by day the position of the young archduchess, who was a stranger and alone in the French court—a court in which she had more than one enemy, a court dangerous for her youth, where her only support, apart from her mother's advice, was Mercy. Besides, Maria Theresa's advice, being of necessity written, did not always produce its full effect. Afar from her mother's vigilant love, Marie Antoinette, mischievous, lively, thoughtless, anxious to find a diversion from her cares, did not realise how necessary it was to be more astute, more of a diplomat. Young people as a rule dislike old folks' advice; they find many ways to evade it, they interpret things according to their own point of view, and finally manage to follow their own inclinations. And so did Marie Antoinette, in spite of her respect for the empress.

The latter was not deceived by her apparent submission, and felt anxious. On February 1, 1773, she wrote to Mercy: 'In spite of the zeal and wisdom you display in endeavouring to direct my daughter's actions, I cannot fail to see how hard it is for her to listen to your advice and mine. In the present century, a playful and flattering tone is the only fashionable one; and if out of good intention you dare to speak seriously, our young people cannot stand it, they pretend that they are scolded—and unjustly, in their opinion. My daughter is no exception to the rule; nevertheless, I shall persist in advising her from time to time, as long as you think it necessary. I write to her by the same post, in the sense you pointed out, and will try and flatter her, although I do not care for that style; but I repeat to you, so long as my daughter is frivolous, and too

lazy to do as I tell her, I do not expect much result. I send you her last letter; it will show you once more her want of truthfulness towards me. This, I assure you, troubles me; it recurs too often, and she is shrewd enough to get out of it. She cleverly perverts the truth, and in spite of her acknowledgment that she has strayed from it, and her promises to be on her guard in future, she persists in having her own way.'[1]

The artfulness that Marie Antoinette displayed in her letters is easily explained. The young princess, feeling, at the bottom of her heart, anger on account of her awkward situation, gave way to the hastiness of her age, and sought for consolation outside her home. She could easily have told her mother the plain truth, for her sins were not very serious. But the empress had instilled in her children respect rather than love; they were almost afraid of her. Marie Antoinette explained it to Mercy: 'I love the empress, but I am afraid of her even at a distance; and to such an extent, that in my very letters I do not feel at ease with her.'[2]

What Maria Theresa took for want of truthfulness was in reality nothing but a wish to escape fault-finding. This was natural enough; and the Dauphiness would have gained her point, had not Mercy given the empress the exact version of everything that occurred. The strangest part of all is that Marie Antoinette never suspected the real source of her mother's information. She accused the spies kept at the French court by foreign sovereigns, especially the King of Prussia, of divulging all her doings.

Grief was in store for her, for the news began to spread that the comte d'Artois was to be married. It was a cruel blow to her, the girl-wife; her self-pride was deeply wounded, for she felt and she knew—it was openly said—that if the king thought of having the young prince married so early, it was because in him rested the only hope of an heir.

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, i. 408. [2] *Ibid.* p 04.

Such a thought was painful to Marie Antoinette. How would the news that the comtesse d'Artois was likely to become a mother, when it could not be said of the Dauphiness, be received at court? She tried her utmost to thaw her husband, representing to him the possibility of his brother having a son; and, indeed, this conjuncture was matter for reflection for the Dauphin.

'Do you really love me?' said he to Marie Antoinette.

'I do,' she replied. 'You cannot doubt it; I love you sincerely, and respect you still more.'

She thought that he had at last taken a manly resolution. He seemed moved. But it was not for more than a few seconds; he soon recovered his usual indifference, telling her that on their return to Versailles he would diet himself, and thought 'that all would be right.'

His reflections, however, stopped there. From time to time he dieted himself, not in the way that would have helped him to overcome his shyness, but in a manner which suited his taste, and which only resulted in a series of fits of indigestion. Apart from eating, his time was taken up not only by hunting, but by the most vulgar occupations, such as masonry, carpentering, and the like. 'He worked with the men, helping to move beams, to mix plaster, to remove stones, and would spend hours at such hard work. Sometimes he returned tired out, as if he had been a common workman obliged to toil hard for his daily bread.'

'I have seen her Highness the Dauphiness quite out of patience,' writes Mercy, 'and grieved at such behaviour. I could realise her feelings by her loud complaints; she lamented the results which she expected such excessive fatigue would have on her husband's health. I did my best to allay the fears of the archduchess. . . .'[1]

This time the cup was full to overflowing. Everybody had expected much from time; and as time went on, instead of

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, ii. 10.

getting better, matters were growing worse. The empress herself was beginning to despair. 'I am grieved to see the delay in the fulfilment of my expectations, owing to the situation of my daughter with regard to the Dauphin. . . . I no longer entertain any hopes.' (December 1, 1773.)

'I cannot understand the coldness of the Dauphin—a young husband of twenty—for such a good-looking wife. In spite of all the doctors' statements, my fears concerning the physical constitution of the prince increase daily. My last hope is in the emperor. I trust that during his visit to Versailles he will find means to induce this lazy husband to fulfil his duties in a suitable way.'[1] (January 3, 1774.)

Meanwhile, the time was drawing near when the political situation of the Dauphin would change. He who was unable to fulfil his marital duties would soon be called to the throne. By the cruel irony of fate, the law of heredity was going to place the sceptre in hands which had more practice in handling a hammer or a trowel than in wielding supreme power. What sort of a monarch would such a man prove to be? It was easy to foresee. What would be his reign? There was everything to fear, for never had France been more in need of a strong man.

Louis XV. died on May 10, 1774. His successor's first public act was an insult to the memory of the late king. He 'sends the creature to the convent;'[2] in other words, a royal letter was sent to Madame du Barry. This measure was, to say the least, unnecessary; for the favourite, having lost her protector, would of her own free will have retired to one or other of her estates. What was the use of making still more conspicuous a *liaison* which death had broken off? and why treat so harshly a woman who was flighty but kind, and whose only inferiority, when compared with other favourites, was

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, ii. 76, 88.

[2] Lettre de Marie-Antoinette à Marie-Thérèse (mai 14 1774).

that, unlike the Montespan, the Châteauroux, and the Pompadour, she had no husband to betray or drive to despair?

The only political mistake made by Madame du Barry was to have induced the king to part with Choiseul. If Louis XVI. considered that minister's disgrace as a serious fault, the best remedy was to recall him, not to exile the royal favourite. Yet, although solicitations came from all sides, he refrained. The reader will see later on what Marie Antoinette says on the subject. For the present, let us mention that through her an interview was arranged between the king and the ex-minister, who heard without too much surprise the strange remarks of the sovereign: 'M. de Choiseul, you have grown fat. . . . You are losing your hair—you are getting bald.' That was all the king could find to say.

There was only one opinion concerning this prince; and only those who did not know him had any delusions about him, trusting that he would be a better king than his predecessor. And yet that did not seem difficult, for a worse reign could not be. The new king's was not worse, but equally bad, though in a different way. Louis XV. did not lack intellect, but will and morality. Louis XVI. lacked both will and intellect; albeit he had an excess of morality, if such a word can be applied to extreme apathy—a failing in a king as well as in any ordinary man.

Mercy-Argenteau felt the danger, and thought the queen alone could stave it off by herself taking an active part in politics. He regretted that she had been constantly kept in ignorance of important questions; 'for, in his opinion, in order to safeguard her happiness she must exercise her ascendency over the monarch and take the reins of the government into her own hands, for the king would certainly be a poor ruler; considering what sort of people composed the court, considering the motives by which they were actuated, it would be extremely dangerous, as well for the state as for the

monarchy itself, if any one else should gain a mastering influence with the sovereign, so that he should be guided by any but his consort.'[1]

Thus, for Marie Antoinette's misfortune, her very friends and advisers urged her to choose the fatal path where she was to meet with so many obstacles and would raise such storms of wrath.

But trials were still afar off; for the present, she was dazzled by her grand title of 'Queen of France.' Her pride was satisfied, and she wrote rather innocently that 'she could not help admiring the ways of Providence, which had chosen her to be the queen of the finest kingdom in Europe.'

She was delighted to display her joy before her mother. She was so happy, that she wished her husband to join her in writing a few lines to the empress. To lighten his task, she dictated to him two sentences, which he obediently wrote: 'I am very glad, dear mama, to find an opportunity to show you my love and devotion. I should be most happy if you would advise me at such difficult times. . . .' He had begun. Marie Antoinette thought that he would go on, and wanted him to do it by himself; so he wrote: 'I should be very happy to please you and give you a proof of my love and my gratefulness to you for having given me your daughter, with whom I am extremely satisfied.'

Marie Antoinette looked at his letter. She certainly could not be 'extremely satisfied' with it; she was disappointed with its commonplace style, and told him so. Then she added a few words, begging her mother to excuse her husband on account of 'his bashful and awkward nature.' She ended with: 'You see, my dear mama, by the end of his compliment, that although he is very affectionate to me, he does not spoil me with too much praise.'[2]

There was, however, an improvement in their marital relations. For some time past the king had not retired to his

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, ii. 137. [2] *Ibid.* ii. 140, 141.

own apartments at night, and had not taken leave of his wife with a mere 'Good-night,' as he had done on his wedding day and for so long afterwards. But he slept only a little nearer his consort—that was all; there was still nothing to prevent his queen sleeping.

News of this change had got abroad; and every one, sharing the universal and customary desire in a monarchy to see the succession to the throne ensured by a direct heir, imagined from the slightest symptoms that their expectations were likely to be realised. Marie Antoinette relates a minor incident on this subject: 'Coming back from Compiègne, I experienced a slight but very unpleasant illness during the journey. The heat, together with the motion of the carriage immediately after dinner, made me sick, and I brought up all my meal. This incident placed me high in the public esteem; yet, unfortunately, my dear mother knows that I am far from being *enceinte*.'[1]

But she did not always take things so lightly. One day, one of her maids of honour having begged her not to ride, she said, with an impatience easy to understand, 'For God's sake, leave me alone! You may be sure that I endanger no heir's life.'[2]

Soon, news that rejoiced others added to her pain. The comte d'Artois, three years younger than his brother and married three years after him, had not followed his example. Like a flash of lightning it spread through the court that the comtesse d'Artois was pregnant; she had been married two months. Some rejoiced, others mourned. For the queen's pride it was a cruel sting. She sought consolation in writing to her mother: 'I confess . . . that I regret to see her become a mother before me; nevertheless, I feel that I am obliged to show her more attention than any one else.' Mercy could speak more openly: 'Since there is a likelihood of the comtesse d'Artois being pregnant, what I always feared and

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, ii. 230. [2] *Mémoires de Madame Campan.*

foresaw has happened. The queen, struck by the fact and pondering over her own situation, has just cause for grief; and I am extremely sorry to see that inwardly her Majesty resents it deeply.'[1]

However she might try to control herself, truth came out at last, and then she began to be imprudent. Her spite at having such a ridiculous husband made her forget her old resolutions; she knew no more restraint, and it is in a jocular tone that she now speaks of him. The harm would not have been very great if she had only taken Mercy or Maria Theresa into her confidence; but she chose instead an old diplomat who had been entrusted several times by the empress with confidential missions, the comte de Rosenberg. On April 17, 1775, she writes to him: 'The pleasure I had in talking with you, Sir, must answer for that which your letter gave me. I shall never trouble myself about the tales which reach Vienna, so long as you hear of them; you know Paris and Versailles, you can judge from what you have seen. If I required an excuse, I should still trust to you. In good faith, I should say many things which you dare not utter: thus, my tastes differ from the king's, who loves nothing beyond hunting and mechanics. You will agree with me that I should look out of place in a forge; I could not act the part of Vulcan, and that of Venus might displease him much more than would my tastes, of which he does not disapprove.' This letter shows us a Marie Antoinette very different from the woman she seems to be in her ordinary correspondence. Still, one ought not to be surprised, because the princess had always had a propensity to raillery and a natural aptitude for discovering ridicule in others. It is easy to understand to what rumours the count referred in his letter. The answer was clear, and showed what a small place 'Vulcan' held in his wife's esteem. Part of a letter written on July 13, and addressed to the same person, makes things plainer still.

It concerns the interview prepared at her instigation

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, ii. 268, 274.

between the sovereign and Choiseul, an interview whose result was so trifling.

'You have perhaps heard of the audience I granted the duc de Choiseul at Reims. It has been so much talked about that I should not wonder if old Maurepas had been afraid of being disgraced. You will easily believe that I did not receive him without having previously mentioned the matter to the king; but you have no idea of the diplomacy I used not to look as if I asked for permission. I told him that I wished to see M. de Choiseul, and the only thing that puzzled me was the day on which to do so. I managed so well, that the poor man himself fixed the most convenient time for the audience. I think I used the full rights of a woman on that occasion.'[1]

The Count of Rosenberg did not think himself bound to keep a secret, as he had not been requested to do so; and he showed the letters. Their style drew attention to them, and they rapidly became the general subject of conversation. The empress, having heard of this, asked to see the originals. She was astounded on reading her daughter's confidences. 'I am sad at heart,' she writes to Mercy. 'What a style! What a way of thinking! All my fears are confirmed; she is hastening to ruin, and may consider herself very fortunate if, while losing herself, she preserves the respect due to her rank!'

The Emperor Joseph II., brother to Marie Antoinette, was as sorrowful as Maria Theresa, and on the spur of the moment, surprised and displeased, he wrote to his sister. His letter was full of bitter reproaches. With real foresight, he enumerated all her faults, especially those which later were to be counted as crimes. Alluding to the appointment of M. de Sartines as Minister of Marine, to the disgrace of the duc d'Aiguillon, to the somewhat suspicious affair of the duc de Guines, and to the appointment of Madame de Lamballe as lady superintendent, he said: 'What do you meddle with,

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, ii. 361, 362.

my dear sister? You change the ministers, you send one back to his own estate, you appoint people to diverse offices, you interfere in a lawsuit, you create a costly office at your court, you talk business, and, finally, use expressions not at all in keeping with your rank!

'Is it possible to write anything more unwise, more senseless, more indecent, than your letter to M. de Rosenberg concerning the manner in which you arranged the audience you gave at Reims to M. de Choiseul? If ever such a letter was mislaid, if ever—and I have no doubt about it—you use the same words and phrases with your intimates, I can only foresee misfortune for you. I confess that my love makes me feel very deeply concerning this. . . .'[1]

Those warnings did not reach Marie Antoinette. The empress thought the reproaches of Joseph II. too harsh for his sister, and succeeded in inducing him to write another letter, in a milder tone. It was perhaps because she remembered that she, as well as Mercy, had advised the queen to exercise a controlling influence over her husband and take part in the affairs of the state, as the king did not seem capable of managing them himself.

When Mercy heard of the disturbance the letters had occasioned, he felt sorry and tried to smooth matters over at Vienna. 'I see how grieved your Majesty is about the queen's letter to M. de Rosenberg. But I would beg your Majesty to allow me to point out that the sense and the phrasing of this letter are due only to vanity, the vanity of wishing to appear to be in a position to lead the king; and that in reality the queen did not use the word *bonhomme*, which she applies to the king by way of mockery. If your Majesty deigns to read my report of July 17, and especially the part referring to the manner in which the king himself fixed the time for the audience to the duc de Choiseul, you will be convinced of the truth of what I say. When the queen mentioned the

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, ii. 365.

fact to me, she spoke of it as of a thing that had happened quite by chance and which she had not schemed in any way to bring about. It was only afterwards that her Majesty thought of giving to a very natural thing the appearance of a good joke. I have always insisted on one point, namely, that though her Majesty may appear to be lacking in attention and regard for the king, in reality she holds her august husband in high esteem; she is even jealous of his state, and in spite of a few outbursts of impatience and flightiness, nothing can conceal her real feelings. . . .'[1]

It was the old courtier, anxious to please every one, who wrote thus; but the empress refused to accept the diplomat's explanation, and declined to be gulled by this perversion of the truth. 'She did not call her husband a simpleton, but a poor man.' Afraid that by being too severe she would miss her aim, and unwilling to add to her daughter's grief just at the time she had heard—not without jealousy and bitterness—that the comtesse d'Artois had been delivered of a son, Maria Theresa merely remonstrated with the queen with maternal fondness, and kept for Mercy her fears and her sorrows.

Every day seemed to increase them. Marie Antoinette had now reached a point of exasperation. She was almost afraid that she, and not her husband, would be blamed for her barrenness, which Versailles as well as Paris commented upon; she could no longer refrain from talking, and confided in any one whom, for one reason or another, she thought worthy of her confidence. Thus she gave to the baron de Besenval very minute particulars concerning the king's constitution.

The baron, a gentleman of Swiss extraction, had fought during the Seven Years' War in the French army, and, owing to his valour, had acquired a good standing at court. 'He was handsome, with a pleasant face; was witty and bold. What more does a man need to bring him success? And he was, indeed, a ladies' man. . . . It was not long before he was

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, ii. 365.

one of the queen's intimate associates; mixing flattery with vicious maxims, which he expounded with so much assurance that they could not fail to impress the mind of an inexperienced princess. He thus acquired a fatal ascendency over her. With several others in a position to judge, I cannot but think that his influence was one of the main causes of her ruin. Notwithstanding her kindness, the queen was given to sarcasm. He flattered in her a failing which can almost be called a vice in one of her rank. . . .'[1]

One may easily conjecture what became of the queen's secrets with a man who flattered himself that he could 'make her act the part and give her the steadiness best fitted to maintain the dignity of her state and ensure her happiness.'[2] His first step was to divulge her confidences, so proud was he of exciting jealousy—and he plumed himself on the favours which were shown him!

News of this reached Maria Theresa; it became another cause of grief to her. 'What she told in confidence to the baron de Besenval on things personal to the king again proves her want of thought,' she writes to Mercy, October 5, 1775. In fact, it was very strange, to say the least, that Marie Antoinette should talk to any one, save to Mercy and her mother, of a slight operation the king was to undergo, not so much to help nature as to enable him to overcome his natural bashfulness. The only excuse she could make for her thoughtlessness was that, surrounded as she was by courtiers who delighted in scandals, the most intimate secrets soon ceased to be such, owing to the indiscretion of servants. Besides, a woman placed in so awkward and abnormal a situation as she was can be forgiven much. Her mind was not strong enough to enable her to devour her grief in silence and to be impassive in public She sorely needed to be armed with patience. Year followed year—she had been married five

[1] *Souvenirs et Portraits*, by the Duc de Lévis.

[2] *Mémoires du Baron Besenval.*

years—and still she could only repeat her eternal complaint as to the indifference of her husband. It was more than enough to discourage any woman, even one not so young, not so good-looking, and not so amiable as the queen.

'The king seems to be kinder and to trust me more,' she writes on November 12, 1775, 'and I have nothing to be jealous of on that point. But with regard to the important subject which troubles my dear mama's fondness, I am very sorry I have nothing new to say; it is not that *I* am lazy. I feel more and more how much my fate depends on it; but my dear mama must realise how difficult is my position, and admit that I can use no other means but patience and kindness.' [1] At other times, as if she wanted to redeem the wrong she had done by unwise or vain talking, she showed herself quite resigned to her fate, and endeavoured to speak of Louis XVI. as kindly as she could. It was not an easy thing to do in itself, but only slightly so by comparison. When she considered her two brothers-in-law—one the comte de Provence, 'as big as a barrel, very lazy and very fat,' and worse than her own husband in the matter of virility; and the other the comte d'Artois, a vain fool, incapable of a sensible deed—she was not so dissatisfied with her lot, after all. 'I am certain that if I had to choose a husband between the three, I should prefer the one Heaven gave me. He is a genuine man; and although he is awkward, he is as attentive and as good to me as it is possible to be.' [2]

Nevertheless, the vague feeling of preference which Marie Antoinette thought or said she entertained for her husband did not satisfy her loving nature. Instinctively, she looked around her to see who could fill the gap, and at first she merely asked for friendship. In the circumstances, her kindness was not a good guide; several times her choice was unfortunate.

She first selected a lady, older than herself, whose beauty and misfortunes had attracted general attention. Mademoiselle

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, ii. 394.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 404.

de Savoie-Carignan, widow at the age of nineteen of the Prince de Lamballe, had felt a deep affection for her debauched husband; his death, due to excesses of all kinds, had given her real sorrow. She at first thought of retiring into a convent. Her family situation recalled her to court; there had even been some talk of marrying her to Louis XV., who, tired and idle, was deploring the double loss of his wife and his mistress, the marquise de Pompadour. The consolations which Madame du Barry offered the old king put a stop to this design.

Marie Antoinette when Dauphiness was very fond of Madame de Lamballe, and when she became queen she felt very anxious to give her an office in her household. But the Princesse de Lamballe was neither gifted nor devoted, and she soon tired out the affection of her benefactress.

Deceived a first time, the queen gave all her affection to a most attractive, highly gifted, but extremely greedy woman, who, unlike Madame de Lamballe, proved that her intellect was superior to her heart; for she took shelter in flight when the dark days came.

The comtesse de Polignac, whose angelic face admirably masked a vicious soul, soon saw the vast benefit she might derive from the royal friendship, which she forthwith turned to account by using it to get out of the poor and even miserable situation in which she found herself. Taking advantage of the extreme favour with which the blinded queen treated her, she brought the whole of her family to court, including the comte de Vaudreuil, who, it was well known, was her paramour. Then, with the Princesse de Guéménée, a suspected gambler, the baron de Besenval, an intriguer devoid of all moral sense, and a few others worthy of them, she formed a kind of coterie whose object was that its members should protect one another while imposing upon the queen's kindness and generosity. They succeeded beyond their wildest expectations. No honours were too high, no present was too costly, for Madame de Polignac and her friends. Her exactions increased

gradually. In a few years she had obtained an income of about five hundred thousand livres a year for her relations, a pension of thirty thousand livres for Vaudreuil, and when her daughter was old enough to be married, eight hundred thousand livres as a dowry for her.

Mercy was scandalised, and did not conceal the fact. 'The most deserving families complain that they are wronged by such lavish dispensations, and if there are any more their clamours, their disgust, will reach a climax.' [1]

At that time there was a talk of giving Madame de Polignac one of the king's estates, the earldom of Bitche, which brought a revenue of one hundred thousand livres.

Unfortunately, the queen did not stop at feminine friendship; soon afterwards she showed a preference for a nobleman, Henri de Franquetot, duc de Coigny, who was first equerry in waiting. His influence over her became so great that it was enough for him to ask for a favour, to have it granted forthwith. He was a handsome man, and this was sufficient to give rise to certain rumours which, as soon as they were spread, gained such ready credence that suspicion fell on the queen's good name.[2]

Nor was this all. Tempted by politics, the forlorn spouse interfered in the government; but, having neither experience nor the guidance of trustworthy men, her interference proved most detrimental. Malesherbes and Turgot owed her their disgrace; the latter, in fact, would even have been sent to the Bastille had not the queen met with strong opposition. Her will had to give way before the most pressing and strongest objections. Moreover, it was sad to see her add hypocrisy to her action. She writes to Maria Theresa, 'that she is not sorry they are gone, but that she had taken no part in this affair.' Mercy, to remain faithful to the truth, was obliged to contradict her.

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, iii. 382.

[2] *Mémoires du Comte de Tilly.*

Apart from politics, which could not have a very great attraction for a woman of Marie Antoinette's temperament, her main relaxation in all leisure moments was card-playing, not as a game, but for the sheer sake of gambling. As usual in such circumstances, her passion increased with indulgence. Mercy used to say, speaking of the queen, 'Her game has become very expensive. She has given up ordinary games, where loss is necessarily limited. Lansquenet is her favourite game, sometimes pharo when there are not too many people. Ladies and courtiers are frightened and distressed at the heavy losses to which they are exposed in order to please the queen. It is also true that the king disapproves of gambling, and what is carried on is as much as possible kept secret from him.'

On this point, as on many others, the monarch was unable to show more than a platonic displeasure; his gentle nature, unwisely and foolishly under the circumstances, could devise no means of putting a stop to the evil. Wanting in energy, devoid of authority, he was baffled by the inveterate gamblers who paid no heed to his remonstrances. Mercy relates a very characteristic incident. 'The queen having taken a fancy to play pharo, she asked the king to allow some Paris bankers to be sent for. The sovereign remarked that chance games being forbidden, even to royal princes, it was giving a bad example to receive bankers at court. With his usual kindness, however, his Majesty added that it would not matter much if it were only for one evening. The bankers arrived on October 30 [1776], and dealt the cards the whole of the night until the morning of the 31st at the Duchesse de Lamballe's house, where her Majesty remained till five o'clock in the morning. The queen resumed gambling the same day till an advanced hour in the morning of All Saints' Day. She herself stayed again till three. The worst of it is that, All Saints' Day being a great feast, the people were scandalised. The queen said that the king had given his consent to one

sitting, it is true; but he did not limit the time, and they had a right, if they chose, to make the sitting last thirty-six hours. Louis laughed heartily, adding: "Go! You are not worth much, any of you!"'[1]

The episode resulted in creating a very unpleasant situation for this meek husband. Gambling, which had been raging in Paris, had been put down only by means of police ordinances. After receiving royal sanction at the palace, it began again worse than ever; the people claimed the right to gamble, since the example was set them by the court. The king signed new and severe decrees, though he dared not even mention them to his consort, and they were rightfully criticised, since gambling was tolerated at Versailles.

The comte d'Artois shared his sister-in-law's tastes. Being a desperate gambler, though as miserly and undignified in this as in everything else, he 'used to go and beg from everybody; he raised a kind of subscription in Versailles, and when he had collected about five or six hundred louis he started a bank against which large sums were staked.'[2] He was not even a fine player; he 'was mad if he lost and shamefully overjoyed when he won.'

As for the queen, she was far from justifying the proverb which says that Fortune's favour compensates Love's vexations, for she was a constant loser; and as her private purse was not inexhaustible, she owed enormous sums. In January 1777 Mercy helped her to reckon up their total; it amounted to 487,272*l.*

The debts contracted by the queen, however, were perhaps not the worst part of this frightful gambling; the sittings very often lasted until a late hour in the night, and the king lived more and more apart from his consort. This made some of the courtiers think they might do what others had done in previous reigns. Without principle, they planned to give the king a mistress. If they succeeded, their influence would

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, ii. 497, 524. [2] *Ibid.* iii. 35.

be the greater ; and they were not far wrong in believing that by pleasing the king they would not displease the queen.

There was at that time at the Comédie Française a young actress, Mademoiselle Contat, who at seventeen 'had the finest waist, the most elegant figure, and a bright and lively expression. She was as witty as she was pretty, and as pretty as it was possible to be.' Added to this, 'she possessed a talent equal to her beauty, deepness and ingenuity, mirth and sensibility, giving always a true accent to whatever her harmonious voice expressed.' [1]

It was she who was destined by some well-intentioned people to teach the king.

But the attempt was from the first unsuccessful. Yet, it would be pleasant to think that the king's virtue alone had the honour of defeating the plan.

The time was at last approaching when a change was to take place in the relationship of this strange royal couple, thanks to the intervention of Marie Antoinette's brother. They had been married seven years, and there is no example in history of such long-delayed expectation.

The Emperor Joseph II. arrived in Paris on April 22, 1777. He was travelling incognito—not a very strict one—under the name of comte de Falkenstein. He refused to have an apartment at Versailles, and accepted Mercy's hospitality at the Petit Luxembourg.

Joseph II. was intelligent, even witty. Like Maria Theresa, he followed the affairs of the French court attentively. He kept up a regular correspondence with his sister, and did not hesitate to give her wise advice and sometimes to address her severe reproaches. But neither the one nor the other had the desired effect ; and, as he could not understand the conduct of the king, he decided to go and see for himself how the situation could be remedied. Shrewd and

[1] *Les Souvenirs et les Regrets du vieil amateur dramatique.*

without any illusions, he did not flatter himself that he was likely to be very successful. Nevertheless he thought it his duty to give the ill-assorted couple the benefit of his experience.

With a view to judge matters impartially, he studied the court carefully before saying anything. What he saw at Versailles did not make a favourable impression upon him. At one of the first dinners to which he was invited he witnessed a scene which gave him a poor idea of the education which had been given to the royal princes. The comtes de Provence and d'Artois, ignoring his presence, played the most boyish and stupid tricks, chasing each other from room to room, jumping over the furniture, and pushing against everybody they encountered. The emperor said nothing; apparently he took no notice of such want of tact and lack of dignity.

He set himself to carefully study his sister and her surroundings. In the first place, none of her favourites pleased him. He was as disgusted with the stupidity of Madame de Lamballe as with the astute cunning of the comtesse de Polignac. The latter tried to show herself to advantage before him; but, for a prince with a finer intellect than those whom she met daily at the French court, her means were too apparent, and she went too far. This is how she acted: Seeing Joseph II. talking privately and familiarly with his sister, she sent to Marie Antoinette a note in which she had heaped up praises of the emperor, saying how much she admired him and what sincere and pure devotion she felt for him. The queen, who must have been in the plot, showed the letter to her brother; but, scenting the trap, he was not to be caught by such timely admiration, and merely mistrusted this female intriguer all the more.

He also noticed the gambling and the gamblers. He soon saw that strict honesty did not reign supreme among them, although they all belonged to the best of society. Madame de Guéménée's open cheating struck him, and he expressed very

plainly his disapproval of such pastimes and his displeasure at seeing them regularly practised.

Still, this was not the main object of his journey. The most important one was the situation of Louis XVI. with regard to his spouse.

He did not fail to realise the bashfulness, the unintelligence, in fact, the moral incapacity, that lay at the bottom of the king's physical weakness. He therefore exercised great caution and prudence. For fear he should frighten 'the poor man' if he broached the subject, he waited until the king should himself mention it first. His tact proved wise.

In a first private conversation, the king, alluding vaguely to their mutual thought, told his brother-in-law that he 'hoped to have children soon.' The emperor only replied that he hoped so too.

His gentleness and kindness touched the king, who, becoming bolder and bolder, put aside generalities and became quite confidential. It was not long before he had no more secrets from his brother-in-law concerning 'the absence of intimacy between him and his wife.' He referred constantly to his 'great desire to have children,' and spoke at length of 'the important consequences of such a blessing.' Then, at last, coming to a climax in his confidences and his ingenuity, and wishing to put an end to a situation which he felt was becoming ridiculous, he bluntly asked his brother-in-law for special advice ! [1] It was not very difficult to satisfy him, and the emperor was able to give him some excellent hints.

Joseph II. was moved by so much candour, and it altered the opinion he had formed of the king. At first he had thought he was very stupid, 'more so than he was in reality,' according to Mercy, who seemed, from a letter to Maria Theresa, to share the emperor's belief. 'This man is rather weak, but not a silly fool ; he has a good understanding, but is lazy both morally and physically. He talks sensibly, but has

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, iii. 57, 66, 69, 74, 80.

no taste for learning, no desire to know; the *fiat lux* has not yet been; his senses are still undeveloped.'

The emperor took advantage of his visits to Versailles to give his sister plentiful advice; he made good use of his right as an elder brother to speak plainly with Marie Antoinette. He saw clearly where she was wrong, and found fault with her more than once; but he always spoke to the point and with impartiality.

He was not as successful with the wife, however, as he had been with the husband. The latter took advice and followed it, whereas the former paid no heed to it whatever. It came too late. Bad habits had taken root in her heart; Marie Antoinette thought she had plenty of time to mend her ways. As soon as the emperor had left Paris, the decorum which was assumed in his presence was set aside and replaced by the most complete *laisser aller*; every one heaved a sigh of relief, and wanted to make up for wasted time.

So gambling went on more madly than ever; in spite of its impropriety, the queen devoted her time to it with a passion which grew from day to day. Mercy speaks of it with sadness: 'The games are sometimes stormy and shameful; they have forced the bankers to reprove violently some of the lady players for their want of honesty. One evening there was a lively discussion of this kind between the duc de Tronsac and the comtesse de Guéménée. These scandals must of necessity get talked about. The queen, feeling how awkward they were, thought she might avoid their recurrence by going to the princess's from time to time.[1] Besides, her losses at card-playing increase; her purse is quite empty, so that she cannot pay what she owes, much less give to charities.'[2] (September 12, 1777.)

More than this, love of pleasure was equal to love of gambling. The comte d'Artois, who always took the lead

[1] The same who cheated at cards. See p. 58.

[2] *Correspondance secrète*, iii. 113.

in the most extraordinary devices for new and out-of-the-way entertainments, proposed to have the French Guards' band and the Swiss playing on the terrace in the gardens at Versailles; they were then opened to the public, so that one vast crowd filled the terrace. Neither the queen nor the princesses were much afraid of this crowd. Indeed, they thoroughly enjoyed mixing, without attendants, and dressed up, among the people. The good-natured king came two or three times, seemed to take pleasure in it, and thus gave a sort of sanction to these nocturnal *fêtes*.

This promiscuousness was hurtful to the sovereign's power. The royal frolics were soon made public, and rumours were set afloat that her Majesty had been too familiar with some gallant soldier or handsome officer. The king's enemies did not allow such a splendid opportunity of attacking the royal family to escape them, and published pamphlets such as the 'Lever de l'Aurore' (Aurora's rising), accusing Marie Antoinette of seeking adventures in those mixed gatherings, and even of giving *rendez-vous*.[1]

The queen, however, was no longer the forlorn wife she had been during the first seven years of her married life. The advice given by Joseph II. had borne fruit; the intervention which had come from so far and so exalted a quarter had at last conquered Louis' bashfulness.

Marie Antoinette writes the good news to her mother, and the circumstances are such as to enhance the empress's joy. 'It is said that the comtesse d'Artois is again to become a mother. It is unpleasant enough for me after seven years of married life; still, I should be unjust if I showed any temper about it. I am not without hopes, as my brother will be able to tell my dear mama how matters stand. The king and he talked on the subject with great sincerity and unrestrained confidence.'[2] (June 16, 1777.)

Mémoires historiques de Soulavie—Mémoires de Madame Campan.

[2] *Correspondance secrète*, iii. 85.

Soon after, the news was confirmed by Mercy; and for the first time Maria Theresa was able to give her daughter the name she had longed to bestow on her. 'The emperor has at last returned from his long journey,' she writes (October 5), 'and *I* send loving kisses to the dear little wife whom I cherish.'

Unfortunately, the 'dear little wife,' in her inward heart, only wished for one son, who would ensure the direct succession to the throne and whose birth would efface the regrettable humiliation she had endured so long. Beyond this wish, she felt in her heart no love for the king, of whom the Prince de Ligne said 'he was the best but not the most appetising man in his kingdom;' and it was with something like actual loathing that she suffered her husband's embraces. She used every possible means to avoid intimacy. She sat at the gambling-tables as late as possible in the night, so as to be able to retire to her private apartments. When Mercy tried to recall her to her duties as a wife she invented excuses, saying, sometimes, 'The king does not care for anyone to sleep with him.' [1]

The ambassador was grieved to see the couple always at variance, and to find it so hard to make those two wills more compatible with one another. He did his best to bring the queen to reason, being always respectful, but firm; if he made any headway with her, it was not much. He was almost despairing, and then told the whole truth to Maria Theresa. 'I will begin by saying that when I remonstrate on the necessity of remaining with the king as much as possible, to amuse him and engage his attention, my advice has not the desired effect on her Majesty, because she has a very poor idea of her husband's character and mental powers. She believes he is too lazy and too shy ever to become a passionate lover. She is so convinced of it that she told some of the courtiers that she would not be sorry if the king had a passing fancy, as

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, iii. 123, 131.

he might then acquire some experience and relish.'[1] (November 19, 1777.)

Mercy, scandalised by such language, tried to make Marie Antoinette understand how improper it was; but she hardly listened to him, and avoided answering. The ambassador spoke like a politician; the queen acted like a woman. It was certainly natural that Mercy should advise her to live in complete intimacy with his Majesty; but it was none the less natural that she should feel some dislike to this fat man, who was more skilled in hammering than in courtship.

Maria Theresa's joy at knowing that her daughter was at last a married woman in the full sense of the word, was mingled with regret at the news Mercy sent her. 'I see more and more that I was not mistaken in my daughter's disposition. As she is not given to reflection, you will try in vain to convince her, although she may appear to listen to you; your remonstrances vanish before her unbounded love for dissipation and frivolity. A sad reverse alone would perhaps bring her to alter her mode of life; but may we not fear that the change will come too late to redeem the injury my daughter has done, and persists in doing herself, through her thoughtless behaviour? For my part, I will not add to your reproaches at present; I will only endeavour to bring her to understand the motherly love which guides me in the advice I give her, and ask her to heed you and Abbé Vermond.

'The emperor intends to lecture her; but he does not show me his letters, nor the answers he gets to them. I can say nothing certain.'[2] (December 5, 1777.)

The same day Maria Theresa writes to her daughter, but, contrary to what she says to Mercy, she cannot control herself; and it is in words of severity that she tells her of her fears—prophetic fears indeed, which were to be realised sixteen years later.

'Vienna, December 5.—Madam my dear daughter, I

[1] *Correspondance secrète*, iii. 137, 138. [2] *Ibid.* iii. 143.

expect every post to bring me comforting news, but it is over-long in coming. I do wish the weather were worse, so as to prevent the king hunting and wearing himself out, and the queen gambling every night, and keeping late hours. It is detrimental to your health and beauty; it is very wrong, because it separates you from the king—wrong for the present as well as the future. You do not fulfil your duty by not mastering your feelings with regard to your husband. If he is too good-natured, it does not excuse you, but rather aggravates your wrong-doing. I tremble for your future. . . .'

Marie Antoinette vindicates herself and denies the accusation, complaining of 'the tales and exaggerations which have been carried to Vienna about her gambling.' Notwithstanding, she listens rather more to her mother's advice; and Mercy, in his office of severe but impartial watchman, gives better accounts of the queen's doings. 'She continues to behave very properly to the king, who for his own part persists in leading, in its truest and most exact meaning, the life of a married man.' (January 17, 1778.)

At last the long-expected news, which the Austrian court despaired of ever receiving, reached Vienna in April. The queen was with child. 'God be thanked!' writes the empress. 'May my dear Antoinette be strengthened in her brilliant situation, and give many heirs to France!' (May 2, 1778.)

She now hopes for 'a Dauphin, her grandson.' But a new disappointment awaited her, for on December 20 the queen was delivered of a daughter, who was called Maria Theresa, after her grandmother. Poor child! she was to experience the greatest adversity.

Nevertheless, the announcement of this birth was received with visible joy. Yet the empress, whose constant thought was for an heir, was near giving way to her old fears. True, she did not trust her son-in-law more than his wife.

'I should not feel flattered if, after the king's *début* as a

husband and my daughter's delivery, we were to wait another eight years before a second birth.' (February 28, 1779.)

'What my daughter tells me of her married life does not satisfy me, and makes me suspect we shall have to wait another eight years before a second child is born.' (March 31, 1779.)

To Marie Antoinette she writes on April 1 of the same year: 'What you write to me of your dear daughter gave me great pleasure, especially what you say of the king's fondness. But I confess that I am insatiable; she must have a companion, and not wait too long for him either. My dear daughter, do not neglect anything which you can do. At this time of the year, when the weather is fine, do not ride too much on horseback, as it might prove detrimental to the consummation of our own wishes and those of all the French and Austrian peoples. . . .'

When Marie Antoinette received this letter she was not in a fit state to ride, still less to see the king, for she had the measles. This illness being highly contagious, his Majesty was not allowed to visit the patient, for the doctors were anxious to preserve Louis XVI.'s health. But fatality seems to enter into the wisest deeds. Four noblemen, who were known to be particularly in the good graces of the queen—the duc de Coigny, the duc de Guines, comte Esterhazy, and the baron de Besenval—offered to nurse the queen themselves. The proposal seemed incredible enough; but it was still more incredible that the queen should readily accept it, and that the king should actually give his consent to the arrangement.

The four noblemen were at once installed in their new office, and they were so eager that they proposed to sit up at night to watch over the royal patient. When Mercy heard of this he was filled with indignation, and hastened to Lassone, the doctor, to beg of him to check a fancy which must of necessity prove injurious to the august patient. Lassone did not

understand, or at least feigned not to understand, the point of the request; so Mercy fell back upon Vermond, and both managed so well that they obtained the queen's promise that the four gentlemen should retire at eleven o'clock and not return until the morning.

It is easy to realise the sensation created by this adventure, and the comments which were passed upon it. Jokers asked who were the four ladies who would nurse the king in case of his being ill. Everything seemed to combine to throw ridicule on his Majesty.

Marie Antoinette could not love him; and life went on in the royal household as incoherently as in the past. Maria Theresa, growing more and more distressed and discouraged, heard with much misgiving of the endless indiscretions of her daughter and the blind weakness of her son-in-law. She almost despaired of ever hearing of the birth of a Dauphin. Fate, indeed, refused her the consummation of this wish, for she died on November 29, 1780—thus depriving her daughter of the only serious and enlightened support she had on earth.

From that time Mercy's influence, which had all along been only a reflection of the empress's, small as it was, faded. Marie Antoinette, thirsting for pleasures and pastimes, gambled more than ever, and added imprudence to imprudence; and, in her exalted state of life, none of her actions were ignored, every one was turned against her. She was beginning to be unpopular with the masses. It was strange that on a visit to Paris, after the churching of her Majesty, the people showed more curiosity than love; and the cries of 'Long live the king!' 'Long live the queen!' were very few indeed. The reason of this is to be found in the general poverty of the people. Misery was kept up by a government of incapable men. For ministers the king had men like Maurepas, Calonne, Loménie de Brienne. The dissipations of the court and the lavishness of Marie Antoinette were severely commented upon. How could it be expected that the miserable working men, for whom

it was so difficult to find work, and thus enable them to earn their daily bread, should not nurse anger, when they knew what enormous amounts were thrown on the gambling tables during the nights at Versailles, and when they saw favourites of both sexes, Madame de Polignac and others, covered with gold?

The fire of revolution was only smouldering; ten years were still to elapse before it should break out. During that period Marie Antoinette bore her consort three more children: the Dauphin, who was known under the pet name of *chou d'amour*, and who died in 1789, in the early days of the Revolution; a daughter, who did not long survive her birth; the duc de Normandie, who became Dauphin at his brother's death, and king under the name of Louis XVII. after the execution of his father. He never reigned.

In spite of her children, Marie Antoinette's feelings towards her husband did not alter. Could they, indeed, when he who inspired them remained what he had always been, a good workman, a great eater, a first-rate hunter, and a miserable king?

Soulavie relates that, 'going after the tenth of August into the private apartments of Louis XVI. at Versailles, he saw six lists stating the king's huntings, either as Dauphin or as monarch—the number of heads, the kind of game that he had shot each time, with a full recapitulation for each month, each season, and each year of his reign.'

When the Revolution broke out, he did not act with more energy than he had done with regard to his wife. He was as incapable of mastering it as of preventing it; he could not even yield gracefully. He did not in the least understand the significance of combined action on the part of the whole nation, which was intent upon breaking up the effete methods of a decaying society; he tampered with affairs with the same clumsiness that characterised all he did. In this unequal struggle he showed no sincerity, no courage, and still less dignity. What the queen endured in seeing his attitude can be imagined, possessing as she did the proud heart of an Austrian archduchess.

More than once she gave vent to her feelings of mournful humiliation. Madame Campan relates, in the mild terms which she was obliged to use at the time she was writing, that she received the queen's confession: 'She spoke to me of the king's want of energy, but always with words showing her regard for his virtues and her love for him. "The king," said she, "is not a coward; he is very brave, but passive; he is unfortunately overpowered by false shame and distrust of himself—a consequence of his education and nature. He shudders at the idea of having to command; and what he hates above all is to speak to a number of people." . . . A queen who is not regent must in those circumstances remain inactive and prepare for death!'[1]

Was Louis XVI. really as good as in the years which followed his death he was said to be? The crimes of the Revolution inspired the people with horror so great that it filled them with admiration and sympathy for its victims. History does not agree with legend on this point. Traits of his character are now known which contradict old belief. And one is almost tempted to side with the Archbishop of Cambrai, who, when some one remarked in his presence one day that kindness was painted on the king's face, whispered, 'The lucky mask' (*L'heureux masque*).[2]

It would hardly have been worth while to give in historic form the story of these domestic secrets which irrefutable documents have revealed to us, had they not exercised a real influence on the events of the time, and on the people who were mixed up in them. Many things would remain obscure or inexplicable but for the light they afford us. They, and they alone, explain why, from the first, the royal couple found themselves in such a critical situation; they were at the bottom of the misfortunes which crushed Marie Antoinette.

Married early to a man without passions, she gave

[1] *Mémoires*, ii. 227–230. [2] *Ibid.*

herself up to distractions which might help her to forget her loneliness in a country which she ignored and in a court where every one treated her as a stranger. Hence her love of pleasure, which gave rise to so much slander and calumny. Hence her passion for women and men unworthy of it, which caused so many regrettable rumours and prepared the way for the monstrous accusations which were showered on this unfortunate woman at the hour of her death. Hence the odious names of Messalina and Agrippina applied to her by her enemies in their sincere or pretended indignation.

This is not all. The saddest part of it is that it was in her husband's family that she met with the most bitter enemy, the vilest slanderer. Ambitious and false, the comte de Provence had rejoiced to see that the king had no son; and during the many years previous to the births of the royal children he had hoped to some day succeed his brother on the throne. He cherished the idea that he also might mount a throne which was not intended for him.

Events were to satisfy some of his ambitions, but not those on which he had counted. As he could not foresee the future, he was astounded when he heard that the man had awakened in the king; and there is no gainsaying that he was deeply grieved at the news, for he has himself confessed it. There is a letter from him, dated October 5, 1778, and addressed to the King of Sweden, Gustavus III., the contents of which are too clear to allow of any doubt with regard to the state of his feelings. 'You have heard of the change that has come over my fate. . . . I have managed to control myself outwardly, and have made no change in my attitude, showing no joy—it would have been called hypocrisy, and rightly so. You may readily believe that I felt neither joy nor sadness—that might have been taken as a moral weakness. Inwardly, it was more difficult to control my feelings. Even now I sometimes feel revolt in my heart.'[1]

[1] *Gustave III et la Cour de France*, by A. Geffroy.

The prince was boasting: inwardly, he was not conquered. He used all his wit—and he was not lacking in that quality—to throw discredit on his sister-in-law; he employed himself with unceasing zeal in making her unpopular. Coming from so high a source, the rumours which attributed to others than the king the paternity of the royal issue soon gained credit among credulous and ignorant people. Not only did the king repeatedly find under his table napkin libellous verses too licentious to be given here, in which he was referred to as a betrayed husband, the queen as a guilty wife, and the Dauphin as a bastard, but in the very streets insults were thrown at him, especially during the days of riot. It is impossible to imagine a worse scene than the one which occurred at Pantin, on the return irom Varennes. A riot had taken place. In the hope of silencing the agitators by the sight of an innocent child, Marie Antoinette was showing her son at the carriage window. Frightfully abusive cries were heard. 'She may show her son—we know he is not the king's!' cried the crowd—with many worse insults.

'The king heard the words very distinctly. The baby prince, frightened by the noise and the clang of arms, uttered cries of fear. The queen held him back; tears were rolling in her eyes.'[1]

She paid dearly indeed for the errors of her youth, but to the end she was a victim to her husband's blunders. He was incapable of preserving his life; he was equally incapable of shielding her reputation.

In his will, which was destined to be read by the world at large, he finds no words to clear the queen of the accusations brought against her. He knows what has been said of the mother, and yet he merely writes: 'I recommend my children to my wife's care; *I have never doubted her love for them. . . .*' He knows what has been said of the wife; here

[1] *Récit de Péthion*, published by M. Mortimer-Ternaux in his *Histoire de la Terreur*.

is his answer : 'I beg my wife will forgive me all the trials she has undergone for me, and the pains I may have caused her during our married life, *as she may be assured that I keep no ill-feeling against her, were she to think that she has aught to reproach herself with.*'

Nothing in those words can be interpreted as hiding an after-thought; it would be granting Louis XVI. more intellect than he possessed to think that there was any malice in him. When he wrote these lines he believed he was fulfilling the duty of a Christian, who, in presence of death, obeys the precepts of his religion and forgets injuries and forgives offences. Neither he nor any of his advisers, who read the will several times over, perceived that in thus speaking of forgiveness, however vague the terms might be, he would be held forcibly to imply offences. Alas for the unfortunate queen, whom the greatness of her birth and her ill fate had united to that 'poor man' with a royal crown ! Posterity can only show its indulgence for her. Posterity—less than the king himself—'would bear her no ill-will if it thought that she had aught to reproach herself with.'

What could she reproach herself with ? The touching, tender, and dramatic romance which was in her sad life a bit of blue in a stormy sky ?[1] While becoming queen, she was still a woman. Who would refuse her the joy of having been loved, the felicity of loving ?

[1] The relation can be read in *Un ami de la reine* (Marie Antoinette et M. de Fersen).

THE COMTESSE DU BARRY'S LAST LOVE AFFAIRS

THERE are two sets of papers in the French Record Office concerning the comtesse du Barry. One is of little interest, but the other contains, besides the principal documents relating to her trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal, a series of papers which throw a curious light on this famous favourite, and explain certain parts of the later years of her life which are not well known.

Those papers show us the woman rather than the favourite, and according to a new phrase, 'after the official document, we have the natural one.' Among the police notes, accusations, indictment, inquiries, and diverse documents, there is a bundle containing nine letters. On the coarse wrapper is the following inscription: 'Letters of Brissac before and since the Revolution.—Of no great importance, except that they prove his intimacy with her [Madame du Barry], and his ideas on the Revolution.

'It is to be noticed that she spent the whole night previous to her death at Versailles, in burning her correspondence with him.'

These nine letters, written in a clear, bold, but fluent hand, awaken a whole past, and make us deeply regret those which, if we credit the annotation, were burnt by Madame du Barry during a night of anguish and mourning. Yet, few as they are, they enable the reader to reconstruct the history of a *grand*

seigneur's love for the royal mistress. This reconstruction is made easier still by several detached papers contained in the bundle and relating to this *liaison*, such as letters from Mademoiselle de Mortemart (Brissac's daughter), Maussabré (the duke's aide-de-camp), the Chevalier Bernard d'Escours (an old friend and confidant of Madame du Barry), and a few short notes written by herself and easy to detect, owing to the fine, small handwriting—in fact, a perfect scrawl.

The Public Prosecutor paid no heed to those letters; for him the only important thing was the crime she had committed by being the mistress of 'the French tyrant' Louis, fifteenth of the name. For us, on the contrary, they have vital interest; and with the aid of whatever information can be gathered from the memoirs of the time, those letters help us to reconstruct fairly well a pretty but tragic love romance.[1]

I

The wonderful progress of Madame du Barry is well known.

Born on February 19, 1743, at Vaucouleurs—the village rendered famous by the recollections of Joan of Arc—she was the illegitimate daughter of Anne Béqus, surnamed Quantigny, and an unknown father.

Brought to Paris by her mother, she had a miserable childhood; her youth threatened to be worse still, when chance and the help of the duc de Richelieu, seconded by Lebel, groom of the chamber, brought her before the idle king, who

[1] National records—W. 16, No. 701, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des événements de la fin du dix-huitième siècle*, by Abbé Georgel; *Mémoires secrets du comte d'Allonville*; *Mémoires de Dutens*; *Les Révolutions de Paris*, by Prudhomme; *Le Courrier français* (*No.* 259); *Curiosités historiques*, by J. A. Le Roy; *Correspondance secrète entre Marie-Thérèse et le comte de Mercy-Argenteau*, by the Chevalier d'Arneth; *La du Barry*, by E. and J. de Goncourt, &c. &c.

was mourning over the double loss of his consort and his mistress.

'Her figure, her blooming youth, bright expression, maidenly look, her charms, and above all her private talents,' says Abbé Georgel, 'decided Richelieu to choose Madame du Barry for a royal mistress.'

A certificate of birth was made, in order to blot out the uncertainty of her origin; she became then the daughter of Jean Jacques Gomard de Vaubernier and of Anne Béqus surnamed Quantigny; and although she was only twenty-six, she gave her age as being twenty-three.

Then, as only a married lady could be raised to the rank which was to be hers, Jean du Barry, the last of her lovers, sent in haste for his brother Guillaume, who was at Toulouse, and they were married by one of the king's chaplains (September 1, 1768).

When she was presented at court the newly made countess dazzled every one. Owing to her magnificent and fascinating beauty she won a host of admirers, many of whom worshipped her. She, apparently, did not dislike the flattering murmur which followed her; but nothing can be alleged against her virtue—if such a word can be applied in such circumstances—or as to her faithfulness to the sovereign, almost a sexagenarian, whose favours brought shame upon her. More reserved, however, than the marquise de Pompadour, she had no Choiseul for lover.

Among the brilliant crowd which reverenced her was a gentleman of ancient nobility, and remarkably handsome; his name entitled him to the highest honours. He soon worshipped the favourite, who for the first time in her life felt that she was at once loved and respected.

She might well be proud of her conquest. Louis Hercule Timoléon, duc de Cossé, was the son of the maréchal de Brissac, Governor of Paris; he was nine years the senior of Madame du Barry. Born on February 14, 1734, he had

married (February 28, 1760) the second daughter of Louis Mazarini Mancini, duc de Nivernais, of whom Lord Chesterfield, in his Letters to his Son, speaks as the most perfect gentleman. The daughter was worthy of her father. The Count of Creutz, in a message to Gustavus III. of Sweden, testifies to it, and his testimony cannot be doubted. 'Madame de Cossé,' says he, 'is beloved and revered for her virtues and the charms of her mind.'

They had one son, but his health was extremely delicate; he required constant care, and was rather a cause of anxiety than of joy. Toward 1770 they were destined to have a little daughter, and Madame de Cossé wished then to feed her.

In spite of his wife's virtues and charms, the duke was smitten by the young beauty whom Louis XV.'s caprice had brought to court. His passionate admiration was not long a secret. Mercy-Argenteau describes the duke as 'entirely in the hands of the favourite,' and Madame du Deffand calls him the 'sultana's favourite.' This thing was so well known that on the death of Madame de Villars, lady of the bedchamber to Marie Antoinette, there was question of appointing the duchesse de Cossé to the office. There was a good deal of hesitation, as it was said that this choice was due to Madame du Barry.

Nevertheless, some one else was appointed, and the duchess was not long in showing that she did not share her husband's love for the favourite. An incident not very favourable to the duke created a sensation at court.

The duc de la Vrillière, giving a supper for the comtesse du Barry, invited Madame de Cossé, who refused the invitation. Her refusal was commented upon, and bitter reproaches were addressed to the duke concerning his wife's behaviour. He was even requested to exert his authority. Not knowing how to get out of it, he gave an evasive answer, saying that his wife acted by order of the Dauphiness.

Mercy-Argenteau would not countenance such an allegation,

and gave the duke a flat denial. In fact, the Dauphiness had given no command to her lady of the bedchamber.

'Three days after, the duke left for Paris; but in order to be reinstated in the favourite's good graces, he wrote to his wife a harsh letter, demanding that she should show her regard for the comtesse du Barry and never refuse to do anything that might please her.

'The duchess replied to her husband that when she had taken possession of her office she had called upon the comtesse du Barry, but that after that step she would do nothing which might expose her to being put on a level with the favourite; she could not submit to it, and would prefer giving up her office.'[1]

In spite of all the annoyance such a false position caused him, and though his affection was not returned, the duke's passion was not in the least abated. Finding happiness in his own feelings, he was content to wait—and he waited for a long time.

II

Louis XV. died May 10, 1774. Madame du Barry was sent into exile at the Abbaye of Pont-aux-Dames, and the duc de la Vrillière was instructed to transmit the order. However, her fall, which she could not but foresee, incensed rather than depressed her.

'This is a pretty sort of reign which begins with a sealed letter,' she exclaimed.

Her exile, however, did not last long. She first came back to Saint-Vrain, near Arpajon, to an estate which she had bought from a M. Duval, a clerk in the dockyards, with whom she had once had a slight flirtation; but it had not lasted, for she wished for money, whilst he wished to be loved.

At last, in 1775, she returned to her dear Louveciennes, a gift of her royal lover.

[1] *Letter of Mercy-Argenteau to Maria Theresa*, by Arneth, i. 371.

At first she sought for diversion from the dulness of her idle and solitary life, in gambling; but it was not for long. She must love; she was soon to be the amorous woman of bygone days. She took a fancy for an Englishman, Lord Seymour. This caprice did not last long, and the time came at last when Cossé was to be rewarded for his constancy. Madame du Barry loved him now as fondly as she was loved, and it seemed as if the noble lover was to receive everything at once. Honours succeeded honours. On February 12, 1775, he was appointed Governor of Paris, in place of his father, who had resigned; a few years later his father's death made him duc de Brissac. He became colonel in command of the Cent Suisses, the king's bodyguard, lieutenant-general of the king's army, Grand Pantler of France.

All these honours did not affect his fondness for Madame du Barry—far from it; he now lived openly with her. No longer did they hide their happiness in a discreet retreat at Louveciennes; they were always together. Madame du Barry often came to Paris to spend the day—and night—at the duke's hôtel, Rue de Grenelle, in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. She travelled with him wherever he went; theirs was a notorious *liaison*. Madame du Barry had her letters addressed to Brissac's house.

But there was now no question of material interest between them. Love was everything. She was no longer the harlot who sells herself for money—she was now the woman who yields to passion. If Louis XV. stooped to her, Brissac had raised her to him. She had given up her vulgarity of speech; she had improved her too free manners. The change was so complete that when the comte d'Allonville met her by chance, about 1780 or 1782, during a journey she was taking to Normandy, where she was going on a visit to the duke, he was struck by the 'quietness of her tone and the dignity of her manner.'

Brissac was in the full vigour of manhood, Madame du

Barry in the fulness of her beauty. These two were never to change: until the end his heart remained young, whilst her face and her form lost nothing of their charm.

III

It was love without a cloud. Those which were gathering over France were not ready to burst, and few were the people who foresaw a storm. Certainly, neither Brissac nor Madame du Barry foresaw what was to come. As for society, it looked with indulgence on their mutual passion. At the end of the eighteenth century a husband would not be condemned for forsaking his wife; such accidents were too common.[1] What was thought most uncommon was the faithfulness of these two lovers, who were watched with indulgent curiosity.

It is a pity, indeed, that Madame du Barry should have destroyed most of the letters she received from Brissac; for, from those which have been preserved, one may conjecture how interesting the correspondence of this *grand seigneur* in love would have been. The short notes which have escaped destruction prove how refined was this passion, so tender, so full of respect. They are certainly the outcome of a cultivated mind.

Here is one without any date; it must, however, belong to the happy time, 1782–1786. It bears the following superscription:

'*To Madame la comtesse du Barry, Lucienne.*

'A thousand loves, a thousand thanks, dear heart! To-night I shall be with you. Yes, I find my happiness is in being loved by you. I kiss you a thousand times.

'I have this evening at eight o'clock an appointment with

[1] At that time society, both elegant and immoral, had copied Louis XV. and countenanced everything.

Madame de Las Cases. I do not know what she wants. I will go to her house, as I will not give her the trouble to come to mine, although no one can touch my heart but you.

'Good-bye. I love you and for ever. I am waiting for my visitors, who, I think, will be many.

'This Sunday, two o'clock P.M.'

The other notes are dated, so that one may follow the story of this passion which is ever the same. Nothing, indeed, as he says, can touch his heart but she who is in possession of it.

'La Flèche: August 26, 1786, 10 o'clock A.M.

'I arrived here yesterday at one o'clock, and all the people who were to travel by post passed before me; so that, dear heart, I am here waiting for horses. I shall have to take a cross road where horses can only go at a walking pace; I shall therefore be delayed one day. I am none the less impatient to join you. Yes, dear heart, I desire so ardently to be with you—not in spirit, my thoughts are ever with you, but bodily—that nothing can calm my impatience. Good-bye. This letter will go with those from Angers, which they are waiting for in order to despatch the post. There is here quite a crowd of people who have come to fetch their children.

'Good-bye, my darling. I kiss you many and many times with all my heart.

'Tuesday or Wednesday, *early*.'

'Vendosme: August 16, 1787.

'I should have liked, dear friend, to hear of your complete recovery, and also that your stoutness might prove it;[1] and you mention nothing of either. Nevertheless, dear friend, I must rejoice at your new fit of laziness, which is so

[1] That you had recovered your *embonpoint*.

uncommon for you, as it makes me hope that you will not be so often away from me.

'I have written to you from Brissac—too long a letter, perhaps, but I do not weary when I talk with you.

'Do you know that I am somewhat vexed at not having been elected president of the Provincial Assembly of Anjou? True, I did not compete for this office, but who is it that prevented my name from being put forward? Really, I cannot understand it, and it grieves me. . . .

'. . . Dear friend, I must now go and inspect my troops, and leave you. I must tell you that I love you, and how happy I shall be to see you again in as good health as I wish you to be.'

Some years had passed. It was now 1789, a year which was filled with the fears and riots occasioned by the revolutionary movement. Yet political anxieties did not disturb the peacefulness of their affection. In August of that same year Brissac was obliged to go for a time to Brissac and Angers. He felt the parting cruelly, and found the days very long.

'Brissac: August 25, 1789.

'I am going to Angers to-morrow, to see the marquis de Ray. . . .

'But what is so [sad], Madame, is that I can write you only a few lines. My letter must catch the post; nevertheless, I must tell you that my love for you is deep and sincere, and that I should like to be in the place of those who have so often the pleasure of seeing you. . . .

'My health is as good as my present anxieties permit. . . .

'I hope to see you in a month, and I want sadly to do so.'

'Angers: August 29—Noon.

'What a philosophical and wise letter yours of the 22nd is, madame! Yes, indeed, when far from you, one must be armed with philosophy, hope, and patience! . . .

'I hear there are riots in Paris; the city, like you, seems to be lacking food. I wish I could share with you the splendid crop of fruit which my Brissac estate has yielded me this year; but it would be neither wise nor possible to attempt to send you any, for the municipalities are afraid of the people, who, not satisfied with the necessaries of life, wish to appropriate luxuries.

'But good-bye, good-bye, Countess. It is nearly twelve o'clock, and I want to dine at Brissac. I pay you my respects,[1] and thank you for the punctuality with which you write to me. My only joys are the reception of your letters, the thought of you, and the everlasting affection I have for you—which I offer you with all my heart.

'I might have received yesterday a letter from you, but I did not.'

How much delicacy is contained in that last sentence! It might be taken as a reproof, and yet it only expresses a wish and a regret!

The following letter is a masterpiece of good-natured simplicity and, at the same time, of youthful grace and enthusiasm. It was written a few months later than the preceding ones, and dated from the Tuileries, where the Governor of Paris had taken up his abode since October 10, 1789. He speaks as openly of his slight illness as a man who is sure of his friend's love, and who is not obliged to pass over commonplace incidents in order to retain her affection. Yet, how well he comes out at the end of the letter; and how well he displays the ever young and constant lover who is hidden in the coughing sexagenarian!

'The Tuileries: Wednesday, November 11, 1789.

'My darling, I must stay in bed to-day in order to nurse my cold, so as to be better to-morrow, and be a more pleasant companion for you than I should be were I to cough as much as I do to-day. My cough is the consequence of biliousness

[1] An old phrase.

which itself is due to my long stay in Paris. I am not used to it, and it will kill me or send me mad if I am not allowed to leave town. I hope I shall; but I dare not speak of it, for fear I should rejoice too soon.

'Good-bye, sweet love! I love you and kiss you a thousand times from the heart which is the most loving of the two—I mean mine—but I will not erase what my pen has written, for I love to think that your heart and mine are one for ever.

'Good-bye till to-morrow. I am going to try and get into a sweat and to throw up the phlegm; nice look-out, is it not? It would be more unpleasant still, if the weather were fine. Everything that happens seems to be mysterious and foolish; the only wisdom is in loving you.

'Good-bye, sweet love! Good-bye, darling! I love you and kiss you.'

IV

Events were becoming more serious every day, and it was already easy to anticipate the dangers which threatened those who had remained faithful to their king. Many had followed the example set them by the comte d'Artois, and had prudently taken refuge across the frontier.

The Paris Governor, who commanded the king's guards, was in greater danger than any one else. Some of his friends urged him to flee from the people's vengeance, advising him to emigrate.

Brissac would not for one moment entertain the idea of abandoning his king; and though he knew what fate was in store for him were revolution to triumph, he refused to separate his cause from that of his sovereign.

'I shall act according to my duty to his ancestors and mine,' answered he proudly to his cautious advisers.

And he remained at his post.

He, however, thought it was unnecessary to allow Madame

de Mortemart, his daughter, to share his fate; so he sent her abroad—or let her go. It is very likely about this time that she wrote to Madame du Barry the letter without a date contained in the bundle. This only shows once more that the duc de Brissac's passion was a recognised one, since the daughter had no hesitation in writing to her father's mistress, or rather, as she says, to her father's friend.

'Madam,—I beg you will accept my best thanks for the kindness you have always shown me, and believe that I deeply regret not to be able to see you before leaving. I feel very sad at the thought that I shall be so long without seeing my father, and that I cannot even take leave of him before I start. But there is nothing left for me except to submit to my fate. I beg you will kindly accept the assurance of my affection for you.'

Madame de Mortemart, accompanied by her husband and her son, went to Flanders, or perhaps to Rhenish Prussia. Her father remained in France, where his duty detained him. As for Madame du Barry, love kept her at Louveciennes. She was perhaps also actuated by the desire not to part with the treasures she had accumulated in her house; she therefore had no thought of emigrating. She fancied that the present generation had forgotten all about her; and as she had never meddled with politics, except in the case of Choiseul's fall, and had never wronged any one, she thought she could escape the people's hatred; and in the midst of events which grew daily more terrible, she was wonderfully calm and had unlimited confidence in her fate.

Both her calm and her confidence might have been justified had not an ordinary incident brought her back to public attention.

During the night of January 10–11, 1791, burglars broke into her house at Louveciennes and carried away most of her jewelry. She had spent the night at Brissac House.

Unwilling to lose her property, Madame du Barry acted most imprudently; she had bills stuck on the walls of Paris, bearing in large print:

TWO THOUSAND LOUIS REWARD!

DIAMONDS AND JEWELS LOST.

This was followed by a long list which would not have disgraced a first-class jeweller's window.

It did not require more to excite envy; but the names of Louis XIII., Louis XIV., Louis XV. came again and again, and they awakened the hatred of revolutionists by reminding them of princely prodigalities.

The old favourite's imprudence was not long in bearing fruit. The newspapers used the contents of the bill to formulate violent charges against Madame du Barry.

'Les Révolutionnaires de Paris,'[1] edited by Prudhomme, was among the most perfidious publications. One article ran thus:

'Since the Revolution broke out, Madame du Barry has constantly made use of the power her wealth gives her—everybody knows how she acquired it—to create enmity between the inhabitants around Louveciennes and the Swiss at Courbevoie. The secret intrigues fomented with the help of the principal officers have not been quite as successful as was expected. On the contrary, there is so much mistrust felt for the owner of the château of Louveciennes that people doubt very much the truth of the burglary. It is thought that the lady, fearing that her income would be cut short, wanted to excite pity by representing herself as the victim of a regrettable incident—gaining, by such means, the indulgence of the inflexible National Assembly.

'However it may be, her conduct in this occurrence is scarcely of a nature to cause pity for her. . . .'

[1] No. 21, date January 22 to 29, 1791.

She was very nearly accused of having committed the robbery herself.

With her usual flightiness, Madame du Barry does not seem to have paid sufficient attention to these attacks. She went on living the life of a woman in love, with all the thoughtlessness attending happiness, for she was happy in loving and in being loved. The following letter, in which the duc de Brissac alludes to the recent robbery, belongs to this period :

'Wednesday, February 2, 1791.

'Come quickly, my darling, and take every precaution for your silver plate and other valuables, if you have any left. Yes, come, you and your beauty, your kindness and magnanimity. I am ashamed of it, but I feel weaker than you. How should I feel otherwise for the one I love best ?

'Good-bye. Come early. Does any one know of your coming ? Did you not tell me that you were having ten or twelve people at supper ? Let me have your orders by the bearer, who is to come back straight from your house. Everything shall be in readiness so that your orders may be obeyed.

'Good-bye ! I love you and kiss you with all my heart.

'Good-bye till to-night.'

Nevertheless, her love for Brissac did not prevent Madame du Barry from thinking of her stolen diamonds and jewelry ; for, having had news that the burglars had been caught and arrested in England, she started under the escort of M. de Maussabré, Brissac's aide-de-camp, and the Chevalier Bernard d'Escours, her old friend.

But law proceedings were more complicated in England than the poor creature imagined ; she had the pleasure of seeing her diamonds, but not of recovering them.

She did not stay more than a few days in London—from February 17 to March 2—but she and d'Escours returned there twice again, once in the spring and once in the summer

of this same year. They were not more successful. Madame du Barry did not for one moment imagine that her journeys would be laid to her charge, and that a zealous prosecutor would explain them by the desire she must have had to visit the emigrants residing in London: this was an unpardonable crime against the Republic.

During her absence important changes had taken place in Paris. The king's bodyguard had been disbanded and replaced by the *garde constitutionnelle.* This was recruited very differently from the royal guard; no one could belong to it unless he had given proofs of his citizenship. The choice of the commanding officer had, however, been left to the king; and Louis XVI. had appointed Brissac, trusting in his secret heart that the latter would be clever in interpreting the royal as well as the Assembly's intentions with regard to proofs of citizenship.

Brissac had no delusions concerning the dangers attending his new office. It was worse than his former one—in this respect, that he did not feel at ease. But what of that? Had he not made the sacrifice of his life to his faith? Until the fatal moment came, his only thought was to love—to love for ever and ever.

He is as eager, as calm, as mirthful as before, as may be judged from the following note:

'October 3, 1791—Monday.

'My little Dauphin is gone; I am without spectacles. I can thus write you only one word, the one which comprises all others: I love you for life, in spite of old people and their jealousy.

'I will dine with you to-morrow, bringing with me Madame de Bunneville, Abbé Billardy, and M. Legoust. We had an eight miles ride on horseback. The king killed three pheasants, and a good dinner made up for my lost breakfast. I love you and kiss you with all my heart.

'Kindly excuse blot. Nothing new.'

V

The two lovers spent seven or eight months longer in relative quietness. Notwithstanding alarming symptoms and the progress of the Revolution, they looked forward to the future calmly, he with his undaunted courage, she with her wonderful confidence. Yet the catastrophe was near at hand. The Legislative Assembly had decreed the disbanding of the *garde constitutionnelle*; its chief, the duc de Brissac, was suspected of having introduced some royalists into it, and was accused of felony. Such a measure was the forerunner of his arrest, his trial, and of course his sentence. Informed of this during the night, Louis XVI. sent at once a message to the duke, who lived at the Tuileries, urging him to seek safety in flight. But Brissac was not a man to fly; he would wait, and would not of his own accord leave his post.

All he did was to warn his mistress. He asked his aide-de-camp, Maussabré, to run to Louveciennes and inform Madame du Barry of the previous night's incidents. This news made the countess extremely anxious, and she no longer felt as safe as she had until then. She wrote a long letter to the duke, full of reasons for hope.

This letter was entrusted to a priest—very likely to Abbé Billardy, who was an intimate friend of the lovers. It is very difficult to say how the letter came to be in the bundle. We can only conjecture that either the abbé was unable to hand the message to Brissac and brought it back to Madame du Barry, or else, after having reached its destination, it may have been seized along with other papers and later on placed in Madame du Barry's *dossier*. However it may be, it is in this lady's handwriting, and its authenticity cannot be suspected.

This is the letter:

'I was very much frightened, Duke, when M. de Maussabré was introduced. He assured me that you were in good health and had nothing with which to reproach yourself. But this is

not enough for me who love you; I am far from you, and do not know what you intend to do. Of course you will answer that you yourself do not know. I send the abbé for information. Oh, why am I not near you? My tender and true affection would comfort you. I know that you would have nothing to fear, did reason and honesty reign in the Assembly.

'Good-bye! I have no time to say more. The abbé is in my room, and I want to send him off as quickly as possible. I shall not rest until I know what has become of you. I am perfectly certain that you have done your duty with regard to the formation of the king's guards, and am not concerned about this point. Your conduct has been so open, ever since you have lived at the Tuileries, that they will find no charge against you. Your patriotic actions are so numerous that indeed I wonder what they can impute to you.

'Good-bye! Let me hear from you, and never doubt my feelings towards you.

'Wednesday, eleven o'clock.'

Events succeeded each other with rapidity. The duc de Brissac was arrested and taken to Orleans, where the National High Court was sitting. His first thought was, as usual, for Madame du Barry; and he sent her, through Maussabré, a long letter to Louveciennes. Brissac's letter has been destroyed, but Maussabré's has been preserved.

'Paris: June 2, 3 o'c. A.M.

'I hasten to forward you the duc de Brissac's letter. It will inform you that he has reached his destination, Orleans, without the slightest incident. I would have brought you this letter myself, had I not several important missions to fulfil; as soon as I have done so, I will come and see you, for there are some particulars that you must know.

'Till then, I beg, Madame, you will accept my regards.

'Your very humble and obedient servant,

'MAUSSABRÉ

Apparently the duc de Brissac did not show much anxiety; this was probably due to his strong will and to his wish not to frighten his friends. These, however, had every reason to fear for a life which was so dear to them. Madame du Barry was not the only one to be alarmed. Madame de Mortemart, who had emigrated with her husband, and who at the time was at Spa, where she was taking the waters, shared the countess's uneasiness.

As soon as she heard of her father's arrest she was afraid, and in her anxiety she wrote to Madame du Barry, who could best of all give her full particulars on the duke's situation.

'Will you know my handwriting, Madame, as it is three years since you saw it last, and it was at a sad time? This is sadder still for your affection and mine. How I have suffered for the last two days! His courage, his firmness, the praises which are showered upon him, the general regrets, his innocence—nothing can quiet my anxious soul. M. de M . . . and myself wanted to start the day before yesterday; but several powerful people prevented us from doing so. They said it would be dangerous for my husband, without helping my father. Besides, the fact of his being an emigrant—they added—might do more harm than good; but could *I* not be of any use to my father?

'Is there any chance of my being allowed to see him? Can it be imputed as a crime to an invalid to have gone to a watering-place, and must it be visited on her father? I cannot believe it, and it is the only thing I am afraid of. Still, if you think that I can be of any use to him, either in Paris or in Orleans, kindly let me know and I shall hasten thither.

'Is there any means of hearing from him, or of communicating with him? Do tell me; and if so I will take advantage of it at once. Through a man who is perhaps unknown to you [here one word is erased] I heard that you had gone to Orleans. Let me tell you that such a token of love for one so

dear to me gives you a right to everlasting gratefulness on my part.

'Kindly accept the assurance of my affection for you.

'Allow me to finish this letter without vain flattery and give me yourself the same mark of friendship. I send this letter through some one reliable in Paris, who, I trust, will be able to forward it to you without any inconvenience. Excuse my scribble.

'June 5.'

Madame de Mortemart's information was not correct. Madame du Barry had not gone to Orleans. Besides, what good would she have done by going? Her presence would have awakened a past which was hateful to every one, and would certainly have injured the prisoner.

The latter had been examined on June 15, 'at the bar of the National High Court.'

This examination took place in consequence of 'the decree which had been rendered and the indictment preferred against him by the National Assembly on the 15th of May and 11th of June last.' It is rather strange that the indictment should be found among Madame du Barry's *dossier*.

The examination contains the proud answer made by the prisoner when he was asked to state his name, surnames, age, profession, and address. He answered:

'Louis-Hercule-Timoléon de Cossé-Brissac, aged fifty-eight, soldier from his birth, lieutenant-general of the army, living at the château of the Tuileries since October 10, 1789.'

He hardly tried to justify himself. When he was charged with having admitted royalists into the guards, he merely denied it:

'I have admitted into the king's guards no one but citizens who fulfilled all the conditions contained in the decree of formation.'

The duke does not seem to have been kept long in close custody. He was soon allowed to correspond with his friends out-

side. Thus he was able to write to his daughter a letter which reached her at the same time as Madame du Barry's answer.

Madame de Mortemart mentions this fact very clearly in a second letter, which she wrote to the countess on June 20.

'Many thanks, Madame, for the news you so kindly sent me. Your letter having been delayed, I only received it along with one from my father written in his own hand; this gave me great pleasure. Since then I have heard that he has been examined, and is no longer in close custody. He is now as comfortable as a prisoner can be.

'Although he is known to be innocent, I am very much afraid the proceedings will be long, and it would have rejoiced me if I had been able to be of any use to him or to give him any pleasure in his confinement.

'For the last few days we have had unsatisfactory news from Paris. Riots seem to be anticipated. The Duke of Brunswick is expected at Coblentz; he is the bearer of a large sum of money. Both are awaited with impatience. There was a report to-night that the French army had been defeated at Naenin, but I do not believe there is any truth in the statement. There are several small detachments marching to surround them and block the road to France, but the French will surely be successful.

'According to your and several other people's advice, I will go on taking the waters, which stink and bring on fever and itch. We must religiously believe that it is all for the best, as well as the horrible weather we have had for the last two months. Above all, we must take our misfortunes in patience; this is the best remedy.

'Good-bye, Madame. Excuse my scribble. Be assured of my love for life.

'June 20.'

The tone of this letter does not show signs of much fear; on the contrary, a cheerful spirit pervades it throughout. This

was probably due to the confidence the emigrants felt after the first movements of the two armies, as well as to the ignorance in which they were kept concerning the disposition of the people in Paris and the provinces. Paris was, however, on that very day the scene of most serious events. The Tuileries palace had been invaded, and the king had been obliged to put on the red cap; he had been hissed and threatened; he was now a puppet in the hands of the crowd, who might destroy him at any moment. Hardly were a few weeks to pass before its fancy should be satisfied. (August 10, 1792.)

VI

Thanks to the tolerance of the gaolers, Brissac and Madame du Barry exchanged letters almost daily.

Postillion and aide-de-camp were constantly on the route from Louveciennes to Orleans. There remains from the whole of this correspondence only one letter from the duke; it was written on August 11, just after he had heard of the riots in Paris and the fall of the monarchy.

'Saturday, August 11, 1792. Orleans, 6 P.M.

'I received this morning the best letter I have had for a long time past; none have rejoiced my heart as much. Thank you for it. I kiss you a thousand times. You, indeed, will have my last thought.

'We are in ignorance of all particulars; I groan and shudder. Ah! my darling, why am I not with you in a wilderness, rather than in Orleans, where it is not very pleasant for me!

'I send you a thousand kisses. Good-bye, my darling.

'Until now the town has been quiet.'[1]

[1] This simple sentence has inspired Greive—one of Madame du Barry's bitterest enemies, and very likely one of the burglars—with the stupid annotation: 'Did he hope there would be a riot?'

The assurance he gives to his friend that she will have 'his last thought' shows what dark forebodings filled his heart. Even the confident Madame du Barry had lost her faith ; and at this very time a sad episode occurred which increased her fears.

The *sans-culottes* of Louveciennes had observed the going backwards and forwards between Madame du Barry's house and the Orleans prison. The poor creature had too many enemies not to be surrounded by spies. Her house was closely watched, and thus it was known that the duc de Brissac's aide-de-camp—who had been one of the 'conspirators on August 10,' which meant that he had taken a part in the defence of the Tuileries—was hiding at Madame du Barry's house.

She had hidden Maussabré in a room of the *pavillon*. He was nursing a wound he had received on the morning of August 10, and he trusted that he would be safe in his retreat, and that his presence there would not be known. His hopes were soon deceived. The Jacobins of Louveciennes, jealous of their Parisian brethren and emboldened by their victories, came to search the countess's house. They invaded it, and tore the unfortunate Maussabré out of his hiding-place ; they ill-treated him under the very eyes of Madame du Barry, who was shaking with anger at her powerlessness. The aide-de-camp was taken to Paris and imprisoned.

Soon after this, attacks were directed against her in a more pointed manner. The 'Courrier français' in its issue of September 2, 1792, went so far as to report her arrest :

'Madame du Barry has been arrested at Luciennes, and has been brought to Paris. It was discovered that the old heroine of the late government was constantly sending emissaries to Orleans. M. de Brissac's aide-de-camp had been arrested at her house. It was thought—and there was good ground for it—that these frequent messages had some other object than love, which Madame du Barry must now forget. As the mistress and confidential friend of the duc de Brissac, she shared his wealth and his pleasures ; who

knows if she does not at this time share his anti-revolutionary ambition?

'It will be piquant reading for our descendants when they learn that Madame du Barry was arrested almost simultaneously with the pulling down of the Maid of Orleans' statue. Her arrest took place during the night of the 30th–31st, about 2 A.M.'

Such attacks, at such a time, were awful; and Madame du Barry fully realised how dangerous similar articles would be for her. The false statement might serve as an encouragement to the numerous enemies who surrounded her at Louveciennes itself, and she was afraid it might suggest to them the idea of arresting her.

She asked a friend of hers, very likely the Chevalier d'Escours, to go to the office of the newspaper and ask for an apology, for the insertion of which she was willing to pay.

The chevalier accepted the undertaking and did what was necessary; yet he was unsuccessful, for no amends were made. But before she received the answer to d'Escours' mission, she had heard of the frightful massacres which filled the Paris prisons with blood on September 2 and after. This threw Madame du Barry's mind into a state of terror.

The duc de Brissac's aide-de-camp, Maussabré—the unfortunate messenger of the two lovers, who had, so to speak, been torn out of her very hands—had suffered a horrible death.

While some of the prisoners were saving their lives through their bravery or their coolness, Maussabré, mad with terror, completely lost his head. Suddenly he heard, or thought he heard, his name uttered. He escaped from his cell; but, shut up in the prison, he wandered about seeking for a refuge. As the slaughterers were pursuing him, he entered a room, and seeing a fireplace he went up the chimney, and with hands and feet tried to escape through the narrow opening. Alas! when he had nearly reached the top, his head struck against something hard; the chimney was grated!

He took hold of the bars, and thought he was out of the murderers' grip. Not so! Far from giving up their victim, one of them fired his pistol into the chimney and broke one of Maussabré's wrists. The poor man held on with the other hand, still mastering his pain. But it was all useless; his wish to live must be baffled. Damp straw was brought and set on fire; a dark, thick, choking smoke ascended. Maussabré's strength gave way; his hand let go, and he fell in a heap. His enemies pulled him out and slaughtered him.

Just as this was going on, Madame du Barry was informed that the Orleans prisoners were to be brought to Paris and would pass through Louveciennes.

She heard of it through a letter which is supposed to have been written by the Chevalier d'Escours.

'Paris: September 6, 1792.

'The Orleans prisoners are to arrive to-morrow at Versailles. . . .

'It is to be hoped that they will arrive in good health, and that, by gaining time, their lives will be saved. Besides, the Assembly is tired of so much blood-spilling, and proposes an amnesty: it is not a very great sacrifice, seeing that none of them are guilty.

'I went to see the editor of the "Courrier français," who will retract to-morrow the false article concerning you. I promised him a reward if his new article should be satisfactory.

'I have received ten letters from Orleans for the deputies, beseeching them to prevent the unfortunate fate which awaits the prisoners. In Orleans they believe that, as soon as they have arrived, the prisoners will be put to death.

'I had these letters delivered at once. Madame de Maurepas, when she heard of the duke's transfer, wanted to go at once to the Assembly. She was dissuaded from going. She then wrote to Danton and to the Abbé Fauchet. Madame de

Flamarens and I took the letters, and the Abbé Fauchet was very much interested.

'Poor Maussabré would have been spared, as M. Marguerie, who was with him, had been, had he not lost his head.

'I am cast down, body and soul; I shall only be at rest when I know that the duke is at Versailles. If there is any possibility of getting through, I will send some one, if I cannot go myself. Do you also send somebody; but avoid steps of any kind which might be made public and be injurious to both of you.'

What an awful situation for Madame du Barry; for so lively and amiable a woman, who now saw before her nothing but danger and massacre! She dared not even attempt to save the man she loved, for whose life so much fear was entertained at Orleans. A single step on her part might be the loss of the duc de Brissac.

She followed the advice she had received, and shut herself up in Louveciennes, to await events.

The 7th went by. The prisoners did not arrive till the next day.

On the 8th she was on the watch, anxious, and shuddering at the least noise; however, everything was so far quiet around her.

All at once, towards evening, cries are heard; it sounds as if a crowd is approaching. What does it mean? She listens. The noise is getting nearer. It is there, in the garden. The drawing-room door is opened, and a head, thrown by wild men, a head dripping with blood, falls at her feet. Mad with fear, she recognises the head of her lover, the duc de Brissac.

VII

The Orleans prisoners had been removed from Orleans without any regular order for their removal. But what did it

matter? The Minister of Justice at that time was Danton; and ever one must remember that during the gloomy month of September 1792 he allowed justice to have a rest, and made himself either the active or the passive accomplice of the bands of cut-throats who called themselves the justiciaries of the people.

The audacity of the frantic mob spread almost everywhere, encouraged as it was by the atrocities which were daily committed in the Paris prisons. The Versailles *sans-culottes* wanted to equal the cruelty of the murderers in Paris; so that, in their desire not to allow the victims near at hand to escape, they posted themselves on the road which the Orleans prisoners had to follow on their way to Paris.

They arrived surrounded by an escort which was there to protect them; but indiscipline had been at work, and the soldiers had entered into a compact with the *sans-culottes.* Nevertheless, they did not go as far as helping them in their dirty work. They merely allowed themselves to be quietly stopped at the Orangery Gate at Versailles. After the prisoners had passed through, the gate was shut and the escort retired, leaving the murderers free to act as they pleased. Wholesale butchery began at once.

Several of the men rushed upon the duc de Brissac, whose fine stature as well as proud bearing marked him out as a target for their blows.

Although he had no hope of escaping the fury of his assailants, he fought like the soldier he was, and struggled with the utmost vigour against them.

Armed with a knife, he sold his life dearly. In the end, overpowered by numbers, and attacked from behind, he received a blow in the loins, and fell bleeding and exhausted. 'Fire at me with your pistols!' said he; 'your work will be over sooner!'

They despatched him, and his torture ended with his life.

It was then that the howling crowd indulged in a last

insult to the corpse; the duke's head was cut off, and this bleeding trophy was taken to Madame du Barry.

Thus was Death increasing the number of his victims around the countess, and yet she tried not to understand the meaning of these fatal omens. She was buried in grief at the loss of her lover, and was deeply moved by the tokens of sympathy which were given her. She expresses her feelings in a letter to a friend whose name is not mentioned. She writes:

'Ever since that awful day, Sir, you can easily imagine what my grief has been. They have consummated the frightful crime, cause of my misery and my eternal regrets. However, my health keeps up in the midst of horrors; one does not die of grief.

'I am really moved by the interest you take in me. It would certainly soothe my sorrows if it were possible for me not to feel them constantly. I have received to-day a letter from your wife, and I trust she will soon be able to come and see me. I long to see her; it is such a comfort to be with those who share your feelings, that I regret, indeed, every moment which I spend away from her.'

A few days later she wrote to Madame de Mortemart, the victim's daughter:

'No one felt more than I did the extent of your loss, and I trust that you have not attributed my silence to a wrong motive; I should have liked to mingle my tears with yours before this.

'The fear of adding to your too justifiable grief prevents me from speaking of it. Mine is complete—a life which ought to have been so grand, so glorious! Good God! what an end!

'The last wish of your unfortunate father was that I should love you as my sister. This desire is too consistent with my own feelings for me not to fulfil it; you may be sure of it I trust you will never doubt my everlasting affection for you.'

Madame de Mortemart replied at once:

'I received your letter this morning, September 22. Thank you very much for the good you have done me; you have lessened my anguish and brought tears to my eyes. Many a time I have been ready to write to you and speak of my grief; my heart is rent, broken. Ever since the fatal day my father left Paris I have suffered, and I still suffer more than I can tell. But I thought it was wiser to wait until I could contain some of my feelings. I must open my heart to you, who alone can realise my sorrow.

'I am eager to fulfil the last wish of him whose memory I cherish, and whom I shall mourn for ever; I will indeed love you as my own sister until the end of my life. The least of my father's wishes is a command sacred to me. If I could only obey every one of the desires he had, or must have had at his last moments, I would spare nothing to do so.

'Do excuse my scribble. My head aches so that I cannot see. Deign to accept, Madam, the expression of my everlasting affection for you.

'September 30.'

Madame de Mortemart was still unaware that her father had left a will. The duc de Brissac had been careful not to neglect such a precaution. The date of the document—August 11, 1792—proves that, in his idea, the fall of the monarchy would indeed be an omen of his own death. What, indeed, could the king's followers expect after his fall?

In order to leave to his mistress a valuable legacy which his daughter could hand over without any awkwardness, and which Madame du Barry might not feel ashamed to accept, he turned his liberality into a kind of restitution, by making himself responsible for the diamond robbery which was committed at Louveciennes during the night Madame du Barry spent at the house in the Rue de Grenelle.

'He recommends earnestly' to his daughter 'a lady who

is very dear to him, and who might fall into poverty through the evils of the time.'

There is a codicil containing his express will: 'I give and bequeath to Madame du Barry, besides and above what I owe her, a yearly income of twenty-four thousand livres, free from all duties, or if she prefers it, the usufruct and possession for life of my estate at the Rambaudière and the Graffinière in Poitou, as well as any dependencies attached to it, or again a lump sum of three hundred thousand livres paid in cash—at her choice. When once she has accepted one of the three legacies the two others shall be considered null. I beg she will accept this small token of my affection and gratitude, as I am all the more her debtor from having been the involuntary cause of the loss of her diamonds. If she ever succeeds in recovering them, those which may be lost, added to the expenses caused by the different journeys to England with a view to recover the diamonds, and by the amount of the reward paid, will form a total about the equivalent of the legacy. I request my daughter will endeavour to bring Madame du Barry to accept this legacy. I know my daughter's heart too well to doubt her fulfilling punctually my will, whatever sums may need to be paid in order to carry out both it and the codicil. My wish is that none of the other legacies are to be handed over until this one is entirely settled.

(Signed) 'LOUIS-HERCULE-TIMOLÉON DE COSSÉ-BRISSAC. [1]

'August 11, 1792.'

The will of the duc de Brissac was obeyed in so far that the bond of friendship which his *liaison* had created between

[1] *Curiosités historiques*, by J. A. Le Roi, pp. 287, 288. The total amount of the duke's legacy was absorbed by the expenses of a lawsuit which was brought under the Restoration between the Gomard and Béqus families, who pretended they had equal rights to Madame du Barry's succession.

Madame du Barry and Madame de Mortemart was a lasting one, strengthened by a common grief. But if we believe the 'Mémoires' of Dutens, the parts were reversed; it was not the friend who was the *protégée*, but the daughter. The fact deserves to be related, whether true or not.[1]

'Shortly before the comtesse du Barry was beheaded [December 8, 1793], an Irish priest succeeded in visiting her in her cell at the Conciergerie, and offered to save her, provided she could give him the amount which would be required for bribing the jailers and paying the expenses connected with the journey. She asked him if he could save two instead of one. But he answered in the negative, saying that his plan would not permit him to save more than one person.

'"In that case," said Madame du Barry, "I am willing to give you a cheque on my bank which will enable you to get the necessary amount; but I prefer your saving the duchesse de Mortemart rather than myself. She is hidden in a garret of such and such a house in Calais. Here is the order upon my banker. Run to her rescue!"

'The priest entreated her in vain to allow him to carry her out of her prison. But on seeing that she was resolved to save the duchess, he took the cheque, cashed it, went to Calais and brought Madame de Mortemart out of her hiding-place; then, having dressed her as a poor woman, he put her arm under his and travelled with her on foot, passing her off as his wife. He was, he said, a good constitutional priest married to the woman. Everybody praised him, and he was allowed to pass. Thus they crossed the French lines at Ostend, whence they embarked for England. There he left Madame de Mortemart, whom I have seen since in London.' (iii. 115, 116.)

[1] M. H. Fornéron, in his *Histoire Générale des Emigrés*, i. 244, places entire faith in the story. MM. E. and J. Goncourt relate it in their book, and speak of the *Mémoires* of Dutens as curious and true.

From the last sentence we must believe that Dutens heard the story from Madame de Mortemart's own lips. But, apart from this episode, which shows us a generous and heroic du Barry, was it not worth while to relate in some detail the tragic love adventure of the celebrated courtesan?

She is perhaps the only victim of the Revolutionary Tribunal who had not till now found, I will not say an apologist, but even an advocate. She may not have deserved any. However, history should contain no *oubliettes*. This poor woman ought not, we think, to be robbed of a little pity and indulgence, for if she was too fond of life, she possessed in a high degree the desire for love.

THE FAVRAS CASE[1]

(December 1789—February 1790)

I

THE DISCOVERY OF A CONSPIRACY

At the end of December 1789 a dinner was given by the Bishop of Chartres. Several politicians were invited, and

[1] The *dossier* of the Favras case has disappeared in its entirety. This is not very surprising, as many most influential people had an interest in its destruction. It contained twenty-five deeds, fifteen warrants of committal, and nine pieces of information. Nevertheless, there are at the National Record Office many interesting documents, especially three papers which were found in the iron safe (C. 184). As sources for printed documents we shall mention : *Mémoires pour Thomas de Mahy, marquis de Favras*; *Interrogatoire de M. le marquis de Favras*, *Plaidoyer pour Thomas Mahy de Favras*, by the baron de Corméré ; *Dernier plaidoyer de Monsieur Thilorier*; *Paroles de M. de Favras*; *Jugement du Châtelet de Paris*; *Procès du marquis de Favras*; *Déclaration à l'Hôtel de Ville et dernières paroles de M. de Favras prononcées au pied de la potence*; *Testament de mort de M. de Favras*; *le peuple éclairé sur la conspiration de M. de Favras*; *Adresse aux Parisiens*; *Justification de M. de Favras*; *Correspondance du marquis et de la marquise de Favras*; *Journal de Paris*; *Moniteur Universel* (from December 1789 to February 1790); *Les Révolutions de Paris*, by Prudhomme ; *Recueil des lettres de Mirabeau*, by M. de Bacourt; *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau*, by Etienne Dumont of Geneva ; *Mémoires de La Fayette*; *Mémorial*, by Gouverneur Morris ; *Mémoires d'Augeard*; *Mémoires de Madame de Tourzel*; *Mémoires du général baron Thiébaut*; *Souvenirs du comte de Montgaillard*; *Le marquis de Favras*, by M. de Valon (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 juin 1851) ; *Histoire du règne de Louis XVI*, by Joseph Droz ; *Histoire parlementaire de la Révolution Française*, by Ed. Buchez and Roux ; *Histoire de la Révolution Française*, by Louis Blanc ; *Les Mirabeau*, by Louis and

among them Brissot, the founder of the 'Patriote Français,' who was a member of the Commune of Paris. After dinner he took aside one of his *confrères* in journalism, Etienne Dumont, Mirabeau's friend and collaborator, and with a self-satisfied air he said to him :

'Well, you are everlastingly laughing at our *Comité de Surveillance* and at the plots we discover. This time you will not laugh. We have in our hands all the secrets of the conspiracy. We know the names of most influential men compromised by it ; we possess the proofs. I will say no more ; to-morrow denunciation shall reveal to you the object of the plot.'

Brissot was speaking the truth, for on the very morning of Christmas Day a bill which was posted up all over the town proved the exactitude of his words. It was signed with a name utterly unknown ; but its contents were so extraordinary that it could not fail to strike every one. It ran thus :

'The Marquis de Favras was arrested, with his wife, on the night of the 24th inst., charged with having planned (1) the double murder of M. de Lafayette and the mayor,[1] by exciting to mutiny thirty thousand men ; (2) the cutting off of our food supply. Monsieur, the king's brother, was at the head of the plot.

(Signed) 'BARAUZZ.'[2]

The news spread like lightning, and soon after Paris was in a state of excitement. At that time people lived a great deal out of doors. Large groups formed everywhere. Now and again a man would come out of the crowd, stand on a curbstone and read the bill. This *mise en scène* of the rioters had for immediate result an increase of public curiosity. Every

Charles de Loménie ; *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, by Albert Sorel ; *Histoire générale des Émigrés*, by H. Fornéron, &c. &c.

[1] Bailly, Mayor of Paris.

[2] This name is spelt three different ways : Barauzz (in a manuscript document), Barauz, and Barreau.

one made his own comments on the fact; some rejoiced, some deplored the discovery of the conspiracy, according to their disposition or their opinions.

One fact in particular added to the gravity of the marquis and marquise de Favras's arrest; it was that *Monsieur* was at the head of the plot. This name, which was used to designate the comte de Provence, Louis XVI.'s younger brother, was thrown as a prey to the hateful curiosity of the mob. It must not be forgotten that Paris was in a state of ferment. On July 14 of that year, provoked by rumours that the government was taking active measures against the people, the mob had inaugurated the era of victorious insurrections by the capture of the old feudal castle, the Bastille. On October 5 and 6, under pretext of famine, they had gone in a body to Versailles, and had obliged the king and the royal family to return to Paris; they imagined that the very presence of the sovereign in the city would put an end to the public misery, and stop the attempts of the royalists to counteract the king's will, if not to oppose his rights. And now another conspiracy was discovered, directed against the only two men whom the people trusted: La Fayette, commander-in-chief of the National Guards of the kingdom, and Bailly, the Mayor of Paris. This plot could only add to the people's misery, since it was to help to famish them.

With steam, railways, boats, all communications more rapid one than the other, the supply of a large city like Paris has been rendered very easy. It is therefore difficult nowadays to realise how awful the prospect of a famine must have been at that time, in the depth of winter. If the convoys were to be stopped at the gates, the corn and provisions which were kept in reserve in the public granaries would soon be exhausted and the population would starve. This danger was never evoked without awakening anger. What then must have been the effect produced when it was announced that the king's brother was at the head of a conspiracy destined to cut off the food supply of Paris?

Was it in vain they had placed their hopes in the royal family? What faith could they have in Louis XVI. now that one of his brothers, the comte d'Artois, had emigrated, and was trying to intrigue with foreigners against France? The other, the comte de Provence, was preparing a counter-revolution in the country itself. What would have become of the nation if the *Comité des recherches*, the spontaneous invention of the Paris Commune,[1] had not watched and taken timely measures to baffle the liberty-destroying plans of the enemies of France and the Revolution?

La Fayette, a constitutional monarchist, realised at once the danger the government ran. This danger was all the greater as there were no troops capable of resisting the anger of the populace; besides, the majority of the *garde nationale*, the only armed troop which remained in the capital, had gone over to the Revolution. The fact of Monsieur being implicated would injure the king; in fact, this affair must be the source of endless misfortunes. Listening to the sole *raison d'état*, La Fayette sent immediately his aide-de-camp, Boinville, to the Luxembourg, on a mission to secretly inform the comte de Provence of the serious incidents of the previous night.

The prince was by no means brave. He was very much affected by Boinville's news, and certain words escaped him which proved clearly that he was not a stranger to Favras's attempt; but the aide-de-camp feigned not to understand, and reported the imprudent words to La Fayette alone, who at first kept them secret.

It was, however, necessary to take decided action and put a stop to the accusation, which was spreading throughout Paris. The comte de Provence imparted his fears to the captain of his guards, the duc de Lévis. This officer was a friend of the count's, and had been surnamed *le petit homme gris*.

The *petit homme gris* set to work without delay. In order

[1] This committee had been formed by a decree of the Paris Commune, dated October 22, 1789.

to avoid implicating the prince he acted in his own name, and gave his excessive devotion to Monsieur as the motive of his action. The name of the first person to whom he applied remains a mystery. All that is known is that, having been asked to state an opinion as to what Monsieur ought to do—'whether, in presence of the shameful calumny which had been spread against him, he ought merely to despise it or devise some means to impose silence on the slanderers'—the gentleman replied that nothing but a formal declaration, in which the prince should disown Favras and deny having taken any part in the conspiracy, would be efficient and weighty enough to remove suspicion and avoid danger. Monsieur ought to go to the Hôtel de Ville and state before the assembled representatives of the Paris Commune that he was in complete ignorance of the plans attributed to the marquis de Favras.

After this the duc de Lévis went to Mirabeau. He approved entirely of the advice which had been given previously; and as he had an extraordinary facility for writing—it was indeed one of his main qualities—he took his pen and wrote forthwith the whole speech which the comte de Provence should deliver at the Hôtel de Ville. He very cleverly drowned in protestations of the widest liberalism the denial more or less sincere of the prince, by which he tried to refute the imputations of complicity made against him. The tribune knew what seductions were best suited to captivate a popular Assembly. He did more. He gave also to the prince's envoy the model of a letter which the count should write to the president of the National Assembly.

The 'little grey man' returned to the Luxembourg with the advice and writings. Glad to know what to do, and confident that the step he was advised to take would put an end to his present trouble, Monsieur at once wrote a note to the Mayor of Paris requesting him to call an extraordinary assembly of the Commune, for it was his intention to attend it and make important communications.

Faithful to his promise, he went in state the next day (December 26) to the Hôtel de Ville, where the members had assembled. Following the ceremonial in use at royal courts for princes of the blood royal, Monsieur sat in an armchair similar to that of the Mayor's, at his left. He read the following speech, which Mirabeau had prepared for him:

'Gentlemen, I come into your midst in order to refute a shameful calumny. Monsieur de Favras was arrested the day before yesterday, by order of your *Comité des recherches*, and to-day it is reported that I was far from being a stranger to the plot. As citizen of the city of Paris, I thought it my duty to acquaint you with the only connection there is between me and M. de Favras. He entered the regiment of my Swiss Guards in 1772, and resigned in 1775. Ever since that time I have not spoken to him. But as I have been deprived of my income for several months past, I felt anxious concerning the payments I have to make in January next; it is quite natural that I should be desirous to do so without calling on the Exchequer. I thought at first that I might alienate some of my leases, but my friends remarked that it would be cheaper for me to borrow money. In view of this, M. La Châtre spoke to me about a fortnight ago of M. de Favras as being able to raise a loan for me through two bankers, M. Chomel and M. Sertorius. Consequently, I gave my signature for a sum of two millions, the amount I require for my payments at the beginning of the year as well as for my household expenses. This transaction being purely financial, I asked my treasurer to follow it up. I have neither seen M. de Favras nor written to him; nor had I any communication with him. Whatever he has done is quite unknown to me. Nevertheless, it came to my knowledge yesterday that a bill was widely distributed in the city, and that it was worded thus: [The prince read the bill signed Barauzz.]

'You certainly will not suppose that I am here to clear

myself of so cowardly a crime; but at the present time, when the most absurd slander may put the best citizens on the same footing with the enemies of the Revolution, I thought it was my duty to the king, to yourselves, and to me, to enter as I have just done into full details, so that public opinion might be able to decide for itself.

'As to my personal opinion, I have no difficulty in discussing it with my fellow-citizens. From the day when, in the second Assembly of the Notables, I stated my views on the fundamental questions which still divided the nation, I never ceased to believe that a great revolution was at hand, and that the king, owing to his intentions, his virtues, his supreme rank, ought to be at the head of it, as this revolution could not be profitable to the nation without being so to the monarch. Lastly, I still believe that the royal authority must be a rampart to national liberties, and national liberties the basis of royal authority.

'None of my actions, not one of my speeches, has ever been contrary to the above principles; in whatever circumstances I may have found myself, the good of the king, the welfare of the nation, has ever been my constant thought and my only wish; therefore, until now I have a right to be believed on my word. Neither my feelings nor my principles have changed, nor shall they ever do so.'[1]

Such a speech was cleverly worded to please the democrats, who are always pleased when a prince flatters them; it was unanimously approved of and heartily cheered. The mayor's answer expressed the general feeling:

'The representatives of the Paris Commune are highly flattered,' Bailly said, 'to see among them the brother of their king, a sovereign who is "the restorer of liberties to France." Monsieur proved himself to be the first citizen

[1] The text we here give was taken from a manuscript copy revised by the comte de Provence himself; this document, which had been communicated to the National Assembly, is at the French Record Office (C. 33).

of the kingdom when he voted for the *Tiers État* in the second Assembly of the Notables. . . .

'*Monsieur was then the first author of public equality.* He has again set us an example to-day, by coming alone among the people's representatives, for it seems he wants to be judged only from his patriotic sentiments. Such sentiments are fully made known in the explanation Monsieur has just graciously given to this Assembly. The prince has met public opinion; the citizen prizes the opinion of his co-citizens. I therefore beg Monsieur, in the name of the Assembly, to accept the tribute of gratitude and of respect that we owe to his feelings and to the honour of his presence, for we value highly the esteem of free men.'

Such words as 'citizens,' 'free men,' such an exchange of flattery, whose hypocrisy would soon be exposed by the events, all this made up a gloomy comedy. La Fayette, who never failed to attend such functions, spoke in his turn, and stated that he had been successful in arresting the authors of the bill signed 'Barauzz.'

Thereupon the prince interrupted him, for he was anxious to show himself magnanimous—forgiving offences, after having passed for a prince-citizen.

'The duty I have just accomplished,' he said in a wheedling tone, 'was certainly very painful for a virtuous soul; but the sentiments the Assembly has expressed have fully repaid me, and now my lips can only utter words of pleading to beg that my offenders should be forgiven.'

How kind! How forgiving! It was more than enough to rouse the enthusiasm of the members. However, far from being moved, they were all the more bent upon punishing a crime which had been directed against such a patriot as the prince, and they at once decreed that the authors of the bill should be tried and sentenced. It was going rather too far; for if they had the power to prosecute, they could not fix the sentence.

Two men had indeed been arrested who had in their possession a copy of the famous Barauzz bill. One of them, called Jouve, was a valet of the duc d'Orléans; the other, a tailor of the name of Potel. It could not be proved that they were the authors of the bill, so they were set at liberty as having played 'a joke.' But the Police Department's pride was stung; and by an order signed 'Bailly, Mayor,' and 'Duport du Tertre, Deputy-Mayor,' it forbade the carrying about of this seditious paper, and offered five hundred louis as a reward for the name and whereabouts of the author.

Nevertheless, the latter, whose personality was disguised under the name of Barauzz, remained unknown, and nobody received the reward.

The comte de Provence had been too well pleased with his visit to the Hôtel de Ville, and with the effect produced by his speech, to stop at this; he bethought himself that he might take advantage of the favourable impression he had created, to clear himself completely of the accusation which had been directed against him.

He copied the letter which had been written by Mirabeau and sent it to the president of the National Assembly:

'The imprisonment of M. de Favras having given rise to calumnies implying that I was implicated in the accusation, and the City Police Committee having taken the case into its own hands, I thought it was my bounden duty to make a statement before the Paris Commune, so that all honest people might be free from any doubt which could weigh on their minds. I think it now fit to inform the National Assembly of my action; for the king's brother must not even be suspected, and, moreover, M. de Favras's case—as it is stated—is of too serious a nature not to attract the attention of the Assembly sooner or later. Therefore I beg leave to notify my desire that all particulars of this case shall be made known to the Assembly. I shall feel very grateful if you will read to the Assembly my letter and the speech which I delivered

yesterday ; both are the exact expression of my truest and deepest feelings.

'I beg, Mr. President, you will believe in my esteem and affection for you.

'P.S.—I shall shortly make public the sums I have to pay next January, which occasioned the negotiations for a loan, for which I gave M. de La Ferté a mandate to come to terms with M. de Favras.'

Meanwhile the *Comité des recherches* had bills posted up to inform the population that an order had been issued on December 26 specifying the charge against the marquis de Favras, and giving full particulars as to the frightful consequences the plot would have had, had it not been discovered in time. This was the order :

'It came to the knowledge of the *Comité des recherches* that enemies of the public welfare were hatching a plot against the order of things established by the combined will of the nation and the king. So as to ensure the success of their plot, they had arranged to introduce armed men into the city during the night, in order to get rid of the three principal heads of the administration,[1] to attack the king, to take possession of the seal of the state, even to drag their Majesties towards Péronne.

'The committee heard at the same time that an attempt had been made to bribe some of the National Guards by holding out to them fallacious promises, by spreading among them clandestinely seditious libels, and in particular the libel entitled "Open Your Eyes."

'The conspirators had interviews with bankers, to make sure of a very large sum, and with divers persons, so as to extend the plot to the provinces if possible.

'Therefore the committee has thought fit for the *Avocat Syndic* to denounce the delinquencies above stated, as well as

[1] La Fayette, Bailly, and Necker, who had been recalled to the cabinet on July 14.

M. and Madame de Favras, charged with the said crimes, together with their accomplices and followers.'

Such were the facts which were brought before the Parisian public during the days of December 25, 26, 27, and 28, 1789. It seemed very clear that there was a conspiracy; but its origin, aim, secrets, were a mystery for most people. Documents which have been found since, of various periods, some even at a somewhat recent date, which we give further on, explain all. They show that La Fayette was not too severe in his 'Mémoires' when he termed the comte de Provence's visit to the Hôtel de Ville a 'vile platitude.' However that may be, the first consequence of this visit was to give the whole affair great importance, by making it widely known, and by prejudging the guiltiness of the principal person accused.

Who was this marquis de Favras, whose name had acquired such celebrity in a few hours? What were his plans? How could they expose this faithful and devoted royalist to be disowned by the king's own brother?

II

THE MARQUIS DE FAVRAS

Thomas de Mahy, marquis de Favras, was born at Blois on March 26, 1744. His family title was an old one; many of his ancestors had held influential posts both in municipality and magistracy. As far back as the fourteenth century the Mahys had been equerries. In 1747 their estate of Corméré was created a barony by royal charter, which gave the second son the title of Baron of Corméré.

Being a gentleman, Favras entered the army at an early age; so early, indeed—he was eleven—that it seems now almost incredible. He joined the musketeers in 1755. He served during the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), took a part in the campaign of 1761, and received his commission of

captain in the regiment of Chapt's dragoons, which later on became Belzunce's regiment. After the campaigns of 1762 and 1763 he was made a captain-adjutant: he was not yet twenty, but had served eight years, during which he took part in three campaigns.

Any one may readily conceive the effect of such an education if a man could sustain its severity; he must leave the army a strong being, physically as well as mentally: it was a school for will and energy, and a man who had undergone its training would be free from the weaknesses or scruples belonging to more peaceful people brought up in the quietness of their home; he would, on the contrary, be ready for any bold enterprise, even if it should be destined to injure fortune or alter life.

The young officer's bravery had won for him the Cross of St. Louis. But soon laurels of a different kind were to be his reward. He won the daughter of Prince Anhalt, and the reciprocity of their affection ended in a marriage in 1772.

It is very likely that they met during one of the German campaigns. We cannot tell how de Favras ever imagined that he, a mere gentleman without fortune, could marry the daughter of a German prince. But what appears likely is that, the young girl being in a peculiar situation, the young officer was encouraged in his ambition; his merit and fine stature did the rest.

Prince Anhalt-Bernbourg-Schaumbourg was not yet of age when he fell in love with the daughter of a Dutch major, and married her in spite of her humble origin. However, his affection was not deep enough to last or to strengthen a union contracted in such circumstances and between two people whose station in life was so different. Notwithstanding the birth of a daughter, they lived more and more at variance, until it was a known fact. The princess thought that she was not bound to be faithful to her inconstant husband; in short, matters reached such a pitch that the

prince had asked for, and obtained in Holland, the annulling of his marriage. His wife, taking with her her daughter, asked the Prince of Soubise—the sorry hero of Rosbach—for shelter. Such a scandal had entailed a complete rupture between Prince Anhalt and the two fugitives, who therefore found themselves in a particularly painful situation. This explains why the offer of the young French officer was so readily accepted. It was impossible to think of obtaining the prince's consent to the marriage of a child whom he no longer considered his; the regular summons took the place of consent.

After this the marquis de Favras returned with his wife to France, and bought his commission of lieutenant in Monsieur's Swiss Guards. This commission gave the rank of colonel, it is true, but it brought more honour than pay; in consequence, the young people were not well off. His relative poverty obliged Favras to quit the army (1775), and he remained only nominally an officer in the Swiss Guards. Besides, important business called him to Germany.

The prince's displeasure with regard to his daughter had increased from the fact that, when she married her husband, who was a Roman Catholic, she abjured the Protestant faith. He therefore allowed no opportunity to pass without showing his resentment, and not only did he give the marquise de Favras no dowry, but he refused to acknowledge her as a legitimate child.

Madame de Favras suffered very much in her pride from such an insinuation; the love her husband felt for her prompted him to revenge this offence. He was proud of having for his wife the daughter of a wealthy prince, but it was painful for him to think that he had wedded only a poor natural child. Both started for Vienna. Madame de Favras besought the emperor to do her justice; she claimed a legitimate descent and the right to a dowry. The case was referred to the Aulic Council, which rendered the following judgment on April 21, 1776: 'The grantee having fully proved that she was born in

wedlock, and having stated that she has received no dowry until now, his Imperial Majesty commands Prince Anhalt-Bernbourg-Schaumbourg to pay the grantee an annuity of one thousand florins, by anticipation, every six months, to begin from the date of the judgment, until the said prince shall have given the grantee a suitable dowry, or until such shall have been fixed by the court. Moreover, his Majesty commands the prince to show within two months how he has complied with the ordinance, and how he intends complying with it in the future.'

The promise of a suitable dowry does not seem to have been fulfilled; the pension of one thousand florins alone was paid. This was about all the income of the pair. On their return to France the marquis and marquise de Favras settled in a very modest flat, No. 21 of the Place Royale.[1] In 1782 the marquise gave birth to her first child, a boy, who was called Charles.

Towards 1785 events which influenced de Favras's life obliged him to go abroad.[2]

About that time troubles of a serious nature caused bloodshed throughout Holland and Belgium. Always on the look-out for a field of activity, Favras could not read with indifference the news which came from the north. He felt anxious to take part in the struggle; and yet neither its nature nor its origin ought to have excited a royalist's passion.

[1] Now Place des Vosges.

[2] The young couple had previously taken a journey to Poland, but it is impossible to state the exact time of it. It is through a letter from the marquise to her husband that this journey is disclosed. 'You know that when we returned from Poland, and when you were on the point of being drowned in the Vistula, I implored it [Providence], and you cannot doubt that you were saved as by a miracle.' But from de Favras's answer to his wife, in which he reminds her that at the time of the Vistula accident 'her existence was not assured,' we may conclude that the journey to Poland took place between the year of the marriage (1772) and the judgment of the Aulic Council (1776).

The revolutionary movement which took place a few years later in France has somewhat distracted attention from the events occurring at the time in Belgium and Holland, and these events are generally ignored. It may not be useless to relate them briefly here.

Although Belgium had been for centuries under foreign dominion, it had ever clung to the privileges granted it by its charters; the most famous one was the Brabant Charter, better known as the *Joyeuse Entrée* (Joyful Entrance). The Emperor Joseph II. tried to introduce into it several religious and administrative reforms. Brabant objected greatly to it, and after a speech delivered by Henri van der Noot, a barrister, the province rose in arms. Joseph II. did his utmost to restore peace in the country. He succeeded in calming down Brabant, but he repealed the *Joyeuse Entrée*.

Just at that time the Dutch patriots were rising against the stadtholder, and were supported by the Prussian army. Defeated in Belgium, Van der Noot and a number of rebels from Brabant went to Holland and joined the Batavians ; the latter had at their head another barrister, named François Vonck. Both were in league together against the Empire. Albert Sorel has written [1] : 'A revolution in the Netherlands had always been considered in France as a piece of good luck.' [2]

Favras, faithful to the old prejudices which made nations look upon Austria as the hereditary enemy of France, without second thoughts, planned to go and help the Batavian patriots. He made up his mind to raise a regiment and to fight the foreigners.

At that time armies, whether large or small, were always composed of volunteers who were attracted by the offer of a bounty and more or less high pay. The formation

[1] *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, ii. 53.

[2] Camille Desmoulins had called his newspaper *Les Révolutions de France et de Brabant.*

of these armies was entrusted to recruiting officers and decoying sergeants: there was always a goodly number of both in the streets of Paris. Favras communicated with one of them, M. Turcaty. Clever as that man might be in his profession, he nevertheless failed to raise a force for M. de Favras. The reason of his failure is very simple: M. de Favras was lacking in money; this main factor of success in war is no less important for enrolling soldiers. The marquis was therefore forced to give up his idea; nevertheless, he did not do so entirely, and he went alone to offer his services to the insurgents. It was towards the end of 1784. He was in command of a legion which fought against the stadtholder. He returned to France fourteen months later, and a year after his return the marquise de Favras gave birth to her second child, a daughter, named Caroline after her mother.

Husband and wife had always been most closely united; their life, however, was precarious, and would have been a sad one but for the constantly renewed hopes borne on the wings of M. de Favras's imagination. He did not lack intellect nor common sense; he lacked education and culture. He was always carried away by his chimerical dreams, and nothing could temper or counterbalance them. Madame de Favras, full of love and admiration for her husband, shared his dreams and encouraged them.

A man[1] who knew M. de Favras all that time speaks of him in the following terms: 'The poor wretch was not rich; I picture him still, with his fine face, high stature, and coat somewhat worn out. He had always a paper of one kind or another in his pockets, and he would eagerly explain to us his plans in the evening; they might have been very good, but nobody ever seemed ready to put them into execution.'

Yet the state of France was then bad enough to call for the attention of advisers and reformers. The Revolution was

[1] 'An illustrious man,' says of him M. Alexis de Valon. He does not mention his name.

smouldering, and signs of it were plainly visible to unprejudiced minds. The initial cause was the lamentable state of the national finance.

M. de Calonne as comptroller-general (1783–1786) had, in his administration, gone beyond all that could possibly be imagined in the way of prodigalities and fancy. Convinced that capitalists only lend to those who have money, and that people are not thought rich unless they throw their money out of window, Calonne seemed to enjoy receiving applications for grants and emptying the exchequer.

A bigwig of the time said: 'When I saw every one holding out their hands, I held out my hat.'

Such a government brought extreme distress upon the country; and Calonne, having exhausted every resource, was forced to confess the state of his finance to the king, who had suspected nothing. The government decided at once to call an assembly of the Notables, not indeed to request them to suggest reforms, but rather to ask them for money, so as to at once relieve the treasury.

The marquis de Favras thought it was a splendid opportunity to produce his financial plans. However, 'as it is not necessary to be managing affairs to talk about them'—so said Figaro—the marquis wrote memorandum after memorandum full of excellent advice, dictated by the best of intentions: their main fault was that they were altogether fanciful, and not in the least practical. He had not the slightest success. Besides, it was too late. Louis XVI., weak and wanting a proper guide, was incapable of realising the gravity of coming events. He recalled the popular minister Necker, who was a native of Geneva and a Protestant, and the *États Généraux* were summoned to meet in May 1789. The representatives of the nation, who had been silent for nearly two centuries, were at last to be heard.

Though he was a fervent royalist, the marquis de Favras was not opposed to the more modern ideas of liberalism which

were gaining ground. He saw without displeasure the absolute rule of an autocrat being gradually transformed into a constitutional monarchy with a parliament. He fully realised the changes which must be brought about in the old eighteenth-century society, which had indulged in the worst caprices during the lamentable reign of Louis XV. He was therefore one of those who approved the revolution of '89 and saw in it the opening of a new era.

In order to be nearer the seat of the great reforms which he thought would soon come about, he went to live at Versailles in June 1789. However, what he witnessed did not realise his hopes, and quenched his generous illusions. The first debates in the Assembly were confused; they were soon followed by more noisy dialogues. The people spoke to the government by means of firearms; it is needless to say that the people had the last word. The Bastille was taken on July 14. Summary executions had preceded and followed this victorious insurrection; pillage and murder attended it. It made such an impression on the mind of de Favras that he determined to be an active worker in the counter-revolution.

As early as July 17 or 18 he again met Turcaty. In their conversations he spoke of his intention to protect the king against the Assembly and against riots, and to send him to Metz.

Turcaty introduced him to a certain Morel, who was 'very clever in recruiting.' It was indeed necessary to have enough troops to overpower the enemies of the monarchy. Favras's plan does not seem to have taken definite shape until about the middle of September. At that time the marquis wanted to bring to Montargis a force whose presence would have been explained by saying that it was to accompany a convoy of food to the metropolis. In fact, it was to march on Versailles to the king's rescue.

On the top of this came the October days. On October 1 the bodyguard had given a banquet—in accordance with an

old custom—to the officers of the Flanders regiment which had just been garrisoned in Versailles. This was the first pretext for a riot. The revolutionary newspapers made that function a pretext for rousing the people: they pointed out how orgies were taking place in the king's palace, whilst famine reigned in Paris. It was more than was needed to rouse the angry populace which formed the army of disorder.

On October 5 a band composed of women and children formed ranks near the *Halles* (Central Market) and marched on Versailles, howling, demanding bread, and uttering threatening words. Among them a number of the lowest of the low had glided—men who were ready for any dirty work, and who under cover of politics would not hesitate to commit murder. At the head of the band was an ex-bailiff's clerk of the name of Maillart. Their object was to bring back to Paris the king, queen, and dauphin, whom in their vulgarity they called the baker, the baker's wife, and the baker's little apprentice.

As this crowd arrived by the Avenue de Paris, which is just opposite the château, several gentlemen were in the *Œil de Bœuf*, the drawing-room next to the king's bedroom. One of them was the marquis de Favras. This sight filled him with indignation.

'It is a shame,' he cried, 'to allow such a gang to advance without opposition towards the king's palace.'

And consulting only his courage, he at once proposed that, sword in hand, they should march against the rioters.

The others wisely objected that they had no horses, and that to fight this crowd successfully cavalry would be required.

'I will have horses!' Favras rejoined. He went to the Minister of the Interior, M. de Saint-Priest. The latter was in the king's room; he answered immediately Favras's call. The marquis requested, 'for him and a few volunteers, horses from the royal stables, in order to meet a few guns which some men and women had brought from Paris, and which could be easily captured.'

The minister replied that 'he had nothing to do with the royal stables, and could not in consequence give the marquis what he wanted.'

Astounded by such an answer at so critical a time, Favras said sharply :

'Will you do nothing?

'No, Sir.'[1]

And they parted.

Do nothing ! This seems to have been the court's and government's watchword in difficult moments. It appears as if, whenever they were in trouble, they depended on some miraculous help; they were for ever expecting it, but it never came. On that particular day they had trusted in the National Guards, and news had just been received that La Fayette was advancing at the head of his 'clever infantry.' But the National Guards were far from answering the expectations of Louis XVI. and his ministers. They were almost powerless in preventing riots. One of the bodyguard was killed in the palace itself, and the raving populace rushed even into the queen's bedroom. She had hardly time to put on a skirt and take refuge with her children in the king's apartments.

Urged throughout by his idea of preventing bloodshed, Louis XVI., after a night of anguish and of danger, consented to 'grant the people's wish,' or, to speak plainly, 'to obey the orders given by the populace.' He agreed to come back to Paris with the royal family. This was a lamentable journey. The procession started at noon. The marquis de Favras and a few brave and devoted gentlemen escorted the sovereign's carriage.

[1] M. de Saint-Priest's evidence at the Châtelet. Concerning this the reader will find here an anecdote which is, I believe, quite true, and has never been published. A grandson of this same M. de Saint-Priest, having heard that Lamartine was about to tell the story of the October days in his *Histoire des Girondins*, called on the poet and began to praise the energy of the minister on that occasion. Lamartine cut him short : 'For my story I just want a brave man ; your grandfather will do.'

The shameful sight of degraded monarchy strengthened Favras in his ideas and plans of a counter-revolution. However, the events which had filled those two October days rendered his former plan impracticable; a new one must be made. Nevertheless, his preoccupations did not prevent him from watching what was going on around him. During the journey from Versailles to Paris he noticed a young man whose face bore signs of pity for the royal family, and who seemed to share de Favras's feelings. He was, from what the marquis heard, a man named Marquier, who had been a sergeant in the *Gardes françaises.* The previous evening, Marquier, aided by a few grenadiers, had tried his utmost to prevent the castle being pillaged. Favras spoke to him, and, after having exchanged a few words, he was convinced that he had found a royalist capable of sharing his plans. He promised himself that in due time he would appeal to Marquier for help.

Unfortunately, Favras had not the least suspicion that while he was observing others he was being watched himself. His firmness on the previous day, so conspicuous in the midst of the general feebleness, had marked him out for attention. He was mentioned as one of the most dangerous enemies of the Revolution; and the *Comité des recherches*, which was barely formed, set a spy upon his track. It was a man called Geoffroy. (End of October.)

III

MONSIEUR'S AND MIRABEAU'S DOING

Shortly after Louis XVI.'s return to Paris the marquis de Favras was sent for by the comte de Luxembourg, a captain in the king's guards. He began thus:

'The way in which you tried to protect the king's life

at Versailles on the 5th of October has given me a great idea of your devotion to his Majesty.'

Then, after having sketched rapidly the state of disorder, of anarchy, which prevailed in the metropolis, as well as the plans shaped out by the revolutionists against the Tuileries, he added :

'Do you know of any means to preserve the king from the blow which threatens him? In that case, I would ask you to do all in your power to preserve a life which I consider is exposed to the worst dangers.'

Favras was anxious to serve the feeble monarch, and they agreed that he should at first go to the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, the seat of perpetual agitation, and study on the spot the dangers which might be feared from that quarter.

Then the comte de Luxembourg made a discreet allusion to Favras's poverty. Talking of the expenses which would be connected with the marquis's investigation, the count offered him one hundred louis; but in order to silence Favras's scruples, Luxembourg told him that the money was given by the king, and to convince him of this the count did not at once hand him the amount—he requested the marquis to come in the evening to the Tuileries. At this second meeting the comte de Luxembourg came out of the king's room holding in his hand the one hundred louis, in two rolls of twenty-five double louis each. He handed them to Favras, who this time raised no objection.

Flattered by so much kindness and confidence, Favras zealously pursued his mission. He attended the meetings which were held daily in the faubourg; he heard there violent threats against his Majesty. The danger was growing fast, and it became urgent to save the monarchy and the royal family. It was during November that the conspiracy took shape, and preparations began to be made for putting it into execution.

Nevertheless, there remains a doubtful point. Was it the marquis de Favras who of his own accord proposed to the

comte de Provence to organise a counter-revolution, of which he would be the main agent? or was it the comte de Provence who asked the marquis, or requested some one to ask him, to become the agent of a plan he and his friends had formed? No document in existence throws any light on this point. Neither of these two suppositions may be true. Each of the two men separately may have had the same idea and have united only in action. This is possible and likely; for at the end of the year 1789 it was plain to every clear-sighted person that France was engaged in a dangerous path, and that it was fast going to anarchy. Everybody, according to the object of his desire or regret, excited or soothed imagination. Conspiracy was rife everywhere.

Among all the men whose ambition urged them to turn events to their own advantage, the person who was the most eager, and who was to be the ringleader of riots and conspiracies whilst remaining behind the scenes, was not, as his contemporaries thought and said, the duc d'Orléans. The duke's intellect was as poor as his will, and Talleyrand speaking of him said: 'The duc d'Orléans was the dustbin into which were thrown all the refuse of the Revolution.' No, it was not this prince who led the agitation, but the comte de Provence —Monsieur, the king's brother, the prince of whom his tutor said in his childhood that he was 'deceitful.'

It is no longer possible to be mistaken as to his true character, nor as to the nefarious part he played before and after the Revolution. Poor Marie Antoinette had no enemy more bitter, more cruel than he; he made the most injurious insinuations against her, saying even in public that he had doubts as to the legitimacy of the royal children. As to his brother, the king, he called him a 'nonentity.' He could not forgive either of them the extreme discomfiture he had felt when the change took place in their marital relations in 1777.

And yet this discomfiture had not quenched his thirst for power. It was as strong and tenacious as before; and it was

with a secret joy that he witnessed the riots which weakened Louis XVI.'s power: he saw in them an opportunity for himself taking the lead in the government.

'Monsieur was mixed up secretly and cautiously in many intrigues, with the object of acquiring personal influence,' La Fayette says; and he was in a position to know, as he and Bailly were pointedly aimed at by those intrigues.

At that time the prince was prompted to action by Mirabeau. This man's ambition was as great as the count's, and until this period he had felt as many discomfitures as the king's brother.

Mirabeau enjoyed the reputation of an immense talent and of notorious immorality. He had left no stone unturned to attract attention, and from the opening of the '*États Généraux*' he had on many occasions given proofs of his boldness. He believed he was ripe for power, and was anxious to hold an office in the cabinet, so as to be an instrument of reconciliation between monarchy and the Revolution, and thus bring happiness on his country.

With this end in view he had been attracted by the orb of the day, and out of sheer policy had tried to bind his cause to that of the commander-in-chief of the National Guards of the kingdom. His attempt was vain and could not be expected to succeed, for between two such men no *entente* was possible. La Fayette hated Mirabeau's immorality, whilst Mirabeau did not appreciate La Fayette's intellectual mind. He nicknamed him Gilles-César or Cromwell Grandison. They could not long conceal from each other their mutual antipathy; they soon realised that they were not made to work together.

About the same time the National Assembly robbed Mirabeau of his hope of ever entering the cabinet. Lanjuinais made a motion, to which an amendment was moved by Bein, that no member of the Assembly should henceforth be appointed to any ministerial office during the session. It was in vain that Mirabeau fought the motion, displaying all the

resources of his eloquence and insinuating that he was the only member aimed at by the motion.

'I move the following amendment,' he exclaimed as he ended his speech. 'The exclusion shall be limited to M. de Mirabeau, member for the seneschal's jurisdiction of Aix.' The Assembly satisfied the pride rather than the ambition of the orator: the motion was adopted.

Rejected by La Fayette, checked by the Assembly, Mirabeau did not accept his defeat.

Had he been merely ambitious, he might have waited until circumstances were more favourable. But it was not only power he desired; he was in want of money. The poverty against which he had fought for many years was reaching a climax. In fact, he confesses himself that in September 1789 that climax had come. 'One day,' says M. de la Marck, 'Mirabeau came to me very early and said in a very anxious tone: "It depends upon you, my friend, to do me a great service. Speak! I do not know which way to turn; I have not even a crown in my pocket; do lend me some money." I offered him fifty louis, all I could dispose of. He took them, thanked me, and added: "I do not know when I shall be able to return this sum." . . .'

M. de la Marck, who was a strong royalist, realised at once how useful a man who was so needy could be, and he thought for a moment that the government might bribe him. But it does not seem that the time had come to use corruption in order to thin the ranks of the revolutionary party. The queen, to whom M. de la Marck mentioned his idea, positively refused to listen to it: 'I trust our misfortunes will never be such as to oblige us to have recourse to Mirabeau; it would be too painful.'

Nevertheless, Mirabeau had prepared a long memorandum, with the intention that it should be brought under the notice of Louis XVI. In this he proposed, as means for strengthening the royal authority and putting a stop to the excesses of

the revolutionists, the king's departure, the dissolution of the Assembly, &c. However, M. de la Marck dared not submit the memorandum to the king himself, but he asked the comte de Provence to grant him an audience in order to communicate to him the above memorandum. He was introduced into the Luxembourg by M. de la Châtre between twelve and one o'clock in the morning. Monsieur read the memorandum, but showed plainly that he did not think his brother's initiative or will could be relied upon.

'The feebleness and indecision of the king are beyond all conception. If you want to have an idea of his character, imagine oiled ivory balls which you should try to keep close together.'

Mirabeau came to the conclusion that there was nothing to be done with the aid of the sovereign; however, one could dispense with it while looking somewhere else for support. It was then he bethought himself of Monsieur. He felt capable of acting the part of Cardinal de Retz towards this new Gaston d'Orléans.

There were not the same obstacles to an understanding between the count and Mirabeau as there had been between the latter and La Fayette. The prince had good reasons for not being scandalised at Mirabeau's immorality, and the politician rightly estimated the intellect of a prince so devoid of scruples. The duc de Lévis, who was a member of the Assembly, brought them together, and it was not long before a plan of counter-revolution was sketched out by the two. In appearance its object was to strengthen royal power; but in reality it was to place the power in the hands of Monsieur and his collaborator.

The ardent, impetuous Mirabeau wrote out at once the theoretical part of the plan which was to be carried out by the marquis de Favras and his agents. As soon as everything was settled between the conspirators, Mirabeau, either giving way to his propensity to talk or seeking for advice,

perhaps merely for approval, revealed the plot to a man whom he fully trusted—Étienne Dumont, a native of Geneva. To this indiscretion alone we owe the most precise particulars on the conspiracy; for in his 'Souvenirs sur Mirabeau' Dumont has given the complete story, and there is no reason for doubting the truth of it.

'Mirabeau called on me one morning,'[1] Dumont relates, 'saying he had a most important communication to make. As usual, he began to paint in the darkest colours the complete disorganisation of the state, and the impossibility of doing any good through the Assembly, composed as it was. I was anxiously waiting for the conclusion of this introduction, which was given in the style common to all counter-revolutionists. He took out of his pocket a document, seven or eight pages in length, in his own handwriting, and said: "There is a plan which will be the saving of France and secure her liberties. Of course you know me too well, my good friend, to think that I should ever dream of entering into any plot which had not freedom for its basis. Read on to the end without stopping. . . . I will mention afterwards how we intend to put it into practice, and you will be convinced that the means we shall use are worthy of this great measure. However, I cannot tell you everything, nor can I divulge names, as I am bound in honour, by a formal engagement, to keep them secret."

'. . . The main basis was the departure of the king, who could no longer bear his captivity in Paris. He was to go to Metz or to some other fortified town, where he was sure to find generals who were able to answer for the loyalty of their troops. As soon as his Majesty had arrived safely, he was to issue a proclamation which would take the form of an appeal to the country, recalling all he had done for it, and all the crimes which had been committed in the metropolis. . . .

[1] Dumont did not remember the exact date on which Mirabeau called on him; but he was certain that it was some time in November 1789.

The king would then nullify the decrees of the National Assembly as being contrary to the *cahiers*[1] and based on plain illegality. He would even dissolve the Assembly itself and call upon the bailiwicks to elect new members. He would at the same time order all the commanders to exert their authority, and the parliaments to meet and resume their duties and punish the rebels. Every nobleman was to join the king to defend the sovereign and the throne. As for Mirabeau, he was to remain in Paris and watch the movements of the Assembly. When the king issued his first proclamation after his return from Versailles, the whole of the "Right" as well as most of the Moderate "Left" were expected to carry a vote that they should join his Majesty and break off connection with whoever should refuse to act in concordance with him; there would then be a complete rupture. Should Paris persist in its resistance, every communication with the city would be cut off, and it would be taken by famine. It was certain that the clergy, whose property had been confiscated by the Assembly, would make use of all their religious influence over the people, and that the bishops would meet in order to protest against the profane usurpation of the Assembly. Four or five pages were filled with particulars of the same nature; and it appeared to me that everything had been artfully planned, and that all the details of the plan agreed with each other.

'It is difficult to describe my feelings, or rather my fears, as I read the document. . . . After a few moments of silence, I said to Mirabeau that his confidence was for me a new token of his friendship; that I had no remarks to make, for the facts alluded to therein were beyond my comprehension. I added, that I was not competent to pass a judgment on the fate of the monarchy, nor to decide between the king and the Assembly; that I had, however, made up my mind to leave Paris, and I was going to prepare at once for my journey.

'I still remember the tone of our conversation: we were

[1] Stated and particular claims embodied in the famous *cahiers*.

talking in low tones, slowly, as men who weigh every word they speak, and who, in order to hide their inward feelings, check every bodily motion for fear they should burst out with their own thoughts.

'"You make a great mistake," Mirabeau said, as if surprised at my decision. "You seem to think that my plot will be the signal of civil war; but you do not know that France is an essentially monarchical country and devoted to the sovereign. As soon as the king is free, the Assembly will be reduced to nothing; with him it is a giant, without him only a sand-drift. There may be a few riots of minor importance at the Palais Royal. Yet, if La Fayette means to act like Washington and march at the head of the National Guards, *La Fayette will deserve being put to death*, *and his fate will soon be settled*."

'"——as well as the fate of many others," I interrupted. "Murder is going to be the herald of wholesale massacre. I do not know how you intend to proceed, but I am convinced that your means of execution are radically wrong; the king has not a sufficiently strong will to uphold your plans—he will be the cause of their failure."

'"You do not know the queen," he replied. "She is gifted with a remarkably strong mind; her courage is worthy of a man."

'"But have you seen her?" I said. "Did she discuss the matter with you? Are you certain she trusts you? Pause a moment, and think who are the men with whom you are going to act, those with whom you will have to deal. Suppose you are at Metz or at any other place; you may be sure that if you were successful from the beginning, you would be the first one to be thrown overboard, because you are to be feared—you would never be forgiven that. However, we will put personal considerations aside. Has not every undertaking against the Assembly turned in its favour? Is it not backed by the full power of public opinion? Has not

the Assembly paralysed the finances and army? True, the king will be on the borders, where he will be supported by the emperor; nevertheless, it is not in him to conquer his people. Do you mean to say you would establish freedom with the help of an Austrian army? Would it not be utter madness to undertake to reform France by bringing on her the worst of misfortunes? . . ."

'I remember that in my excitement I gradually ceased to be on my guard; my voice grew louder; and after a sudden outburst, Mirabeau and I were surprised not to hear any longer the sounds of a violin to which we had paid no attention, but which some one had been playing in a room next to the one in which we were, and separated from it only by a very thin partition.

'"Some one might be listening," Mirabeau said. "Let us go into another room. . . . I have considered in my own mind some of your objections. Nevertheless, I am so certain that the court is bent on making the attempt, that I feel I must join it, in order to ensure success and lead the monarchy in the path of freedom; if not, they are sure to commit some new faults which will destroy them. If we fail, monarchy is done for."

'"Yet, how can a man with any common sense," I said, "play this infernal game? Of course, you resent the Assembly's decision which excluded you from the cabinet, and in spite of yourself you are governed by your anger. Had your plot been hatched by any other than yourself, you would think it was the greatest crime that ever was committed, unless you looked upon it as utter madness. I quite agree with you that the leaders of the Assembly are far from being what they ought to be; but at the same time I am convinced that if seven or eight men could be brought to work hand in hand, the Assembly could be made to do much good. If you enjoy any credit at court—which I very much doubt—use it in the sense I am pointing out, and seek for help in the country, not outside it. All your half-measures, all your counter-

revolutionary ideas, only increase the general uneasiness, and serve to justify the fears of Jacobins and of the *Comité de surveillance.* In fact, all your influence is in the Assembly; there alone you can do something. Out of the Assembly you have no power; and if the court places any trust in you, you can serve the king better as a member of the Assembly than as a member of the cabinet."'

This intercourse had lasted some two or three hours. Dumont's firmness, and the strength of his arguments, made a strong impression upon Mirabeau; not, however, the same impression that Dumont thought it did. Dumont believed, indeed, that he had convinced his friend that his scheme was a dangerous one and had little chance of being successful; he thought, besides, that he had touched his weak point by telling him he would play only a secondary part.

Indeed, Mirabeau seemed to give in to his friend's reasons. 'He gave his word of honour that he would draw back and advise Monsieur'—for it was he, Dumont says, who was the leader of the conspiracy—'to desist, and to induce the court to look upon the National Assembly as its safeguard.'

Then, as Mirabeau had found neither complicity nor approval in his friend, he tried to redeem the imprudence he had committed by confiding in him. Two days later he told Dumont that he had given up his scheme entirely, and that the royal family had altered their views. The king was, indeed, too irresolute to attempt anything of that kind with him.

At first Dumont was beguiled by Mirabeau's assumed sincerity; but a few weeks later he began to suspect it. In fact, everything tends to prove that the ambitious politician did not remain a stranger to the plot whose ringleader was the comte de Provence. And yet Mirabeau denied having any share in it. Apart from other proofs which will be mentioned in due time, was it not a self-avowal that he was an accomplice, when he hastened to confer—and with what

eagerness!—with Monsieur immediately after de Favras's arrest? The care he took to write the speech and the letters for the prince in this perilous circumstance—were not these also proofs? Would he have interfered if he had not known the scheme? Would the prince of his own accord have asked for his advice? Besides, Mirabeau speaks clearly enough of the part he played in the affair, although his words are purposely equivocal. On December 26 he writes to the comte de la Marck: 'How we have set to work, I and the *homme gris* [the duc de Lévis] under my guidance, is of no consequence. The result will lead you to guess the rest.' He expresses no astonishment at the charge brought against Favras. Is this not a proof that he was by no means ignorant of the plot?

IV

THE PLOT

The revelations Mirabeau had made to Dumont were correct on almost every point. The comte de Provence had really planned to take the king out of Paris, where he was almost a prisoner, and send him to Péronne—not to Metz. Once there, Louis XVI. would sign orders dissolving the Assembly and call on the three orders to elect new members. He would also enact several measures whose object was to restore to the sovereign the power he had lost.

What Mirabeau omitted to say was that everything was done unknown to his Majesty; he was thought too irresolute and too much wanting in energy; the *nonentity* was to be merely an instrument in the hands of the conspirators. The queen, on the contrary, was acquainted with the scheme; for her co-operation was useful in any case, it was necessary in many ways. She certainly could be trusted, and her courage would not fail her in the hour of danger.

The idea of carrying the king away was a bold one indeed;

but it was most hazardous. However, it was indispensable, and must certainly be the first step in the counter-revolution. Desertion had reduced to insignificance the components of the so-called army, and those of the soldiers who remained under arms were not to be trusted ; most of them were won over to the new principles. Therefore, on whom could the monarch rely if he remained in Paris? No one. The majority in the National Assembly, the National Guards, the people, all were hostile to the king and his court. In Paris he was nothing more than a hostage, and the anxiety not to endanger his own life paralysed any effort which might have been made in his favour.

This feeling was so general, indeed, that at every moment the crowd trembled instinctively for fear it should be robbed of its victim. On the side of royalists all schemes tended to save his Majesty from the populace; the comte de Provence and Mirabeau, later on Breteuil and Bouillé, had no other object in view. The king gave his consent too late, when circumstances had ceased to be favourable. And yet the plot very nearly succeeded.[1]

In order to put this plan into execution, it was not to be expected that the two main authorities in the city would become accomplices. La Fayette the commander-in-chief, no more than the mayor Bailly, or even Necker, who would have been less useful, would have given a hand, much less shut their eyes. Very far from it; every one concerned was certain that these men would oppose the king's flight with all their might. In this case they became obstacles which must be removed at any cost, even if it became necessary to resort to violent measures.

To carry out the scheme, it was indispensable to have armed men commanded by a man ready to defy any obstacle, and perhaps to sacrifice his life if necessary. The comte de Provence and his principal accomplices, the comte de Luxem-

[1] The king and his family left Paris during the night of June 20-21, 1791, and were arrested at Varennes on the evening of the 21st.

bourg, the duc de Lévis, M. de la Châtre, all agreed to give this dangerous mission to the ex-lieutenant of the Swiss Guards the marquis de Favras.

Favras was willing to serve his sovereign and to give his life for him. But at the same time he realised the gravity of the undertaking, and he asked for moral guarantees. He did not consider that the personal co-operation of the comte de Provence was a sufficient one; indeed, he knew the man, and was aware that very little confidence was to be put in him. Therefore, he insisted that Marie Antoinette should tell him herself that she approved the plot.

It was not very easy for the queen to give a secret audience to Favras at the Tuileries, where spies were numerous and where the sovereigns themselves were under watch. The difficulty was overcome by means of a stratagem which seemed a new edition of the 'Affaire du Collier.' Her Majesty was to come out on the terrace along the river, and, passing Favras, she was to speak some words which had been agreed upon beforehand.[1]

[1] A few historians, struck by the romantic and strange side of the episode, have thrown suspicion on the truth of this relation, which Favras himself has left, and which M. Joseph Droz has given in his *Histoire du Règne de Louis XVI* (iii. 88 and following). Yet it must be true for the main part at least. Besides Favras, there are two other witnesses to corroborate the fact, in spite of a few contradictions, which however are more apparent than real. We have, in the first place, the evidence of Marquier in the trial at the Châtelet. Marquier acknowledges that towards the end of October, as he was on guard at the Tuileries, he saw her Majesty walking in the garden and spoke to her equerry. Next to this comes Augeard's evidence, who states that Favras confessed that in his first interview with Marquier he said to him: 'You saw the queen yesterday, when she was walking on the terrace along the river; she was with Madame Elisabeth and you were behind the two ladies. The Queen came to you and said, "Your conduct towards us on the two days October 5 and 6 has been remarkable. I thank you for it. I trust that in a short time you will have an opportunity of giving me greater proofs of your devotion and zeal"' (p. 223). Augeard realised so fully how dangerous such words would be for Marie Antoinette if they were

The meeting took place at the appointed time. The queen came. As soon as Favras was assured of so high and so valuable a moral complicity, he set to work. He came back to the old scheme he had outlined, and sought his two old associates, Morel and Turcaty. He hoped that with their help he would be able to recruit a certain number of old soldiers and willing men. He also remembered Marquier, and he thought that the help of this lieutenant in the grenadiers would prove most valuable, as he must have some influence over his men.

On November 15 he met Morel and Turcaty as they were coming out of the theatre. They had been to see the third performance of 'Charles IX.' This tragedy by Chénier, rhymed in Voltaire's style, but his bad style, and full of revolutionary maxims, was a great success among the enemies of royalty. The two officers proposed to Favras to get up a cabal against the tragedy.

'Now, gentlemen, this is not a time for joking,' Favras replied smartly. 'We have no time to give to Charles IX.; we should be thinking of protecting the king. It is said that the Tuileries are threatened, and his Majesty's life is in danger.'

They understood, and requested him to let them know 'as soon as anything new should happen.'

Favras asked Morel to find Marquier and to arrange a meeting between the marquis and the lieutenant. Morel was successful in finding Marquier, and a few days after brought the two men together under the arcades of the Palais Royal. Favras complimented the young officer on his bravery during

divulged that he advised Favras to deny she had spoken them, or at least to say that he had heard them confidentially from Marquier. In reality it was the comte de Provence who repeated them to Favras.

From such diverse evidence, it is quite clear that the queen knew of the plot. It is not improbable that she met Favras the first time at the Tuileries, as the marquis told Talon, and that she also met Marquier, as he stated in his evidence at the Châtelet.

the October days. He advised him to persevere in the same way, and also to 'watch over the King's life if, as it was then rumoured, there should be another riot.'

However, Marquier, who did not know the name of his interlocutor, was very reserved, and he would make no other promise save to accept a second appointment.

M. de Favras was convinced no one had seen him. In this he was mistaken, for during his intercourse two men had been hiding behind the pillars—Geoffroy, the Committee spy, and another man he had brought with him, whose personality will be disclosed further on.

Favras met Marquier on three other occasions. Each time the marquis put questions to Marquier, asking him what was the disposition of his men, and if there were many of them who could be trusted. At last he handed him a pamphlet called 'Open Your Eyes.' It was an appeal to the *Gardes françaises* inviting them to resume their old post near their king. As he gave him the pamphlet, he added: 'I have marked the best passages.' One of them was: 'They only want a man capable of bringing them back to the path they used to follow. . . . Well, soldiers,—I am addressing the *Gardes françaises*,—you shall find one; it is I!'

Most likely Favras was the author of the pamphlet, and the leader he proposed was no other than himself. However, he made insinuations with regard to the duc de Biron's task, trying to give it more importance than it had in reality. Marquier saw that they had him in view to work among the old *Gardes françaises* and rouse them against the National Guard commanded by La Fayette. In consequence, he asked Favras if he had any member of the Assembly on his side.

'M. d'Entraigues and Abbé Maury are with us,' Favras replied. 'As for M. de Mirabeau, we do not place much confidence in him. Nevertheless, at the last minute he shall know everything, and a thousand louis will bring him to do anything.'

Marquier murmured a few words and went away. He never came back, save at the Châtelet during the trial.

The confident Favras was always ready to believe that every one shared his enthusiasm. He was convinced he had gained Marquier to his ideas.

Thus he said to Morel: 'He (Marquier) answers for each of his grenadiers personally.' 'What do you intend doing?' inquired Morel.

Favras explained his plan fully. 'We have twelve hundred horses, most of which are at Versailles. We require a sufficient number of trustworthy men to ride them; I rely on you and Turcaty to find them. . . . We will endeavour to gain the Swiss Guards. These troops will be formed into four columns of four hundred men each. . . . The first one shall come in through the "Porte Maillot," the second by the "Porte de la Conférence,"[1] and the third by the "Porte du Roule."[2] They will attack the guard-house and kill the men.

'Once in possession of the three gates, we shall march on the Tuileries. Three coaches will be in readiness at the swing bridge[3] with a strong escort.

'One hundred men shall be detached and sent to the quarter where La Fayette is living. But, as his house is under a strong guard, they will wait until he goes out driving. As he does so four men, who will have been posted on his way, will join him. One of them will call out to the coachman to stop, saying he has a letter to remit, and when near to M. de La Fayette he will fire with his pistol.'

Morel begged to be entrusted with this mission, and his request was granted.

[1] Between the Cours la Reine and the Champs Élysées.

[2] They had not decided upon the gates exactly except for the Roule, as Favras mentioned to Turcaty the gates of Grenelle and Chaillot.

[3] The swing bridge separated the Tuileries from the Place Louis XV —now the Place de la Concorde.

Favras went on:

'Le Roule column shall have for its special duty to rid us of Bailly and Necker. After which it will go to the Tuileries. We shall then say to the king: "Your Majesty, the Faubourg Saint-Antoine is up in arms, and we are afraid for your life. It would be safer if your Majesty would seek for security in flight. Carriages are ready for you and the whole of your family." Supposing the king should refuse to be persuaded, we shall resort to force if needs be; he, the queen, and the chancellor shall be carried off. We shall drive to Saint-Denis and thence to Péronne, for we are sure of the place. There a number of faithful adherents will meet under pretence that a legion is being formed to go to Brabant. . . .'

To all appearance, such a scheme was perfect; for at the same time troops were expected to arrive from all parts of the provinces around Flanders, Picardy, Artois, Champagne, Lorraine, Alsace, Burgundy, &c. M. de Favras calculated that they would have about twenty thousand men. He was arranging to get thirty thousand Swiss; ten thousand men would be sent from Germany, and twelve thousand from Piedmont. 'Paris will have to submit, for its supplies will be cut off.'

Nothing had been left to chance. Should the order to move the troops fail to come, they would manufacture one, and they would sign it with La Tour du Pin's name by means of a counterfeit stamp.

When Favras had finished disclosing his plan, Morel, being a very practical man, questioned the marquis on the financial part of the affair. Where and how should they find the money they would require to pay all these people? The marquis de Favras himself was very poor, and he had no credit. Personally, it was impossible for him to find the two million francs which they calculated would be necessary for the achievement of their enterprise. He confessed to Morel that as far as money was concerned he had some

difficulty; in fact, he was still trying to find a capitalist. Morel then offered to introduce the marquis to a banker from Lyons, a M. David Hébrard Pomaret, who was at the time staying in the Rue de Richelieu in Paris.

Such information was too valuable to be laid aside. Favras seized the opportunity eagerly; he called on the banker. However, he requested that the gentleman who had introduced him should be left in ignorance of the person in whose name the money was to be raised, and also of the bonds which would be given as a security. This *entrée en matière* put Pomaret on his guard, and he was reluctant to be mixed up in an affair which was not very clear. He showed himself so exacting that the whole thing fell through.

After this Morel thought of a Dutch refugee, M. Chomel. There was every chance of succeeding in this quarter, if in exchange for his services Chomel received the promise of becoming 'the court banker.' Favras having given Morel to understand that it was feasible, new negotiations were begun.

Whilst discussing the terms for the loan, the marquis gradually glided into confidences. He told Chomel the name of the person of high rank for whom the loan was raised; this was Monsieur, the king's brother. He also informed Chomel that the transaction was for a political purpose, and that the safety both of the monarchy and of the king himself, by his flight, was the end in view. As the reader will see further on, Chomel did not share Pomaret's scruples —he had reasons for this. He agreed to lend the two million francs to Monsieur, at five per cent. interest. This sum was to be repayable within six years by half-yearly instalments. Moreover, he stipulated that he should receive personally a royalty of two per cent. Such were the bases on which the money was to be advanced.

It was high time the transaction should come to a close, for Favras was beginning to think that the police were turning their attention towards the marquis's proceedings. On several

occasions Morel and Turcaty had called on him. He asked them not to do so again unless he sent for them, for, he added, 'I am followed by about fifteen spies, and I assure you I make them walk!'

This was true, although there were more than he knew of.

This was towards the end of December. On the 23rd Chomel wrote to Favras enclosing a draft of the agreement, together with a copy of the words which were to be written by the comte de Provence:

'I, the undersigned, agree to all the terms above stated; and I give M. Chomel full power to pay two million francs under the terms of the said agreement in exchange for the receipt of my treasurer, M. Papillon de la Ferté, less the two per cent. royalty which I agreed to pay.'

On the morning of the 24th M. de Favras sent the banker the following note: 'Everything is ready for signature to-day. Therefore, on receiving advice from the gentlemen in question, M. Chomel will be able to proceed with the loan. Should any obstacle arise it will be useless to proceed any further with the proposed loan.'

As if stung to the quick by the last sentence of the note, Chomel made an appointment with the marquis for that very evening at M. de la Ferté's, the comte de Provence's treasurer. At the appointed hour Chomel was there. He said that he would take the prince's steward, Morel de Chefdeville, to the banker Sertorius, when a first payment of forty thousand francs was to be made. They both started together; but Chomel came back alone, saying that the cashier was out. He could not get the money that day, and the affair was put off to the following day.

It was about half-past eight, and Favras, having nothing more to do at the Luxembourg, took leave of M. de la Ferté; he was going home, where he knew that his wife was anxiously awaiting his return.

The marquis was walking through the lonely street, and

had just reached the Rue Beaurepaire,[1] when he was overtaken by a few men, one of whom, the spy Geoffroy, laid his hand on his shoulder and arrested him 'in the king's name.' Favras being alone, it was useless to resist. He allowed the men to take him to the Hôtel de Ville, where a summary examination took place, and he learned the reason for his arrest. He was charged with being associated with M. de la Châtre, an agent of Monsieur, in order to carry out a plan of counter-revolution and kidnap the king. He was made to understand that if he would denounce the comte de Provence, upon whom suspicion rested, without material proof, which, however, the marquis was able to give, he would receive forty-eight thousand livres and be set at liberty. He nevertheless refused the offer and denied all the charges brought against himself. In consequence of this he was transferred to the Abbaye[2] at four o'clock in the morning, where he was kept in close custody.

While these incidents were taking place, one of La Fayette's aides-de-camp, Masson de Neuville, went with a few soldiers to the Place Royale, and called with this redoubtable escort at the marquise de Favras's house Well knowing her husband's plans, the poor frightened lady realised the full meaning of such a visit at such an hour of night. Nevertheless, she displayed neither weakness nor insolence, but with dignity quietly accepted her fate and submitted to the warrant for her arrest. She was taken to the Hôtel de Ville, whither she heard that her husband had been conveyed an hour before. But she was not allowed to see him, still less to speak to him. She was examined, and her answers were firm, yet prudent. Neither

[1] The Rue Beaurepaire has been pulled down. It was built on the space comprised between the Rues Montorgueil, Greneta, Saint-Denis, and Tiquetonne.

[2] It was in the Abbaye prison that so many prisoners were massacred during the days of September 1792. It was close to the church of Saint-Germain des Prés.

cunning questions nor misleading promises availed to extort from her a single word concerning the share which the comte de Provence had taken in the deeds with which her husband was charged; she had made up her mind to say nothing, hence her judges obtained no information whatever. So she was transferred to the Abbaye, whither her husband had now been conveyed.

Husband and wife could have no doubt that the plot was discovered. What they could not guess was the name of the informer. Who had betrayed them? They were both lost in conjectures, and, as so often happens in similar circumstances, they suspected everybody save and except the proper person. Who indeed would have thought that the real informer was Morel himself, one of those whom Favras trusted, the one, indeed, in whom the marquis had the most entire confidence?

His profession as recruiting officer was not one to develop honour, still less honesty, in the man. Besides, he was poor and in debt; his main object was to make money, and to this end he was on the watch for every opportunity; he had made up his mind to make his fortune, honestly or otherwise.

He had not been slow in finding out from his conversations with Favras that the marquis was very poor, and that there was not much to be expected from him. On the contrary, he might make a good profit by betraying him. Therefore, as early as the middle of September, between the 15th and the 20th, he called on Masson de Neuville and divulged the whole of the plot. The aide-de-camp realised how important was the revelation; he did not hesitate to take Morel to the general, and it was La Fayette himself who urged the informer to play the part of spy upon the conspirators, while at the same time pretending to be a zealous partisan of their cause.

After the October days, Morel thought that the idea of a counter-revolution had been abandoned; but as soon as Favras resumed the working-out of his scheme, Morel, for his

own part, resumed his double character of accomplice and traitor. He informed Masson of the marquis's steps, and in particular of the interviews with Marquier. The aide-de-camp went with Geoffroy to the Place Royale, and there saw, from behind a pillar, 'M. de Favras, whom he did not know before.' Masson then renewed to Morel the order to pursue his mission. In this case Masson, La Fayette's aide-de-camp, acted more like a detective than a soldier; his sense of the public interest hid from his eyes the unworthiness of his conduct. He did not stop to consider that through his understanding with Morel, who had become an abettor, he now became the accomplice of the man. Masson had found out a plot; his only aim was now to obtain complete and material proofs of it.

For his part, Favras suspected nothing; he pursued his scheme, and was trying to carry it into execution. A fatal chance, which had a first time thrown a traitor across his path, was to bring him into contact with a second traitor. One day, after the marquis had been exposing before them the plan he had formed to permit armed troops to enter Paris, Turcaty felt inclined to reveal a conspiracy which he thought might endanger his safety. He therefore said to Morel: 'I think it is time for us to denounce the marquis de Favras by means of an anonymous letter.'

Such a proposal was far from suiting Morel. He felt no shame at being a traitor, but he wished also to share the four-and-twenty thousand livres which were to be the informer's reward.

'We may as well wait a little longer,' he answered. 'There is not the slightest appearance of his receiving money so soon—and he can do nothing without it.'

Morel was, and meant to remain to the end, the principal actor. It was with this purpose in view that he had offered to be La Fayette's murderer, and that he had undertaken to find a banker. There is every reason to believe that Chomel had an understanding with him, and that the letters he exchanged with

Favras, concerning the loan, were only a means for obtaining material proofs against him.

In fact, the trap was laid, and in readiness to catch the conspirators at the time and in the manner most convenient for the revolutionists. La Fayette's *état-major* was ready to put the spring in motion in due time. At the end of November Masson de Neuville denounced the plot to M. Gouvion, the major-general of the National Guards. They went together to see Morel, who reiterated his previous revelations and informed the two officers of what was going on.

It is most probable that if the committee waited another month before arresting Favras, it was because they expected they would in the meantime get hold of some unquestionable proof of the comte de Provence's participation. This proof was certainly obtained, and there is not the slightest doubt that La Fayette did not share his officer's opinion; he at least differed from the *Comité des recherches*, for La Fayette had the required proof in his possession, if it was only for a few hours. We have the testimony of Gouverneur Morris contained in his 'Memorial': '27 December, La Fayette told us, after dinner, that for a long time he had been aware that there was a conspiracy, that he had traced it, and had at last arrested M. de Favras. A letter from Monsieur had been found on de Favras, and it tended to prove that Monsieur was strongly implicated in the plot. La Fayette had gone to Monsieur, taking this letter with him, and had handed it to Monsieur, saying that no one but himself and Bailly knew of it; therefore Monsieur should not be implicated; and that Monsieur had been delighted by this formal promise. . . . Nothwithstanding, he (Monsieur) had gone this morning to the Commune, where he had made a speech; this was most likely done on Mirabeau's advice, and La Fayette considered the latter nothing but a scoundrel.'

V

A ROMANCE OF MARRIED LOVE

In his 'Mémoires' La Fayette is quite as affirmative on all the points we have stated above. 'There is not the slightest doubt that there was a plan to murder La Fayette and Bailly,' he states. He however does not mention the letter, saying only that Boinville was sent to the prince. Nevertheless, his silence concerning the letter may be explained by personal as well as political reasons; yet it does not appear of a nature to invalidate Gouverneur Morris's narrative.

At that time there was at the Abbaye prison a notable prisoner, Augeard, ex-*fermier-général*, afterwards the queen's secretary.

Augeard had his own plan for delivering the royal family from its enemies. There appears to have been only one means of escape from the situation, or the imagination of the deliverers was not fertile, for their plans were all alike. They all proposed the flight of their Majesties towards a town in the north-east of France. Augeard had fixed upon Metz. Betrayed by a clerk, he had been sent to the Abbaye.

He had succeeded in making friends with the jailer, and this he found a double advantage. In the first place, he heard, through conversing with the man, any news that might interest him; in the second, he enjoyed certain privileges, such as being allowed to go about inside the prison.

During Christmas night Augeard heard more stir than usual. He was not over-much surprised, for Deltus, the jailer, had imparted to him what he had learnt from La Fayette's aide-de-camp. From what had been said, it appeared that a conspiracy had been discovered in which a person of very high rank was implicated. The jailer had even been asked

whether there was at the Abbaye a room fit for a person of the highest rank.

Early in the morning Augeard questioned the jailer as to the cause of the noise, and asked if the person of very high rank was to be his fellow-prisoner. He was told of the marquis and marquise de Favras's incarceration.

He was not acquainted with them, yet he was certain that they must be supporters of the monarchy, for the prison gates were often opened to receive persons accused of similar crimes. He made up his mind that he would take advantage of the freedom he enjoyed to communicate with the new prisoners, and do them whatever service was in his power. Augeard was not long in finding out that Madame de Favras was his neighbour, and he hastened to knock at her door.

'Who are you?' he said, to make sure that he was not mistaken.

'I am Madame de Favras. Who are you?'

'I cannot tell you my name. I am willing to oblige you, yet I do not wish to compromise myself. I suspect that it is for having tried to help the king that you are here.'

'Yes; that is the cause of my imprisonment. My case is connected with very big people. I was offered forty-eight thousand livres and my freedom if I would name Monsieur.'

Augeard was alarmed at hearing such a confidence, the more so at its being made through a prison door and to an utter stranger.

'I do not ask for particulars of your case. Beware of speaking of it to any living soul, even to myself. Supposing I had come only with the intention to turn informer, you would be lost.'

'But, from what you said, I do not believe you would do so.'

'Listen! I want to tell you a secret—for you alone. Be careful that the ailer knows nothing of our intercourse, for it would be his loss and mine. Your husband was arrested last night.'

'I suspected as much. He was in the habit of coming home by nine o'clock at the latest. Nevertheless, he had not returned at ten, when they came to arrest me, and I was most anxious about him.'

'He is kept here in close custody.'

'This is good news for me in the midst of my troubles. For God's sake, Sir, let him know that I am here; you may thus be the means of saving many lives.'

'I will do my best to communicate with him. However, it will not be easy, as his cell is in another part of the building, and if any one met me there, it might arouse suspicion. Still, I will do my best.'

Augeard contrived to find means of communicating with Favras. Two days later he was at the marquis's cell door, and called to him. As his wife had done, Favras divined a friend in this stranger. He told him all about his arrest in the Rue Beaurepaire, his examination at the Hôtel de Ville, and his imprisonment at the Abbaye, about four o'clock in the morning. He confirmed what Madame de Favras had said concerning the reward that had been offered if he would turn informer against Monsieur. It was a consolation to him—but a very relative one indeed—to hear that his wife was shut up in the same prison as he was, for he might perhaps correspond with her.

He said to Augeard: 'I have discovered that there is a small hole under my door, through which I can pass a small piece of paper. If you can get me some, I shall be able to write to my poor wife. The rascals, who have searched my pockets and have taken everything, did not discover a small English pencil-case, which will be useful to me.'

Being a practical man, Augeard advised Favras to make use of the opportunity he offered them to correspond together, to concoct with his wife the answers they would give; for it was likely that both of them would soon be examined, and this during the night—'as,' Augeard added, 'the owls that

compose the committee always take advantage of catching those charged with high treason during their first sleep.'

Favras acted on Augeard's wise advice. Soon the improvised messenger was able to pass a note through the door of the cell of the marquise by means of a long pin.

The poor lady was quite affected when she recognised her husband's writing. 'You are one of God's angels!' she exclaimed. 'I cannot conceal anything from you. I must tell you——'

But Augeard stopped this confidential outburst. There were more urgent things to be attended to by the lady prisoner.

'You must think of what is most urgent. Prepare your answers, so that they may be identical with your husband's. Your judges will try their utmost to bring you to contradict each other, in which case you will be lost.'

Between eight and ten o'clock at night he took to each of the prisoners the notes they had written. This precaution proved a wise one, as, according to Augeard's previsions, they were examined during the same night, and owing to this previous understanding their answers were perfectly similar.

Nevertheless, Madame de Favras did not give up the idea of confiding in their unknown friend. It was thus that Augeard heard that 'her husband had entered into a compact with the young comte de Luxembourg, the comte de la Châtre, the marquis de Lévis, &c., together with Monsieur, with the view of saving the king. To this end M. de la Châtre had asked M. de Favras to do all he could to find for Monsieur a sum of two million francs without the prince having to ask the help of his financial advisers or his superintendent, as Monsieur's advisers did not wish to awaken suspicion. The marquis therefore raised a loan through M. Chomel, a banker, who was in the secret. Already Chomel had Monsieur's notes of hand, and the money was to be paid the very day that Mme. de Favras's husband was arrested. They had been betrayed by M. de Luxembourg. . . . The latter had asked as his

reward to have M. de La Fayette's post; but having been refused, he had told everything to the general.'

This last statement, as we know, is not correct; the traitor was Morel, and not the comte de Luxembourg.

Augeard was naturally very much interested by Madame de Favras's narration; but he wanted to make sure that the facts were true, or rather that they had been neither altered nor exaggerated by feminine fancy. So two days later he questioned Favras on the subject, and found that the two statements corroborated each other on every point but one, namely, the name of the traitor. He therefore came to the conclusion that the conspiracy was a fact; for, he says, 'husband and wife could not otherwise have come to an understanding and related the same things, as they had not seen one another since their incarceration.'

As will readily be seen, the marquis, and probably the marquise, would be tried upon the gravest charge, and the sentence might be a very severe one; for at that period justice was not lenient, and the people, who were then all-powerful, spared no victim.

But before proceeding with the narrative of this case it is necessary that the reader should be better acquainted with both prisoners. A friend of theirs found and published the whole of the correspondence they had exchanged during the seven weeks of their captivity. This correspondence is not only valuable, but interesting.

Is it not surprising to find in these letters, which were written in a prison cell, the deepest, truest, most tender and passionate love? Indeed, the eighteenth century, which is supposed to have ignored love, saw it revived and blooming under the shadow of death. Is it not often under the most tragic circumstances that the captivating romance of conjugal love unfolds itself? Who can remain insensible in the face of such trials? and is there a soul capable of being unmoved by the affection of two such hearts?

The first letter was written by Madame de Favras. She was still in ignorance of her husband's fate, and only suspected the horrible truth. 'Where are you, my dear? What are you doing? I see that you must be in prison—but where? I do not know. For my part, I was arrested on Christmas Eve by soldiers. You were at the Hôtel de Ville at the same time as I was there; and having been myself brought to the Abbaye, I cannot suppose they treated you more favourably. At last I was allowed to write. Great God! Could I only know where you are, and how you feel, my troubles would not be so great.

'For the last few days I have been suffering from *crises de nerfs*. I have asked for a doctor, but I do not know whether I shall be allowed to see one. I have only one straw chair, and a prison bed which tires me dreadfully. I can hardly move in it. . . .

'You are fully aware of my sentiments and love. I shall never complain if I share your fate, whatever it may be. . . . I come back to my children.[1] My daughter does not give me so much anxiety, as she is out at nurse; but I am very much concerned about my son, who is to leave school on the first day of January. . . . Good-bye! My soul flies to you! Believe in my eternal love.'

Favras obtained leave to correspond with his wife; their letters, however, being carefully perused by the authorities, it would have been most unwise on their part to speak of the charges against them both. This is why the letters consist largely of words of comfort and noble encouragement to bear affliction, and of expressions of strong and mutual love.

On January 7, eleven P.M., Favras wrote: 'I shall be transferred this night to the Châtelet, my dear Caroline. . . . I feel deep regret at leaving the place where you are. It was something to be living under the same roof and to hear from you

[1] Charles, eight years old, and Caroline, nearly three years old.

several times a day; but remember that honour must go before everything. . . . I close this letter by assuring you, my dear child, that your image follows me everywhere, that my soul will always be near yours. My thoughts are with you always; and for you alone the heart of your lover, of your husband, shall ever beat.'

The answer was not long in coming. '*January* 8.—Dear friend, you, the comforter of my pains and my grief, you whom I cherish better than my own life; you, who are a thousand times dearer since you have been persecuted, whilst you are far from deserving it,—your loving letter expresses so truly the feelings of your heart for me that I cannot put it out of my sight. I have kissed it, wept over it, pressed it to my heart! You are now far from me; we no longer breathe the same atmosphere; I have lost the only consolation I had! It was sweet to me to be near you; far from you, it is death.

'O my dear! can you believe that in my eyes there is any stain on your honour—I who know your honesty, your straightforwardness? . . .

'I received your vows at the foot of the cross, with a thrill of happiness which I can never forget. Our hearts, my dear friend, were made one for the other; my life is bound up with yours far more by love than by the marriage sacrament. . . .'

Such deep love moves Favras, who, however, feels rather uneasy at seeing his wife so over-excited. 'Try, dearest, to console yourself; commune with your own self to find comfort, and rejoice over the thought that it is preferable to appear guilty in the eyes of men rather than suffer a guilty conscience. I will do all in my power to lay my actions open before all eyes, and I defy any one to maintain that I can be charged with having attempted the nation's safety, or having employed violence against my king. . . .

'O my friend! my friend! how perverse, how wicked men

are! how fatal, circumstances! . . . In some of them we can only trust ourselves to Divine Grace! . . .

'Our children are in good health; my sister and my cousin have seen them, and informed me of it. I suppose that they told you also. . . .' (Letter of January 12.)

The poor lady prisoner, however, irritated by separation, cannot control her love, and she takes bitter pleasure in expressing it in her letters.

'*January* 14.—My heart is intoxicated with its love for you. Never has any one loved as I love you; and I repeat to you, with rapture, I will devote each moment of my life to prove my affection. Remember that I cannot live apart from you, that the whole universe is nothing for me without you, without my love, without yours; but remember also that I would rather mourn your death than be ashamed of your life. I speak in the name of your children; never forget them in any circumstance of your life; if it were necessary, they would help to keep up your courage.'

Such a support was, however, not needed by Favras, whose honour was paramount. On this point, as on all others, he agrees with his wife. On January 15 he answers: 'Rest assured of my courage and my resignation. Whatever be the fate in reserve for me, you will not have to be ashamed of having chosen me for your husband. I will never belie the blood of my ancestors. . . .'

She writes on January 17: 'I did not write to you yesterday, dear friend; I was expecting a letter from you; but your days are taken up with cross-examinations, and you have barely time to eat. How they torment you! I suffer indeed from not being with you! I would like to comfort you. . . . Repeat to yourself that I love you, that I am always busy with you, thinking of you constantly; in this you can never be deceived, for your image, your souvenir, fill all my thoughts. How could I not love you—you who have given me such marked proofs of a true and pure affection; you

whom I prefer to any one in this world, who is, and ever shall be, my only comfort in life! I have sworn, and I swear again, to live and to die loving you; and if it be possible for human beings to feel anything after death, I dare promise that you alone shall fill my whole heart hereafter as you do now.

'Have you heard from our children? I do love them! they are so dear to me! Your son, our dear Charles, is your picture; he must therefore be like you in thoughts and mind. Alas! may he be less unfortunate than his father!

'Good-bye! Love me as much as your own self—such are my wishes. Your wife, lover, and friend wishes you good-day, and reiterates her assurance of everlasting love.'

The marquis in his fondness was not afraid of stooping to minor details, almost intimate ones, in the interest of his wife. He thought of everything, and particularly of her health, which was so dear to him, and which would be invaluable should his life be taken from his friends. He was afraid that the prison food might be bad for Madame de Favras, and in his letter of January 18 he gives her almost fatherly advice on the care she ought to take. He ends with this wise recommendation: 'I must advise you to eat only food good for the blood.'

'I do not write any more to-day,' he goes on, 'being very busy at present; yet I will not close my letter without having told you once again of the feelings of affection, fondness, and love which are ever in my heart. It cherishes its Caroline, whom I love above everything; after her come the charming children she has given me. You are quite right, my darling, in believing that living and dying is for me the prerogative of perfect happiness. Entertain the same feelings with regard to me; it is the constant wish of my heart. . . .'

Madame de Favras was, however, no longer in close custody; she was nevertheless still in prison, although she was not cross-examined nor charged with being an accomplice of her husband. She was now allowed to receive visitors

and to see her children. Favras was glad to learn this; for the heart of that energetic man, that bold conspirator, was not only a proud one, it was at the same time affectionate and loving. His letter of January 19 is full of delicacy:

'Do tell and repeat again and again to my sister and my cousin that if I was fond of them because they are related to me, our misfortune has brought them closer to my heart, not only because they have sympathised with us, but also because they hastened to come and comfort you as soon as your prison door was opened to your friends. Their visit was not the only pleasure in store for you, since you tell me that you have seen your daughter. Kiss the dear child for me; show her my likeness often, so that she may know me more easily when I see her. At her early age one forgets quickly, and I should be sorry if she forgot me. My son was only ten months older than she is when I came back from Holland, and yet I was overjoyed when, after fourteen months of absence, he knew me in the midst of a number of people, and at the first glance called out: "Ah! dear papa, you have come back!" Do you think, my charming Caroline, that I do not see or feel the motive power which acts on my children? It is you, it is my dear Caroline, their mother, who, while guiding their steps, instils in them, unawares, part of her fondness for me! . . .'

He is moved, and at the same time comforted, at this joyful thought. He wants to believe that it will be renewed, he wants his 'dear Caroline' to believe it, and he closes his letter with hopeful words: 'The end of our lives shall be brighter than the beginning has been, although it seemed so free from clouds; our summer, which has been darkened by storms, and made so hard owing to the thorns which have strewn our path, shall be followed by an autumn in which we shall fully enjoy the precious fruits of our labours.'

She answers on the next day—the 20th: 'What a letter, dear! . . . Be certain that our children's hearts shall love

you as much as I do. Yes, I do lead their minds to think of you as much as I can, by telling them what you are, and all their mother owes to you; for it is to you, dear, that I owe a second life. Without you, without your courage, should I have gone to Vienna and asked from the emperor justice against oppression? I owe you my honour; my children owe you a mother whom they can own with pride. . . .

'How that dear little Caroline fondled your likeness! She knew it perfectly well; it is not surprising when you think how many times you went to see her at her nurse's at Belleville, even through the worst of weather. Little Caroline is marvellously well, and she is tall for her age; for after all she is only thirty-four months old. Alas! how young!—yes, very young! She does not know our troubles, our griefs; but I am told that she is so affectionate that she seems to feel the necessity of attracting attention—loving every one. Our friends are mad over her.'

The father's heart is moved by all that he hears about his children; but he has fears for his son. The boy is old enough to understand, and his childish mind might be impressed too strongly by events. Favras's fatherly love feels alarmed.

'*January* 21.—I am delighted with little Caroline when I think that she knew me from my likeness. The amiable and loving disposition which you describe will make you grow all the fonder of her, for now I am sure that you will have her for a long time. . . .

'My daughter is too young to feel and appreciate our present situation or to be grieved at it; but I think, dear, it would have been wiser on your part if you had not deprived my son of his quietude. The child had never seen a prison; yet it is impossible that the sight of soldiers, wickets, bolts—in a word, all those surroundings, so new for him—may make on him a worse impression than you think. . . .'

Favras's trial had begun, and he knew too much not to

perceive from the beginning that the result of his case would not be favourable to him. Though he seems to have made it a rule not to speak of it in his letters, he cannot help showing his fear concerning the result. 'It is always a new pleasure for me, my dear and best friend,' he writes on January 26, 'to send you again the expression of my love—my fondness for you. I feel all the nice things you say in your letter. Dear me! how I do wish to see you and my children, to embrace you, to hold you all in my arms! . . . But when shall this pleasure be given me? Great God! how easy it is to accuse a man! I should never have thought thus before my trial. I am told that M. Thilorier is to be my counsel.'

Madame de Favras answers on the 27th: 'I know, my dear, that M. Thilorier has agreed to be your counsel. I do not know him; but his name is enough for me to be pleased with the choice that has been made. . . . I spent a dreadful night. . . . I have had unpleasant dreams, and felt so feverish that I awoke in a state of perspiration. I am anxious to hear from you—my heart needs it. Be sure that I always read with pleasure your loving protests; I love you so passionately that no one has ever loved any better. . . .'

Many a time Favras had said how much he regretted being separated from those who were dear to him; he was not long in realising that the pleasure of seeing them was worse than the pain of separation. His friends were allowed to bring him his son. His letter of January 28 betrays the deep emotion the sight of his children made on him.

'The sight of my relations, who are dear to me in more than one way, the sight of my son, has caused pain and pleasure: the poor child was very sad, tears were rolling down his cheeks. I pretended not to see them, so as not to make him worse; and I did the best I could to brighten him up. I petted him and spoke to him of having his lunch; I reminded him of keeping guard at his uncle's door; and I succeeded pretty well in cheering my boy.

'Chitenay[1] had brought him, saying that my sister and my cousin would soon be here. Their visit has given me pain, because it reminded me of their kind attentions; but it did me good from the pleasure I had in giving them a proof of how much I appreciated their visit. I could hardly breathe! At last Corméré[2] came with Gaillard.

'This general meeting was precious to me—it was a gathering of relations and friends—but I felt sad at the thought of what brought them together in such a place. . . .

'There were only two missing, my dear Caroline and her daughter: the latter would have been a boon, the former everything. I might expect to see my child, but I dared not dream of being so fortunate as to see her mother. The little one was brought to me yesterday; she is really a charming child, and it is impossible to be sweeter than she is. She kissed me again and again, and showed that she knew me. However it may be, I saw part of what I love; yet my dear Caroline was missing, and my Caroline is everything to me.

'Good-bye, good-bye, my own darling! I am more than ever yours; you are for ever in the heart and in the thoughts of your husband.'

The marquise answered on January 29: 'My soul is sad, very sad, to-day. I did really want some comfort, and your letter was balm to my pain. Your letters give me such pleasure! Yes! my own dear friend, they are a great comfort to me; I read them at least twenty times a day, and every time with renewed pleasure. My love for you is so true, so pure, so sincere! When shall it be given me to prove it to you in a sensible manner? It has never been my lot to make any sacrifice for you. . . .'

It is evident that, on the eve of the misfortune that she dreaded, this loving and devoted woman became doubly loving and devoted. And yet, who among her sex has given

[1] The marquis de Favras's sister had married M. de Chitenay.

[2] Brother to the marquis de Favras.

a husband more thorough proofs of boundless love? Nevertheless, she does not think she has done enough—poor, noble woman!

Alas! a terrible blow is in store for her. On January 30 she hears that M. de Brunville, the king's procurator, has demanded a sentence of death against Favras! This cut her to the heart.

'What a frightful evening, dear, I spent yesterday! The night was worse still. Dear me! what an awful end! I don't know where I am. What a situation! I am lost in thoughts. However much we may wish to be strong and brave, there are times when we give way to our weak nature.... I could not cry; but it is the ordinary effect produced by great shocks and overpowering blows. Put your trust in Providence. I pray to God for you. . . . Do not give up hope, for you want it more than ever. . . .'

Favras was certainly not wanting in courage; he had enough for two, as will appear from his letter to his wife. He tries to comfort her, and does so in simple but noble words.

'*February* 2.—Believe that I share every one of your feelings; my nature is neither above humanity, nor fatherhood, nor the ties of an affection which binds me to the beloved one. More than any one else, therefore, I feel the harshness of my situation. Yet Fate, which is sometimes so cruel, may also have better luck in reserve; and it is better luck that by chance may befall me; indeed, I trust in it, as my fate rests now in the hands of justice. This word justice is an invitation to confidence; and after a searching investigation into such a complicated and extraordinary adventure as the one in which I am concerned, my judges must find me blameless.'

He does not even tremble or feel cast down at the thought of capital punishment; but why should the purest feelings of the husband and father join in making a furious assault against him and render him weak and unable to resist? He confesses it with pain.

'*February* 3.—My dear Caroline, I had the pleasure of dining with my children, but I must confess that after the first moment was over, my pleasure was not without alloy. It was so mingled with care and bitterness that I could not undertake to renew the experience often. The sight of them is too dear, too precious, not to stir deeply my fatherly love. When will my grief be really soothed? . . . I feel strangely oppressed, stifled: I love them too much now; they need me so much!

'Ah! my darling! what a difference it will make when I can see you! My captivity will be nothing then; I shall feel free, though in prison, and happy—oh, so happy! for it is you alone that I long for, that I need! I sigh after you! Being deprived of seeing you is the only cause of my anguish. . . .'

Madame de Favras shared her husband's anguish; she saw in imagination the darkest pictures and experienced the worst forebodings. 'The whole of the night I pondered over the three drops of blood which you found on yourself a fortnight before we were arrested; you remember you could not explain how or whence the drops came. . . . Never have I loved you better; never have you been so dear to me!'

As his trial goes on and the close draws near, the unfortunate man feels more and more how hard it is to break certain ties; he requires all the courage he may still have to keep up a cheerful countenance; he is afraid of anything that may weaken him, and of his children more than of anything else, for they were always a cause of emotion.

'*February* 7.—I am resigned, since we must endure what we cannot help; . . . but it is more than I can bear to see those two beings who are so dear to me. I cannot amuse them, I cannot divert their attention from the grief which I feel in thinking of their future. My dear Caroline, do not insist upon it. I do not require to be entertained; I want real consolations from those who can devise with me the best way of enlightening my judges and the public on the real facts of my case. I saw nobody yesterday—in fact, not since Wednesday;

I am sorry, for I feel it more than I can say. I close my letter by repeating to my dear Caroline that she is and shall ever be the one whom I love and adore.'

Madame de Favras herself is beginning to despair :

'*February* 13.—I am not afraid for myself, but for my unfortunate children, whose only hope is in their father. Never forget them, they are so dear to you. What will become of them if they are deprived of their father? I am sad when I think of their future! I may be wrong in thus giving way, but I cannot overcome the dark forebodings of my heart. If implacable fate . . . but no! my dear friend, I will not consider such a dreadful prospect. . . . If they must needs have a victim, why have they not chosen me? I would bear torture with as much courage as you do; my heart is as brave as yours, and I have proved to them that, in spite of the frightful preparations they had made to arrest me, they had not the pleasure of terrifying me. I was not awed by a three hours' examination and cross-examination by MM. Bailly and La Fayette. I spoke to them with dignity, and showed how much I despised the Committee. Misfortune has added to my pride, and my heart will be brave until the end of my life. . . .'

It often happens that in the most troubled hours, when the mind is tired of facing misfortune, hope rallies and delusions reappear. Whether the de Favrases were sincere or not, they tried to make each other share their self-delusions; it may have been but innocent deceit, meant to soothe one another's grief.

Favras wrote on February 15: 'My son has just arrived; he shall spend the day with me and his sister, who will be brought for dinner. Towards evening he shall come to you and spend to-morrow with you. Keep your mind easy. I repose great hopes on my Memoir.'

The next day Madame de Favras replied: 'Your calm, your courage, strengthen me. . . . I will pray to God and ask Him to have pity on my soul. After that He may do with me as He pleases: He will certainly have mercy upon us.'

De Favras wrote on the 17th: 'This is not a time for anxiety, for I am on the eve of the trial to which I have looked forward, and neither my heart nor my conscience reproach me with anything. The most extreme sentence can only be an error on the part of humanity. This, my dear Caroline, must be a comfort for you, as it is for me. The only thing that troubles me is that my Memoir cannot be ready. . . .'

Madame de Favras answered the same day: 'I will not describe the depth of my grief, my dear friend, in spite of your innocence. You are only accused, it is true, and there is no reason why you should be sentenced; still, your life is in the hands of men: the infernal machination of the evil-minded people who have so wickedly caused your incarceration will be more influential than ever. They are too much afraid lest the king should have one faithful subject left. They may take our lives, they cannot rob us of so just a sentiment. My son, who is with me, is witness of my grief and my courage. I do not conceal from him that you may be sacrificed to the wrath and ambition of those to whom the presence of a subject faithful to duty is a living reproach. I shudder, and my blood runs cold within me. My pen refuses to go on. . . .

'My heart, though strong, gives way before nature, dear; it is a mother, a wife, who fears the worst for him whom she cherishes: what will become of my poor children? No, I must not entertain such a dark thought; I must not make you weak. You may be sure that I shall be brave, as brave as you. I shall teach my son to love, to respect, to be devoted to his king; he will fondly remember your virtues, and the better he knows our misfortune, the more he will feel that the last drop of his blood belongs to a prince whose kindness has brought upon him the worst of fates.

'Good-bye, dear. Keep all your love for me. Remember that I am worthy of it, on account of my affection, my courage, and my fondness for my children.'

Was not this letter, in which Madame de Favras speaks at

length of her husband's loyalty to the king, and of that king's troubles, an appeal to the sovereign who could, or at least she thought so, interfere in favour of a loyal subject? She virtually confesses her husband's plan by her allusion to his political faith; but what matters now? The verdict is on the point of being rendered. Should her letter, in default of the king, be read by the magistrates—for there is every probability that Favras's correspondence was perused by the civil lieutenant at the Châtelet—will not the judges be more inclined to acquit this man, or at least to inflict a light sentence upon him, whose crime was only an act of loyalty? The magistracy was said to be royalist.

Favras was fighting for every inch of ground. In the last letter he wrote to his valiant wife he told her how annoyed he was at not having the Memoir he had composed. 'That printer is a cruel man, my dear Caroline; he is playing me an extremely perfidious trick by not having brought me a single copy as yet; and it is Thursday, nine A.M. . . . As I was writing this, he came; the woman you sent saw him. He has still two full pages to print, and he dared to ask me for money! Money, indeed! This is a day for cash! Do not give him any if he calls on you. It is evident that this man must have been bribed by somebody, to have acted in so perfidious a manner; for it is very evident that I shall receive no copy to-day.

'Yesterday I was told that they were going to ask you for money. Do not give any to anybody from the little amount you have. Besides, we shall very soon see each other. This will be a sweet moment for me, you may be sure, my dear friend. Believe in my hearty and fond wishes.'

This note was dated February 18, the very day of the verdict.

VI

THE TRIAL

At the same time as the marquis and marquise de Favras were arrested, the police searched their house. They found there :

1. A copy of the song, the 'Troubadour Béarnais.'
2. A few letters to Madame de Favras.
3. Letters, suspicious through their enigmatic style.
4. A letter from the comte de Foucault to the marquis de Favras.

The song was a very innocent composition, expressing in very bad verses the feelings inspired in the royalists by Louis XVI.'s misfortune. This document bears the stamp of the time, and deserves to be reproduced.

LE TROUBADOUR BÉARNAIS.

Air—*Eh! vraiment ne savons-nous pas!*

Un troubadour béarnais,
Les yeux inondés de larmes,
A ses montagnards chantait
Par un refrain, source d'alarmes :
Louis, le fils de Henri,
Est prisonnier dans Paris. (*bis*)

Il a vu couler le sang
De cette garde fidèle,
Qui vient d'offrir, en mourant,
Aux bons Français, un vrai modèle ;
Hélas ! le fils du bon Henri
Est prisonnier dans Paris. (*bis*)

Il a tremblé pour les jours
De sa compagne chérie,
Qui n'a trouvé de secours
Vraiment qu'en sa propre énergie.
Elle suit le fils de Henri
Dedans les prisons de Paris. (*bis*)

Quel crime ont-ils donc commis
Pour être chargés de chaînes ?
Du peuple ils sont les amis ;
Le peuple veut-il donc qu'on l'aime,
Quand il tient le fils de Henri
Dedans les prisons de Paris ? (*bis*)

Le Dauphin, ce fils chéri,
Qui seul fait notre espérance,
De pleurs sera donc nourri ?
Quoi ! les berceaux qu'on donne en France
Aux enfants de notre Henri,
Sont donc les prisons de Paris ? (*bis*)

Bon peuple, ouvre donc les yeux ;
Vois ce que c'est qu'un parricide,
Où des monstres odieux
Ont entraîné ton cœur candide,
En faisant les fils de Henri
Par tes mains captifs dans Paris. (*bis*)

Indigne de ce forfait,
Désolé de ton erreur,
Il te faut, par un bienfait,
Reconquérir l'antique honneur
D'être le peuple chéri
Du sang de l'immortel Henri. (*bis*)

The letters addressed to Madame de Favras were without importance, and had no connection whatever with the conspiracy. However, the notes 'written in an enigmatic style' were very important ; they were Chomel's letters. Not only did they refer to the loan of two million francs, but they also made allusion to some means of creating a counter-revolution in Holland, the birthplace of the banker. As to the comte de Foucault's letter, it contained a series of questions, evidently made by some one acquainted with Favras's plan and ready to join him in its execution.

More important documents had escaped the police ; they had been placed on the top of a cupboard in a clothes room which was not searched. They came to La Fayette's know-

ledge much later; the baron de Corméré spoke of them secretly to La Fayette after the trial. However, those documents were not necessary proofs of the accusation; the charge had been fully established by Morel and Turcaty's information, by the spy Geoffroy's reports, and by the unwise and suspicious steps of Favras himself.

He was first summoned before the *Comité des recherches*; he requested that Bailly and La Fayette should be present. He denied that there was a plot. Concerning the loan, he gave long but confused explanations; of course, he had reasons for it. It was very difficult to make people believe that the loan was not raised for a political purpose. Supposing Favras's evidence to be true, the comte de Provence was not in such financial difficulties as to require, as he (Favras) stated, such an enormous sum; besides, had he really been in want of it, it would have been more natural and wiser for the prince to ask for this amount, through his steward, from French bankers, who would have concluded the affair much more rapidly and in a simpler way.

Moreover, Favras stated, in order to save the prince, that he believed the idea of a loan had been spontaneous. Of course, such a statement was not in favour of the marquis.

It was in itself suspicious enough that Favras should be mixed up at all in Monsieur's private affairs; this became still more suspicious when Favras's interference was considered together with the intrigues he carried on with Morel and Turcaty with a view to recruit armed troops. Another thing yet gave his statement still more the appearance of being untrue; this was his conversations with Marquier, when he asked the lieutenant to help him in removing the danger which threatened the king at the Tuileries. For each of those facts separately he gave, indeed, a sensible reason. Thus, the loan was a financial transaction similar to others which he was in the habit of making. The troops were for Brabant; this was the realisation of an old project. As to his conversations with Marquier, they only

proved his fears as a staunch and open royalist, and his ardent desire to prevent the royal family from suffering evils which might be expected, considering the troubled state of France. However, all those incidents, being simultaneous, gave reason for supposing that they were closely connected ; upon such a supposition, they explained each other. Being a faithful royalist, Favras endeavoured to save the monarchy ; with the agreement of notable persons, he was borrowing money to pay the troops he would have collected, and with which he would fight the Revolution's forces.

The marquis did not imagine that his defence would save him. However, he would not plead guilty ; he thought that perhaps the judges, being the majority of them royalists, would acquit him, or that Monsieur would use all his influence in his favour.

'They succeeded in persuading him,' General Thiébault says, 'that his Majesty alone could save him, and that he would be pardoned if he left out everything which might implicate Monsieur.'

As we have said before, Favras had been arrested on December 25, 1789, towards four o'clock in the morning ; he had been incarcerated at the Abbaye, and on January 7, 1790, transferred to the Châtelet prison. This was the court before which his case was to be tried, as by a decision of the National Assembly, dated September of the previous year, the Châtelet had been transformed into a High Court, judging political cases.

Since October 16, 1789, the civil lieutenant of the Châtelet was Omer Talon, a former *Conseiller au Parlement.* He was a staunch royalist, but not over-scrupulous. The part he played in the Favras case was considerable ; this shall be shown by the trial, and the reader will be able to form his own judgment on Talon. He was assisted by M. Bellanger, private secretary to the judges. These were MM. Avril, Pelletier, Millon, Béville de la Salle, Ollivier, Boucher, Olive

de la Gastine, Bouron des Clayes, Lemoine, Michaux, Boucher d'Argis, Judde de Neuville, Dubois, Destouches, Mutet, Baron Quatremère, Nau, Vieillot, baron des Fontaines, Nau de Champlouis, Moreau de la Vigerie, Sylvestre de Chanteloup, Chapelain, Trochereau, Duval fils, Goupy Geoffroy, de la Garde, Denois, Solle, de Petigny, Henry, de la Huproye, Chabaud, and Clavier, with the registrar Drié. The crown prosecutor was M. de Brunville. M. Quatremère was appointed judge-advocate.

The case caused an extraordinary stir among the people. The anger of the masses was aroused at the idea that the king might have been carried off, and that its actual idols, Bailly, La Fayette, and Necker, had had such a narrow escape of death. Besides, to crown those crimes, the population was to be famished. There was a perfect storm raging against poor Favras, who was charged with being the author of so daring and so hateful a plot. Public curiosity was excited by the mystery which surrounded the origin and the accomplices of this affair; the universal question put, both by friends and by enemies of the Court, was: Would Favras disclose all he knew? The complicity of the comte de Provence was not in the least contested; but the question was, rather, how far was he an accomplice? Then, the prisoner was a nobleman, and at that period it was not distasteful to the people to see a marquis perish. And they rejoiced because, equality having been established in sentences of death, that marquis would be hanged like a commoner, and not beheaded like a gentleman. Such a sight would be pleasant to the Parisians of the Revolution; they must have desired as a great delight to see, for the first time since the 'Declaration of the Rights of Man,' the first victim swinging six feet above the ground.

Every day the noisy, howling, and threatening crowd assembled before the prison walls and clamoured for the life of the prisoner upon whom it had already passed sentence. One need not believe that such a crowd would require any

ringleaders; and yet they were numerous, those who kept up the people's anger. Whence they had come it would be difficult to say. What, however, can be safely stated is, that there were two classes of people who had an interest in the marquis's death: the revolutionists who were glad to punish an enemy, and Favras's accomplices, who would be rid of one who knew their secret.

Those circumstances were most unfavourable to the work of justice from the opening of the case. And the fact that the Mayor of Paris and the commander of the only armed troops of Paris were the very men who were marked out to be murdered by the conspirators, made the marquis's case ten times worse. We must, however, render justice both to Bailly and La Fayette, and say that they were not actuated by any base sentiment of revenge. On the contrary, La Fayette went spontaneously to the civil lieutenant and the crown prosecutor, assuring them that whatever the sentence might be, they were not to fear its consequences. 'God forbid that I should ever think the Châtelet of Paris may be actuated by fear,' he said; 'but such fear would be quite superfluous, for there is not the slightest danger, and whatever your sentence may be, it shall be carried out.'

The case began on February 13.

The president, Omer Talon, was sitting under a canopy; around him were the thirty-seven magistrates. It was before this imposing assembly that Favras appeared, with powdered wig, and bearing the Cross of Saint-Louis. The cross-examination began. Every one agrees in saying that the prisoner's attitude was perfect, and that all those who came to hear the trial without being prejudiced were favourably impressed by Favras.

Prudhomme says in his newspaper, 'The Revolutions of Paris,' that 'he stood before his judges with all the advantages appertaining to innocence, and that he made the most of them; for, being an educated man, he spoke with facility and

as a gentleman. His delivery had even a certain charm, which it was difficult to escape. His nature was gentle; his bearing gentlemanly. Besides, he was of good stature, and bore a noble expression on his face. During the whole of his cross-examination he never departed from the attitude of an innocent man, and answered every question in a clear tone, without the slightest embarrassment.'

General Thiébault relates in his 'Mémoires' an interesting fact: 'Being still on guard at the Châtelet on the day Favras was tried, it happened that by chance I had to stand sentinel behind his seat, and to remain there the whole time he was examined. I must say that I was very much struck with his firmness; indeed, he must have made up his mind beforehand to stand his ground. I was none the less struck with the clever way in which he played his part. Every time the name of Monsieur was mentioned he recalled the obligations under which he was to the prince, and never once said an incriminating word. Far from it, Favras explained away all that was most compromising for Monsieur.'

His noble and generous attitude was, however, encouraged by the magistrates, who were trembling lest an imprudent word, pronounced in the heat of the defence, should reveal a secret which was no longer one for them; but, being desirous to avoid a scandal which would reflect on the king himself, they feigned to ignore the secret. What would have happened if, losing courage or patience, Favras had said: 'I am but the agent of Monsieur. He alone is the instigator and the leader of the conspiracy which is laid to my charge'?

However, Favras did not speak those words. He bore all the blows his enemies dealt him. Alone he struggled against the witnesses and the proofs which were accumulating against him.

The first witness was M. de Saint-Priest, ex-Minister of the Interior. He related the conversation which had taken place between him and Favras during the day of October 5—

how M. de Favras had asked him for the king's horses, and how he had refused.

Morel—forty years old, describing himself as an officer in the National Guard, and living Rue Thibautode, No. 26, in the parish of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, at Paris—gave evidence at length, with most precise particulars on the marquis de Favras's plans. The first plan, shaped out on September 15, was to form an army of one thousand men at Montargis, under pretext of sending it to Brabant, but in reality to march it upon Versailles. Once there, it was to dissolve the Assembly and deliver the king. The second plan was resumed after the October days. In this, with the complicity of Turcaty and Marquier, three columns of four hundred men each were to be formed. They were to enter Paris through the 'portes Maillot,' 'de la Conférence,' and 'du Roule.' Necker, Bailly, and La Fayette were to be murdered. In view of preventing any other accomplice taking part, he (Morel) had asked to have the honour of killing La Fayette with his own hand. The witness gave particulars of the manner in which Louis XVI. was to be carried off by means of a ruse, or even, if necessary, by force. The king's departure was to be the prelude to a march on Paris. All the malcontents from the neighbouring provinces, aided by twenty thousand Swiss, ten thousand Germans, and twelve thousand Sardinians, were to compose this besieging army. Lastly, famine would be the crowning of the operations.

Far from concealing it, Morel boasted of having revealed Favras's scheme to Masson de Neuville; he was proud of having been instructed by La Fayette to continue to take a part in the plot, so as to baffle it at the proper time. He was following his instructions when he introduced Favras to the two bankers, Pomaret and Chomel.

Turcaty—aged forty-one, infantry officer, living in the Rue Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, Paris—corroborated Morel's evidence on every point. Being frightened by the aim towards

which the conspiracy tended, he at one time advised Morel to reveal it. For his own part, the witness had never intended really to be a party to the plot.

Chomel—aged forty-three, a merchant, living at 6 Place des Victoires—told of the negotiations relative to the loan of two millions raised in the name of Monsieur. He added, that the marquis de Favras had never spoken to him of the plan of entering Paris with an army and murdering three men of note, but merely of carrying the king away from Paris and bringing him to Péronne.

Next came Jean-Pierre Marquier, aged thirty-six, a sub-lieutenant in the grenadiers of the National Guard, of the Sainte-Marguerite district, in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. He confessed to having wept when he saw the rabble dragging the king from Versailles on October 6. He added, that towards the end of the same month, being on duty at the Tuileries, he saw the queen walking in the gardens. He then spoke to her equerry. On the following day M. Morel came to him asking him to go on the evening of that day to the Place Royale arcades. Having agreed to it, he met a man whom he did not know, and whose name was never disclosed. He recognised that man in the prisoner. The third time they met, his interlocutor asked him if he could answer for his grenadiers. He (Marquier) answered in the affirmative, meaning by that, that he was sure of 'their punctuality, their discretion, and their courage.' In the fourth interview the stranger gave him a pamphlet called 'Ouvrez donc les yeux' (Open your Eyes), and marked a few passages which were intended to incite the ex-*Gardes Françaises* to resume their post near the sovereign. He understood that they expected he would urge his men to march against La Fayette. He took the pamphlet and never returned.

We shall mention the names only of the following witnesses, whose evidence was quite insignificant : Jean-Baptiste Le Dreux, barrister ; Buquet, upholsterer ; François-Marie

de Varèze, vicar-general of the diocese of Autun; Jean-Marie Arrighi, a Corsican priest.

Marie Questa, the widow of M. Savournin, stated that she had seen the marquis de Favras wearing a white cockade on the October days. Some time afterwards, having asked him to help a friend of hers, a priest, that he might be appointed to a bishopric, he answered that he had no influence at all in this way. But the marquis added, that she ought to urge all the Corsicans she knew to join him, in order that they might take the king to Péronne. She had replied that she only knew invalids, and they would be of no use.

But graver evidence followed this ridiculous gossip.

Masson de Neuville—aged twenty-nine, aide-de-camp to La Fayette—corroborated Morel's statements. He had received this man on September 15 and had gone with him to the general. Morel had then revealed all Favras's plans, the one before the October days and the one subsequent to the October days. The commander-in-chief urged him 'to follow the conspiracy.' After receiving information from Morel, Masson de Neuville had been present at one of the conversations between Favras and Marquier. He was then with the man Geoffroy. Referring to the latter, Masson de Neuville said: 'I must do justice to the zeal of this citizen, who, as well as I, obeyed the general's orders. I will add, that I was among those who urged M. Morel to go on watching the conspirators, as their doings were of public interest.'

Jean-Baptiste Gouvion—forty-five years old, Knight of Saint-Louis, major-general in the National Guards—stated that at the end of November Masson de Neuville gave him all particulars concerning the plot; he went with his friend to Morel, who reiterated his information.

Alexandre-Casimir Geoffroy—aged thirty, ex-officer in Naples, volunteer in the Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois battalion—stated that towards the end of October he had undertaken to spy upon the marquis de Favras; he had been present at

the interviews between the prisoner and Marquier; and, according to his orders, he had arrested Favras in the Rue Beaurepaire on September 24.

David Hébrard Pomaret—aged fifty-two, a banker in Lyons—had been introduced to Favras for the purpose of raising a loan. He had asked for certain guarantees, and had heard nothing more of the transaction.

A barrister named Tornézy merely said that he knew nothing about the matter; he only thought the marquis de Favras incapable of being a conspirator.

An ex-commander in Amsterdam, Eliot Abéma, was introduced by Chomel to Favras; he considered, however, the latter's dreams as of no consequence. Baron de Capellen, of Marche, a member of the Dutch government, had seen the prisoner at La Haye at the time of the Batavian rising. Having been informed by Abéma of Favras's scheme, he had said to him: 'It appears, Sir, that you want to produce a three-act play—the first in Holland, the second in Brabant, and the third in France.' He had paid no attention to such a scheme, as he looked upon it as a dream.

Two other witnesses—Martin de Suriny, a parliamentary counsel, and Claude Berthollet, a surgeon-major—had heard a man named Waflard declare to the district committee of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois that there was a plot for murdering La Fayette.

The marquis de Favras opposed these statements by speaking of the worthlessness of certain witnesses, such as Morel—'Can any faith be put in the word of a man whose villany goes so far as to say that he himself offered to kill La Fayette?'—and when he could not deny what he had told Morel, Turcaty, or Marquier, denied having entertained any guilty intention. 'If I had believed that France was threatened with dismemberment, and if I had thought that the only means to prevent it was for the king to change his residence, I should have thought it my duty to confide to the press

an extravagant idea, perhaps, but which I should have thought might serve the country. Where is the court which would then have had the right to arrest me for having been mistaken in my previsions?'

The name of the informer against him had been concealed from Favras at the opening of his case, but he kept asking for it. He of course had immense interest in knowing it. When the marquis had requested the crown prosecutor to give the name, the latter had evasively answered that he had heard the information through the procurator-syndic of the Commune. This was a mean lie. Favras then applied to the National Assembly, whose power seemed to be above all others. But this assembly pretended that it was not endowed with judicial authority, and therefore refused to interfere, saying there was no reason for it to discuss the question. La Fayette and Bailly then broke a silence which was contrary to loyalty and humanity; and on January 24 they wrote to the civil lieutenant Omer Talon. In their letter they recalled the facts we have already stated, adding, 'Two of the chiefs of the Paris government must be permitted to state that M. Morel, the second witness in the case, is the citizen who first gave us information concerning the scheme laid to the charge of the marquis de Favras.'

As soon as Favras knew who had turned informer, he made his grievances more precise; he stated that Morel was in poverty, with liabilities to the amount of eight thousand livres, and always in quest of money. Having waited in vain for an office or a commission, Morel had then turned his expectations towards the sum of twenty-four thousand livres awarded to informers, and he had invented a conspiracy in order to claim the credit of having disclosed it to the government.

He gave the following explanation concerning the loan: 'My son is under Monsieur's protection, and a boarder in one of the National schools. The half-year's money, which ought to be paid in advance, had not yet been settled in October. I had

known for a long time that he (Monsieur) was in difficulties. . . . I have done it without being asked; I had made a point of not divulging it before Monsieur himself should have been informed of the happy result of what I had undertaken in order to please him.'

The public followed the proceedings with feverish excitement. The hostile crowd did not leave the approaches to the Châtelet; it uttered violent cries, and it looked as if the people wanted to dictate to the magistrates the sentence they were to pass; they seemed to think justice too slow. On January 26 the crowd rushed against the prison doors, and very nearly burst them open. Meanwhile, the Châtelet gave judgment in another case, contrary to the expectations of the people, and thus exasperated them.

The Baron Besenval, commander of the troops in Paris, had on July 14, the day of the riot, roused the Parisians' anger, although he had done nothing that could justify it. The court advised him to seek safety in flight. Arrested not very far from Paris, he was brought back and tried at the Châtelet. He was acquitted on January 29, and set free during the night of the 29th–30th.

The 30th was the day on which the crown prosecutor was to conclude for or against the marquis de Favras. Besenval's acquittal gave the people to understand that the judges were favourable to the prisoner, who, like Besenval, was a royalist. So the crowd surrounded the Châtelet that day; clamours for death ascended, reaching even to the room where the court was sitting; they formed a sinister accompaniment to the trial.

At nine A.M. the eight-and-thirty judges took their seats.

Before the judge-advocate spoke, the crown prosecutor requested that the prisoner should be brought in; he wished to open and read in his presence a letter addressed to him. The prisoner having been placed in the dock, the letter was read. It was addressed to *The marquis de Favras, ex-captain in the Swiss Guards of Monsieur, brother to the king, at the Grand*

Châtelet. It only contained insults and railleries addressed to the prisoner and his judges. The signature was *Tiresias, grandson to Nostradamus and first cousin to the Liège Almanac.* It had been posted in *London, a sarcastic place, where the French at the National Assembly and the Variétés are admired.*

After this rather ridiculous incident the prisoner retired, and M. Quatremère, judge-advocate, gave a summary of the case, reading at the same time all the documents relating to it, among which was a request of the prisoner that he should be allowed to prove his innocence. In spite of M. Thilorier's demand, the request was not granted.

Then M. Brunville, crown prosecutor, delivered a pathetic speech, the subject of which was the blindness of those who were trying to bring about a counter-revolution. His florid style could hardly conceal his emotion at having to prosecute a man who certainly was guilty of the crime of which he was accused; yet the crime was not so much his own as the crime of men of particularly high rank, whose close relation to the sovereign shielded them from justice; lastly, against a man who heroically assumed all responsibility, and ennobled his cause by his sacrifice. It was therefore with 'shaking voice,' as the 'Moniteur Universel' said (February 3, 1790), that he concluded that 'M. de Favras be duly declared guilty and convicted of having conceived, communicated, and endeavoured to put into execution the plan for a conspiracy capable of revolutionising the kingdom and of annulling the decisions of the Assembly; furthermore, of having planned the murder of MM. Bailly, Necker, and La Fayette, in order to attain his ends; and of having in particular chosen a certain man for the accomplishment of this last crime. And in atonement for these crimes, he requests, in the king's name, that Favras should pay the penalty in front of Notre-Dame and at the Hôtel de Ville, and afterwards be hanged in the Place de Grève.'

After the sentence was read, the prisoner was called again

and cross-examined by the civil lieutenant as well as by several of the magistrates. The charges and the defence are those which have been given before. The 'Moniteur Universel' remarked that the marquis de Favras 'replied in a calm voice that he was innocent of all the crimes imputed to him.' This was a strange case; the actors had exchanged their parts, for it was the prosecutor who trembled and the prisoner whose countenance was steadfast.

The prisoner being in the dock, M. Thilorier spoke

M. Thilorier was a Liberal who had embraced the new ideas. Nevertheless, his duty obliging him to defend a staunch royalist, he fulfilled it with a zeal and eagerness quite praiseworthy in his case. For four hours he spoke before an unfriendly audience. 'His anti-patriotic sallies,' the 'Moniteur Universel' said, 'often caused the audience to murmur; he roused indignation in the Assembly when he tried to throw ridicule on the citizens and shopkeepers of whom the National Guards were composed. But what finally turned every one against him, was when he dared attack the solicitor-general, by accusing him publicly of having given sentence against his conscience, in order to please those who had requested him to prosecute and to satisfy the cruelty of public opinion and the unjust clamours of the crowd.'

This short extract shows how difficult was his task; hard in itself, it was made harder by the animosity he met with in the audience, composed mostly of revolutionists. In fact, his defence had in no way exceeded his right. He had closed the defence with the following words: 'As I conclude this speech I feel unspeakable anguish, for we naturally pause with uncertainty before human judgments. It seems to me I hear a tremendous voice. . . . Yes, Gentlemen, I hear it, and I know it—it is the people's voice! It reaches even into this court. The crowd requires a victim! Ah! Be careful! . . .'

N 2

The president interrupted the barrister, and the crown prosecutor said in a sharp tone:

'M. Thilorier, you must have a strange notion of your duties and mine to indulge in expressions so out of place.'

'Posterity shall say which of us two has best fulfilled his duties,' M. Thilorier replied.

'I despise what you say,' the crown prosecutor answered.

'But what you have just spoken is to my honour,' retorted the counsel.

After this violent discussion the judges retired to deliberate, and at half-past twelve P.M. the civil lieutenant gave the following verdict:

'We say, after deliberation of the counsel, the whole court being present, and passing judgment without appeal,

'Having heard the crown prosecutor as well as the counsel for Thomas de Mahy, marquis de Favras,

'Without considering the reproaches made against the first and fourth witnesses (Morel and Turcaty) by M. de Favras in his case,—reproaches which we declare impertinent and not admissible,—and before doing justice to the accusations and charges brought against M. de Favras, MM. Morel de Chefdeville, de la Ferté, Abbé d'Eymard, the comte de Mirabeau, the comte de La Châtre, the comte de Foucault, and any other person whose name may be afterwards given, shall be examined by M. Quatremère, judge-advocate; the said examination having been communicated to the crown prosecutor, to be by him required; and that the Assembly present do judge as to what part of it shall be pertinent to this trial.'

VII

THE SENTENCE

The new witnesses were accordingly called, and examined by the judge-advocate.

The comte de La Châtre, who was a gentleman of Monsieur's chamber—he was one of the conspirators—deposed that he had known Favras when the latter was a captain in Monsieur's *Cent Suisses* ; he had afterwards lost sight of him until the time the National Assembly had met. M. de Favras, he said, had called on him and submitted for his approval several financial schemes for Monsieur. The latter, said the marquis, required two million francs, and Favras was trying to obtain them from Dutch bankers. On the marquis's request, he (La Châtre) had mentioned it to Monsieur, who had agreed to the proposal. He added, that he knew nothing more, and that in his opinion M. de Favras was a good citizen and an honourable man.

The next witness knew nothing of the charges brought against the prisoner. The latter had given him notes concerning a financial work. He went on a Sunday to M. de Favras, to thank him; he met there a gentleman, who, he was told, was M. Turcaty.

The comte de Mirabeau stated that 'he met M. de Favras on several occasions about financial schemes. The prisoner had been introduced to him by M. de Biron as a man well versed in such subjects; for his own part, after holding repeated intercourse with the marquis in the presence of several people, he was fully convinced of his competency in financial affairs. Beyond this he knew nothing whatever of a conspiracy, neither against M. de Favras nor any one else whose name was mentioned in the information given to the procurator-syndic of the Paris Commune.'

Such evidence was rather bold in the mouth of a man who had disclosed the whole plot to Etienne Dumont. But Mirabeau had nothing to fear from Favras, for the marquis was bent on defending himself without implicating any one else. Nevertheless, Favras thought that in return for his own silence he might expect a few favourable words from Mirabeau. He therefore asked the witness to state 'whether he (the prisoner) had not spoken to him of his plan of going to Brabant in order to help the forthcoming counter-revolution; and whether he (Favras) had not said that he intended to refer his project to M. de La Fayette and ask him to give his sanction to a town being chosen where six thousand men could be brought together. Further, did not all their intercourse tend to prove that his aim was to go to Brabant?'

Mirabeau replied, that in all his life he had held only one private conversation with M. de Favras, and that for a space of two minutes. During so short a time it had not been possible to enter into full particulars on so important a question. All he could say was that it was true M. de Favras had spoken about going to Brabant, but no mention had been made either of M. de La Fayette or of a conspiracy, nor as to the formation of an army.

Then Favras replied:

'I am sorry, Count, that you cannot recall to mind our conversation; three lines would be sufficient to relate all that was said, and if you would take the trouble to repeat it, it might serve my cause.'

Mirabeau answered that he did not remember.

He was on the point of retiring when Favras stopped him, saying that 'he was sorry MM. Morel and Turcaty should have brought his name into their evidence.' However, Mirabeau said 'he did not care, as it was a trick on the part of his enemies.'

Morel de Chefdeville, steward at Monsieur's, said he had no knowledge of the charges imputed to the prisoner; he had

only heard of a loan of two million francs. In order to free himself from any real or apparent complicity, he wished to state that he could not give a precise account of anything with regard to the loan. This was rather strange for a steward, who ought to have been the first person to hear of it.

M. Papillon, treasurer to Monsieur, gave similar evidence. It had come to his knowledge that the comte de La Châtre had seen M. de Favras concerning this loan, but it was at a much later date that the fact was mentioned to him. On December 24 Chomel and Favras saw him in regard to the conclusion of the business; they left at nine P.M., and he had never seen them since. Besides, the loan had not been made.

The comte de Foucault was summoned because of a letter bearing his signature, which had been found among Favras's papers. This letter, which had reference to the unfortunate period, and to the sad situation of the king, ended thus: 'Where are your troops? How many have you? On what side of Paris will they enter the city? Try to find a post for me, for I should be glad to serve under you.'[1]

The comte de Foucault, who was five-and-thirty years old, was a captain in the king's own regiment, and his seat was Bellefontaine, in Argonne. The wording of his letter coincided too well with the information given by Morel, to allow the court to believe that Favras had not asked Foucault's participation. The latter, however, denied the fact. He stated that, having left Paris in July, he had retired to his estate in Argonne; there he had received a letter from Favras, in which the marquis spoke of the riots which had taken place through-

[1] In the work which the baron de Corméré has written on his brother's case, the suspicious phrases of M. de Foucault's letter are given somewhat differently: 'Whence will reinforcement come? Through which province will it pass? Are you to be one of the officers? How glad I should be if I were to serve with you! Kindly let me know the news.' In this version no mention of Paris is made. However, we cannot trust it as much as the other, for it is evident that M. de Corméré had an interest in shielding his brother from the charges of which he wished to clear him.

out France, and above all in Paris; nevertheless, this letter had no reference to any plot whatever. Besides, the suspected parts of his own letter were only answers to rumours of riots in the metropolis, and of the danger to which the king and his family were exposed in Paris. These rumours had come to him through Favras. Notwithstanding this explanation, nobody was convinced; and, as the 'Moniteur Universel' remarked, 'there was too great a want of analogy between Favras's letter and Foucault's reply.'

All the evidence, with its reticences, contradictions, and negations, completed and gave weight to the clear and precise information given by Morel, Turcaty, Marquier, and Chomel. The prosecution found in the first two depositions 'particulars which cannot be made up,' and in the two others the confirmation of every part of the previous ones. Favras was beginning to feel that his case was a bad one; all the more so, as a short time after his arrest he had written to the comte de La Châtre, begging that he would induce Monsieur to go on with the raising of the loan, and to cash the amount through Chomel, and thus corroborate Favras's statement. Nevertheless, Monsieur had given up the affair, and both parties had laid aside the idea of a loan.

Considering everything in detail, Favras saw that he was lost. He had doubtless assumed all the responsibilities; but had he not a right to expect that the prince, for whom he was sacrificing himself, would reward his devotion by doing all in his power to save him? Yet the comte de Provence was far from entertaining such feelings. He was too glad to escape from the peril which had threatened him, and he thought but of one thing: how to clear himself entirely, without troubling about his unfortunate victim. His fate did not concern the comte. Favras felt indignant at such conduct;[1] for a short time he

[1] It may be that, giving way to discouragement, he went so far as to suspect the comte de Provence of trying to hasten his death in order to rid himself of a dangerous witness. He wrote in his justification: 'I have no doubt that an invisible hand is aiding my accuser in torturing me.'

was overpowered by his love for his wife and children, and by his love of life; he very nearly abandoned his strong resolution.

This was on February 16. The trial was drawing to a close. He begged that the civil lieutenant, Omer Talon, would come to his cell, as he had important revelations to make.

'Sir,' he said, 'I am going to be sentenced, it is evident to me. But I am determined not to die, or at least not to die alone if, after my revelations, I am not pardoned. Will you kindly read what I have written, and communicate it to the court?'

Then he handed to the civil lieutenant four large sheets of paper covered with close writing and bearing his signature.

'Astounded by those few words, Talon had a glimpse of the awful truth. Unable to answer the prisoner, and more disturbed than the latter, he endeavoured to overcome his emotion; he read to the end the document, which was written in a firm hand, without a single correction—thus making it easier to peruse than the magistrate liked.

'As he came to the signature, he was obliged to discuss with Favras the possible result of his revelations. Was he right to renounce his resolute attitude? Talon said:

'"You are afraid of death, and you are rushing upon it, with this difference: with the paper you entrusted to my loyalty, your death on the scaffold was glorious for you, and certainly useful to your near relations; while the other death, infamous, cruel, perhaps as inevitable as the other, becomes a dishonour for the very last of your descendants. Do you not suppose that thousands of people will rise against you all over Europe to punish you for having hung over Monsieur's and the queen's heads the sword which threatened your own life? Frightful calamities will follow them into the abyss into which you are precipitating them, and shame and violence will be heaped up to punish yourself and your own relatives for the frightful statement you have made. . . .

'"You are a religious man, M. de Favras; accept the martyr's crown; the heavens are opened for you. As for the earth . . . it will lie light upon your children.

'"*Monsieur will owe his life to your silence; and if, in the future, he should hesitate to fulfil his duty towards your family, his honour rests in my hands.*"

'Such arguments, presented under many forms, in a warm discussion between the magistrate's supplications and the prisoner's threats, were certainly not without force or truth. After three hours' wordy fighting, and after both men had exchanged their word of honour, Favras at last gave in, and Talon retired, taking with him the document and his promise to be silent.'[1]

What a scene and what a drama between those two men! And if one thinks of what became of the queen and the monarchy whose salvation was proposed as a sacred aim to be attained through the chivalrous devotion of Favras, one cannot help feeling grieved at the useless sacrifice. It was, however, not only his staunch loyalism that induced Favras to yield; it was because, having a wife and children, he thought that his sacrifice would for ever ensure the security of his beloved wife and the future of his dear children. The reader shall see whether his expectations were realised.

[1] *Histoire du Règne de Louis XVI*, by Joseph Droz, of the Académie française (iii. 89, 90, 91). Before this quotation the author says: 'A man, whose name I cannot give, has left some valuable information on several episodes of the Revolution, episodes which were known to him; I will give the most striking part of what may be called his evidence in the Favras case. He was out of Paris at the time the trial took place. As soon as he returned he hastened to Talon, the civil lieutenant at the Châtelet, whom he knew intimately, and asked him as to the truth of the case. Talon's first answer was to hand him a manuscript.' This was the Memoir written and signed by Favras. This man's name, which J. Droz could not give, is known nowadays: it was M. de Sémonville, who was entrusted with diplomatic missions abroad. Councillor of state, ambassador and senator during the Empire, peer of France under the Restoration and Louis Philippe, he died in 1839.

Two days after, this prolonged trial came to an end.

On February 18, while the crowd still surrounded the Châtelet and proceeded with its shameful and wild manifestations, while thousands of lips were uttering cries of 'Death to Favras! Hang the aristocrat on the lamp-post!' the President allowed the baron de Corméré to speak. He had requested as a favour to be allowed to undertake his brother's defence.

This was a touching act of courage, yet the result was not what the improvised advocate had anticipated. M. de Corméré lacked eloquence; though he spoke at great length, he did not even move his hearers, still less did he convince them.

M. Thilorier, on the contrary, spoke with warmth. The audience felt that he had strong convictions, and that he was anxious to save the prisoner. This he attempted to do, calling to his aid all the resources of casuistry and rhetoric. He endeavoured to prove that even had Favras elaborated a scheme for a counter-revolution, the shaping of such a plan was not punishable by law; it was not even a crime to have imparted it to other people. In order to become a crime, this communication must have extended to a beginning of execution; and Thilorier maintained that in reality it was not so. A man cannot be sentenced for a crime unless it has been proved. There are three kinds of proofs, he said: (1) the prisoner's confession—and Favras has always denied having been a conspirator; (2) letters—and the Court has found none, save a few ambiguous lines which were not written by him, but by a third party, the comte de Foucault; (3) the evidence.

Evidence is certainly valuable, but on one condition—it must be given by spotless witnesses, not liable to bribery; informers could never be called as witnesses. Are Morel and Turcaty—the two witnesses who are the instigators of the accusation—blameless? In their statements M. Thilorier picks out diverse contradictions; he challenges them as being 'accustomed to playing with truth.' Besides, both are informers;

they have been paid for their denunciation ; it is impossible to put any trust in their evidence. Thilorier discussed successively all the witnesses, and summed up by saying that there was nothing against the prisoner but vague and undefined suspicion. . . . He closed his speech with the following peroration :

'France is to-day powerful enough to be able to afford to be generous; and who would be such a fool as to boast that he can shake the Constitution, when Louis XVI., who is a pattern to kings, has of his own accord declared that he would befriend, uphold, and defend it?

'Let anxiety, mistrust, alarm, cease. Let spying and the work of informers, the hateful resources of weakness and tyranny, be put down on this solemn day when the whole of France rejoices over the grand oath which binds all the citizens to the maintenance of the Constitution ! Let a full amnesty put an end to scandalous spying, and bring back to a peaceful country those fugitives who have been quite sufficiently punished by their voluntary exile !

'Gentlemen, such are the prayers I make, even for the culprits, whilst appealing to your justice in favour of one who is unjustly sentenced.'

The trial had continued till a late hour of the night. Frightened by the clamour which reached their ears, still more frightened by the sentence which they were going to pass, the magistrates sat pale and faint on their seats. At last the prisoner was brought in, and the court gave the following verdict :

'Judgment without appeal, given publicly in audience at the Civil Court of the Châtelet in Paris, the court being assembled on February 18, 1790, by which Thomas de Mahy de Favras is duly convicted of having formed, and communicated to soldiers, bankers, and other people, and attempted to put into execution, a plan of counter-revolution in France. This was to be done by assembling the malcontents in diverse

provinces, by bringing into the country foreign troops, by bribing part of the ex-*Gardes Françaises*, by sowing discord among the National Guards, by attempting the life of the three principal chiefs of the government, by carrying off to Péronne the king and royal family, by dissolving the National Assembly, and by marching in force against Paris and reducing it to famine. In consequence, Thomas de Mahy de Favras is sentenced to make *amende honorable* in front of the principal gate of the Church of Paris, where he shall be taken in a cart by the executioner; thence he shall be brought to the Place de Grève, there to be hanged and strangled until death follows.'

It is said that out of the thirty-eight magistrates, thirty-two were for, and only six against, the sentence. The audience did not conceal how pleased it was at such a verdict; it is even said that some were cruel enough to clap their hands as at a good play.

VIII

THE 19TH OF FEBRUARY 1790

At that time, when judgments were generally given without appeal, execution followed soon after the verdict. The next day, February 19, M. Quatremère, as judge-advocate, read the verdict to Favras. He listened to it calm and standing, remarking only, in a quiet and cool manner, after each charge: 'This is not true; that is false; this was not proved at the trial.' After the judgment was read the marquis added: 'I pity you if the evidence of two men is enough to warrant you in passing sentence.'

The judge was more upset than the prisoner, to whom he tried to give the highest consolation; but he felt so troubled that he could only speak these strange words:

'You must offer your life as a sacrifice to public

peace. I have no other comfort to offer than that which you can find in religion.'

'My innocence is my truest comforter,' replied Favras.

He was still wearing his Cross of Saint Louis. He was told that it was going to be taken from him, and the jailer came forward to perform this duty. However, Favras was indignant at this man touching his cross, and declared that a soldier alone should be allowed to touch it. A non-commissioned officer was called for the purpose.

'Take it, comrade,' Favras said. 'And yet I had really deserved it, and I wore it with loyalty.'

The cross was handed to the court clerk. After this the prisoner asked for the assistance of a priest, and gave the name of the Abbé Bossu, Curé of Saint-Paul. Their interview lasted three hours.

The cart was waiting for the prisoner. Before he left the prison, Favras handed to the Abbé Bossu all the money he had left, about twenty louis, that it might be given to Madame de Favras. Then the procession started for Notre-Dame. When they reached the porch, Favras alighted from the cart for the function of the *amende honorable*. Before reading his own sentence, however, he cried out in a loud voice:

'Listen, people, to what I have to say to you. As truly as I am going to appear before God's tribunal, so true it is that I am innocent of the crime which is imputed to me. I obey the justice of man, and you know it is not infallible.'

After he had finished reading, he asked permission of the judge-advocate to go to the Hôtel de Ville to make his will. This was granted him. He began this sombre work at four o'clock, and those who were present could not help admiring his calmness and his presence of mind.

He slowly dictated his last will, correcting and changing words in order to give greater precision to the expression of his thought. He began thus:

'The unfortunate prisoner here present declares, in this

awful hour, on the point of appearing before God, and in the presence of his judges and of all the citizens who hear him, first that he forgives the men who have so grievously and so much against their conscience accused him of criminal schemes which never entered his soul, and which accusations have misled the magistrates.'

He objected to any suggestion of a plot. 'I had no desire nor power to use violence against the order of things newly established. I received no pension, nor any personal favour; my own and my family's interests are abroad. I had nothing to lose by the new order of things; personally, I could only profit by it. . . .'

He entered into a few particulars relative to the part he had played during the last few months, and alluded to what took place between him and the comte de Luxembourg. However, he did not mention his name, speaking of him as 'a lord whose family takes rank after the princes of the blood royal, and, owing to his rank, filling an office at court.'

The clerk, thinking he was rendering Favras's meaning, added the name of the comte de La Châtre.

'Why do you write a name I have not given?' he said sharply. 'Erase it. I may say that the seigneur is not the comte de La Châtre, but one occupying a much higher rank.'

He resumed his dictation.

'I have given full particulars of my doings in a Memoir which ought to have been printed several days ago, but of which I received a few copies only last night after ten o'clock.'

The names of Morel and Turcaty, those two disloyal agents who had been the instruments of his ruin, could not but come into his mind at such a time. He did indeed give vent to his grievances against the two witnesses 'who had made the most open and loyal intentions appear as a crime,' although he said 'that he forgave them their sin, and trusted God would do as much.'

He referred again to the 'noble lord,' adding that 'he had

seen him since, and that this nobleman had told him before a witness that, God be thanked, the sense of danger was passing away; it would not be long before the king recovered his rightful authority, without any crisis or riots taking place; it would be sufficient for this to appoint a commander-in-chief of the army and a commander of the Paris Militia; that, having called upon this noble lord, he had been requested not to come again, as he (the marquis) was suspected.'

He ended with the following lines: 'I recommend my memory to the esteem of the honourable citizens who hear me. I recommend to them also my too unfortunate wife, who has been estranged from a father and family whose connection would not bring dishonour upon our kings, through her having embraced the Roman Catholic faith; I further recommend my two children to the care of those who in certain circumstances of their lives may think that it is possible for them to make up for the loss of a father, necessary as he is to their education and their future. . . .

'The generous attentions of the Curé of Saint-Paul have been a great comfort to me. I beg the magistrates will hand my body to him, in order that it may be buried according to the Apostolic Roman Catholic rites, God having given me the grace of dying with the sentiments of a true Christian and of a faithful servant of my king and my country.'

The dictation took four hours, and yet this last will did not contain a single word, nor a single revelation, capable of modifying in the least degree either the legal judgment or public opinion. What was the aim of Favras in thus delaying his execution? No one can tell. It is nevertheless reasonable to think that, however resolute Favras might be not to betray a state secret, and however resigned to accepting the position of a scapegoat for others' crime, he hoped to the very last that Monsieur who was saved by so heroic a devotion, the queen whom his silence had shielded, or the King himself for whom he had conspired, would not allow the awful dénouement to

take place without interfering, or trying to rob the executioner of his victim.

A small incident tends to confirm this supposition. After Favras had finished dictating his will, M. Quatremère requested him to name the lord of whom he had spoken, and to say who, in his idea, was to be appointed commander-in-chief of the army. The marquis asked the magistrate whether, in case he complied with the request, M. Quatremère 'would stop the action of justice which was going to cut off his days.'

M. Quatremère, not daring to take such a responsibility on himself, did not answer; consequently, Favras kept silent.

One last request he made, that his will should be made public through the press.[1]

Time was passing, and night had come. A fine icy rain was falling and wetting the crowd, which was getting impatient at the delay in giving satisfaction to its brutal appetite; already it was grumbling, fearing it would be robbed of its victim.

'If it were one of us, he would have been hanged long ago; but it is a nobleman, a marquis—they want to save him!'

Favras was ordered to go.

'Gentlemen, I am ready,' he said.

The procession started for the Place de Grève, in the middle of which the gallows had been erected—the instrument designed to make all men equal before the invention of the guillotine.

A second priest had joined the Curé of Saint-Paul; he was a very active priest, full of resources and always intriguing. Being an illegitimate son of Louis XV., he called himself Le Duc. He was comforting the prisoner; but also he was watching him. . . .

[1] This satisfaction was given to Favras. His will was published with the following sanction: 'We give leave to the clerk to have the present will printed and made public. Done at the Châtelet of Paris, this 22nd of February. Signed, *Talon*, *de Flandre*, *de Brunville*.'

The Place de Grève was filled with a crowd bearing torches, and most of the windows of the neighbouring houses were illuminated. Even the gallows was decorated with lamps.

The crowd was clamouring for the execution. We wonder if among those people there were none but revolutionists who rejoiced over the death of a conspirator! In his 'Mémoires' La Fayette asserts that 'it was Favras's own accomplices who were so eager for the death of one who knew their secret.'

As he reached the foot of the gallows, Favras felt for one moment despair and anger, seeing that the pardon on which he had reckoned was not forthcoming. Human nature recovering its rights, the hero, giving way to weakness, was on the point of speaking, and certainly he would not have spared any one. The Abbé Le Duc, noticing the danger, sprang towards him, and, under pretence of kissing him, whispered:

'Your fate is sealed. . . . Suffer what the king himself cannot now prevent. Think that you are saving the whole of the royal family, and that your relations will receive the price of your heroic sacrifice.'

Fatherly love, added to his faith in monarchy, kept the secret from passing his lips.

Then, lifting his head, he said in a firm voice:

'Gentlemen, I die sentenced, but I die innocent. I commend to you my wife and my children.'

Having made this last indirect appeal to the prince for whom he was dying, he submitted to his fate; he was now anxious that all should be over.

'I am ready. Executioner, do your work,' he said.

The hangman pulled the rope; the victim's body swung in the air.

'Jump, marquis!' called a child who had climbed a post.

And the crowd repeated the jeering word which was a profanation to the majesty of death. Applause burst out on every side.

While this sinister drama was being acted, the comte

de Provence, surrounded by a few of his courtiers, was anxiously awaiting news in one of the Luxembourg drawing-rooms.[1] Every one displays anxiety and care; their troubled hearts find the time long! At last, about nine o'clock, the Abbé Le Duc was introduced. The execution was hardly over when he jumped into a carriage, and, as fast as the horses could go, went to the Luxembourg.

'*Consummatum est*,' he cried, thus dispelling the fears of the frightened accomplices.[2]

Peace and quietness returned to every mind; the victim was forgotten in the joy of having recovered security.

Étienne Dumont remarks wittily that Mirabeau seems to have shared the general feeling. He writes: 'The praises he showered on Favras for his intrepidity led me to suspect that his death had given tranquillity to his enemies as well as to his friends.'

The corpse of the victim was at once taken from the gallows; it was still warm when it was handed to Favras's brother and brother-in-law, the baron de Corméré and M. de Chitenay. It was, according to a legend, brought back to life by means of bleeding. However, it was only for a few minutes, for the dead man, having opened his eyes, breathed a sigh and gave up his soul. But there is not much ground for this story. The corpse was buried at Saint-Jean-en-Grève.

The day after the execution, a newspaper vendor was

[1] La Fayette has stated that if, later on, under Louis XVIII., he was not implicated in General Berton's affair at Saumur, nor in that of the 'four serjeants of La Rochelle,' it was because he was in possession of the secret of the Favras affair, and because the king was afraid he would make some revelations on the subject.

[2] Thiébault, who relates this scene, adds: 'My friend Preval and myself are indebted to the Abbé Le Duc for knowing all the particulars relating to Favras in this affair. The same priest confessed before us both that Favras had not the slightest personal reason for, nor the means of, recruiting an army, and that in reality he had been a mere agent of Monsieur.'—*Mémoires*, i. 272.

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calling out the news under the windows of the Abbaye. Thus the marquise heard of her loved husband's death, and although she had fully expected it, it was none the less a cruel blow. On hearing the news she fainted.

This unfortunate lady had been arrested and imprisoned without any crime being laid to her charge. After a first examination she had been left alone. She had been kept in gaol against every right and every justice; and a member of the committee had even declared cynically that Madame de Favras should not be released before her husband had been sentenced.

'We will not allow her to intrigue or to solicit in his favour.'

Therefore Madame de Favras was liberated only after becoming the widow of the martyr.

Hers was a dreadful situation; she was left almost in poverty with two young children. But having a stout heart, she did not give way to despondency; on the contrary, she found in her maternal love courage to struggle against adversity.

Might she not, besides, hope for powerful aid? Ought not Monsieur, for his own sake, to help her in her misery? Would he not, after bringing the husband and father to his grave, see that the widow and orphans should live? Did not his honour answer for it? And had not the civil lieutenant, Omer Talon, answered for Monsieur's honour?

We shall see how both did their duty.

IX

THE HONOUR OF MONSIEUR

Madame de Favras would have been very glad to be able to go back to her house in the Place Royale, after leaving the Abbaye; but this was impossible. Her furniture had been seized. She therefore took refuge with her brother-in-law,

the baron de Cormeré. Unfortunately, he was married to a wife who, though a polite and good hostess, was not overjoyed at the presence of the new-comer, and she so managed as to cut short the marquise's visit, lest she should have to keep three more persons.

Madame de Favras realised that she was not welcome. Consequently, after having asked the advice of the Curé of Saint-Paul, she retired at the end of ten days to the Convent of the Dames de Saint-Gervais, situate in the Rue des Francs-Bourgeois, in the Marais. There she received modest board for 150 livres a year. However, this was not long to be a shelter for the poor lady; the community of the Dames de Saint-Gervais had been dissolved, and the sale of their house fixed, by a decision of the Assembly, for the month of July at the latest. Her situation was evidently very precarious.

His sister-in-law's departure had freed M. de Cormeré from care, and he by no means tried to remind her of his existence.

And yet her misfortune was so great and so generally known that it was hardly possible to allow poverty to aggravate her hardships without some generous person coming forward to allay it. Three documents, unpublished till now, which were found in a bundle of papers at the National Record Office, and which came out of the *armoire de fer*,[1] show that Madame de Favras's fortunes were looked after by some one in high rank. Being police documents, these papers bear

[1] This was the name given to a hiding-place, built by Louis XVI. and a workman called Gamain, in a wall of the Tuileries palace. There the king had placed all the papers he wanted to put in security and save from investigation, should anything happen. Gamain had felt unwell after drinking a glass of orangeade which the queen had offered him on the day he had come from Versailles to work at this cabinet; he thought he had been poisoned, and, to revenge himself, he revealed the secret to the Minister of the Interior, Roland. The latter seized all the papers, several of which were made use of as charges against the king.

neither date nor signature. It is easy enough from their contents to give dates to them, at least very near ones. The first two were written whilst Madame de Favras was staying at the Convent of the Dames de Saint-Gervais, that is to say, between March 1 and July 1; the third, towards the end of August 1790.

As to the person who requested the king to take care of the poor lady, may it not have been the queen herself? This supposition is not improbable. In the first place, Marie Antoinette was very kind-hearted, and, moreover, she had been very much impressed by the execution of Favras. Madame de Tourzel wrote: 'Both the king and the queen have been very much distressed at the sentence passed on Favras. I was a witness to their grief, and I cannot recall without pain the state the queen was in when she heard that M. de Favras had been hanged.'

It was certainly not the baron de Corméré who acted in this matter, for in the same bundle of papers there is a letter which he wrote to the king to inform his Majesty that the baron was sending him the work he had written to clear his brother. This letter was of much later date, as it bears that of September 8, 1791.

Nevertheless, we give here the three documents. The first runs thus:

'To ascertain in what situation is Madame de Favras, how much she requires to live upon with the greatest economy, and what sum would help her at present.

'If she wishes to know who is interested in her fate, she is to be told that helping her at present can only be done with great prudence and discretion.

'That she may, and must, trust the person who will put the above question to her.

'She must be approached in private, and a prompt and precise answer given.'

The second note is the answer to the first one; it gives

particulars of Madame de Favras's situation. 'The whole of the husband's income consisted in life annuities which died with him. The widow's personal income is a pension of 1,000 livres[1] paid by her father. It has been paid in advance till July 1791. The furniture, valued at from 1,500 to 1,600 livres, has been distrained upon.'

The writer of the above note proposes to recover the furniture for Madame de Favras by paying the creditors a sum of 2,000 livres. He adds that 'there are two children, a boy and a girl.' The boy has been promised a commission in a regiment, but he is only eight years old; therefore seven years must elapse before this can be done. The boarding of the boy cannot cost less than 600 livres, 'without dancing, fencing, and other masters, who would have to be paid apart from the school.' The note states that 'Monsieur had promised to place the boy in a school, but that he has cut off the amount.' There is a 'young lady;' her schooling would also cost 600 livres, and 200 for her dress. The total amount for the children would therefore be 1,600 livres. In order to provide for the mother, so as to allow her to live 'without luxury and with the economy of a person who has been used to a decent way of living,' 600 livres would be necessary, without taking her pension of 1,000 livres into account. She would require a woman cook and a lady's maid; cost, 800 livres for both. This makes a total of 3,000 livres as a pension, besides the 2,000 once paid for the furniture.

Apart from the particulars we have already given on the attitude of the baron de Corméré towards his sister-in-law and her stay in the Rue des Francs-Bourgeois, the note contains the following information: 'Madame is forty-two years old. She was married at twenty-eight—that is, fourteen years ago.[2]

[1] The pension allowed to his daughter by Prince Anhalt was 1,000 florins; the florin was a little over two livres.

[2] This is a mistake. The writer has very likely mistaken the date when Prince Anhalt was made to acknowledge the marriage in 1776

She is rather good-looking, without being pretty. She wears full widow's mourning; has rouge, paints her eyebrows. Her eyes are big, but red with crying, for her troubles are constantly renewed by the people she sees, who speak to her about her husband.'

She was granted a pension of 4,000 livres on the civil list. However, every precaution was taken that this should not be known, as the court could not forge weapons against itself for the use of those who accused it of having inspired Favras and arranged the conspiracy.

The third note is a proof that Madame de Favras used all necessary circumspection in her life.

'Madame is very much moved by the new tokens of kindness which have been given her; she will always comply with the intentions of her benefactors.

'Consequently, she gives up the idea of going to Aix-la-Chapelle, although her doctor had directed her to take the waters. She will go instead to Enghien, in the Montmorency valley, and will endeavour to avoid society as much as possible.

'Anxious to live a retired life, she takes with her a relative, and a woman who will be at her service. She thinks that the cost for three persons for the two months which she will spend at Enghien may amount to fifty or sixty louis. She expects to start next week, if the aid she solicits is given her in time to allow her to start at the beginning of September.'

Thus she was staying in France, asking for nothing but to be forgotten. Nevertheless, events were assuming a threatening appearance, and she began to think she was not safe in her adopted country; she therefore made up her mind to return to her fatherland. In view of this she asked M. de Septeuil,

for the real date of the marriage. On this point we have Madame de Favras's testimony. In a letter to her husband, she wrote on January 12, 1790, the following words, which are very explicit: 'Eighteen years of married life have taken nothing from my affection for you.'

treasurer for the civil list, if he would pay her her pension a quarter in advance. M. de Laporte, through whom the request was made, gave as a reason 'that she intended leaving Paris in a few days to go to Cologne.'

However, before she left, a public incident awakened the memory of her misfortunes and the pride of her stout heart. Having been taxed for one of the numerous patriotic contributions which necessity forced upon the city of Paris, she sent to Bailly a strong protest:

'The marquis de Favras's widow has special claims which M. Bailly ought not to forget, as he has been criminal enough with regard to her. How can he be so blinded by a temporary elevation as to oblige me to remind him of what I can never forget—that he had the audacity to have me arrested at my house during the night, and the cruelty of keeping me for twenty-six days in close custody, when there was no warrant nor complaint lodged against me? He deprived me of the means I might have had of being useful to my husband, by lengthening my captivity until after the murder of that immortal victim.

'How could he be so shameless as not to feel that innocent blood which has been shed by sacrilegious hands is a contribution so disgracefully *patriotic* that it shall never cease crying for vengeance; on the other hand, it ought to give to the family which has paid such horrible tribute the greatest and most sacred rights to public veneration.'

Madame de Favras emigrated to Austria, taking with her her daughter. Out of the sums which the Emperor of Russia and the King of Spain paid to Louis XVIII., she was allowed a pension of 1,200 livres. As to her son Charles, nothing is known of him, except that in 1830 he was leading a very retired life in a small village of the Aube, close to Nogent-sur-Seine. He received a small annuity out of the civil list. The male descent of the marquis de Favras has long been extinct.

Why is it that Omer Talon, who had made such a solemn engagement with the victim who had been sacrificed to the *raison d'état*, never made use of the dangerous weapons he had in his possession? It is certainly not that he did not realise their full value. Far from that; he had taken good care to inform those whom they concerned that he had them in his possession.

In December 1790 the comte de La Marck wrote to the queen: 'I have seen M. Talon several times. . . . He showed me the original of an important document of which I will not speak at length, as I suppose the queen has heard of it through M. Mercy, with whom, I have reason to believe, M. Talon communicated through M. de Bougainville. It is evident to me that part of this document, which might be very injurious to your Majesty, must be the result of some infernal machination; nevertheless, it is evident that a writing which possesses a certain amount of authenticity deserves special attention in the present circumstances. I shall some day take the liberty to talk this matter over with your Majesty and to suggest some means of doing away with every inconvenient part of this narrative. M. Talon derives a certain amount of power from being in possession of this writing, and he sets a high value on the service he has done by keeping it secret. It cannot be denied that M. Talon is a man to be treated with regard; I would even say that one must conciliate him, were it only to secure his silence.'

With this weapon in hand, Omer Talon resigned his office of civil lieutenant at the Châtelet on June 30, 1790, and was appointed assistant deputy for the bailiwick of Chartres. A staunch royalist, he served Monsieur, who was afterwards Louis XVIII. He was his agent in Paris under the Consulat. As such he attracted the attention of the police, and after the Georges Cadoudal plot he was arrested and sent to the Sainte-Marguerite Island, where he was detained for three years (1804–1807). His intellect having given way, he ceased to be looked

upon as dangerous. He was released, and died a few years later at Gretz, in the department of Seine-et-Marne, August 18, 1811. By his marriage with the comtesse de Pastre he had two children—a son in the army, and a daughter who was destined to acquire great celebrity under the name of the comtesse du Cayla, wife of Antoine de Baschi.

The comtesse du Cayla, the worthy daughter of her father, found in her inheritance the papers which were so compromising for Louis XVIII. She foresaw all the profit she could make out of them if the rightful king, whose return she desired ardently, ever came back to the throne.

However well guarded a secret may be, especially one which is at once judicial and political, it cannot remain long without leaking out. Savary, duc de Rovigo, who was head of the Secret Imperial Police, heard that Madame du Cayla had in her possession authentic documents which might bring dishonour upon the pretender. What a splendid thing it would be for him if he could get hold of them and thus unveil the infamy of Favras's unpunished accomplice! He neglected nothing to attain his aim; he even made hot love to a coquette—and he was not one used to defeat. But if he succeeded in his designs, as is reported, he obtained nothing more; the cunning woman kept her treasure in reserve for better opportunities.

The misfortunes of France brought back upon the throne the successor of Louis XVI., at which Madame du Cayla rejoiced. She was admitted to his presence, and she brought with her the manuscript containing Favras's revelations. Louis XVIII. fully appreciated the precious gift. He destroyed the document; and, as he could not ask Madame du Cayla to be his mistress, he made her his favourite. She made the most of her platonic dishonour: her husband received a peerage; her brother was rapidly appointed general, and married into the old nobility. The king, who was fond of witticisms, said of this marriage, 'qu'il avait donné du talon dans le derrière de Mademoiselle de Beauvau.'

As for Madame du Cayla herself, she was presented with the château of Saint-Ouen and divers sums of money, to a total amount of seven or eight million francs. This earned for her the surname of the 'du Barry de la Charte.'

Louis XVIII. proved how highly he valued 'the honour of Monsieur!'

A LOVER OF CHARLOTTE CORDAY:

ADAM LUX

JULY 17, 1793, was a stormy day in Paris. Real water-spouts were falling on the city; lightning and thunder completed the scene. It was four o'clock in the afternoon. And yet an immense crowd filled the streets to witness the passage of the cart which was to take the prisoners sentenced by the Revolutionary Tribunal to the place of execution. This was at that time the Place de la Révolution. On that day there was only one person sitting on the coarse wooden bench in the cart; it was Charlotte Corday. The crowd, who the day before had witnessed the funeral ceremony held in honour of Marat, was quite joyful over what it called the expiatory ceremony which was to complete in a worthy manner the apotheosis of the previous day.

The stupid populace displayed its regrets for the loss of a wild madman—who, through his newspaper, requested daily two hundred and fifty thousand victims—by shrieks and insults, hissing the woman who had been so daring as to kill this monster. The cart was dragged slowly by an old horse—lengthening her torture seemed to be a pleasure for her tormentors. Charlotte Corday was passing along, quiet, peaceful, dominating those who insulted her, from the height of her courage and her scorn.

As she was turning the corner of the Rue Saint-Honoré her eyes met those of a young man. He was taking no part

in the demonstrations of the crowd; on the contrary, his looks were full of pity and admiration for the young victim. And yet this glance passed like lightning. As for Charlotte Corday, it is not possible to say what her impression was, for she confided in nobody before dying; but the young man felt such a shock, that, making his way through the closely packed crowd, he came as near to the cart as the escort would allow him. He followed the procession, step by step, for the two hours it took to go to the gallows. As soon as he had seen the girl, the young man felt a sudden and violent passion in his heart, and amidst the wondering populace he manifested his love by words, by cries.

The lover *in extremis* of the maiden assassin was a young foreigner who had arrived in Paris a few months earlier. His name was Adam Lux.

His history is no less strange than his love for Charlotte Corday.[1]

Adam Lux was born on December 27, 1765, in a small place called Obernburg, situate about eighteen leagues from Mayence. His parents must have been small country people, perhaps only wealthy peasants. He received a rather good education; he knew both Latin and French; later on he studied pharmacy and medicine; but he felt so much repulsion against anatomy that he gave up this course of study. He retired to a small farm which belonged to him, about a mile from Mayence, and there he lived the life of a farmer.

He had married Sabine Reuter, a relative, and two daughters were born of this marriage. He loved his wife and children, and he might have ended his days in peace had

[1] National Record Office, W 293, bundle No. 213, *le Glaive Vengeur*, *Mémoires sur les Prisons*, *Histoire du Tribunal révolutionnaire*, by H. Vallon; *l'Amour sous la Terreur*, by M. de Lescure; *Marie-Anne-Charlotte de Corday d'Armont*, by Chéron de Villiers, &c. &c.

not the events of the end of the century shaken Europe, small and large states alike, cities and villages, and thrown many a man out of his path as well in France as out of it.

The new spirit from which the French Revolution originated did not, indeed, make its effect felt in France alone; it crossed the borders, either spreading terror or raising enthusiasm. Adam Lux was among the first men who felt its influence, for he was quite prepared for it. He had read Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and professed great admiration for the social theories of this bold philosopher. Moreover, Adam Lux was in a centre whose atmosphere was propitious to new ideas. In no town could more people be found than in Mayence who were ready to embrace the notions of liberty and fraternity among the citizens of all nations; humanitarian dreams counted their thousands of adherents.

When the Mayencers heard that the *Convention Nationale* had proclaimed the Republic on September 22, 1792, they assembled spontaneously. Proud, and at the same time glad, to follow such a beautiful example, they elected among themselves a German convention, which in their own minds would have all the greater power because it was far from being defined.

As soon as this news reached Adam Lux's ears he hastened to Mayence. The opinions he had professed for some time are sufficient indications of the eagerness with which he would forward the new movement for the welfare of revolutionary France. He it was who had a Tree of Liberty planted in the main square of Mayence. For him this imitation of the ceremonies which were being held in every city on the French side of the Rhine was like a moral bond between Mayence and the French Republic. Yet another joy was in store for the new order of patriots: a French army under General Custine was approaching their town.

The wishes of every heart were with this army; they were, so to speak, wafted over the heads of the Austrian troops

who were occupying the town. For their own part, the French brushed the enemy on one side, and amidst general acclamation entered Mayence victoriously on October 21, 1792.

Was it not a splendid opportunity for tightening the moral bond between Mayence and the Republic? Certainly, the people thought so, and the next day the German convention proclaimed in solemn assembly that Mayence was French territory. More than that, in order to render the communion between the two conventions closer, it was decided that a delegation should be sent to Paris to convey the good wishes of the Mayencers.

Adam Lux was chosen to be the head of this mission. He had over his fellow-citizens—besides other merits—the advantage of speaking French. The two other members were Forster and Potocki. They started towards the end of March 1793.

Adam Lux was the bearer of a letter of introduction, written in the usual formula: 'The bearer is a representative of the people of Mayence for the incorporation of their town into the French Republic. He is the citizen Lux, a friend of mine, and by obliging him you will oblige me, &c. . . .'

The signature was illegible. The curious part of the letter was the address: 'To the citizen Weiss, almoner at the Veterinary School, staying at Madame's, formerly comtesse de Sparre, Rue Sainte-Anne, in the quarter of the Palace formerly Royal.' This double expression of 'formerly' shows how anxious the writer was to adapt his tone to the style of the period, by avoiding the use of 'reactionary formulæ.'

Adam Lux did not take advantage of this letter and did not ask for the almoner's aid, for the letter was found in his papers and joined to his brief. In fact, on its arrival in Paris the delegation had found better help in the person of Haussmann, a deputy, who had himself offered to present them to the National Convention.

On March 30 Adam Lux and his two colleagues entered the legislative building[1] and handed over to the Assembly the message with which they had been entrusted. They were afterwards, according to custom, allowed to attend the sitting.

This ceremonial, grand enough in itself, must necessarily have made a deep impression on the enthusiastic spirit of Adam Lux. When he came out, his pride was enhanced, his faith in the Republic greater, and his love for France stronger. From that day, without however forgetting his family or his country, he made up his mind to devote himself to the country of his adoption; more than that, he fondly hoped he might play an active part in a revolution which was destined to transform the world. He was fascinated by Paris; it was for him the centre of the universe, and he rejoiced at the thought that he would witness the great events which could not fail to occur for the happiness of mankind.

He had taken up his quarters at the Hôtel des Patriotes hollandais, Rue des Moulins, close to the Tuileries, where the Convention was on the eve of holding its meetings. He was therefore in the very heart of the metropolis. He found a special attraction in the Assembly; it was for him quite a new spectacle to see the representatives of the people discussing, voting—in a word, creating 'law,' that instrument destructive to tyranny, and owing to which the world would enjoy freedom!

Of the fifteen hundred people who daily crowded the public galleries, he was the most assiduous listener; he did not miss one meeting. But alas! the nearer he saw the deputies whose character at a distance had inspired him with so great an admiration and respect, the less he could disguise from himself how far the reality was from his expectations.

[1] The Convention met at that time in the hall of the *Manège*, along the Feuillants terrace, upon the site of the present Rue de Rivoli, not far from the Rue Castiglione.

What ! Those were the men who called themselves the Apostles of the Rights of Men?—those the legislators entrusted with the noble mission of organising a new society on the bases of justice and equality?—those the mandatories whose task it was to help the world's citizens to fraternise with one another? And yet they scarcely ever proposed any but defiant motions—they uttered words of anger, or threats of death. Passions were breaking loose. His heart felt sad at such a sight.

However, in the midst of party politics he acknowledged that the Jacobins were the most violent of all; their hatred was more marked; and in his innocent mind, which could not give up a dream, he thought he saw that the Girondins alone were the true representatives of the Republic. Their moderation, their milder motions or speeches, called for his admiration; he wished them success; he hoped they would triumph.

This is the reason why he endeavoured to make their acquaintance outside the house. He succeeded in becoming acquainted with a few of them, particularly with Péthion and Guadet. He constantly met them; he told them of his expectations for world-wide happiness and showed his enthusiasm. They, on the contrary, were already more *blasé*, less confident, better acquainted with men, foreseeing events as they did; they let him talk, and did not often answer his naïve confidences; sometimes they called him a dreamer and did not even discuss with him. Then Adam Lux would be grieved by their silence or their coldness. 'He was even vexed to a certain extent.' Nevertheless, he clung to his friends, or rather, without being aware of it, to his dream, which he embodied in those men. He considered it so grand, so beautiful, that he could not believe it was possible for it to be swept away by the storm. This dream of his was his *raison d'être*, the sole aim of his life. Death alone could make him renounce it.

For a short time he thought that he was to be triumphant.

It was at the time when the Girondins, refusing to listen to Danton, who was warning them against attacking the Convention, were successful in carrying a motion by which the deputies were no longer inviolable. They carried also a vote for the arrest of Marat, and that he should be tried by the Revolutionary Tribunal (April 13). Marat, the most hideous of the Jacobins, the most ferocious too, was at last to answer before justice for his incitements to plunder and to murder!

His delusion did not last; for a few days later Marat was acquitted by the court, carried in triumph, crowned with wreaths of flowers, and brought back to the Convention by the delirious crowd (April 24.)

This was a terrible blow for the Gironde, and a heartfelt one for Adam Lux. However, his disappointment only brought his exaltation to a climax. He could not understand how the Revolution, so grand when it started, could fall off so as to be nothing more than the apotheosis of a madman thirsting for blood. This was a shameful failure for such great hopes!

Nor was this all. News came that Custine was withdrawing before the enemy's attacks; Kleber, for his part, was, with his twenty thousand troops, surrounded in Mayence. The French Republic, rent by the internal struggles of opposite parties, had to withdraw before the armies of monarchical Europe. Even had Adam Lux wanted to go back to his own country he could not have done so; but he never gave it a single thought—he would have felt too humbled—he, the delegate of the German convention—had he been obliged to confess to his countrymen his own deception. Moreover, had he not a part to play in Paris? Magnifying his importance as well as he had magnified his part, in his over-excited imagination, he claimed for himself the duty of bringing about reconciliation between the two opposite parties; he believed it was possible for him to enlighten them as to the evils their

divisions would inflict upon France. Yet he had not found means to obtain such a result. He recalled to memory the heroism of old, almost fancying that olden times had returned, when the anger of the gods could be appeased only by some human sacrifice, and a mad desire gradually grew in him to offer himself for expiation !

While he was pondering over his foolish fancy and trying to think how he could realise it, events were rapidly assuming a more serious turn, and the very misfortunes he wanted to prevent were now taking place under his own eyes.

Marat, after having been acquitted, had made up his mind not to be satisfied with a paltry reparation on the part of those who had accused him. The populace itself wanted to revenge its idol. Out of the forty-eight Paris sections, thirty-five sent to the Convention a petition asking for the expulsion of twenty-two Girondin deputies, the heads of the party. The Girondins tried resistance, and on May 18 they carried a motion that a committee of twelve members should be appointed to watch over the security of the representatives. This committee, which was composed of the chiefs of their party, ordered that Hébert should be arrested; he was the author of the coarse sheet 'le Père Duchêne.' This was repeating against one of Marat's agents the manœuvre which had met with such a paltry success when directed against Marat himself. The Jacobins called the people to arms, who responded at once; and the populace having gained the victory during the two days, May 31 and June 2, exacted from the Assembly the arrest of twenty-nine deputies and two ministers. The Moderate party in the Convention was ruined.

Adam Lux hesitated no longer ; he had taken a resolution, and he had only to put it into execution. He made his plan fully known to Péthion and Guadet by means of a letter, in which he gave with wonderful calmness the reason of his mad decision.

'*To the citizens Péthion and Guadet.*

'Paris : June 6.

'I impart to you the decision I came to on June 1. I felt violent indignation when I saw crime triumphant ; and, trusting that in such a crisis my own death might impress the minds of the citizens and avoid the dissolution of the Convention, I resolved to make the sacrifice of my innocent life, as by dying I may serve the cause of liberty better than I could ever do by my life.

'This is the first motive of my determination ; the second is that, by an act of patriotism which calumny and suspicion cannot impair, I may honour the memory of my master, Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

'It is true that I leave a wife and two daughters without support, and—my farm being ruined—even without bread. But were liberty to disappear, there is no reason for me to live; if it be triumphant, I trust the Convention—appreciating the motives of my death—will not forget my wife and children.

'I leave to the Convention a memoir on our situation. I have not communicated it to you, so that calumniators may not have it in their power to say that you contributed to it. The reflections therein contained are entirely my own, so is my resolve to die; this resolve can only be taken and put into execution by an intellect which is sufficient to itself.

'I am for the commonwealth, not belonging to either one party or another; and I should cease to have any esteem for you if you chose to belong to any party rather than to the commonwealth, for which you and your brethren are suffering now.

'Give my salutations to the virtuous Roland, the courageous Vergniaud, the republican Brissot and Gensonné. I regret

that I do not know them personally; nevertheless, I trust they and the republicans will grant me their esteem.

'But I must confess that in any case it would be enough for me to have the approval of my own conscience, which approval I take with me and which I shall enjoy in a future life.

'Give my salutations to your wives, and kiss your children for me.

'AD. LUX.'

'At all hazards, I wish to be buried, dressed in the clothes I am wearing now, at Ermenonville; and I beg M. Girardin to grant my ashes a resting-place on the hill, opposite J.-J. Rousseau's grave, above the temple dedicated to Philosophy, under an oak tree at the foot of which there is a modest stone. The inscription is to be merely: 'Ci-gît Adam Lux, un disciple de J.-J. Rousseau' ('Here lies Adam Lux, a disciple of J.-J. Rousseau').

At the same time as he wrote this letter, Adam Lux prepared a speech which he intended to read to the Assembly before putting an end to his days. His sacrifice, in order to be profitable, must be explicit; from his point of view, death was only meant to give weight to his deed. So little did he question that he should get the ear of the Assembly, that he headed his speech with this superscription: 'Speech *delivered* at the Convention Nationale by Adam Lux.'

It began in a grave and solemn tone:

'Representatives,—Long ago I conceived violent hatred against injustice and tyranny in any form. I was glad when your army reached our country, and I endeavoured to help the latter to gain freedom by joining the French Republic. You granted this freedom, but it was stopped, owing to the communications of the time. As for myself, I was to stay here. For the last two months my principal occupation has been to watch the turn your deliberations were taking. At first I groaned over your divisions, your party spirit—one side

being always bitter against the other, and constantly suspecting its honesty. I made careful investigations as to the source of such a grievous state, and I came to the conclusion that it was due to the aberration of some and the almost imperceptible fear of others.

'Is there a true patriot who does not sigh when he beholds the disorders which rend the Senate—which could and ought to have made the fortune of France, not to say of Europe? However, an evil genius set in motion a few intriguers; by means of calumny they overthrew everything; they called talent conspiracy, and virtue a crime.

'Evils have reached a climax; yet they are not past remedy. Nevertheless, do not waste time; you have not a moment to lose. . . .'

After having painted in its true light a situation which was daily growing worse, he went on to enumerate the remedies he had found for it, and spoke of the resolution he had taken to die.

'May it please God that by shedding my blood I may be fortunate enough to show you the abyss into which you have cast freedom. . . .

'Some of you are wanting in courage, others are lacking in clear sight. Well, I will give an example to the first by sacrificing my life to duty, and to the others I will give my blood to answer for my good faith in previous professions.'

Then, carried away by his own imagination, he became intoxicated with his own words—so much so, that he forgot the part he had intended to play. He thus betrayed one of the motives—perhaps not the least—which actuated him in his foolish deed. Life was now hateful to him, after the numerous crimes which he had witnessed and which were tarnishing his ideal as a candid revolutionist and simple minded republican.

'Thus I shall no longer witness the public misfortunes and

the disorders which I cannot prevent. I had sworn to be free or to die ; it is therefore high time I should go. . . .'

At the end of his speech he mixes the confession of an undeceived man with the cries of the voluntary scapegoat :

'Is a new Curtius wanted, who by precipitating himself into the abyss may save the commonwealth? Here am I. . . .

'No! From June 2, 1793, I have foreseen civil war and the immeasurable evils which must befall my new country, and this city in particular; my patriotic mind anticipates them; from that day I had a horror of life. . . .

'You unfortunate representatives of a wonderful nation, whose happiness is my last thought, have the courage to punish knaves, avenge the violation of the national representation, and come to the rescue of freedom, or else die as I do!'

Long as this speech was, it did not give full expression to all the ideas which were seething in his brain. For, in spite of his exaltation, which sometimes bordered on madness, he had a clear insight into the crisis through which France was passing, and he discerned with remarkable perspicacity the origin and the cause of the deep agitation which shook the nation and its representatives. When he was at a distance, he had been the dupe of phrases and words; but when he witnessed the acts, when he saw the actors in the drama, he judged them at their real value. He realised that such false supporters were injurious to the cause of the Republic. Although he endeavoured, by reasoning as well as by prayers, to bring them back into the right path, he despaired of being successful. Then, looking backwards, he compared his enthusiasm when he was at Mayence with his present discouragement, and he dared not confess to his fellow-citizens how far he had deceived them while deceiving himself.

This last feeling is much more visible in a writing which he calls 'Mes Réflexions présentées à la Convention nationale

pour y être lues le lendemain de ma mort'[1] than in his speech.

This document is very interesting; it is more intimate, more free; he gives his thoughts with the calm of after life, if we may use the expression. He shows plainly that at the bottom of his self-sacrifice there is the suicide of a Cato, the act of one defeated, who is not willing to survive his lost faith nor his vanished dream.

A trifling incident shows that even at that moment his literary vanity was not dead in him. He begins thus:

'I beg the readers to forgive my Germanisms; I have done my best, though it is not much.'

Having taken this precaution, he goes on, swelling his voice, yet not without some eloquence:

'There are still in France many men who are partisans of the old government, and their number is increasing every day, owing to the lethargy of the present government, and the abuses and arbitrary acts of patriots whose exaltation has often no other source than the corruption of political life and ignorance of politics.

'Your long line of frontier is invaded on all sides by enemies who are everywhere victorious. . . . Your people do not possess republican manners, not even the Constitution it wishes for so much, and which would have saved the country from great misfortunes had it been properly established. . . .

'Had I known or foreseen all that has happened between March and June, I should have abstained from urging my countrymen to join France before a government had been established. . . .

'When I arrived, I had made up my mind to attend all the meetings of the Jacobins; yet at the second meeting I was

[1] 'My Reflections, to be presented to the National Convention, to be read there on the day following my death.'

disgusted. . . . I saw that in the temple of liberty a few intriguers were the masters of the majority in the Convention, thanks to bribery or to madness. . . .'

He never could forget the memory of those two days, May 31 and June 2, during which the Convention, degraded and terrorised, was deliberating while the guns were speaking in the faubourgs; the Convention was rather registering the wishes of the crowd. He is sincere in his indignation, and he foresees the fatal consequences of the two days with astonishing clearness; it seems as if he saw beforehand the events just as they were to take place a few months later.

'During those sombre days, the ridicule and the horror of which my pen refuses to trace, the Jacobins, or rather the heads of the Paris municipality, destroyed the inviolability of the national representation, the palladium of French liberties. They then really made a counter-revolution, and declared the departments to be their subjects.

'From May 31 the Convention has really ceased to exist. All power is in the hands of the Jacobins, who have usurped it; they seem to me to be incapable of saving the Republic, even if they wanted to do so, because in their turn they are divided into opposing parties, and because they lack talent and the confidence of the French people. Can the departments ever forget the repeated injustice that the so called sovereign people committed, that people which in reality is nothing but a handful of Parisians, men and women misled or bribed by anarchists? As for me, I already see civil war at my door; add to this the foreign enemies, and then try to see if there is still any way to save the republic.

'Before everything else, and at any cost, this crime (May 31) must be atoned for, by cancelling the measure by which thirty-two members were accused, and securing the freedom of the National Convention. Otherwise, all will be lost, and you Parisians will have to face civil war in the departments, who, rather than receive a master at the hands of

your municipality, will revenge themselves by accepting one from the potentates of Europe!'

Adam Lux does not stop at playing the part of Cassandra: he sought for remedies for the evils he now predicts. They are three in number:

1. Dismiss the General Council of Paris, punish the leaders, and seize the anarchists among the Jacobins.

2. Call the *Assemblées primaires*, and ask them to approve of a plan for a republican constitution which shall relieve the poor without overloading the landlords, and thus put an end to the war which is raging between the *sans-culottes* and the rich.

3. Appoint a dictator, as ancient Rome did.

These measures, save the last, were evidently wise and practical; they answered exactly the requirements and the perils of the time. For foolish assemblies or imprudent and blind leaders alone can forget the fundamental principles on which rests every organised society, and bring universal misery on their too-confiding partisans. We find a wonderful example of this in the state of France during the years which followed 1793. As for the third means which Adam Lux proposed, it was a recollection of antique Rome dear to literary minds of that period. However, the French people could not be compared with Roman citizens. The latter were few in number; they were conscious of their rights as well as of their duties; and their minds were not filled with vague Utopias, but rather taken up with the interest of the country. Besides, a dictator cannot be improvised, and just then there was not a man who, through his merits or his glory, could be chosen by his fellow-citizens. Therefore Adam Lux did not mention any one for this office; he only gave a very gentle hint about Roland—'whom I have never seen,' he added at once. Lux's choice may be excused on this ground, for such a man—who only very faintly reflected his wife's intellect and bravery—would have been a sorry dictator.

The memoir closed with the obligatory appeal to concord and peace. Then Lux went on :

'If by forgetting my own self, my wife and children, and giving up my life, I could open the eyes of the mandatories of a large nation worthy of freedom and peace, I should be proud of having died for it.

'ADAM LUX, *Deputy for Mayence.*

'Paris: June 6, 1793, second year of the French Republic.'

In the midst of his political anxieties—for he now looked upon himself as a French citizen—Adam Lux did not forget his family. However, the thought of his wife and little girls was no longer strong enough to combat the patriotic fever which had taken hold of his heart. He considered himself the apostle of an idea to which he must sacrifice every other feeling ; this is why his letter to his wife is too much in the old heroic style—with less Stoicism, it would be more human.

'You will receive the newspapers before my letter reaches you, and they will give you particulars as to my last days. If the newspapers give a faithful account of my death, you will think to yourself, "My husband has acted in accordance with the grandeur of his soul." If, on the contrary, they give an inexact rendering, which you will easily recognise, then you will say that it is a lie, for your husband was incapable of acting otherwise than according to reason and justice.

'It will certainly be hard for me to forsake my wife and children ; yet when the country's welfare is at stake, one cannot hesitate. . . .'

He goes on to comfort his wife for what she has suffered through him, and must yet endure after his death.

At the same time he wrote to a M. Dumont who lived at Mayence ; he appointed him his executor, and spoke to him of his intentions, as he did to his wife.

These two letters are in German, and have been partly

translated. The translator summed up the second one in these few words: 'It only shows a fanatic mind, ready for the worst, yet thoroughly moral and energetic.' This appreciation is strikingly true.

The two letters were found later on in Adam Lux's pocket; they had not been sent, and it is questionable whether they were rough or neat copies, but we have no indication on the subject. What is most probable is that Adam Lux, not having fulfilled his intentions, in their primitive shape at least, did not post the letters; he, on the contrary, kept the originals until he should be on the eve of committing suicide.

Nevertheless, it is very plain that Guadet, if not Péthion, knew of his intentions.

Owing to the decision which the Convention passed concerning the Girondins, they, as we know, were not arrested at once, but only deprived of their legislative mandate; they were constantly watched by a national gendarme. It is thus that Adam Lux was enabled to see Guadet on June 10 or 11 and acquaint him with his resolution. Of course, Guadet endeavoured to dissuade Lux, for he too well knew his adversaries in politics—adversaries who had then the upper hand—to think that an action so foolish as Lux's could exert any influence over them. He evidently did not succeed in persuading him; nevertheless, he entreated him to ripen his plan before putting it into execution, in the hope that time and reflection would make him give it up.

This conclusion may be drawn from a letter which Adam Lux wrote to Guadet a few days later. Unfortunately, in this as in the two previous ones, it is not possible to say whether the letter reached its destination.

The following are the most important passages:

'June 19, 1793.

'Citizen Guadet,—When, a week ago, I imparted to you the resolution I had taken of dying, you tried to make me give

it up, and gave me reasons for this; I have since weighed them carefully, and do not find them strong enough to silence the inward voice which, prompted by an ardent love for my country, urges me. . . .

' . . . Should things go on as they do now, I will not survive the loss to France of her liberties. . . .

' . . . I shall set the example of what ought to be done to defy the victory of crime, aided by chance; *nam, si parva licet componere magnis*, the poet's verse shall gain favour through my death:

'Victrix placuit Diis, res victa Catoni. . . . [1]

'If, as I trust, the storm passes over, do not forget, you brave republicans, that my wife and children are starving. A married man, no doubt, owes his duty, his life, to his family; yet when the country is in danger, it stands before everything else. . . .'

In spite of all his reasoning and his very plain assertions, Adam Lux did not realise his project. It surely was not due to cowardice, for in other circumstances he gave proofs of real and steady courage. He was perhaps waiting day after day for an opportunity which should render his sacrifice greater, his death more useful.

If so, his expectations were fulfilled; for an unforeseen event, while strengthening his wish to die, made him decide on another kind of death.

On the evening of July 13 it was rumoured in Paris that Marat had been murdered. It caused general astonishment. Even those who inwardly hated and despised the maniac shared to such an extent the universal fear inspired by the government of terror which was ruling France, that they mingled their loud

[1] Adam Lux quoted from memory, and made a mistake. His quotation from Lucan's *Pharsalia* ought to have been

'Victrix causa Diis placuit, sed victa Catoni.'

regrets with the rabble's sincere mourning. It was soon known that the author of such an unprecedented crime was a girl of four-and-twenty, who had travelled from Caen to Paris on purpose to be the executioner of the criminal.

This news gave Adam Lux a violent shock. What was his own project compared with Charlotte Corday's deed? And if the murder of the 'ami du peuple' changed nothing in the practice of the victorious Jacobins, what would be the use of an obscure Mayence delegate's suicide, especially since the latter place was on the eve of falling into the hands of the German army?[1]

Inwardly, Adam Lux felt confusedly that the young heroine had in fact given proofs of marvellous energy. Of course, he did not approve of murder; yet in the present case the victim was so hateful, so unworthy of any pity, that he could only admire the girl who had dealt the blow. While men were discoursing, she had been active—and had freed humanity from a monster.

From that time, Charlotte Corday filled his mind and his heart; she held his whole nature. She was his constant thought. He wanted to see her at any cost, and the only means at his disposal being to mix with the crowd who had come to feast upon the sight of her torture, he was in front of the sightseers on the road where the cart was to pass.

The impression made upon him by the sight of the young maiden transformed and exalted him; he felt at the same time admiration, love, and passion. He had no more control over himself; she had taken possession of him. At last he knew his duty; he must die for her. His death must share the glory of her own; for henceforth she is his only affection, and, as

[1] Custine had left in Mayence twenty thousand men from his army, under command of Meunier, Aubert-Dubayet, Kléber, &c. Besieged by the Prussian general Kalkreuth, and wanting provisions, they surrendered on July 21. Nevertheless, they were allowed to leave with arms and baggage; they went to fight against the Vendée insurrection.

they will both have died for the same purpose, their names will be linked together in history.

As soon as he comes home, he sits down and begins to write Charlotte's apology. He is fully aware that the committees which watched over the safety of the Republic will make him pay for his audacity with his life. But that is just what he wants; and he will suffer death for having confessed his love.

Two days later he had a pamphlet printed, with the following title:

CHARLOTTE CORDAY

BY ADAM LUX

DEPUTY EXTRAORDINARY FOR MAYENCE

Its motto was taken from Horace:

Quo me rapis tui plenum?
Quae nemora aut quos agor in specus
Velox mente nova?
Dicam insigne, recens, adhuc
Indictum ore alio.
Nil parvum aut humili modo,
Nil mortale loquar; dulce periculum est.[1]

(Odes, III. xxv.)

He first began by expounding his theory on murder, an incoherent theory which was upheld only by vague and confused arguments.

[1] This is a striking example of the alterations that some of the literary men of the eighteenth century made in the classics. In this ode Horace addresses Bacchus, and attributes to that divinity the inspiration which leads him to praise Augustus. The arbitrary manner in which Adam Lux has altered the verses evidently changes their meaning when applied to Charlotte Corday. They may be translated thus: 'Where do you lead me, you, whose thought fills my soul? Into what forest, into what solitude does the resolution which has just taken hold upon me carry me with such force? I will write a great work which I have just conceived, and such as no one has ever written. I will utter nothing low, nothing humble, nothing which mortals usually write; sweet is the peril which I run.'

'Murder is only permissible in the case of a man who is dangerous to public liberties, and when that same man, having placed himself above the law, prevents it from punishing his misdeeds.'

After this he might be expected to place among the permissible murders that of Marat. Was this not, in fact, 'a man dangerous for freedom'? Had he not, indeed, placed himself above the law when he turned the Revolutionary Tribunal into a docile instrument of his own will? And yet Adam Lux does not speak in favour of Marat's murder, but goes on thus:

'Murder is permissible in the case of a general who turns traitor to his country, and who is at the head of his army which he has misled; in the case of a magistrate who has usurped power in circumstances such, that, he being dead, usurpation must end. Murder is not permissible in the absence of such circumstances; it is not permissible when usurpation, being founded on anarchy, can only be strengthened by such an act as murder, for anarchy is the hydra of fable—for one head cut off, three more appear.

'That is why I do not approve of Marat's assassination.

'I hate murder, and will never lend my hands to carry it out. . . .'

Having thus made certain concessions to the political rhetorician in himself, Adam Lux passed on to the subject of his pamphlet, and spoke of Charlotte with a liveliness and an eloquence which betrayed his inward sentiments.

'A delicate girl, of good birth, graceful, well brought up, and loving passionately her endangered country, thinks she must sacrifice her own life to save France, by killing a man whom she believes to be the source of public misfortunes. She takes this resolution on the 2nd of June, and is confirmed in it on the 7th. She leaves her peaceful home without having confided her secret to any one. In spite of the unbearable heat, she undertakes a long journey; she arrives without

having anybody to advise her, to help or comfort her. Did she wish to realise, and did she realise, a project which she hoped would save the lives of thousands of people? She knew beforehand what her fate would be; yet she did not resort to flight. She remains steadfast; she keeps her presence of mind and her gentleness from the day of her incarceration until her death, four days later. She writes the famous letter to Barbaroux—a letter which has impressed me too much to allow me to praise it; a letter which can never be equalled, a letter which will create and will astonish heroes in the future!'

Little by little he gives way to enthusiasm; it is no longer sufficient for him to speak of her, he wants to speak with her; he invokes her memory.

'Charlotte Corday, you sublime soul, incomparable girl! I will not speak of the impression you may make on other people's hearts; I will only mention the feelings which you have raised in my heart.'

And he tells again the story of the march to execution:

'On July 17, the day of her execution, towards evening, I was surprised by this hasty judgment, every particular of which was known to me. I knew enough to come to the conclusion that the prisoner must be able to display an extraordinary courage; and this is the only thing that I had in my mind while in the Rue Saint-Honoré, when I saw her driven along in the cart. . . . But great was my astonishment when, besides the intrepidity which I expected, I saw her unchangeable sweetness in the midst of the barbarous howling! . . . Her look, at once so sweet and so piercing! . . . The vivid and humid sparks which shone in her beautiful eyes, which reflected a soul as gentle as it was intrepid! Charming eyes, which might have moved rocks! Unique and immortal recollection! Angels' looks, which went deep into my heart, which moved it with feelings unknown to me before—feelings as sweet as they were bitter, and which will endure until my last breath!

'For two hours, from the time she started till she reached the scaffold, she maintained the same firmness, the same unspeakable sweetness; having no help, no comforter with her in the cart, she was exposed to the continual hissing of a crowd unworthy of the name of men. And her looks, always the same, seemed to scan this multitude as if they searched for a human being.

'She ascended the scaffold. . . . She died . . . And her grand spirit rose to live among the Catos, the Brutuses, and a few others whose merits she equals, if she does not surpass them. She ascended, and left remembrances in the heart of every human being; . . . with me she left pain and eternal regret.

'Charlotte! Heavenly spirit! Were you nothing more than a mortal? Have you your equal in history? France, be triumphant! Rejoice, Caen, for you have the like of whom was never seen by either Rome or Sparta. She has left earth, which was no longer worthy of her; she has passed like lightning; however, French, she has left us people the souvenir of her virtues. This beloved and sweet souvenir will never leave my heart; it increases and sustains my love for the country for which she was willing to die. . . .

'The mere idea of this angel marching to death will enable me to despise her torturers.'

There Lux stops in his panegyric, to defy her torturers who cannot fail to become his own.

'If they will do me also the honour of their guillotine, which now is nothing more than an altar on which victims are offered in sacrifice, and which, since the 17th of July, has lost any ignominy which was attached to it—if they are willing, I say, to guillotine me, I beg the executioners to allow as many blows to be given to my fallen head as they ordered to be given to Charlotte's. I pray them likewise to order their populace of cannibals to applaud such a cruel sight. . . . Ah! Parisians! can you remain unmoved while there are

as many murders committed within your walls as there used to be flirtations? . . . You will forgive me, Charlotte, if in my last hour I am unable to display the same courage and sweetness which marked you out; I rejoice at your superiority, for is it not just that the object of adoration should be always higher than the worshipper and far above him?'

Then he addresses the 'usurpers of May 31,' and reproaches them with their violence and crimes.

'I came here to seek for the reign of freedom,' he adds, 'and I found merit and virtue oppressed; I saw ignorance and crime triumph. I am tired of living in the midst of the horrors which you perpetrate, and the misfortunes which you prepare for the country. Two hopes are left to me: either, through your care, to suffer and to die, as a victim of freedom, on that honourable scaffold; or to help in wiping out your lies, which are the real source of federalism and civil war, so that your tyranny may end with the blunder, and that the immortal Charlotte Corday may have, on the very spot where she died, a statue bearing the following inscription:

'PLUS GRANDE QUE BRUTUS.'

He signed—'Adam Lux, French citizen.'

Almost at the same time he published another pamphlet, called 'Avis aux citoyens français.'

The subject of this pamphlet is not Charlotte Corday; therefore we must conclude that it was written some time before, and that, in prevision of an early arrest, he wished once more to assert his sentiments in regard to the 'Rolandins, Girondins, and the "right" in general.' He addresses the defeated men: 'You, republicans, are at present oppressed; but I having become a free man in order to be a just man, it is an honour for myself to testify to my esteem for you and to deserve your esteem for me.'

Adam Lux had given good measure. It was more than enough, at that period, to procure one a visit from an officer of police holding a warrant of arrest. On the 24th the commissary of the Butte des Moulins section arrived at the Hôtel des Patriotes hollandais. After he had arrested Adam Lux, he searched his room, seizing his papers, the letters to Guadet and his wife, &c., schemes for speeches, and the two pamphlets dated, one July 19, the other July 23; after which he took to La Force the deputy for Mayence.

The same day Adam Lux was summoned before the Revolutionary Tribunal, where he was examined a first time.

After the questions concerning his identity and the motives of his coming to France, the magistrate reminded him of his intended suicide, which was known through the papers found in his room; he called it a foolish notion. Adam Lux replied sharply and scornfully:

'It is not mad to commit suicide when you can prove that one man's death alone may be more profitable to the country than his life; I add, that there is a certain language of virtue which it is useless to speak before people who do not know the grammar of it.'

'Why,' said the magistrate, 'did you communicate your intentions?'

'I was afraid that, for the want of previous confidences, I might have been taken, after the event, either for a fool or for a man in despair, and I am neither the one nor the other.'

'When you imparted to the citizens Guadet and Péthion your intention to commit suicide, did you expect they would agree with you, or did you think they would raise some obstacle? In the first case, you must have supposed them to be very cruel; in the second, you were not quite sure of yourself—you had an *arrière-pensée*?'

'I had no *arrière-pensée*, and patriotism may be sometimes very cruel. . . .'

The magistrate was not satisfied with Adam Lux's sincerity; he said openly that at the back of it there was some hidden desire of attracting attention in order to obtain aid under some shape or another; perhaps 'some charlatanism, in order to bring himself under the notice of influential men and get appointed to some office.'

'Have you asked for any?' he added.

'No,' replied the prisoner.

'Have you requested any indemnity for your journey since your arrival?'

'Not yet.'

The examination stopped there. Evidently the judge, unable to discern a reasonable motive for Adam Lux's answers, was not averse from regarding him as a lunatic. This is probably why he was in no hurry to send him for trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Lux was not examined again until August 30. Scellier, who had been entrusted with the cross-examination, could not obtain any different answer; and he appointed Tronson du Coudray to defend Adam Lux.

The lapse of time between the arrest and the cross-examination of Adam Lux seemed to open a chance of escape for this unfortunate man. However, this prospect, pleasing to some, was unpleasant to others. In Adam's case this was evident, for on September 4 two unexpected interventions took place.

One was a letter sent to the public prosecutor by a fellow-countryman of Adam Lux, who was apparently anxious to satisfy some old grudge.

'September 4, 1793.

'If every one were not fully convinced of your indefatigable zeal in prosecuting the enemies of the patriots, I might charge you with negligence in regard to Adam Lux. What! That bold writer is still alive—he who dared call Marat a monster, his murderer a Brutus, and her judges torturers? is this not an encouragement to the Moderates, aristo-

crats, and federalists, to leave unpunished the author of "Avis aux Français," he who asserts that the Revolutionary Tribunal —the pillar of our freedom—sentences innocent people and obeys conspirators?

'I, his fellow-countryman, undertake to prosecute him; and, out of regard for your true patriotism, I warn you that I shall denounce him to the Cordeliers and the Jacobins, so as to hasten his punishment. I am yours respectfully,

'THE PATRIOT MOSCHENBERG.'

The other intervention comes from another Mayencer. However, this is a friend of Adam Lux, and he takes the reverse side from the heinous and perfidious accusations of Moschenberg; this man wants to save Adam Lux from justice by giving him out to be a lunatic. The letter, published in the 'Journal de la Montagne' of September 4, emanates from a certain Dr. Wedekind, who is not afraid of using physiological arguments to give weight to his theory.

He says: 'Another circumstance has made his madness more complete. Lux is very fond of his wife, and although he is very passionate, he has lived a perfectly pure life since their separation. This, of course, has increased his mental disorder; so that the sight of Charlotte Corday, the only woman he has noticed since his arrival in Paris, made such a strong physical impression on him, that it brought to a climax the confusion and the gloominess of his mind. He has spoken right and left of Charlotte Corday, he has proclaimed that he would die for her; and the consequence is that he has been incarcerated.'

However, Adam Lux, who did not care if his enemies betrayed him, was not anxious that his friends should use such arguments in his defence. He would not sanction their treating as a rash or mad action his determination not to survive either the abolition of liberty or Charlotte Corday's death. Consequently, he sent to the 'Journal de la Montagne'

a written protest, which was published in the issue of September 26, in which he stated that, on the contrary, 'he was not mad enough to desire to live any longer.' Then, fearing lest by repeating constantly that he was a lunatic, people would not only succeed in gaining credence for this belief, and thus turning him into ridicule, but that he would soon be forgotten by the tormentors of her whom he cherished and whose fate he envied—to prevent so shameful a result Adam Lux wrote to Fouquier-Tinville a letter in order to recall to himself the attention of the Public Prosecutor.

'Prisons of the Hôtel de la Force :
September 7, 1793. Year II.

'Citizen,—I have made known, in two small pamphlets, my political opinions, to which I owe my imprisonment since July 25 last. Having always demanded that I should be brought to trial, I am more anxious than ever to be tried, now that well- or ill-intentioned men, whom I have never seen, tax me with being nothing but a lunatic. (See, for example, the 'Journal de la Montagne,' No. 94.)

'It may be a misfortune for a man to differ from the government in his opinions; publishing them may be unwise; but why should the fact of not being exactly like everybody else be an act of madness?

'Man possessing nothing more valuable than his honour, and a republican being convinced that no hardship is greater than to feel he is regarded as a useless burden on the Republic, I insist on being tried shortly, so that the court may decide whether I am a republican or a counter-revolutionist, wise or foolish, guilty or innocent; for nothing, in my opinion, is worse than having to bear the unjust and undeserved shame of being fed and imprisoned as useless, pitiful, and despicable.

'I therefore beseech you to decide very soon whether there is any cause for which I should be tried, and if so, to have it over as early as possible.

'Whatever be the judgment, believe me you will have obliged me.

'ADAM LUX, *Deputy Extraordinary for Mayence.*'

By thus provoking Fouquier-Tinville—who, as a rule, did not require to be urged to prosecute—Adam Lux was not actuated by temporary ill-temper or by a desire to astonish his judges by his defiance ; and as the public prosecutor delayed taking any notice of Adam Lux's request, the latter wrote again, but this time to the president of the Tribunal.

'Prisons of La Force : September 20, 1793.

'I am fully aware that you are extremely busy ; but, as I have been in prison for the last two months, I beg to remind you of my existence, requesting at the same time that, if there is any charge against me, you will kindly hasten my trial.'

The polite, deferential expressions he makes use of when addressing men whom he had rightfully called tormentors are worth noticing. It almost seems as if he were asking for a favour, and were afraid of being refused.

Six weeks more elapsed before it was granted. On November 2 he left La Force for the Conciergerie. Prisoners never remained very long in this latter prison, which was appropriately nicknamed the 'Antechamber of Death.' Adam Lux realised that his end was near at hand.

Time, however, had done its work. In spite of Lux's anger, his early political passion and his amorous raving had lost some of their exaltation. He perhaps felt, at the bottom of his heart, some regret for a life on which he had founded such grand expectations, and which had been so tame. Nevertheless, he showed no mark of either weakness or fear. On this point we have the testimony of a fellow-prisoner who, as by miracle, escaped the guillotine, and who related later what he had seen and heard during his days of anguish. He wrote the following lines concerning Adam Lux :

'Adam Lux, who was remarkable as deputy for the town

of Mayence and as the lover of the wonderful Charlotte Corday, faced death with Stoical quietude. He was talking with us of the dangers of passion and of want of judgment, which always makes an ardent and inexperienced mind go beyond the mark, when he received his indictment; he read it coolly and put it in his pocket, shrugging his shoulders. "This is my sentence of death," he said to us. "This tissue of absurdities will lead to the scaffold the representative of a town who sent me to give itself to France. I end at eight-and-twenty a miserable life! But tell those who may mention my name to you, that if I deserved death I ought not to have suffered it among French people, and that calmly and without fear I saw it coming."

'He spent the night in writing, and in the morning enjoyed his breakfast. He gave his cloak to a poor prisoner, and at nine o'clock started for the Conciergerie.'

On the 14th of brumaire, year IV (November 4, 1793), he came before the court, which was presided over by Dumas, with Denisot and Harny for assessors. The public prosecutor was not Fouquier-Tinville, but his substitute, Lescot-Fleuriot. The jurymen were Renaudin, Desboisseaux, Meyer, Maupin, Klispis, Fauvel, Servier, Didier, Billion, Laporte, Sauvet, and Beau. The counsel for the defence, whose presence was required, though useless, was not, as previously arranged, Tronçon du Coudray, but the citizen Guillot. It was of small importance.

The trial was quickly carried on by the president, Dumas, a cowardly and facetious man, who regarded every prisoner as guilty, and with whom the obsequious jury always agreed. The following questions were put to the jury:

'1. Is it proven that writings were printed containing provocations to dissolve the national representation and to give back to France a government which is inimical to government by the people?

'2. Is Adam Lux the author of those writings?'

The answer of the jury was affirmative on both points. In

consequence, Adam Lux was sentenced to death, and his property was confiscated for the benefit of the nation.

The judgment did not admit of appeal of any kind. A cart was in readiness in the courtyard of the Palais de Justice, awaiting the prisoners who had been sentenced, and it took them at once to the guillotine which was permanently erected on the Place de la Révolution.

At the supreme hour Adam Lux showed himself worthy of the woman for whom he was anxious to die. The 'Glaive Vengeur'—the vile newspaper whose editor (Dulac) had set himself the mission of following the prisoners to the scaffold—in the hope, as he said, of recording their terrors and their weakness—was obliged to do him justice. The writer said: 'He (Adam Lux) went to the scaffold with admirable coolness; he was talking and smiling, and seemed to face death without any apprehension. Having ascended the scaffold without trembling, he kissed his executioners before being struck by the sword of law.'

A GIRONDIN'S LOVE AFFAIRS[1]

JEAN-FRANÇOIS DUCOS was five-and-twenty when, on October 21, 1790, he married Jeanne-Agathe Lavaud.

Thus were united two respectable families of Bordeaux. The Ducos and the Lavauds were tradespeople, and must have been fairly well off, if we may judge from what each of the parties received on their wedding.

Agathe Lavaud brought her husband an income of two thousand livres, while Ducos had a personal revenue of four thousand. In addition, he had a share in his father's firm, from which he received 25 per cent. of the profits. He could also choose between boarding at the paternal home—he, his wife, and the children that might be born to him—and receiving an extra thousand a year.

Thus the young couple began married life in very good circumstances. Added to this, there was deep affection between them; they loved each other fondly.

Their life might have been an easy and happy one; but Ducos, who had embraced the new principles, was far from wanting to lead an obscure and peaceful life in his native place. He had no taste for trade, and rather prided himself on being a literary man. He had made the acquaintance of Marat, having gone several times to Paris, and they had struck up a friendship. This was, of course, before Marat grew into the sanguinary lunatic that he later on became, and this friendship contributed much in instilling into Ducos the desire to play a part in politics.

[1] Archives Nationales, W, 292–294, part iv.

The confidence his fellow-citizens placed in him, and his own unfortunate fate, helped him to realise his ambitious dreams. Ducos was elected deputy to the Assemblée Législative in September 1791.

At first he and his relatives rejoiced at the news that the electors of the department of Gironde had chosen him to go and help the *geniuses*—as they were called by the enthusiasts of the period—in working for the happiness of France, and humanity in general. This immense joy was not unalloyed, for the glorious post to which he was appointed demanded his immediate departure for Paris; thus entailing his leaving behind him the young wife whom he had wedded less than a year before.

Madame Ducos was nearing her time for becoming a mother, and it would have been madness to insist on her undertaking such a long and difficult journey just then; especially as they would arrive in a city where nothing was ready for them. Remaining in Bordeaux, she would find, both in her own and in her husband's family, all the attention she required.

It was therefore decided that the legislator should start alone, and that his wife should join him after her complete recovery.

We owe to this separation a series of letters (there is a bundle of seventy-four) addressed to Ducos by his wife or his sister-in-law, Sophie Lavaud, a charming girl. The wife's letters overflow with passion; those of the sister-in-law are full of affection, perhaps too tender for a sister's love only. There is, indeed, a strange and unexpected pleasure in inhaling from the voluminous bundle of documents relating to the case of the Girondins a perfume of love a hundred years old, yet still fresh; and we must thank Fouquier-Tinville for having, perhaps unawares, preserved it for us.

The reading of these letters is very instructive. As a rule, when men are mixed up with politics they seem to stand alone, and apart from their friends; we know nothing of their private life. And yet, in the shadow of privacy, loving

hearts beat for those men standing out in the light. May we not consider it fortunate that we are able to reconstitute the lives of these obscure people—above all, that we can do so with truth? This is the right and the duty of the historian. There are, however, in the wife's letters a few passages in which she displays her passion without any disguise, in words which were meant for the husband's eye alone. These we shall leave out. Let us now, with a bold yet discreet hand, raise the veil which conceals the secrets of three hearts.

Ducos started on September 21. Before he even reached Paris he wrote to his wife. The poor forlorn woman, after eleven months of married life, had to console herself in the absence of the beloved one with nothing but a few lines of his handwriting. She is very sad, and does not try to hide it; she uses, in writing to her husband, a childish language, natural to a young love, but which reminds him of joyful days.

'Bordeaux: September 7, 1791.

'I am going to have a chat with you, my dear friend, and it is a very sweet joy to me. I have been waiting impatiently for the moment when I might do it. This is the sixth day since we parted, and it seems to me as if it were six months. Ah! when will the time come for our meeting again, fonder and more loving than ever? Help me to be strong, my loving friend, so that I may live through the time which must elapse till then.

'I am not always sensible—*ta Cocotte si été pas sage*; but do not scold me when I am sad. I have not Bobo's fond kisses to comfort me. You must try to make up for them by letters full of tenderness and love, like the one you wrote me. I have read it many times; it is my comfort when I am sad. . . .'

'Bordeaux: October 1, 1791.

'This is a joyful day for me, my dearest friend, because I expect a letter from you and because I can talk to you. You

have begun to exercise your duties as legislator ; as for me, I always zealously obey your recommendation to me to pray to God for you. I trust my prayers will be heard, for nobody will then have any fault to find with you. . . .

'. . . All our friends are in good health, and all send their love ; especially Sophie, who is with me,—for she refused to go to Canegeau, so as not to leave me. You see she is attentive to me ; I hope you will let her see that you are grateful to her. . . .

'. . . For me, I am never so happy as when we can speak of "Petit-Mami." I often think of the pleasure I shall have when I come to live with you. *Maybe you not know poor Cocotte.* . . .

'Good-bye ! I rely upon your promise and your faithful heart. Good-bye, Bobo ! Good-bye, Petit-Mami ! Cocotte loves you and wishes you to love her ; you know that if you ceased loving her, her life would cease also. Good-bye ! I kiss your lovely eyes. . . .

'AGUITE.'

'Aguite'—or 'Cocotte,' as she called herself—was not long in growing jealous of 'Bobo,' of Petit-Ami, pet names whispered in the rapture of their early and mutual affection. She trembled for the constancy of her husband in a place like Paris, where he might find many opportunities of testing it. What could her letters do? She would like to be more eloquent. Her double preoccupation is evident throughout her correspondence.

'Bordeaux : Saturday, October 8, 1791.

'. . . I see from your letter that we love one another more and more ; that our hearts understand each other and feel the same impressions. Ah ! I am often so sad that I sometimes fear we have been too happy ; yet, in order not to give way to sadness, I try to think that that time will come back, and that we shall appreciate it all the more for having been deprived of it. I so like you to write me fond letters ; they

make me cry, and yet I enjoy them. I can hardly believe that mine have the same effect on you.

'It seems to me there is a vast difference, and *Cocotte not write well for Bobo*; still I see, from the manner in which they affect you, that you love me truly and that it is out of affection that you think them nice. I assure you, Petit-Mami, that this makes me very happy, and that my grief is soothed by your fondness. *Cocotte loves Bobo!* . . .

'Good-bye, my dearest friend! I pray to God that He may keep you in good health and in the straight path. Good-bye, Bobo! Love your Aguite. Be faithful to her, and she will be happy. I kiss you on your eyes and mouth. . . . You will not be untrue to me . . . your poor Cocotte would die of grief.'

But Madame Ducos is not the only one who loves her husband. Her sister, Sophie Lavaud, has for him a deep affection. She does not make a secret of it, and allows her brother-in-law to know it; it seems, however, that it does not displease him.

'Bordeaux: October 11, 1791.

'Thank you for your letter, my dear Ducos. It breathes confidence and friendship, and it proves that you know me well.

'I have not left Agathe since you went away; for who better than I could share her griefs? Is it not the person who feels them as deeply as she does?

'Almost every one has been telling her she must be strong and sensible. I alone know that there is only one consolation—and that is to give way to one's grief. At present she is quiet, and almost happy.

'She reads me your letters to her; it is not possible to read them without being moved and shedding tears over your fate. But it is impossible to resist one's destiny. My heart had anticipated your recommendations; I promise I will not leave Agathe, and I thank you for having made me her secretary. I shall do my best to fulfil my duty. Be at rest in regard to the

pretty little baby who is on the eve of being born. Thus, *Mr. privileged*,[1] think that you will soon be a father.

'I hope, my dear Ducos, that you are convinced that, whatever change may take place in my life, my heart will remain the same, and you will always have a large place in it. I do not mean to say that there is no one worthy of filling my heart, but what I can assure you is that I know nobody. This is why I beg you will sometimes remember that little possession; do think of me in your leisure moments. In the meantime, do not forget me in your letters to Agathe, so that I may have the pleasure of reading my name in them.

'I cannot tell you anything of Trotel, for I have not been there since we went together. I suppose it has not altered, yet it would not be the same for me. Its beauty is over. I dread the day when I must go, for I hate remembering any but nice things. I wish I had never to go there again, and I do so above all in the moments when I despair of ever seeing you any more.

'I will not try to tell you how much I love you. You nearly guess it. I send you thousands of kisses.

'SOPHIE LAVAUD.

'Papa, mamma, Lavaud, and Hélène send their best love. Not a day passes but we say "If Ducos were here!"—that happens oftenest in our walks to the Beyle road. It must look very small to you, now that you see it from such a distance and that you are busy with so many things. Good-bye! It seems like a century since you left me.

'Thank you beforehand for the knife: I long to have it. I intend using it daily, as I do my dear necklace.'

The Legislative Assembly began its work on October 1. Ducos had met in Paris his colleagues from the Gironde, among whom was the most famous of all, Vergniaud, who

[1] Alluding to immunities pertaining to members of the Assemblée Législative.

was destined to make a name for himself in history. Madame Ducos, being the wife of a legislator, did not fail to take an interest in politics; she was aware of her husband's caustic turn of mind, and feared that his propensity for epigrams might make him more than one enemy. She gave him sound advice; one feels that she wished him to be a general favourite, as she knew how kind he was. Notwithstanding, her anxiety concerning her husband's fidelity was persistent, for she loved him quite as much, though he was at a distance.

'October 15, 1791.

'. . . I have read in the papers the row which took place in the Assembly on the day the decree was repealed. The republicans say that it impairs legislature; but the royalists, on the contrary, think that this was a wise step, as the motion would have caused division between the two powers.

'Generally, it is thought that the Assembly is not doing much beyond having long and useless discussions. It would appear that men of note have not had a chance of coming to the front. I trust that if you find an opportunity of doing some good work, you will leave aside epigrams, for you have been rather too witty—I mean, that you cannot forget your sharpness. I deplore this, for at bottom you are not malicious, yet you often say things which may lead people to believe you are—those above all who know you only from hearsay. It would be gratifying to me if you could possibly please every one, and your friends in particular. . . .

'Never forget your little woman, who is always afraid you will seek for happiness with another besides herself. . . .

'Sophie sends her best love; she took the kiss which you would not give her because it was she who had answered your letter. . . .

'I have just received a nice letter from Vergniaud, and it gave me great pleasure. I shall not answer him before next

post; it will be hard enough to do so without looking too stupid. In the meantime, give him a kiss from me for the pleasure he has given me. . . .'

Her time is approaching, and the thought of becoming a mother is the source of grave reflections; yet she looks forward to a brilliant and happy future.

'Bordeaux: October 18, 1791.

'. . . It has always been a wish of mine to nurse my child, but since I have been reading "Emile" I realise it is a duty. I found in that book all sorts of reasons for doing so; but the one I preferred was that Jean-Jacques dares to promise a wife who feeds her children the constant love and fidelity of her husband. I, for whom such a hope was everything, would now give all I possess, even my life, to be a mother in the true sense of the word, and so make sure of your fidelity.

'Ah! if I succeed, what joy it will be for us! We shall bring up our baby, and it will grow fond of us. Our mutual affection will cause it to love both of us equally; as we are one, it will have one affection for both. We shall be of one mind in its bringing up, so that it will see no difference in our views on education. How happy we and the child will all be! Ah! no happiness is to be compared to a love such as ours, and to the joy of having children who cherish none but their father and mother. I often think of our future joy, my good and loving little Mami, and I rejoice beforehand. . . .'

Yet she was jealous, and her jealousy was unexplained and vague. It surged constantly to the surface, the more so when she remembered past and lost joys.

'October 22, 1791.

'. . . Good-bye! Love me always, and never forget the promise you made me the day before you started. Remember your poor Cocotte lying at your side. You were holding her in your arms, and mingling your tears with her own; you promised you would always love her and be true to her.

This recollection brings tears to my eyes, darling; nevertheless, my hope that you will never break your promise gives me joy, and at the same time grief because I am far from you. . . .'

At last the eventful day had come! Madame Ducos gave birth to a son. Sophie Lavaud writes to her brother-in-law full particulars of the confinement.

'Bordeaux: October 29, 1791.

'Oh, you blessed mortal! I am aware that I am not first in giving you the news that your wife was delivered of a fine boy on Tuesday at 1.30 A.M. She had been suffering from pains in her back all the afternoon, and at six she went upstairs to her room. There the throes succeeded one another more rapidly, and increased in intensity until she was delivered at 1.30. It was quite long enough. . . .'

Then Sophie speaks of the baby:

'Now let me tell you what it is like; you will then be convinced that every one has a different opinion. As a rule, people say it is like you. But you surely were not expecting that it would be like me! Well, well, say what you like, but your mother thinks so, as well as several other people to whom she pointed out this resemblance. I cannot make out why the child should resemble me. However, keep your mind at rest; I often have it in my arms, and then I try to find out if there is anything of you in him. I think I have discovered that the little face is a miniature of yours. I recognised the stamp of the workman; its eyes will be beautiful, and its chin will be as pretty and pointed as yours. I must not forget to tell you that I am dry nurse. Tell your son to be more modest, for he begins already to lift my fichu. . . .

'Cocotte asks me to kiss Petit-Mami, and I consent to being Cocotte at that price. Good-bye! Love me. Below is the name of one who loves you too well:

'SOPHIE LAVAUD.'

This is a very plain confession of deep affection, but it is clear also that it is not a guilty one. The above lines contain the imprudence of innocence; yet the playfulness and the good temper with which the girl revealed the secret of her heart take from this affection all that might be objectionable or even wrong. One feels that she had a great admiration for her brother-in-law; still, her love for him is deep enough to admit of her rejoicing at his own happiness, and being happy in it.

She again wrote to Ducos on November 1; but this time it was only as her sister's secretary. Her letter began with: 'It is she who speaks, listen to her attentively;' and it ended with the words, 'Good-bye! I beseech you not to forget your little sister.'

Madame Ducos was nursing her baby. For a time motherhood calmed her mad transports and bitter regrets, and she took to writing in a serious tone. Ducos had told her that he had paid a visit to The Hermitage, where J.-J. Rousseau lived for a few years. The remembrance of the philosopher who wrote such pretty lines on maternal nursing recalled to her mind her admiration for this great man.

'November 19, 1791.

'From your letter, my darling, I see that you have spent a delightful day at The Hermitage. The description you gave me of it increased my desire to join you. I fully realised your feelings from your impressions on seeing the humble retreat of the man whom you cherish. Ah! would not your joy have been complete had your wife and son been with you! How I long to go on a pilgrimage with my darling through the Montmorency valley! . . .'

Although Ducos was absorbed by politics and his duties as 'legislator,' and still remained true to his wife, he was not indifferent to the sentiments expressed by the bright and playful 'little sister;' he even complained of her silence, which he thought too long. Sophie Lavaud was delighted, and at

once wrote to her brother-in-law a letter in which she opens her heart still more freely than before. However, she only put her initials at the end, and, whether by chance or intentionally, the two initials form a monogram of an S and L entwined, revealing an expansive and loving nature.

'Bordeaux: November 22, 1791.

'How sweet your reproofs! I do like your wild anger! It is a proof that you care for me, and this I never questioned. Do not be so unjust as to think that my silence was due to indifference or coldness on my part. If I denied myself during a few days the pleasure of writing to you, it was harder than you think, and I could not long have stood such strict abstinence. Henceforth, I promise you I will answer your letters at once.

'My dear darling, I am very far from and yet very near you. Many a time I have complained of my want of memory; now I wish I had not so good a one: it is often troublesome, and is of no use except to make me sad.

'Why must I not think of you when I drink?[1] I cannot agree to this, because, from what you say, I should be drinking all day, even all night long, since I never cease thinking of you. It is your own fault, for I see no one like you, not even your son.

'I send you a thousand fond kisses.'

In a postscript Sophie Lavaud informed her brother-in-law of a small incident in her life. It seems that a M. Maillia, a friend of the family, was a frequent visitor, and it was probable that he was attracted by the charming girl. However, Sophie entertained no thought of marriage, either with him or with any one else; as she had said previously, in her letter of October 11: 'I do not mean to say that there is no one worthy of it, but I can at least assure you that I know nobody who is.' The suitor was dismissed.

[1] She was alluding to a goblet which Ducos had sent her.

'Poor M. Maillia has been dismissed. Your father preferred to frighten papa by telling him that Maillia came only for me. . . . They chaffed me rather nastily about him. And yet it ought never to have grieved me. It is quite enough to be sad at being parted from somebody I love. . . .

'I shall satisfy my wish to kiss you once more. Good-bye!'

On the same day Madame Ducos mentions the incident to her husband:

'You will write to Maillia to tell him how grieved I was at having to hurt his feelings, but he is convinced that I have nothing to do with it. I don't know if he came for Sophie, but when I told him his visit made papa anxious on her account, he did not answer. Therefore I cannot be sure that he came for her. . . .'

Compassionate for those who love, Madame Ducos felt sorry at seeing the poor fellow's grief, and she tried to comfort him.

'I saw Maillia yesterday,' she wrote on November 28 to her husband, 'but I shall tell you how, and I know you will not be angry, although you may think it was not wise. I sent him a note through Noinain, telling him that I had not seen him for several days, and that I should have an opportunity of doing so in the morning, if he chose to take a walk along the moats. He came, and we walked together the whole of the forenoon. He is very miserable, and longs to go to Paris.'

Time was passing. Madame Ducos was better, without being as strong as she was before her confinement. She had an abscess on the breast, which was very painful, and this physical pain recalled her mental grief; the sorrow she felt at being parted from her husband was increased by her jealousy. She tried to revive the love of days gone by, through her childish language; she was afraid his love might be on the wane after three months' separation.

'Bordeaux : Tuesday, December 13, 1791.

'I write only two lines, my darling, because at present I am not strong enough to bear my grief, and it is deep. . . .

'Baby is in splendid health ; he is beginning to know me, and I cannot tell you how pleased I am at this. It is only just I should have such a comfort. I do not suppose you are jealous of it. *Poor Cocotte, she is so sad ; but Cocotte not say it to Bobo, because Bobo angry ; but me wants Bobo guess it ; me has promised Bobo be good, never think Bobo could* . . . . I am anxious, and I shed tears as if I were sure that another woman is happy. . . . Ah ! Bobo, do not be vexed. Good-bye ! I send you many kisses for myself and for our baby. Good-bye, darling ! Love Cocotte always, and so make her happy. Do not scold me for constantly suspecting my Petit-Mami. You do not deserve to be suspected, and as for me, I should deserve to have an unfaithful husband ; yet it would be death to me. . . .'

Ducos understood the state of mind of his poor 'Cocotte' and was moved by her love, which she expressed with such ingenuousness and fervour. He answered her in the same tone, and put himself on a level with her childish love-talk. Agathe was delighted.

'December 23, 1791.

'Ah ! darling, how your letter pleased me ! It seemed to me, as I read it, that I was hearing and seeing you ! How sweet was the kiss in the small circle ! Petit-Mami had put it there heartily—I saw it. I thought it was your mouth I was kissing ; but the first kiss alone deceived me, because, after having kissed the circle many a time, I received nothing in exchange from Petit-Mami, and I remembered that if I gave you one it was to receive two. . . .'

As she would not owe Petit-Mami anything, she also traced a circle on her paper : 'In the circle is a very fond kiss.'

Sometimes, however, Ducos thought that his wife was exaggerating her fears, and he laughed at her persistent jealousy. This troubled Madame Ducos, who did not like being teased on a subject which caused her so much anxiety.

'Saturday, January 7, 1792.

'Good-morning, you wicked man! You may be astonished at this name, yet it suits you. I will not get out of temper, but when we meet again, you shall pay me for all the cruel things you have written to me. . . .

'You clever dear, you might know that you will not cure me of my jealousy by turning it into ridicule. You always made yourself out to be jealous. Have you ever had cause to be so? and if I have cured you of your malady, see what means I used. I did not laugh at you, and never gave you a single opportunity of finding fault with me. Of course you will say you have done the same. That may be; but if I have felt suspicious, it is because I remember the life you led before loving me. Now I am sure of your heart. . . .'

The time was coming when it would be possible for Madame Ducos to join her husband. She was afraid he would not find her as pretty as when he had left her. Her trouble at being parted, her confinement, the cares and fatigues of maternity had told upon her; this is why she was endeavouring to warn him against any disappointment he might experience. 'Petit-Mami, I must tell you what I look like now, as you will find a great change in me. I am always very pale; I have got thin, which does not prevent me from being as big as if I were fat. . . . You will have to love me quite as much as if my complexion were all cream and roses.' He, on the contrary, is better-looking than ever: 'I heard from Fonfrède,[1] who dined yesterday with M. Barrère de

[1] Fonfrède, member for the Gironde, was married to Ducos's sister.

Vieusac, that you are much stouter, that your complexion is clear and your cheeks are ruddy. . . .'

Unfortunately, the weather was unfavourable; snow had been falling, and the roads were impassable for a young woman with a child. Madame Ducos was obliged to delay her journey. She tried to wile away the time by writing long letters to him whose duty kept him far from her. '. . . Alas! when shall I see you? When shall I be able to hold you in my arms? What joy to kiss my Petit-Mami! . . . Ah! cursed Revolution! Dear me! forgive what I have just said. I should like to be with my darling, and I hate all that comes between him and me.' (January 27, 1792.)

Even the honours of which she used to be so proud are now a cause of irritation. She finds the obstacles between them both too great in number! She says so openly:

'I was very sorry to hear that you had been appointed secretary to the Assembly. I shall hardly see you the first days of my arrival in Paris. How well I see now that love does not require honours, and that I am happier with you as the secretary of the heart than of the National Assembly! However, I must be patient; surely a time will come when all this will be over. Good-bye! I must leave you; it is nearly one o'clock, and a nurse must go to bed earlier than this.' (February 13, 1792.)

Several incidents further delayed Madame Ducos's journey. Her father could not give her money, as he was expecting a cargo of sugar; and snow was still covering all the roads.

'A week ago, my darling, I thought I should write to you to-day a charming letter; fate has decided otherwise.' (February 21, 1792.)

Judging from her letter of February 27, she multiplies the tiny circles in which she puts longing kisses:

'Every night I dream that I am with you; last night again I dreamt that we were together. I woke up in a state of excitement, but alas! this was only a dream. Oh, my dear, I feel how much I need you. . . . When I think of the joy

that was ours, my heart palpitates, I get excited, and I feel a burning fire within me. . . . Ah ! you must feel the same, and you can understand what I mean. When this state of excitement has worn off, I feel sad and am ready to cry. Oh, when will all this end ? I really cannot refrain from asking the question, although I know you cannot answer it.'

At last all obstacles were removed; she could now start on her journey, and she wrote joyfully to advise him of it:

'Good-day, Petit-Mami. Cocotte is so pleased, for she will surely set out next week ; but the day is not yet decided, because papa, having been obliged to borrow some money from Papille to fulfil his agreements, has left him the sugar as guarantee, and the matter is not yet entirely settled. Nevertheless, I shall begin to pack to-morrow.' (March 2, 1792.)

She set out on Monday, March 5. On the evening of the first halt she sent a short note:

'If I tell you that I am not starting, you will scold me; but if I say that I am on my way, you will give me a kiss. Well, Petit-Mami, I left to-day, Monday, the 5th, and we came as far as Cuzac, where we shall stop for the night. . . .

'It has been raining all day; we were somewhat wet on board, but when embarking and landing we were knee-deep in mud. This, however, is nothing, as I am coming to meet Petit-Mami ! . . .'

A few days later she arrived in Paris:

> Voilà nos gens rejoints, et je laisse à juger
> De combien de plaisirs ils payèrent leurs peines.

Sophie Lavaud did not accompany her sister to Paris; the girl remained at Bordeaux, and correspondence was kept up between her and her brother-in-law. This was not a frequent correspondence, but it was filled with the same sentiments, and they were as freely and as openly expressed. The first letter refers to a slight coolness—a misunderstanding,

perhaps intended, for nothing serious can vary the quietude of this mutual affection.

'Bordeaux: March 10, 1792.

'One ought to forgive all offences, my dear Ducos; my heart had already forgiven you, and I was only waiting for a sign of repentance on your part to sanction it. It is not, *like M. Dumas, that my weapons were too weak to fight my enemies.* You had given me terrible weapons against you. I should like to feel proud of it, as you say that this is a favour you grant to your friends alone. I regret to say that I cannot appreciate it at its full value.

'But you, my dear cousin—you, whose memory is not so short as mine—you should have remembered that Sophie would be grieved, and that, coming from Ducos, the sting would be all the more bitter. This is not the first time she has forgiven you, and in spite of her short memory she could draw up a long list of the numerous instances in which she has forgiven you. However, as you put it, *generosity must follow victory*; and if you care at all that we should make up the quarrel, you may be certain that peace is now perfect. The kiss of peace alone remains to be given; I do not forego it, but I will neither receive it on paper nor in Paris.

'I am expecting it in Bordeaux. You will not find the time very long, for you say that we have only one more year for writing to each other. One year! Of course it is soon over! As for me, I do not think as you do. One year is a century to me! Yet, I should like to think that this will be the limit of our separation. But you have never seen such an incredulous person as Sophie; you cannot get it out of her head that you will only come back to her when you require a support for your old age. However, she is always at your service whenever she is strong enough to bear the weight of your talent. Till then I shall be pleased to speak of you in my letters to my dear Agathe. I am aware that you are

too busy to write to me, and I do not care about talking to people who do not answer. Thus I sacrifice your letters—a sacrifice which I add to many others. At present I make one in not writing to my dear Agathe. Will you please tell her a letter shall come by next post? Give her two kisses as if they were from you, and take two for yourself. If I were to say there are none for Ducos you would be cross. Let us see how you will take this : all for Ducos. After this I have only to say good-bye and give you fond kisses.'

Bordeaux had become a sad place for the girl; so was Trotel, the country house where they used to go as a joyous family party. She tells of her solitude with mournful expressions :

'I went on Thursday to Trotel, only for the afternoon; but, dear me! what a difference when we all met there, happy and joyful! I like to think of this time, however sad the recollection may be. Yes, Trotel is still a charming place; my eyes find there what they are looking for, and I love it out of gratitude for the pleasure I have enjoyed there. The future will make up for the pains I feel from my dear Agathe's absence and yours, and if such a hope was taken from me I should be to be pitied, oh! so much to be pitied. But, dear me! when I think that my misfortune may last two years longer, I should prefer to be dead rather than wait so long.

'Good-bye, my charming little brother, my little cousin. Come back some time, so as to judge, from what I shall then say, whether my heart had i s share in the sentiments of friendship your friend professes for you.

'S. L.

'Receive one very fond kiss. I give you one in addition for your son, whom I love exceedingly.'

Time was passing. Ducos, absorbed by his office, and

occupied by the events which were taking place in Paris, did not write so often. It was the year when the cataclysm began. June 20 and August 10 were marked by the fall of the monarchy, and yet it is curious to notice that none of those important events found a place in the girl's correspondence with a representative of the people. When she made any allusion to politics it was only because they had a direct effect on their lives, forcing them to live longer apart.

We quote now a long letter of September 22, 1792. Massacres in the prisons had been committed on the 3rd and 6th of that month, and it was not possible for Sophie Lavaud not to have heard of them. Yet she did not say a single word about them.

'Oh! how nice of you to write to me, my dear little cousin! I did want this token of remembrance on your part, to put a stop to the struggle between my heart and myself. I wanted to forget my little brother. He was the cause of all my troubles, and yet without sharing them. See, my dear, how unjust grief makes us; when I remember the wishes it excited in me, the wicked things it made me say, I can hardly believe that in such moments I can have been in the full possession of my reason. I trust, my dear cousin, that you will blame the state of dementia in which I was, for my mistake. If you could read my heart you would feel nothing but pity for me, and you would surely forgive me on account of the motive of my mistake. Do not be, in your turn, unjust to the point of accusing your friend; her heart is not altered. She still loves you as she must—that is, far too well! . . .

'I am very grateful, my little brother, for the confidence you put in me, and of which you gave me a proof in your letter. How sweet it is! How well it describes the state of your mind! You cannot possibly realise the good it did me and the pleasure it gave me! You cannot have the least idea of it, because it depends on you alone to make others,

and me in particular, experience it. This is the only thing which I despair of ever being able to repay you. Do not let this prevent you from writing, I beseech you. I dare not ask you to do so oftener, for I feel it would be an indiscretion on my part. It is much better and more just that I should be thinking of you constantly; I have nothing to prevent me from doing so, and I yield myself to the comforting thought, which alone can soothe the anguish of absence, that those whom I regret deplore our separation as much as I do. I am fully aware that it will be a long one, yet I should have preferred not to read in your letter, "*this future, if it comes, is still far from us.*" This "if it comes" has been a pang to me. . . . I do so want to believe that it will come. Yes, my dear little brother, a better future is in store for us; let me hope for it, or else I must give up joy for ever.

'I must thank you again for the pretty paper you have sent me. I made up my mind not to use any before writing to you, and to keep it entirely for answering your letters. Let us see if it will last the whole time you stay in Paris. I warn you that I shall not go and see you; I am afraid I should not love you as much as in Bordeaux or at Trotel. . . . Ah! I was forgetting that you asked me not to mention our poor Trotel any more. What a sacrifice!

'It is to-day a year since you left. Dear me! when I think that in business it is just as if it were yesterday, and that to me the time has been so long! May God grant that the Convention should not last any longer! I can sacrifice one more year, but afterwards all will be indifferent to me.

'Good-bye, my dear! Take care of yourself; do not overwork yourself; keep yourself for those who love you. I hope I am among them. I send you a thousand hearty kisses.'

The last letter is dated February 23, 1793:

'This is the first time, my dear friend, that I can reproach myself in any way with regard to yourself, and yet it is only for having been too long without writing to you. Nevertheless,

I can assure you that I have none the less thought of you, and that I have sympathised with the different situations in which you may have found yourself. I was even taking too great a share of your troubles, if I may judge from the answers I received from those with whom I spoke of my trials. Still, my dear, I do not complain, if you understand the sentiment which guides me.

'I ought perhaps to tell you that it is through no negligence on my part that I do not write to you, but it is entirely your fault. For myself, I do not know what it is to neglect my friends, having always plenty of time to think of them, because I put them before everything else; instead of that, I question very much if my little cousin does the same.

'. . . Yet your letters have not remained unanswered; true, the answers were made by my heart alone, for my hand did not write them; notwithstanding, I am sure you do not ignore them. . . .'

Then she recurs again to the lapse of time she must still spend alone in Bordeaux before her brother-in-law's return. She finds the sacrifices imposed by politics very hard:

'. . . I know full well that I can never wish my most bitter enemy a worse evil than to have the *honour* of being a member of the National Assembly. You may realise what I must suffer through your occupying such a post, you Ducos!

'You will soon see papa; you will be very much surprised to hear that, although I was asked to accompany him, I refused. It was hard for me, I assure you, to give up the only thing that I long for. But, my dear friend, I can sacrifice three or four weeks of a joy which would be marred by the thought that they would soon be over. I could not bring myself to bear a second parting; the first one has been too painful already: I cannot think of it without shedding tears. Before I can dry them, I must be certain of enjoying true happiness; and for me there is only one—and that is, living with those I love.

'Good-bye, my dear Ducos! Do write as soon as possible. Remember how long you have been without writing to me! I have paid dearly enough for your silence, but am I not atoning for it? My letter is as long as an address of congratulation to the Assembly. I do not ask to be specially mentioned in the official report; I should prefer that you remembered me. Good-bye again. Take care of yourself, without however stealing from the Republic any of the love you owe it. I send a thousand hearty kisses. S. L.

'Papa, mama, Lavaud, and Hélène send their best love and kisses. Citizen Lacroix wishes to be remembered. I denounce him to you as paying me assiduous attentions.'

Sophie Lavaud's correspondence ends there. The last letter of the bundle is dated from Bordeaux, and was addressed by Madame Ducos to her husband.

But how different it is from former ones! It no longer contains wild expressions of love, nor bursts of unreasonable jealousy; the childish talk of earlier days has been replaced by a quiet, melancholy, almost painful tone. The passion she had felt for her husband had grown purer. During those eighteen months she had had another child, a daughter, and the anxieties caused by her two children were beginning to tell on the young mother. The present was looking very dark; what would the future be?

Madame Ducos had witnessed the awful events of those terrible days. Her husband had voted with his friends of the Gironde for the death of the king. Yet the Girondins had been left behind in their turn; defeated on May 30, most of them were now either banished or prisoners. Ducos, being under the protection of Marat, had been left at liberty; but Marat was no more.

Ducos might have remained in obscurity if he had chosen to; but, on the contrary, he came forward every day, begging from the Convention that his friends should be recalled. Yet

far from sharing his wife's hopes, he anticipated the fate which was in store for him; and, anxious that his wife should not be near him were the worst to happen, he sent her and their children back to Bordeaux, in the midst of their friends.

Madame Ducos obeyed.

On September 24, 1793, she wrote the following lines to her husband:

'It was only on Sunday, after having written to you, that I received the letter which ought to have reached me on Saturday; however, it reached me all right, as well as Thursday's letter. I should like you, my darling, to write to me as often as possible. You know how glad I am to hear from you, and my heart needs a little joy. . . .

'You are deprived of seeing your dear children, of whom you are so fond. . . .'

Then she spoke of her son Emile, who said 'Papa!' and of little 'Minette, who is so plump.'

'Alas! my dear, it may be a long time yet before you see her. You have already sacrificed much to the Revolution! But this is certainly the greatest sacrifice you have made—and what will be your reward? . . .

'I advise you to promise nothing more in behalf of your fellow-citizens, for they are, you may be sure, weak and cowardly. They may yet be worse. The day before yesterday they passed a motion that all men who have been members of the *Commission* should be banished. . . .

'Good-bye, my darling! I kiss you for myself and the children. Write to me, comfort me, give me hope. Ah! when shall we be able to live alone, far from the world, with our children's affection? I have no other ambition. I trust that experience will have taught you to give up all others. . . .

'Good-bye! Love me as I love you, and my heart will be satisfied.'

Poor woman, she was never to see her husband again!

This was the last letter Ducos received. On October 3 he

was among the Girondins whom a decree called upon to appear before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and on the 9th of brumaire, II (October 31) he was one of those who ascended the scaffold, defying his executioners by his courage and his peace of mind.

More than a hundred years have passed away since then. Those letters from a wife and a friend, buried in the midst of numerous papers, are the only witnesses of the sentiments of love that had grown up around this man. It seemed to us the episode was worth while recalling, showing as it does the young Girondin surrounded at the same time by passionate love and artless affection.

MADAME DE KOLLY

DURING the second half of the eighteenth century, owing to the influence of Rousseau, it was fashionable to be sensitive and to pass for being virtuous. But virtue, as it was understood at the time, was not very troublesome; it consisted in being sensitive, or, in other words, following 'the sweet inclinations of Nature.' And Nature was the good creative power which never makes a mistake, which makes and keeps man a good being, provided he is not deformed by injurious teaching or by a conventional morality which is born of superstition.

Such pleasant and easy teaching did not count among its adherents only philosophers or people anxious to see a change in society; it had spread to every class, and few there were who had not been influenced by a period in which pleasure was the aim and end of every one.

It is well to recollect this, so as to enable the reader to judge of facts in a more sane manner, and to prevent him from being too severe upon the sensitive woman whose romantic and tragic life we shall relate according to the most authentic documents.[1]

[1] We have first a large and complete *dossier* of the Kolly affair (National Record Office, W 269, No. 23). In this are the papers relating to the case, the correspondence exchanged between M. de Kolly and his wife, between Beauvoir and Madame de Kolly, and several letters from people who were mixed up in the affair, which were seized when the accused persons were arrested. Among the printed documents we may mention *le Bulletin du tribunal révolutionnaire*, *le Glaive vengeur*, *les Mémoires*

I

Madeleine-Françoise-Joséphine Derabec was born at St. Malo in 1757; she first married M. Foucault, a Lorient merchant, by whom she had a son René. But having lost her husband after a few years, she married for the second time about 1780; she became then the wife of a wealthy farmer-general, eighteen years her senior, named Pierre-Paul de Kolly.

M. de Kolly, who was of an adventurous turn of mind, following the example of M. de Calonne, who was the most extraordinary Controller of Finance the department ever had (1783–1787), entered into various speculations. His fortune was not proof against his unwise management, any more than the fortune of France withstood a minister's wrong administration; the only difference was that M. de Calonne ruined the Exchequer, while M. de Kolly ruined himself. Of his immense wealth he managed to save a few remnants, the most valuable of which was a piece of land in Lyons valued at 80,000 livres, but which was not easy to dispose of. If most of his claims were vague and irrecoverable, on the contrary his debts were very certain; thus, the ex-farmer-general found himself in very straitened circumstances, and in order to save her personal fortune Madame de Kolly claimed her personal rights. This, however, did not apparently affect the bonds of affection which existed between husband and wife, for they had afterwards several children, of whom only one survived; he was the eldest boy, Amand-Pierre-Marguerite, born in 1781.

Unfortunately, chance brought to their house a singular man, gay, bold, talkative, full of intrigues, with no more money than scruples—the true type of the adventurer; he at once captivated both husband and wife.

François-Auguste-Renaud de Beauvoir, comte de Mahu,

sur les prisons, *l'Histoire parlementaire de la Révolution française*, by Bouchez and Roux; *l'Histoire du Tribunal révolutionnaire*, by H. Vallon, &c.

was born at Constantinople in 1758. His father was chargé d'affaires of the King of France, or perhaps only attaché; it is not clear which. The young Beauvoir was brought to France when about two years old, and left somewhere in Languedoc, near Béziers. A few years later he was sent to school in Paris. Having reached the age of manhood, he served successively in the French gendarmerie, then as a lieutenant in the Luxembourg legion. It was in 1787 that M. de Kolly took him into his service as 'valet de chambre.'

Of course this appellation had nothing in common with its actual meaning; the young de Beauvoir was in reality a mixture of secretary, steward, and confidential man,[1] and more than once he will be seen acting in all three qualities.

Outside the house he justified, or endeavoured to justify, the confidence de Kolly placed in him, by his zeal and activity in business; but in the house he betrayed his master shamefully. In fact, was it not rather rash for a man who was nearly fifty to bring into his house, in daily intercourse with his wife, a young fellow of nine-and-twenty? Besides, M. de Kolly was fighting against his creditors and trying to rebuild a fortune for his children. The young man had thus plenty of opportunity to engage in a love intrigue, and, having found a roof and his food, he soon managed to have what more he wanted. He was a brilliant talker; he wrote plays for the amusement of the young wife, and thus estranged her easily from her old and gloomy husband. Madame de Kolly reciprocated the affection which she had inspired, and the young secretary soon became the lover. About the year 1791 another child was born, and christened Théodore. M. de Kolly, who had not the slightest suspicion concerning his wife's fidelity, was convinced that this child was his own; but Beauvoir had better reason to consider himself the father of the newly born babe.

[1] In *l'Avare* Molière uses the word 'servant' for a steward, when Élise thanks Valère for his passionate love, 'which has brought him to accept the situation of *servant* to her father, to enable Valère to see her.'

Just about this time events had assumed a very serious aspect. The ill-arranged and ill-carried-out flight of the royal family—who had been arrested at Varennes, June 21, 1791—had resulted only in depriving the king of consideration and confidence; it had, besides, given the Revolution a violent impulse, capable of sweeping away, at short notice, the tottering throne of Louis XVI. Nevertheless, Kolly entertained dreams of vast financial plans, which he thought would restore the monarchy, while rebuilding his own fortune. He really believed that if the king's two brothers, who had emigrated, were unsuccessful, it was because they lacked money; and he thought that a financial combination which he meditated was the surest means for procuring large sums of money for the comtes d'Artois and de Provence.

His combination was not wholly chimerical, and had not the times been so troubled it might easily have been realised. Kolly had thought of taking over the Commercial Bank in the Rue de Bussy, which had failed and thus made its paper worthless, for nobody thought it would ever be possible for the bank to resume operations. He had to assist him in his work M. Bonvalet-Desbrosses, who was an authority on French finances. Bonvalet-Desbrosses had formed a gigantic plan; he proposed to buy up the property of the clergy and find resources to indemnify the victims of the Revolution, at the same time offering the shareholders of the bank such advantages as might induce them to put their money into it. A tontine was to produce at once five million francs.

This business, as its promoters understood it, had a double aspect. On one side, and this was probably the view which Kolly took of it, the support of the king's brothers—the sovereign having no more authority—was indispensable to the bank. Kolly had then manœuvred to obtain the assent of the comte d'Artois and the approval of de Calonne, who was financial adviser to the emigrant princes. He succeeded very easily. On the other side, the bank could not reopen

without the government's sanction, and it was perhaps more difficult to induce the Legislative Assembly to pass a law which would enable them to reconstruct the bank, than to obtain the royal assent. Bonvalet-Desbrosses and de Kolly found two useful auxiliaries for these negotiations—M. Bréard, an ex-marine commissary, and Beauvoir.

A few deputies joined these men. A representative government has always been the government of an oligarchy whose omnipotence is tempered by bribery. By means of cleverly made promises, and prospects of a very high rate of interest, Bréard and Beauvoir got the deputies to set to work, and the bill in favour of the reopening of the bank was read for the first time on June 29.

A chase after money, or rather after capitalists, began immediately. To those who, by their connection, opinions, or birth, stood by the *ancien régime*, Bréard and Beauvoir presented the affair as a service to be done to an ever dear cause, and pointed out the advantages which they would derive from having been the restorers of the royal power and having had a share in the monarch's triumph by crushing the rebels. To others, who were in favour of the Republic, the promoters described the affair as extremely profitable to the nation; it would help to refund the national debt, to make France prosperous, to put an end to all the calamities of the people.

However, the people, in ignorance of the grand projects elaborated to save them, and feeling more and more the pangs of misery—the simple-minded people thought that the last obstacle to their happiness lay in the phantom of royalty, whose members were prisoners in the Tuileries; twice they rushed against the palace to rase it to the ground. June 20 and August 10 saw the last of the monarchy. The king being a prisoner in the Temple, nothing prevented the advent of the Republic.

Such were the events which frustrated the plans of Kolly

and his associates. Riots as a rule cause the hiding of cash. Soon after, the September massacres terrorised Paris. M. de Kolly thought that he and his friends were no longer in security in Paris, where for three days the government—powerless, if not an accomplice—allowed bands of murderers to commit the most hateful crimes in the prisons in the name of justice. Fearing that he and his might fall victims to the fury of the people, he took his family and Beauvoir to a seaport, from whence they might easily embark for England. On September 14 the fugitives arrived at Boulogne-sur-Mer; and after a stay of six days at the hotel, they settled at the Citoyenne Routier's, Rue du Puits d'Amour, in the upper town.

II

The calm which always succeeds a storm soon brought the hope of better days to Kolly. For the present all danger seemed over. He thought the moment was a favourable one to resume his plan, to which the riots had put a temporary stop. The last episodes acted rather as a stimulus to him; besides, his situation was far from brilliant. However modest their new life might be, he had to keep a wife, three children, and Beauvoir, one servant and a cook. Living was very expensive at that time. Moreover, Madame de Kolly, who had been used to every luxury, found it very hard to give up her many expensive fancies; her feminine reason could not understand that anything could be refused her that might satisfy a passing desire; and her poor husband would have liked to handle gold with a shovel in order to make those around him happy.

Circumstances were apparently growing more favourable. In the last hour of its last sitting the Legislative Assembly had passed a motion for the reconstruction of the Commercial Bank. This removed the legal obstacle; though that advantage might not be as profitable as Kolly had expected. He could

not possibly dream of asking money from the republicans, even had any of them been ready to subscribe. Besides, he was not particularly anxious to apply to them; their interposition in the proposed transaction might prove dangerous and troublesome. On the other hand, if Kolly applied only to royalists, they, on their part, might be suspicious of a bank patronised by the Republic. Again, if the king came back to the throne, what authority would a law passed by the Legislative Assembly carry, since all the decisions of the Assembly would be cancelled? The moneylenders needed other guarantees, and Kolly endeavoured to find them.

While he was to go to Paris in order to collect the amount required, Beauvoir was to go to the comtes d'Artois and de Provence, to whom he intended to explain his case, and endeavour to obtain from them a formal promise that, if they came back to France, they would sanction the decisions concerning the Commercial Bank.

Beauvoir started early in October, and on the 7th met the princes at Stenay. He opened negotiations by showing an outline of the plan which Kolly and his associates had mapped out. It ran thus:

'M. Bonvalet-Desbrosses, author of "l'État des Finances de la France," proposes to open a Commercial Bank, which cannot but be a source of inexhaustible wealth to the kingdom in general. It must be useful to every class of citizens, even to working people, and in the present ruinous circumstances the state itself should derive from it the best results. However large the debt may be, a means to refund it will be given. This same means will even help to lower the present taxes by the establishment of an indirect taxation which will bear on every individual according to his revenues, whether derived from property or industry. This mode of taxation will bring money out, and help to gradually extinguish the national debt, and thus all fear of bankruptcy will disappear.

'There will be a tontine, subdivided into twenty different

classes, of the total amount of five hundred million francs, at the rate of four per cent. interest. This part of the plan is easy to realise, for as the rate of interest paid to the subscribers rises, it will be lowered in favour of the promoters.

'The realisation of such a plan would enable the bank to redeem all the property belonging to the clergy, and to indemnify those who have suffered through the Revolution.

'The plan was submitted to Monseigneur d'Artois on June 29 ultimo. H.R.H., having approved the idea of asking the sanction of the so-called National Assembly—this was indispensable—sent the scheme to M. de Calonne for examination. M. de Calonne entirely approved of it, and requested that it should be carried out at the earliest date possible. The directors of this bank never had anything else in view except to hand over to the princes the profits thus realised; but in spite of the numerous efforts of all kinds which have been made without cessation, and although most of the members of the so-called National Assembly and the municipality were won over by the offer of a large percentage, it was only on the evening of September 20 that the motion was passed.

'During this interval of time a certain number of capitalists had been found ready to help the foundation of the bank through their subscriptions as soon as the motion should be passed. Unfortunately, they left Paris suddenly after the events of August 10. Before that day they had nevertheless expressed fears that, should the royal family return to France, the princes would close the bank, from the very fact that they would annul every decision come to by the so-called National Assembly. In spite of the repeated assurances which were given to those capitalists, that the princes patronised the bank, it was difficult to calm their apprehensions. It might be necessary, in order to satisfy the future capitalists on this point, for their Royal Highnesses to make a formal promise of patronising and favouring the development of the bank, even

though it be established with the sanction of the present government.

'With a written promise it would be much easier for the promoters to find funds in Paris as well as abroad.'

The princes could not possibly refuse to give such a promise; it cost them so little and might bring so much. It is true that by giving this promise they were trespassing on their royal brother's authority; but they looked upon him as being *ipso facto* deprived of his power, as he was a prisoner, and had thus lost his freedom of action. Such a scruple, therefore, could not influence them.

The following deed was at once written:

'Considering the usefulness of an establishment such as the one described in the scheme which has been submitted to us for perusal, and which is known under the name of the Commercial Bank, although this bank has been opened with the sanction of an unlawful authority and against the fundamental laws of the country; considering only the welfare of all classes of citizens and the good they might derive from the establishment of the said bank,

'We, Louis-Stanislas-Xavier and Charles-Philippe, promise, on our return to France, to patronise the said Bank of Commerce and to maintain it by our power and authority.

'LOUIS-STANISLAS-XAVIER.
'CHARLES-PHILIPPE.

'At Stenay, this 7th of October, 1792.'[1]

Beauvoir was very much pleased with the result of his mission, and he came to Boulogne with the documents, which he entrusted to Madame de Kolly. Both of them hid the papers as best they could, for they fully realised the terrible responsibility which they involved before the implacable justice of the Revolution, were the documents discovered. This being done, they enjoyed, in the absence of M. de Kolly, complete

[1] This line was in the comte de Provence's own handwriting.

and unrestrained happiness; they gave themselves up to pleasure, and, to use the language of the period, decorous even in the worst actions, nature was allowed to enjoy unrestrained encroachments upon morality.

Kolly was in Paris at the time. But whether because he was afraid to meet his creditors, or because he wanted to be close to business quarters, he did not take his up abode in his house in the Rue des Petites-Écuries-du-Roi, but put up at the Hôtel de la Marine, Rue Croix-des-Petits-Champs. He certainly was eager to carry out in a satisfactory manner the business which had brought him to Paris. Nearly the whole of his time was occupied in hunting after the hoped for person who should advance the first five hundred thousand francs which he required in order to reopen the Commercial Bank; yet he did not forget those whom he had left in Boulogne, and wrote frequent letters to his wife, whom he called his 'dear Fanny.' This voluminous correspondence, which is included in the *dossier*, gives the clearest impression that this old husband, who was betrayed both by his wife and secretary, was a very kind man and a pattern of a father. Through his many tokens of affection for his wife and children, one can perceive the purity of his affection; they show a man who not only does not suspect evil, but a man who fulfils his duty without weariness, because he is aware that he is working for those whom he loves. When he speaks of his children he does not make any difference between them; he even always mentions first René Foucault, the eldest.

His letters do more than acquaint us with the man. They give most curious, piquant, and instructive particulars on the mode of living at that period; they enable us fully to realise the life of private people in those eventful days. History is obliged to pile up events; it relates only the principal ones, and the space allowed for their narrative is so small that we are often misled. The reproduction of a few of those letters will thus be a double corrective.

One of the first letters contains news of the war, given in a form which is somewhat uncommon :

'To-night the cries in the streets are that our valiant patriots have recaptured Verdun, which had fallen into the hands of the Prussians.

'The Prussians have evacuated Verdun, and last night news reached us here that they had also evacuated Verdun ;[1] having to give up so many towns must weaken them. Last night we had the *première* of "Le Dîner du roi de Prusse à Paris, retardé jusqu'à présent par l'indisposition de son armée." Our government is amusing. The National Convention declared last night that the country ran no more danger.'

On Sunday, October 7, Kolly wrote to his wife :

'My dinner was very dull the day before yesterday; there were members of the Convention, thorough Jacobins, a few first clerks at the War and Foreign Offices, and wives of emigrants. You may judge if it was fitting for these to meet together; news of victory rejoiced some and grieved others. Everything was a cause of dispute—even the dinner, which was, however, not solid enough to long resist so many enemies. Rage made us eat, and stimulated our appetites. I should have been better pleased with the smallest share of the dinner, provided I could have been outside. . . .

'Yesterday I had dinner at Beaujour's, and there I was sitting beside a visionary who had predicted to the late king[2] and Madame de Lamballe[3] everything that has happened since; his latest prophecy is, that he is the last man who has escaped from La Force, but that notwithstanding he will soon be hanged. I confess that I am tired of leaving scoundrels only to find hanged men, and if to-night at dinner I must

[1] Kolly made a slip when he wrote Verdun the second time. He must have meant Longwy, as these two places were, in fact, evacuated by the Prussians on October 1, 1792.

[2] Louis XV.

[3] Killed at La Force, September 3, 1792.

sit beside a man who has been flogged or beheaded, I shall give it up and dine henceforth alone in my room.'

We have next a concise description of the alterations which the change in the form of government has made in the habits and manners of the Parisians.

'Je dîne tous les jours chez le restaurateur sans être restauré [I dine every day at the restaurant without being fed [1]], I go to bed instead of going to supper, and as I have only one particular business to attend to, my evenings are very dull. Paris is looking like a small provincial town—a few cabs, a few patrols, not one friendly face; it is impossible to go to the theatre unless you are willing to mistake it for a church, for at the end of every performance the whole of the audience must kneel down and sing a hymn to Liberty, and this is rather a drone than a song. Adeline fell into disgrace a few days ago for refusing to sing the "Carmagnole;" Madame Dugazon has decided never to return to Paris; every Italian artist has left the Rue Feydeau,[2] and the dancers are all third-rate.'

Kolly was constantly writing, for it was his only enjoyment in the midst of his cares and anxieties; he loved to think of those whom he had left at Boulogne. Yet his double affection as a father and a husband did not always receive the response he had a right to expect. Answers to his letters were not as frequent as he would have liked; he hints at this, and almost apologises for writing so often.

A letter dated November 4 contains the following words:

'My dear Fanny, I wrote to you the day before yesterday, and again yesterday, and I am still writing to-day. Well, my only pleasure is to be talking to you. . . .

'Your last letter bore the date of the 28th; that means that you have been seven days without writing. Why are your letters not more frequent? I feel anxious. . . .

'Monday morning, and again no letter from you. . . .

[1] The pun does not come out in the English rendering.

[2] The Opera.

'Dear me! how I wish I could be with my Fanny and my children! I send kisses to you all, and I wish I could kiss you otherwise than through a letter.'

On December 11 he referred to the same subject and almost in identical words: 'I love and kiss you all; what a long time it is since I have either seen or embraced you!'

He tells the story of his days, spent in the pursuit of an aim which seemed every day farther off.

'I cannot bear Paris; it is nothing but going out on business and being annoyed. Always the same polite and amiable people; sittings from three till nine in the evening; no variety whatever; they are difficult to digest. Desbrosses sleeps part of the time; but, much as I would, I cannot follow suit, because it would not be polite!'

Yet, if he could only look forward to a brighter future! Now and again, in spite of his strong optimism, he despairs of success.

'I am despairing at being still here and not knowing how to get out of it. I shall to-day make another attempt to obtain funds; if I fail, I don't know where to look for them. . . .

'Good-bye, darling! I kiss you fondly, as well as our brave Beauvoir, Lolo,[1] Amand, and Théodore. Dear me! when shall I see them all again?'

In his blind kindness he gives an equal share of his affection to his children and to the man who was betraying his confidence. And this unfortunate husband is so sincere, so dignified in his expressions, that one cannot help pitying him—he certainly does not appear ridiculous. It is his affection, indeed, which enables him to bear his troubles; he realises how vitally important it is for him and his family that he should succeed, and he is so anxious to bring them out of the poverty into which his speculations have thrown them. Yet he listens to the voice of reason, and waits patiently.

'I cannot tell you how anxious I am to leave this place;

[1] A nickname given to René Foucault.

but at the same time I see that, short of money as you are, I cannot go back empty-handed; I must bring you some money, whether much or little.'

November, however, was drawing to a close. Two months had already elapsed since Kolly had returned to Paris, and things were no more advanced than they had been on his arrival; worse than that, some of his possible chances had proved failures. Capitalists would not risk money; they refused his as well as his agents' demands. All came back empty-handed, and the chase after the half-million—for the ambition of the directors of the bank had been reduced to this paltry sum—proved fruitless. And could it be otherwise? When civil war threatens a nation, when every one is afraid, when money becomes a dangerous thing to possess in the midst of miserable and starving people, who would dare be so unwise as to take part in new enterprises? In a letter dated November 5 Kolly summed up all the difficulties he had to face:

'My dear Fanny,—I received last night your letter dated the 2nd inst. I see that you are all in good health, in spite of dear bread and severe weather. I can assure you that I would have given my little finger to be with you all, for staying here is very unpleasant and almost fatal at present; we live in constant fear and trembling. Agitators influence the people in a manner most distressing to those who, like me, are lovers of peace. At any moment a new insurrection may break out, either against the shops or the wholesale warehouses, either against the National Convention or the Jacobins, perhaps against the august prisoners at the Temple. For the last few days scoundrels have been uttering threats against the Convention, and it has been decided to begin the trial of Louis. Although the verdict may soon be delivered, a few ill-intentioned persons may not be willing to wait for it before they give the king warning. These fears have been increased by the return of the murderers of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th September. Capitalists are terrified, so that Madame de Vauréal's banker, who promised three or four days

ago to advance the money, drew back yesterday morning, appealing to present circumstances and asking for a delay of a fortnight or a month. We shall certainly not grant it. . . .

'A few *sans-culottes*, having last Sunday gone to the Convention in order to ask that the seals should be taken off without the court's order, so that they might be paid their dividends, were not allowed to enter; they then wanted to go to M. Roland, the Minister of the Interior, and threaten him also. I hastened last night to warn him. He received me very cordially and made an appointment with me for to-morrow night, to enable me to give him an exact idea of our intentions. I shall go to him to-morrow, and I trust he will be pleased, for I am well acquainted with the business. I must now do everything alone, for Bréard is fighting shy, and Desbrosses spends his time reading his books to some French and English ladies, cousins of Bréard; they look upon him as the benefactor of the world at large. I am therefore the leading horse. . . .'

Still, although occupied with the bank, he does not forget his own affairs, and he endeavours to manage both at the same time.

'I am trying my utmost to induce a wealthy Paris merchant, whose family lives in Lyons, to buy my estate there; but, like all people who have money, he is timid. . . . He has heard so many times that by the 15th of December every capitalist, every priest who has not taken the constitutional oath, every nobleman or woman must have left the place, that he imagines he is all three at the same time. For my part, I do not believe in such threats; nevertheless, both the Convention and the ministers take as many precautions as if they believed in them. . . .

'I kiss you and our children very fondly; I quite rejoice at the idea of seeing them once more. Good-bye again and again.'

In the margin he adds a few words which clearly show the

cares and troubles in the midst of which he is fighting—with courage, it is true, but in vain.

'Nothing new up till now; still, I am sending this letter off, because I do not want to miss the post and I wish to save you from anxiety. I think that I am on the eve of getting some money, and you may be sure that none of your orders will be forgotten, either skirts, cloths, or chaises, &c. . . .'

He was on friendly terms with Santerre, the famous brewer, who had been raised to the rank of commander-in-chief of the National Guard of Paris. He called on him and questioned him on his intentions, with the *arrière-pensée* that Santerre might help him, not as regards the financial part of his scheme, but in the political part. Whether the brewer made formal promises, or whether Kolly interpreted vague answers in a sense favourable to his wishes, the latter at any rate gave his wife to understand that Santerre was not adverse to his views.

This was certainly a great mistake; but the good man was rich in illusions of every kind, and if he ever thought they could become realities, none among his friends shared his belief.

III

Although the husband's absence had given the two lovers of Boulogne opportunities to exchange, in the appropriately named street of the 'Puits d'Amour,' without the slightest remorse, numerous tokens of their affection, yet, at the height of their mutual passion, neither the woman, whose mind was filled with criminal joys, nor the man, who was proud of his conquest, could avoid thinking of practical life and its requirements. In the beginning they gathered enough hope from Kolly's letters to lull their apprehensions; but as their expectations were gradually contradicted, Beauvoir and his friend began to experience anxiety. It was in vain that Kolly persisted in his naïve confidence, which would appear

all the more extraordinary in a farmer-general were not the person in question really a ruined farmer-general. By the end of November Madame de Kolly and Beauvoir were both convinced that Kolly was no longer able to carry out so delicate a business as the reconstruction of the Commercial Bank. They had had too many proofs that the man could be easily deceived, not to know that at his age and with weakened faculties he was a poor and easily duped negotiator.

Beauvoir wrote to Bréard on the subject; and the ex-naval commissary, in his answer—which was dated from Paris, November 28—did not deny that he shared his correspondent's unfavourable opinion of Kolly. In fact, Bréard urged Beauvoir to come to Paris, 'so as to draw Kolly and Desbrosses from the hands of B., with whom they are both infatuated.'

The man thus designated was a barrister, who boasted he could lend one hundred thousand livres, but was nevertheless unable to pay over that sum. Then Bréard added wisely that one hundred thousand livres would not be sufficient—three or four hundred thousand would still be required; and he wrote: 'Your presence, in my opinion, would be useful.' Then, as if he had been certain of having convinced Beauvoir and brought him, by such arguments, to think as he did, Bréard ended thus: 'I expect you to dinner on Monday. Keep my letter secret, as I keep yours.'

This pressing appeal put an end to the lovers' hesitation; and, notwithstanding the grief parting caused them, Beauvoir's journey was decided upon. He started by the Boulogne coach on December 7.

Madame de Kolly was very anxious to know what sort of quarters her dear friend would find. She had strongly urged him to go to the apartment in the rue des Petites-Écuries, since Kolly did not occupy it. But in what state would he find the apartment? She was so sad at the idea that her lover might not be as comfortable there as she wished him to be, that, forgetful of all else but her guilty affection, she hit upon

the amazing idea of writing to a cousin of hers, a Madame de Montgazon, who lived at 7 rue de Poitou, in the Marais quarter. With unconscious wantonness, which the morals of the period can alone explain, she entered into the most minute recommendations, while confessing at the same time very plainly her foolish passion for Beauvoir.

'Boulogne: December 7.

'My dear Cousin,—You are going to be more fortunate than me, for you will see poor Beauvoir, who left me to-day on his way to Paris in order to settle, one way or another, the business which has for so long detained my husband in the capital. But I beg you will not inform the latter of Beauvoir's arrival, as I do not wish him to be aware of it; not only would his affairs suffer from it, but he might be displeased with me for not telling him beforehand of Beauvoir's journey.

'On the contrary, I want my husband to believe that this journey has been quite unexpected. Consequently, you will receive my letter on Sunday morning; and Beauvoir is to arrive by coach on Sunday night, as the coach takes at present three days instead of two. You will kindly go, on receipt of my letter, to my apartment; take there a pair of the best sheets and six towels. I told Beauvoir he might go there, as I should have time to write to you. You will prepare my own bed for him, and you will order some wood, so that he may have a fire. On his arrival he will repay you any expense.

'I should also be obliged if you would not mention Beauvoir's arrival to my people until you leave, so that if de Kolly came in the meantime he might not be told of it. Excuse me for troubling you; but I am aware of your kindness, and feel confident you will not think I am trespassing.

'See also that every vessel is thoroughly washed before he uses it; for we have put rat poison in every room, and it is very dangerous, as you are aware. . . .

'I confess frankly, my dear cousin, that I send Beauvoir in

order to make my husband come back ; he is doing nothing in Paris but spending money uselessly. Beauvoir will do in a week what my husband did not succeed in doing in two months, and, besides, he may help him to make up his mind to come back and enjoy the peaceful life which reigns in this place.

'All my children are in excellent health ; they send their best love to you.

'Good-bye, dear and kind cousin ! Remember me to my big and small cousins if they are both with you. I kiss you as fondly as I love you. Take care of my poor traveller and give him a kiss for me.'

Madame de Montgazon had married a government civil engineer, who was just at that time out of Paris. Enjoying greater freedom in the absence of her husband, she thought it would be complying still more with her cousin's desires if she kept Beauvoir at her house. Therefore, instead of going to the deserted flat in the rue des Petites-Écuries, Beauvoir found in the rue de Poitou what he termed 'friendship's hospitality.'

There then passed between him and Madame de Kolly a correspondence for which the epithets of loving, or even passionate, would be too faint. Nothing but reading it can give an idea of the exaggerations of their delirious minds. What a contrast with de Kolly's letters, so full of common sense, good humour, resignation, courage, and affection ! When we remember that at that time envelopes were not used, and a light pressure on the paper was sufficient to enable anybody to read the best part of a letter, it is somewhat surprising to see with what absence of reserve and of modesty this wife and mother speaks of her criminal friendship—and still more astonishing are Beauvoir's answers. There the crudest and coarsest words recall to the sorrowful friend, in her solitude, glad and yet painful remembrance of an affection which, having no regard for anything, had not even self-respect. But who could have taught those two lovers refine-

ments, which were all but unknown in their time? Young and passionate, with a sincerity which excluded all idea of greed, did they even think that they were doing wrong? Moreover, if a celebrated trial has brought us the echoes of such sensual extravagance, must we not decline either to absolve or to pass sentence upon a confession which was not meant for us?

However, it is not necessary to throw a veil over the whole contents of the letters, and we can quote a few extracts which may prove both interesting and instructive.

As soon as he had arrived, Beauvoir wrote to Madame de Kolly:

'I have at last arrived, my good and sensitive friend. The horses must have shared my regrets at leaving you, for they only walked, and we did not enter Paris till Monday morning at ten. . . . I had been sitting in the same seat the whole time, so that I feel somewhat bruised.

' . . . From there I went to your husband's hotel, and found him in. After looking rather disagreeably surprised, he received me heartily, embracing me, and asking all sorts of questions about you and your children. He has lost none of his hopes. Desbrosses came in—renewed astonishment and embrace. Then came Bréard, and there was a repetition of both. . . .

'Kisses—give some to your children, but the best part to Théodore, about whom your husband inquired most particularly. Good-night. . . . This is very different from . . . but in a few. . . . In the meantime I am yours, and for life.'

The dangers to which people were exposed in Paris—which was in the hands of the demagogues, and where the unruly populace committed almost daily some outrageous act of summary justice—seemed to Madame de Kolly's mind to have increased since her lover was in Paris. She urged him to be prudent. But this was not all. She was too well aware of Beauvoir's captivating manners not to be jealous; she knew

how many pretty women there were capable of throwing her into oblivion! Would the recollection of their mutual joys be enough to keep him from being untrue? On the last two points he reassured her. He wrote on December 14:

'The day when we had most to fear was the one when the king was brought before the court, and, as I have told you before, it was dull rather than uproarious. In order to keep your mind at rest, I am staying at the kind Madame de Montgazon's. This is my life: I get up at seven, I dress, and then go out for the day unless I have an early appointment. It is generally nine o'clock when I go out on business. At two I go to those English ladies whom I have told you of. If I have any more business, I leave them after dinner; but I am always at Madame de Montgazon's before night, and there, sitting near the fire, I write to you or talk housekeeping. You see, my dear, that it would be difficult to get at me. . . .

'Good-bye, my own darling! Love always your sweetheart and your truest friend. Kiss your children and my little pet (Théodore). How is my little darling? Take care of him.'

The postal service was then regular enough, and yet at that time Madame de Kolly had received Beauvoir's first letter only, while she had written five. What had become of them? She told her anxiety to her kind cousin.

'December 14, 1792.

'Thank you, my good and dear cousin, for all your kindness to my poor traveller. In case he has left you, I should be much obliged if you would kindly go at once to my apartment, and ask him whether he has received five letters of mine which I addressed to the rue des Petites-Écuries, because . . . they were interesting. I am very anxious, as he has not yet answered them. Will you please give him the enclosed letter which I send you, at all events? You may depend, my dear cousin, upon my affection and gratitude.

'I received to-day his first letter, in which he informed me of his arrival. I must leave you in haste, for it is time for the post, and I can only tell you how much I love you. Have

you received my first letter, in which I told you of his coming? Good-bye! Many fond kisses.'

At the same time Beauvoir was giving Madame de Kolly particulars concerning her husband and what had been done with reference to their project.

'December 15.

'Your husband has made up his mind to go back to Boulogne. You may be sure this will be for the best. I have made inquiries about Boutibonne [one of Kolly's agents]. The man who was to give a hundred thousand livres does not even know him. Notwithstanding, Kolly still believes in him. Do not find fault with him; he does not know what he is doing, he is a perfect child. . . .

'To-day I shall introduce Desbrosses to a capitalist who promises one million if the guarantees are good. . . .'

Two days later came the letters, and Beauvoir still talked business; but he wrote above all to the jealous friend:

'I have received your seventh letter, my darling. Keep your mind at rest on the matter,' he writes on December 18. 'I always find new pleasure in receiving your tokens of affection; they make up for the troubles which fall to my lot here. You were afraid that pleasure would detain me in the capital. What a mistake! My heart will rejoice the moment I can leave Paris to come to you; for, far from my feelings being cooled by absence, I prize more and more the bond that unites us. . . .

'As I thought, delay has ruined our business; it is almost impossible to repair the damage that has been done. Your husband has made it known among all the agents, and Boutibonne has put it in the hands of all the Paris scoundrels. Revel did the same, and Maillard and Acourelle knew the most secret particulars. . . .

'Good-bye, my darling! The more I see of your sorrow, the more I love you. Let us two be one—ever one. You

know that your lover is also a true friend. Be satisfied with such joy. Love and friendship together can make up for many sorrows. . . .'

Beauvoir would hardly have been expected to use the aphorisms of so strange a philosophy, for as a rule his thoughts were not taken up with the union of souls. His other letters prove that he was troubled with more earthly cares. They contain some vague information about the affair which had brought him to Paris. He thought he had at last found the sum which his associates had been seeking for several months past. It was high time; and the famous million would be welcomed, for all these people were in a most distressing situation. Beauvoir related his misfortunes in a letter dated December 28–29, half joking, half in earnest.

'By dint of walking, my shoes have forsaken me in the rue Saint-Honoré; my stockings and socks have done the same. Madame de Montgazon has been wanting me for some time past to buy both stockings and shoes. At last I have done so; but at what a price! Stockings cannot be had for less than eighteen livres and a half; shoes with bows cost ten livres. I am ashamed of spending so much money upon myself. . . . My breeches are quite worn out, and yet I have no others to go out in; the others are in holes. I have nothing but white stockings, and when I have walked ten steps they look dirty. . . .

'I dare not hope; but Desbrosses and I are going to-morrow to the capitalist, and yesterday they signed an agreement that he should receive ten thousand francs on the first hundred thousand, and an annuity of twelve hundred francs on every additional hundred thousand. If this fails, everything will be lost, and I will have nothing more to do with it.

'I do not think I shall be there to kiss you on the first of January; yet it will not be long before I repay you for the delay. . . .

'Good-bye, my good and sensitive friend! I long for nothing else but the blessed hour when I may hold you in my

arms and press you to my heart, covering you with burning kisses of love. . . . I am pining far from you ; but you—and you alone—create and can satisfy my desire ; I swear it, and will not break my oath. . . .

'Kiss most tenderly Théodore and the other children. . . .'

Just then Beauvoir believed that he was nearing success, and what made this more valuable to him was that it would be due to his own clever initiative. During the fortnight in which negotiations had been carried on, he had cruelly insisted in his letters upon Kolly's incapacity, upon his stubborn and vain delusions, and upon the necessity of sending the idiot back to Boulogne and taking him away from Paris, where he spoilt everything and failed to obtain any result.

Bonvalet-Desbrosses and Bréard shared Beauvoir's opinion, and they too heaped reproofs and mockery on poor Kolly, who seemed at last to realise that he was indeed useless, perhaps even hurtful. After having daily written long letters to his wife, he on December 14 stopped writing. He began to think that he had better go back, and yet he put off his journey. Most likely he had entire faith in his secretary's cleverness, and would have been glad to see the business concluded before going back to his dear ones—Fanny, Lolo, Amand, and Théodore.

To know fully what the new negotiations were, we must go back a few days.

IV

After learning what attempts Kolly, Bréard, and Bonvalet-Desbrosses had made, and after ascertaining that the agents' endeavours had come to nothing, Beauvoir decided that he must direct his efforts to perfectly different quarters. He had been a regular visitor at a reading-room kept by a woman called Rose Uzel. It was situated in the Jardin des Tuileries, now known under the name of the Jardin de la Révolution. This reading-room had many customers ; for news makes papers

interesting, and news was not wanting at that time. Beauvoir bethought himself that among her customers Rose Uzel would surely know a banker who might be willing to invest five hundred thousand livres in a profitable manner.

He therefore went to her shop and explained to her the scheme for the reconstruction of the Commercial Bank. It would be hazardous to say that she understood what Beauvoir told her; but in order to open her understanding, he promised her a royalty of ten thousand francs if she succeeded. This took place towards the middle of December.

Rose understood the last part of the business, and she at once set to work to earn this fine sum. She fixed upon one of her customers who came regularly every day to read the newspapers; and although she knew nothing of him, not even his name, she imparted to him the mission with which she had been entrusted, and asked him to advance the amount required.

The unknown customer was shrewd; he listened with the deepest attention to his interlocutor, and drew from her all she knew of Beauvoir and his project. A few days later he asked her to call at his house, 79 rue Meslay; thus she heard for the first time the man's name. She went to the rendezvous. Her customer told her that he was not in a position to advance so large a sum as the one required, but he knew of a very wealthy gentleman who was able to lend the necessary capital. This gentleman lived in the provinces; his name was the marquis Gérard de Prouville; he was by chance staying in Paris just at the time, and had taken up his quarters, with a manservant, at the Hôtel des Étrangers, 11 rue Vivienne. He was acquainted with the affair, and all she had to do was to go and see him with Beauvoir.

Rose Uzel did not miss such a splendid opportunity; she sent word to Beauvoir, who was proud of so prompt a success. Accompanied by Bonvalet-Desbrosses and Rose, he called on the marquis de Prouville, and negotiations began at once.

Rose Uzel judiciously retired shortly after she had introduced the gentlemen.

In this first conversation things were not fully explained, and they talked of the affair only generally. Bonvalet-Desbrosses and Beauvoir described their project in its main lines, and the marquis de Prouville stated that he could dispose of a large amount in cash for the business on condition that good security should be given in return. Beauvoir then brought M. de Kolly forward, and offered as security, and in his name, a piece of land in the rue de Bondy. True, this land was not exactly in Kolly's possession; it belonged to a wood merchant who owed him money. But Beauvoir did not mention this trifle; it was not necessary at first to go into minute details.

Thus presented, the affair seemed to be very feasible, and there was every probability that an agreement might be come to. Negotiations were opened under very favourable circumstances.

In the course of conversation the marquis spoke of the hardships of the period, of the political events which he witnessed, in words stamped with pure and ardent royalism. These did not fall on deaf ears, and Beauvoir fixed an appointment for December 31 at six P.M.

On that day there had again been one of many arbitrary executions. A man called Louvain, who had been charged with being one of La Fayette's spies, had been murdered in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine; and under pretext of depriving his corpse of the honour of a stretcher, it was dragged to the Morgue. Such circumstances were not very favourable to the undertaking of a big financial enterprise. But, as we know, de Kolly's scheme was not purely financial; behind it lay a political purpose, and it was this very purpose which served as an incentive to carry out the project—on account of the country's sufferings.

Therefore Beauvoir came on the evening of December 31 to the Hôtel des Étrangers quite decided to hide nothing from the marquis de Prouville, for he was convinced he would rejoice

this faithful royalist. At the very beginning of their conversation he told Gérard that the four hundred thousand francs which he had asked him to advance for the Commercial Bank were in reality to go to the princes, and that it was for them and for their cause that he and his associates were working.

On hearing those words Gérard de Prouville plainly showed his joy; he said that he was ready to make any sacrifice in favour of the unfortunate princes that might alleviate their lamentable fate; he would even share his fortune with them. He could only dispose at the time of three hundred thousand francs, but he could very easily complete the sum required, for he had friends who would do what he himself could not. However, he wished to hand over to the princes themselves the whole of the money. He had a great affection for them, and no one loved the comte d'Artois as much as he did!

Beauvoir was deeply moved by the marquis's speech. He answered that he was quite ready to accompany him and take him to the princes. He was in a position to give de Prouville the assurance of their protection, and he added that he was certain to obtain a passport from the Convention Nationale through the help of Santerre himself, the commander-in-chief of the National Guard. And having begun to be confidential, he went on to tell his own and his partners' secrets. He informed the marquis that he had in his possession a formal and written promise of the princes to protect all those who should be faithful to their house; he could, and he would, show the paper to Prouville.

The latter listened attentively and encouraged the speaker. Beauvoir had a great deal to say; he knew so many things. For instance, he was sure that, having for adversaries the market people, the National Convention would not try the king. As soon as the royalists should require one hundred thousand men to help them, good Santerre would put them at the disposal of Beauvoir's friends. Besides, the counter-revolution was sure to take place in four months' time at the

latest, and precautions had been too carefully taken for it not to be successful.

Foreign policy had no more secrets for the secretary than had home policy. He told the marquis that the retreat of Prussians and Austrians had been arranged beforehand with Dumouriez; that the army of patriots which had been sent to Brabant would never leave that province, as it was surrounded so as to prevent it from retreating; lastly, that all the generals were acting in accordance with the wishes of the princes and of all honest citizens.

The two men were delighted with one another; they parted, only to meet the next morning at nine o'clock of January 31.

At the appointed hour Beauvoir was introduced into the marquis's room. They talked again of the unfortunate princes, and feelings of compassion seized them both, but the marquis especially; he seemed fully overcome, and, as a mute and delicate allusion to the lost flag of legitimate monarchy, he waved a white handkerchief which he was holding.

What would they not do for their beloved princes! Beauvoir referred again to what he had previously said: the money was for the princes themselves, and he who should advance it could trust them entirely. Then he entered into fuller details; he made precise his previous allusion relative to the document signed at Stenay on October 7, 1792, by the comtes de Provence and d'Artois. He mentioned that he had left the document at Boulogne, where it was in safety.

The marquis de Prouville rejoiced to hear this; however, he pointed out to Beauvoir that it would be of the greatest importance to show such a guarantee to those who would lend the money. Being written for their sake, it would have a considerable influence on their decisions.

Beauvoir agreed on this point. Nevertheless, he was not willing to have such an important document sent to Paris; he

considered that it was a dangerous step to take, for, what with denunciations, searches, and the domiciliary visits which took place daily, it would certainly be difficult to conceal the paper from the police. He offered to take de Prouville to Boulogne, telling him of the many adventures he had met with on his return from Stenay. He had, he said, been on the point of being arrested several times; but, he added, 'rather than allow the document to be taken from me, I would have chewed and swallowed it.'

Then with his usual loquacity he resumed his confidences. He and his associates had friends in the government. Roland, the Minister for the Interior, had promised them that as soon as they had succeeded in getting the seals on the Commercial Bank removed, he would give them two police inspectors to protect them; the only recommendation he had made was, that they should keep entirely secret their scheme of reconstruction until then. Four members were also in favour of their plan; he however gave the name of two only, Leroy and Cambon. Having such support, the affair was a splendid one. To those who should patronise it, it would certainly yield a profit of five hundred per cent. The old notes of the bank could be had for a morsel of bread, as the dividends had not been paid; a very small sum of money would be required. He knew, for instance, some holders who were ready to sell, for fifty francs, notes to the value of fifteen hundred francs; and it would be possible to buy up the whole of the notes at the same rate.

Beauvoir grew intoxicated with his own words; he was sure of success. How was it possible to fail, having on one side the aid of the National Convention, and on the other the favour of the princes? Besides, Dumouriez was an accomplice in the counter-revolution. When the princes came back, the best appointments would be given to those who, true to their king, might thus be rewarded for their pains.

They met again the next day (January 2) at one o'clock in

the afternoon. Although the marquis de Prouville paid due attention to Beauvoir's conversation, he did not lose sight of the main object of their business. He returned to the subject on the same day, and made the facts very clear. Being entirely devoted to the princes, he willingly agreed to give the three hundred thousand francs he had promised and to get a friend to advance the other hundred thousand. But this friend was very suspicious, and before giving the money he wanted to see the paper by which the subscribers were assured of having their rights recognised, even in the case of a counter-revolution. And as that friend did not care to go to Boulogne, Beauvoir must of necessity have the paper sent.

This was a very just demand; nevertheless, Beauvoir did not hesitate to say how dangerous it was in the then political circumstances; he dared not have the document sent to Paris. He was afraid of keeping a single compromising paper by him; he had a receipt for one thousand livres, signed by the princes, and that he had left in Boulogne in the care of a lady friend.

On Prouville insisting, Beauvoir gave in. He agreed to send for the document, and to ensure its safety he would have recourse to the same stratagem which had given such good results when he brought it from Stenay. It was to be folded inside a powder puff.

This agreed upon, they arranged that they would meet on the following day at five o'clock, in the rue Vivienne, to sign the agreement relative to the payment of the first hundred thousand francs. As he was taking leave, Beauvoir said to Prouville:

'You are the only man to whom I have said so much. I am very grateful to Madame Uzel, and I will prove my gratitude to her.'

As he was going out, he went up to the marquis's servant and congratulated him on his 'luck in being in the service of so amiable a man.'

The die was cast; the time for hesitation was over. Beauvoir must send for the documents; this alone would ensure success.

He wrote on January 3 the following letter to Madame de Kolly:

'I write in haste, my cruel darling. It is half-past eleven, and I have only till noon.

'I am not going to answer your last letter, which I received this morning, and which grieved me. You are always unjust towards your best friend and most passionate lover. Well, I suppose we must be content with imperfect joys; mine, which I most prize, is to be loved by you. Yet your distrust, your injustice, are constantly marring it. I shall answer you to-morrow at length, perhaps even to-night.

'Now to the subject of this letter.

'The person of whom I told you will pay the money over on Sunday; first one hundred thousand livres, and the rest gradually. As to the other object of our younger brother,[1] you must, on receipt of this letter, send by coach the two things,[2] the big one and the small one, which I left at your house, and which you undertook to keep. Wrap them up carefully, as I did, and in the same wrapper that I brought you. The thing is so very breakable that you cannot be too careful. Raise no objections whatever; they would be useless. As soon as you receive my letter, buy what is wanted and send at once to the coach. For God's sake, do not refuse me this. If I were not obliged to stay here in order to look after things, I would have started at once; but I cannot leave, as everything rests on me. Congratulate me; let us congratulate ourselves. I dare not tell you any more.

[1] This means the paper signed by the comte d'Artois, Louis XVI.'s younger brother.

[2] Beauvoir had thought at first only of the promise signed by the two princes, and he had written 'the small thing.' Then he changed his mind, erased the words and wrote above them, '*the two things*,' meaning the promise and the report which had preceded it.

'Good-bye! I send you millions of kisses. I am yours and adore you in spite of your cruel injustice.

'A thousand kisses for your children, but particularly for our darling. Soon! What joy!'

Thus he writes in the midst of the most serious matter; with his usual flightiness, he cannot refrain from showing his passion. It may be that he thought it would in this way be easier for him to pacify Madame de Kolly's jealousy and to obtain from her what he wanted. At any rate, he is anxious to receive the two objects—the large one and the small one—for he adds at the top of his letter:

'Do not lose a minute if the coach starts on the day you receive this.'

He had nevertheless to wait a few days before receiving the answer, and in the meantime negotiations were being carried on.

As agreed, Beauvoir returned on January 4 to the Hôtel des Étrangers; but this time he was with Kolly, Bonvalet-Desbrosses, and Bréard. Between such warm royalists conversation was sure to turn upon the evils of the time, before they came to business matters. Beauvoir was extremely talkative; he declared that the republican forces would soon be defeated; Custine had been routed. In the country, the reaction was growing, and honest people were on the eve of being victorious. This prospect of victory made him speak severely of Roland, whom he had hitherto regarded as almost an accomplice. Beauvoir nevertheless confessed that he was not quite as bad as the other ministers; yet he could not forgive him his letter to the king,[1] nor his neglect in not having taken from the *armoire de fer* documents which might injure the monarch's cause in the eyes of the Convention. This was a decided breach of trust.

[1] On June 10 Roland read a letter to the king. It was harsh, even insulting, and caused the Girondin Ministry to be dismissed. The riot of June 20 was an answer to this dismissal

When they began to talk of their own business, the marquis de Prouville handed to the associates a copy of his own intentions. The draft was approved of, save on two points : one by which the moneylender was to receive fifteen per cent. even after one hundred thousand francs had been repaid ; the other was a reference to the 'princes' high protection.' The deed having to be written by a notary, such a clause could not be inserted. It was too early to speak the truth so openly. Prouville agreed to these two clauses being left out.

His visitors asked him, after this, to pay part of the sum before Sunday. But he replied, that the document arriving only on the Tuesday or Wednesday, he would not be able to cash any money during the following week.

As they were going, Beauvoir took his new friend aside and offered him a shelter at Boulogne as soon as the business should be concluded. The place was rather expensive, and it was not very easy to find accommodation, on account of the number of people who had come from the environs to await the landing of an English army, to which, he added, it had been decided to offer no resistance whatever.

On January 5 Beauvoir and Bonvalet-Desbrosses called again on the marquis. Beauvoir was still living in hopes of better days for France and his party. He saw a proof of this in the way in which the Convention was allowing the king's trial to drag ; to him, the delay in the rendering of the verdict was a clear confession on the part of the Convention that it was not qualified to try the monarch. Then he began to tell his news. La Fayette[1] had just been sent, by

[1] On hearing that monarchy was abolished and to be replaced by a republic, La Fayette had made up his mind to resign his commandership in the north and go to America. Followed by part of his *état-major* and three of his colleagues in the Assembly—Bureaux de Puzy, Alexandre Lameth, and Latour-Maubourg—he had crossed the frontier. Having fallen into the hands of the Austrians, he was sent to prison, first in Wezel,

order of the King of Prussia, to the prison formerly occupied by the baron de Trenck,[1] and submitted to the same torture as the latter. That scoundrel, the duc d'Orléans, might expect soon to suffer punishment for his crimes. As for the princes, they were sure to return by the end of April. On their return they would issue a proclamation, giving notice that they did not recognise the assignats; but what would be the value of the Commercial Bank's notes?

These last words brought him back to the paper which had been signed by the princes.

'If it were discovered, we should be in the greatest danger —our lives would be at stake.'

'I quite agree with you,' assented Prouville, who did not appear the least concerned at the possible danger.

'Yours especially,' Beauvoir added, 'since your name comes first on the list of directors.'

On January 6 Beauvoir and Bonvalet-Desbrosses were again at Prouville's. They were still expecting the famous document which would enable them to complete their arrangements. They thus had an opportunity for one of those talks which all three enjoyed particularly, and they conversed about the affairs of the time.

The marquis de Prouville was deeply interested in all the news Beauvoir brought him. Thus, he heard that four members of the Convention knew the spot where the crown jewels had been hidden; it was probably an island, whence they might be fetched on the princes' return.

then in Magdeburg, Gratz, Niss, and finally in Olmütz. It was only after the Campo-Formio treaty, in 1797, that he recovered his freedom.

[1] The baron de Trenck was well known for his riotous life. He had been the paramour of Princess Amelia, a sister to Frederick II. This sovereign kept the baron a prisoner for ten years (1753–1763), and at Magdeburg he was treated with the utmost harshness. At the beginning of the Revolution the baron de Trenck went to France. Although he had embraced the new ideas, he was sent to prison as being suspicious, and guillotined on 7th thermidor, II (July 25, 1794).

Bonvalet-Desbrosses would not be behind his friend, so he disclosed his own scheme :

'I cannot hide from you that at this moment I am endeavouring to bribe the people, and I am glad to say that I have been fairly successful.'

Indeed, he had long since begun to act, or rather to advise action. If the people had followed his advice, the counter-revolution would have kept pace with the Revolution. As early as the time when the *États Généraux* had formed themselves into the National Assembly, he had prepared a plan for sweeping away the people's representatives wholesale. This consisted in spreading sulphur under the floor of the House, and placing four men at each door with orders to set fire to it. Apparently the mob were frightened by the boldness of the plot.

When they parted, the three men made another appointment for two days later, making sure that they would have the document, or at least news of it.

Beauvoir did, indeed, receive the answer to his letter of the 3rd. Madame de Kolly wrote :

'6 o'clock, January 5.

'I have just received your letter of the 3rd inst.—and only this moment. I am grieved at the reason for the delay. This morning, at eight o'clock, I sent as usual to the post office, but I was told there were no letters. It did not trouble or astonish me much, as I had been lucky enough in receiving letters on two consecutive days.

'Only a minute ago, an unknown young lady asked very mysteriously to speak to me in private. This was only to tell me that she had received a letter which she thought was for her, that she had read it and then seen that it was for me. What do you think of this? Fortunately, you wrote in a way that I alone could understand ; but you see how very necessary

it is to be cautious. Besides, this young lady is the best patriot in the place.

'It was therefore impossible for me to do this morning what you asked, as I only now have your letter. In spite of the frightful weather, snow and ice—a man has broken his thigh, a woman her leg; my landlady's servant fell and broke open her head—in spite, I say, of all this, I went out, and I have returned safely from buying a *hou*. I called at Madame Damb's to know when I could send off your parcel. There is no coach before Tuesday next, at eight in the morning; it will carry a small wooden box containing what you ask for, addressed to my cousin. I am not sending your shoes. . . .

'Be careful about what you are going to do. For my part, I am terrified; but I do not know how to refuse you anything. Dear me! how frightened I was by the preamble of your letter! But I anticipate many joys—perhaps, also, many sorrows! . . . Are you going farther away from me? Oh, that would be too dreadful! . . .'

Nevertheless, the dark foreboding, which for one moment had saddened her mind, was but a passing one; it was quickly driven out of her light brains by the passion which had taken such hold upon her. She went on:

'It is to you alone that I am and shall for ever be indebted for my happiness. This thought, my beloved, is sweet and delightful; I will enjoy it all the more, for it is exceedingly pleasant to derive one's joy from such a man as you. But I have never required, and shall never want, such a motive for preferring you to everything else in this world; you may be sure of it—to believe the contrary would be an insult to me.

'Your ink is so pale that it caused the error which was committed and which I regret deeply, for you know what small towns are. However, I believe that in my

confusion I had the presence of mind to say it came from my husband. Besides, it bore no signature.

'. . . You will know that on Tuesday morning, at eight o'clock, it will be on its way to the address above mentioned, packed as I saw it. I shall have given it a kiss, and so will all my children, for it is my relic, and I cannot part with it except to you. . . .

'Good-bye, many and many times. I am in a great hurry; I have only time to renew the assurance of my love for you, and of the fire you have kindled in a heart which loves no one else besides you.

'I am very much afraid that you will give me a scolding in the letter you promise for to-morrow.'

Beauvoir might well tremble while reading this letter; the postal error, which had caused his message to fall into the hands of the best patriot of Boulogne, was certainly quite enough to make him anxious. The message was, of course, most compromising, an account both of its object and of the precautions he had taken to conceal his purpose. Beauvoir knew that his life was at stake, as he had told Prouville; and the fears which his friend expressed were too natural not to strongly impress him. Nevertheless, he did not appear to attach too great importance to the incident, as he changed nothing in his manners or in his doings.

On the 8th he and Bonvalet-Desbrosses went to inform Prouville that the document would soon be in their possession, most likely on the 10th. Beauvoir saw him again on the following day and received a copy of the agreement. Everything was ready, and awaited only the arrival of the document.

Madame de Kolly, in a letter of the 8th, confirmed the fact that it had left Boulogne:

'I have just received your letter dated the 5th and 6th, my beloved. Seeing how anxious you were to receive what you asked for, I am much afraid that the delay, which was quite

independent of my will, has caused you great annoyance and may have cooled your man; but you must acknowledge that there has been no fault on my part, and I have been the first to suffer from having your letter so late. . . .

'At last it is gone—and well recommended to the care of the postillion; yesterday, Monday, at eleven A.M., it was on its way. Thus, the day you receive this letter, you must go for your parcel, which is to arrive at the same time. The parcel has been registered under the name of my servant, Jeannette Rousseau. . . .

'I am anxious on account of this fatal delay; it troubles me, and I am grieved at the thought that you are again going to leave me, for if you were staying in Paris you would not require new passports, and you say that you are asking for new ones. I am indeed to be pitied. Am I never to live quietly with you for more than a month, and after an absence so long and cruel as the present one, must we part again? And for what result? Who knows? My brain is at work, and the pleasure I expected at meeting you again has been poisoned. I have no more peace of mind. I know beforehand what objections you will make, but I am ready to answer them all. Must you ask for things in the name of our child in order to obtain them from me? . . .

'Yes, I do enjoy writing to you; much more than you enjoy reading my letters. . . .' (Here, following her lover's example, she speaks of her affection in words too expressive and too crude for reproduction here.)

'Good-bye, my little darling! Whatever you do will be well done and approved of. Do not forget yourself; it is an insult to me when you say that you are waiting for the settlement of the business to buy what you want for yourself. You are grieving me, and I certainly do not deserve it. Good-bye! I cover you all over with kisses; they are as passionate as the love with which you have inspired my heart for life.'

At last January 10 had come. It was on that day that the

coach was to bring from Boulogne the small parcel on which depended the fate of the Commercial Bank; which was to enable Beauvoir and his friends to send subsidies to the princes; which was to be the motive power of the counter-revolution; the fortune for some, and for others not only fortune, but the certitude of the full enjoyment of peaceful affection.

On that day Madame de Kolly, whom Beauvoir's letters had reassured, showed more plainly than ever that she was what she had always been, a flighty woman, talking on every subject without thinking, and a jealous and passionate mistress longing with all her power to recover lost joys. Hardly does threatening danger darken her thoughts, although the slightest imprudence may bring evil on them all; her pen runs over the paper, passing lightly from one subject to another.

She remarked that she had advanced to her husband a total amount of nine thousand seven hundred and fifty-four livres; if he should get rich once more, she hoped that his creditors would not take every penny. She spoke of her husband, too, with the most profound disdain.

'You did not say anything of my husband, and I shall not speak of his day-dreams. I am quite excited at his having missed an important appointment at the minister's. . . . I have already told you, and I tell you again, that he will never do any good except in a government office. In every other matter he will be like a baby with padded cap and strings. . . .

'Théodore has one more tooth since the day before yesterday; that makes eleven since we have been at Boulogne. It is a great many, and yet he does not get any thinner; he is a finer child than ever. He kissed your letter many times and called you "Pa"; he cannot say the whole of your name yet.

'Good-bye, Mimi. . . .

'Oh, my dear, I am very much afraid; tell me the whole truth. I feel ready to die when I think of it. Such an idea benumbs my desires and my faculties. The hope that that will not happen can alone give me renewed strength to love you

still more, if it were possible, and enable me to be happy enough to die of the desire to be in your arms. I am not like the rose which, when it receives a caress from the butterfly, pays no heed to the thorn which is protecting it.'

This letter was never to reach its destination. On that day Beauvoir had gone to the coach office to fetch his parcel, which had been addressed to Madame de Montgazon. He was returning, and at her door, when he met the police inspector of the Marais quarter, who told him he had come to arrest him and his hostess.

The parcel was opened before them. It contained a nankin pair of breeches, a printed dimity vest, a pair of socks, a white skin powder-bag containing half a pound of face-powder and a swan's down puff. The inspector tore the puff to pieces and drew from it two folded and crushed papers—the plan of reconstruction of the bank and the document signed by the princes.

After having been briefly examined, Beauvoir and Madame de Montgazon were taken to prison. On the following day Kolly, Bréard, and Prouville were arrested in their turn. An order was sent to Boulogne to search Madame de Kolly's house, to arrest that lady, and to take her back to Paris.

Bonvalet-Desbrosses was the only one who was able to escape the police.

By whom had the conspirators been denounced? How had the police been so well informed of their doings? Such were the puzzling questions the prisoners endeavoured to settle.

They were not, however, to have any clue to them until a few months later, when their trial began.

V

On the day following his arrest, the marquis Gérard de Prouville was set at liberty. At the same time he gave up his title, and became merely Philippe Gautier, an inspector of police.

It will be remembered that Rose Uzel had applied to one of her customers and had told him of Beauvoir's plans. This man, a certain Jean-Pierre Leblanc, happened to be a zealous patriot who had thought it his duty to inform the chief of the central police office that a plot was being fomented against the state. It was important for the police to foil such machinations; but in order to baffle them with certainty, they must be better acquainted with them. The chief of police had urged Leblanc to follow the affair, and had given him two of the best detectives—Philippe Gautier, who was to play the part of the capitalist under the name and appearance of the marquis de Prouville, and Rousseau, who was to act the part of servant. It was as such that they had arrived at the Hôtel des Étrangers, having eight louis in hand to pay for one month's rent.

The comedy had begun, played in a very clever manner by Gautier. The reader has seen how he captivated Beauvoir's confidence, and with what thoughtlessness the latter had given the most complete and most compromising information, not only in regard to himself, but also as to his associates, the princes, and several political or military personalities. Gautier had not lost one word of the secrets. There are in the papers that were produced at the trial a series of letters written by Gautier to Leblanc and to the chief of police, giving full particulars of every interview. Now and again he asked also for advice; for, as he said, the part was rather new to him. When the decisive time arrived, and the agreement was to be signed, he wrote again: 'It is urgently necessary that you should send me as early as possible a model of a contract of this kind.'

Leblanc had found a strange pleasure in a game which, while being perfectly safe for him, was so dangerous for those royalists whom he hated, being himself a zealous Jacobin. He had gone heartily into it, and as he was not called upon to expose himself as the pseudo-marquis de Prouville, he paid his share in cash, giving two hundred francs to the policeman and his accomplice, who had played their parts so well. Thus he had

satisfied his patriotic wrath against 'Bonvalet and Beauvoir, who hated the word citizen, addressed each other by their titles, and besmeared everything which was called reason, philosophy, republicanism, &c.'

None of those men had thought for one moment that they were doing dirty and disloyal work. The police may spy upon and watch the doings of those who are the enemies of the law; it is their duty and their right. But no one with the slightest principle of honesty can approve of the police not only encouraging, but preparing and facilitating plots which would otherwise fail. Yet the government of the time frequently used similar means; the reader has had an example of it in the *affaire Favras*, when La Fayette's *état-major* was not ashamed to have recourse to such proceedings.

The legal inquiry into a case was thus made extremely easy, and whatever means of defence the prisoner might have relied upon, they were brought to nought.

A brief examination took place on the day following the prisoners' arrest. Madame de Montgazon was fortunately able to prove that she had always been kept in ignorance of the plot; her part had consisted merely in harbouring Beauvoir and in receiving Madame de Kolly's letters to him. She was at first sentenced 'to remain in her house, under the guard of a gendarme national,' then set free on January 26, and finally acquitted of all charges.

On January 13 Madame de Kolly was examined at Boulogne. Her anticipations had been fully realised. Taken by surprise, and not knowing what Kolly or Beauvoir had said, she kept close enough to the truth; she acknowledged that she had sent the parcel to Beauvoir, because the latter had told her before he left Boulogne that it was to be sent. She declared that she was in ignorance of the contents.

René Foucault and Amand Kolly were examined in their turn, because they had kissed the parcel before it was forwarded to Paris. They both said they had seen the powder-bag.

Jeannette Rousseau, the maid, and Marguerite Morlaix, the cook, could only say the parcel had been sent.

After these examinations Madame de Kolly was arrested and brought to Paris with her youngest son, Théodore, the child of her sin. She too was sent to the Abbaye, where the other prisoners had been confined.

No compromising papers were found at Bréard's house; his guilt, however, was plain, as he had gone several times with his associates to Prouville's.

The case seemed ready for trial. Yet it was delayed through a very strange circumstance—there was not a court qualified to try the prisoners.

After the events of August 10 a special jurisdiction had been instituted for the purpose of trying those who had taken part in that day. All those who had rallied round the king, in order to save the dying monarchy, were declared to be guilty. This court, known as the 17th of August court, did not sit long; it was found to be too lenient and too slow. The fact is, that its proceedings could not bear comparison with those of the September murderers. It was abolished by a law of September 29, and no court was appointed to replace it. The king himself was to be tried by the National Convention, which was allocating to itself, for the occasion, the supreme power of a court of justice. Therefore everything else was thrown into the shade, unless it had a connection with a trial which is unique in French history.

Great was the emotion after Louis XVI.'s execution on January 21; no wonder that the prisoners at the Abbaye connected with the Kolly plot were forgotten. However, all the members who had voted for the king's death, and all those who had rejoiced over it, began to feel that it was necessary to prevent a public reaction. At the sitting of March 10, 1793, Cambacérès argued in favour of an exceptional court being created, and based his arguments on the principles of the purest Jacobin doctrine. 'We have to save the common-

wealth ; we must use active and general means. . . . I oppose the closing of the House before a motion has been passed for the creation of a revolutionary tribunal. . . . Having been entrusted with full powers, you have a right to exercise them all. You have not in this case to act according to ordinary principles. When you are building up a Constitution, you may discuss the division of powers. I renew my proposal, and I ask that a tribunal should be composed and a ministry formed at once.'

Danton, with his brilliant eloquence, supported Cambacérès, and the motion was passed.

In the meantime the prison rules had been somewhat relaxed in favour of the prisoners, who were allowed to write to each other. Madame de Kolly was not going to allow such an opportunity of writing to her lover to pass, and Beauvoir received permission to answer her letters.

One of his letters is to be found in the *dossier* ; it is worth quoting.

'The Abbaye : Saturday evening.

' How kind of you, Madame, to calm my anxiety in regard to your cruel position. I suffer only for you and your unfortunate husband. Both of you are innocent and confined in cells built for culprits alone. This thought rends my heart. You were enjoying real happiness in the midst of your family, and I am the cause of your having been torn from the embrace of your children and treated as a criminal ! This is a fine reward for your kindness ! If you had shown me less compassion and had not given me shelter, you would not be to-day the victim of my actions. Certainly my conscience is blameless, but this is not sufficient for a man ; you and your husband are experiencing it to-day as well as myself. That kind father is under the same prison roof as I am, and yet we are as far apart as if the sea were between us. I wish I could take upon myself all that he must suffer at the thought of being parted from the wife and children whom he adores; besides, his health must be impaired by his confinement. Dare I

complain? Have I any right to do so, I who am the innocent cause of so many evils? I wish with all my heart that my sufferings could be great enough to put a stop to your own. Why can I not give my worthless life, so that you may enjoy the felicity which you deserve for so many reasons? And Théodore! . . . a twenty-months-old child in prison! Yet he is your only comfort! . . .

'I had done all you asked me to do. The harp is at the maker's, who has not been paid. . . .

'Do write to me sometimes; I dare not say often, because there are so many obstacles in the way! I have not yet been legally examined; but I have but one answer to give: my crime lies in my ignorance.

'Good-bye, Madame. Do kiss Théodore for me. He who was born in freedom does not enjoy it. You know my feelings for you and yours; add to them my regrets and my pain, which alone can increase my gratitude and affection.

'BEAUVOIR.

'I received your letter only this evening—Saturday.'

The whole of this letter was concocted with a view to helping their common defence. Beauvoir spoke of 'his ignorance, which is his only crime;' thus he pointed out that they must go on denying. As to the sentence about the harp, it had a secret meaning. The reader will see later on how Madame de Kolly used it in court; at least, one may suppose she based part of her evidence on that sentence—otherwise it would be difficult to explain how Beauvoir, in the midst of his troubles, could think of such a trifling matter. The only part of his letter in which Beauvoir betrayed his love is when he referred in such affectionate terms to Théodore. He could not, of course, address his tokens of affection to the mother, therefore he took advantage of the imprisonment of their child, the only one who was with Madame de Kolly at the Abbaye, to speak of his affection in an indirect manner.

Outside these matters, he turned and rounded his phrases so as to impress favourably those who should read his letter, for he knew full well that before reaching its destination it would be perused by the prison officials. Was he expecting a favourable issue? That may be, for a man's heart is very tenacious in its hopes. Besides, the prisoners were not even examined, and they gained some confidence from the peace in which they were left. This supposition is corroborated by a letter from Kolly to Santerre:

'I have been arrested without knowing why, except it be for the part I took in the reconstruction of the Commercial Bank, for which we obtained a decree last September. If my friend M. Santerre would consent to come and see me, he would give me great pleasure, for I do not believe I can be ranked among scoundrels or dishonest people. I kiss the general as fondly as I love him.'

However, the time came when the four prisoners were remembered. The Tribunal had held its first sitting on April 6. On the 27th, Kolly, Beauvoir, Madame de Kolly, and Bréard were examined by Justice Montané.

Kolly stated that he did try to get a certain sum to enable him to reconstruct the Commercial Bank, but that having failed to succeed he had given it up; 'having broken his partnership in the business,' he had handed it over to Bonvalet-Desbrosses and Beauvoir. He denied ever having asked for the sanction of the king's brothers, or thought of sending them funds.

Beauvoir, who had been arrested with the parcel in his possession, was in a very false position. Nevertheless, he tried to get out of it by inventing quite a little romance. Towards the end of last August or the beginning of September he used to lunch at the Café de Valois, in the Palais Royal. A private gentleman who came frequently to the café, an Englishman, tried to strike up a sort of friendship by addressing him several times. One day this man spoke to him of a scheme for the

opening of a bank which would be of great service to the public in general. He mentioned the bank in the rue de Bussy, and asked him (Beauvoir) if he did not know of some capitalist who would be willing to invest money in it. Beauvoir had replied, that in present circumstances, while the enemy was occupying French territory, it was not a fit time for such speculations. The Englishman having asked him for his address, he had answered that he was on the point of leaving Paris for Boulogne-sur-Mer, and did not know where he would be staying.

In the following October, about the 20th or 25th, Beauvoir was walking along the harbour when an Englishman whom he did not know, but who, as far as he could judge from his dress, must have been a sea captain, went up to a woman who was standing there, and asked her if she could tell him where M. Beauvoir lived. Hearing his own name, Beauvoir came forward, giving his name. The gentleman endeavoured very cautiously to ascertain his identity, and, apparently satisfied on this point, said: 'Here is a parcel which I have been asked to give you. You will please not to open it before getting leave to do so or before some one calls for it.' Beauvoir had taken the parcel—promising not to open it—and left it at Madame de Kolly's. Not long ago, having begun negotiations with a capitalist who was asking for securities before investing one million francs in the Commercial Bank, he remembered the Boulogne episode and mentioned it to the capitalist; the latter said that there might be a connection between this episode and the bank business, and advised him to have it forwarded to Paris. Thus it was that he had the parcel in his possession when arrested.

To a question put by the judge, he replied that the capitalist was Gérard de Prouville.

Montané asked him next whether he knew that the document was hidden inside the puff. 'No,' he said.

Then the magistrate, who had kept this as a last argument,

told him that, 'according to the letter of January 5, he must have known of the document.' Besides, had he not said that if the document were to be discovered he would run the greatest danger?

Beauvoir merely repeated that 'he had not the slightest knowledge of it.'

Madame de Kolly, examined on the same point, confessed to having sent the parcel to Madame de Montgazon, who was to hand it to Beauvoir. She added, 'that the parcel was packed and left in an unlocked chest of drawers; she had sent it on Beauvoir's request, but did not know what was in the parcel.' The magistrate having observed that she had given evidence as to 'having made up the parcel,' Madame de Kolly replied that she meant she had wrapped together with the powder-bag, which she had not opened, a vest, a pair of breeches, &c., which she had been asked to send. She declared again that she had no knowledge of any sanction having been given 'by the brothers of the ex-king.'

As to Bréard, he used the same means of defence as Kolly. He did not know there was any document signed by the princes, and he never had entertained any idea of sending them funds.

But no more than Beauvoir's extraordinary story could these denials prevail against the numerous charges which had been gathered from the correspondence between Madame de Kolly and her paramour, and from Inspector Gautier's daily reports.

The magistrate therefore sent the four prisoners to be tried by the Revolutionary Tribunal upon the charge of 'having wickedly and wilfully endeavoured—the four of them working together—to overthrow the Republic, and tried to re-establish the monarchy in France by issuing paper money with the sanction of the ex-king's brothers; of sending, or even taking to them, the moneys derived from the exchange of notes or investments by persons who had agreed to take a

practical interest in that criminal undertaking; and through this means of facilitating the success of the hostile plans of the rebel emigrants and other enemies of the Republic, besides throwing discredit on the assignats, the only paper money recognised and guaranteed by the State.'

The prisoners were then transferred to the Conciergerie.

VI

The trial by the Revolutionary Tribunal began on May 2. The president was Montané, and the public prosecutor Fouquier-Tinville.

None of the people upon whom the prisoners had reckoned came to their aid. Santerre avoided compromising himself for 'his friend Kolly.' As to Roland, the minister, he had, as early as January 19, denied ever having had any relations with the ex-farmer-general. In a letter which he wrote to the chief of the police he acknowledged, indeed, having received a document asking that the seals should be taken from the bank, and for a passport; but, he added, 'as this request did not seem to me either urgent or trustworthy, and as I did not know the citizen Kolly, I sent no reply.'

Numerous witnesses had been subpœnaed by the public prosecutor; but most of them being absent at the opening of the court, the president was obliged to interrupt the hearing of the case from one o'clock till five.

Madame Rose Uzel was the first witness; then came Leblanc. They repeated what they had said at the inquiry. The 'Bulletin of the Revolutionary Tribunal' disguises very discreetly under the initial N. the name of the chief of the central police office, who confessed very openly the abettor's part which he had acted.

His inspector, Philippe Gautier, related at length the confidences he had heard from the prisoners, thanks to his fraud.

Sometimes he would make jeering remarks : 'I promised to advance four hundred thousand francs the very next day; yet I had not the first farthing of that sum. . . .'

When the man had finished giving his evidence, Beauvoir called out eagerly that the whole was a tissue of falsehoods. 'If I do not prove it, may God crush me!' Then he repeated his story of the English captain, and accused Prouville of having invented every word he had spoken.

'This traitor has informed against me. He was arrested, but almost immediately released, while I have been a hundred and two nights in close custody!'

Then the president asked Gautier about the famous document and the confidence Beauvoir had denied having made to him.

'If he had not told me of it, how could I have guessed that the document existed and was hidden at Boulogne-sur-Mer, as I have never been there?'

Kolly and Bréard accused Gautier, in their turn, of having tried to bring the princes' names into the agreement. Gautier acknowledged that this was true.

Madame de Kolly maintained her own system of defence: 'Beauvoir had entrusted her with the parcel, which, he said, was very precious, and recommended that she should not open it. She had strictly followed his orders.'

The president asked her if she had not written to Beauvoir on January 8, but she did not remember doing so.

However, the letters being in the *dossier* are an overwhelming proof against her and her lover. The president read a passage from a letter written on January 3: '"Send me the large object and the small one . . . wrap them up carefully." What was the meaning of this?'

'It meant the two papers hidden in the puff,' Fouquier-Tinville said.

'It meant two pots filled with English china clay—a present for the citizen Montgazon,' Beauvoir replied.

The president, again addressing Madame de Kolly, asked her what was the relic she gave her children to kiss before sending it. (Letter of January 5.)

'It was a portrait I was sending,' she answered.

'It is very strange, then, that the parcel did not contain any portrait?'

Kolly remarked that he had not seen his wife for two months, and he had heard only indirectly of the parcel story, which he considered to be a pure invention. As for Bréard, he said that he was completely ignorant of the matter.

The evidence being closed, Fouquier-Tinville pronounced his speech. There was an abundance of written proofs; he read part of them, careless of the revelations they contained of the relations which existed between Madame de Kolly and Beauvoir. It was thus that the poor husband learned of his wife's infidelity and how he had been betrayed by his servant, almost his friend.

The four prisoners had the same counsel, the citizen Julien, a barrister 'who fulfilled his task in a praiseworthy manner'—the 'Bulletin' says.

The jury retired for deliberation. It had not yet acquired the habit of rendering verdicts with the rapidity which made the inglorious fame of men like Renaudin, Lockroy, Prieur, Châtelet, &c. After a two hours' deliberation it came back, asking that Beauvoir's letter to Madame de Kolly of January 3 and her answer of the 5th should be read *in their entirety*.

The prisoners were brought back, and Fouquier-Tinville read both letters. Then the chief justice put a few more questions to Madame de Kolly:

'What did you mean by those words in your answer to Beauvoir: "I have bought a *hou*"? Did you not mean a puff, the puff in which the papers were found?'

'I never bought any puff in Boulogne.'

'Then what did you mean by the words, "I have just bought a *hou:*" with two dots?'

'I had bought a harp; that must be what I meant.'

'But if you had bought a harp, you would not have said that you had purchased a *hou*?'

'I was writing in a hurry; I may have made a mistake.'

'Did you send the harp to the citizen Montgazon?'

'No; it remained at Boulogne.'

'You say in your letter that you left everything, in spite of the frightful weather of that day, to go and buy a *hou*. . . . As a rule, people do not leave everything and expose themselves to bad weather to go and purchase a harp.'

'I had had none for a long time; I knew my husband was very fond of that instrument, and as I was expecting him any moment at Boulogne, I made up my mind to buy one. . . .'

But it was in vain for the poor woman to struggle against so definite an accusation; her answers could not deceive anybody, not even herself.

Each of the prisoners was allowed to speak in order to complete his defence.

Kolly remarked that 'he had never gone out of his country since he was fifteen; that since the Revolution had broken out he had always done his duty; that in 1789 he had been appointed elector substitute; since then he had been elected a commissary in his section, and he had the honour of having a nephew serving in the republican armies and fighting the rebels.'

Bréard stated that 'not a single paper had been found in his house which could be laid to his charge.'

Beauvoir said 'that he had always paid his taxes and had never emigrated.'

Madame de Kolly had nothing to add to her defence.

The jury was now fully enlightened; it gave a verdict of guilty for all the prisoners. Dumont, the foreman, according to a custom which was growing up among these men, so impressed with the importance of their new mission, delivered a speech:

'There are offences which may be committed without any criminal intention; but the charge brought against the prisoners cannot be ranked among them. In order to act in concert with the tyrant's brothers, the prisoners must have reflected well over their plan. As impassive as the law itself, I must forget that I am passing judgment on a woman, and see in her nothing but a conspirator. My conscience forbids me to listen to the voice of pity for the weaker sex, and I declare on my honour and my conscience that the prisoner is guilty.'

The other members of the jury did not feel how ridiculous this speech was; on the contrary, full of admiration for its fine sentiments, they supported their foreman's resolution.

Just at this moment, and before the court had passed sentence, Madame de Kolly, catching at the slightest ray of hope, asked to be allowed to speak, in order to give an explanation of what she meant in her letter of January 5. 'She had just remembered that it was a *houppelande* (a great-coat) which she had purchased for Beauvoir, the very one he was wearing in court.'

Her endeavour was vain, for their fate was sealed. The Tribunal passed a sentence of death on the four prisoners. This was the only kind of sentence it ever passed, as revolutionary justice knew no pity.

'Since we are sentenced to death,' said Beauvoir, 'I beg as a favour that we should not be separated.'

He could not repress this last passionate appeal, not even before the betrayed husband or in face of death! It seems as if, at the supreme hour, he felt more regret for his love than for life itself, and thought only of the joy it would be for him could he spend his last moments with the beloved one.

This last satisfaction was denied him. Madame de Kolly had recourse to the only means in her power to delay, perhaps to avoid, death; she said that she was *enceinte*,

and in accordance with established law her execution was put off.

On the following day, May 4, about noon, Kolly, Beauvoir, and Bréard were taken to the Place de la Réunion, the new name for the Place du Carrousel. It was there that the scaffold was erected. They all three died bravely, paying with their lives for their unwise delusions.

VII

We have now to relate Madame de Kolly's struggle with the death which hung over her head after the sentence passed by the Revolutionary Tribunal. The poor woman could not be blamed, even had she been only trying to save her life; such a feeling is very human. But she had a higher one, for her resistance was not now that of the guilty wife; she was a mother who was passionately fond of her children, and who felt how much they still needed her care.

Her statement, when she said that she was pregnant, was characteristic of the inflated style of the period: 'She could not give up her natural feeling, nor allow the fruit she was bearing in her womb to die.' However, she was sincere when she spoke to the woman guardian the day following her sentence; she was the wife of the prison doorkeeper, named Richard.[1] Touched by a mother's grief, the good and sympathising woman reported at once Madame de Kolly's words to the commissary of police, Letellier. 'The woman Kolly,' she said, 'had insisted on being allowed to see her children, for whom alone she was now living. Henceforth, her only

[1] Madame Richard was badly rewarded for her kindness and the care she took of the miserable prisoners who filled the Conciergerie. In August 1796 she was murdered by a man who had been sentenced to twenty years in irons; the wretch seized the moment when she was handing him a bowl of broth to stab her to the heart. She died almost immediately.

comfort in her present circumstances were her children; her life depended on seeing them and sharing with them her troubles. If she were to be deprived of them, she would rather lose her sight.'

Madame de Kolly asked, besides, to be removed to the Abbaye. The doctors having declared that the patient's pregnancy was too recent for them to make a positive diagnosis, the Tribunal put off her execution *sine die* and ordered her transfer to the Abbaye.

However, the poor woman did not find there the same facilities she had enjoyed before. When she was first incarcerated at the Abbaye she had money, and jailers will always have pity on those who can repay their services and compliances; she now came back in poverty, for every sentence of death carried with it the confiscation of the culprit's property in favour of the state. She was harshly treated, and failing to understand the reason why, she wrote complaining to Fouquier-Tinville.

'The Abbaye: May 9, 1792, Year II of the Republic.

'Citizen Public Prosecutor,—It is one of my miserable children who appeals to you and begs that his mother's pains may be made lighter. When stating that I was pregnant, I was actuated in my desire to prolong my life, only by the hope that I should be able to comfort them and help in making them happy. When I came back to the Abbaye it was in the expectation that I should be treated there with the same regard and kindness which were shown to me before; instead of that, I am treated roughly, being placed in a filthy cell, where the straw beds are full of vermin.

'If I am to be deprived of my children, whom I have brought up and fed, and who have never left me, I prefer death to my present torture. Be so kind as to give permission for me to see my baby, for without your sanction the doorkeeper refuses to let me see him; and kindly give orders

that I shall not be treated so harshly; otherwise, driven to despair, I shall go mad, living as I am in a tomb.

'I have, citizen, the honour of being your zealous co-citizen,

'DERABEC KOLLY.

'I request also, as a last favour, that my poor husband's and the citizen Beauvoir's coats may be handed to me, as well as what belonged to them. I will pay the price demanded for them.'

The worst days of the Terror had not yet made their appearance. A year later, a sentenced woman's complaint would have passed unnoticed, it would not even have been read; but in 1792 the magistrates had still some regard to form, and Fouquier-Tinville did not yet kill people without listening to them. He granted Madame de Kolly leave to see her children. Moreover, a M. Delainville, who had made himself her protector, asked that she might be removed to a more healthy prison than the Abbaye, which was close to a fish and meat market. On her request she was transferred to the Petite-Force, the former house of the Brienne family, in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine.

She was cherishing the hope that she might be forgotten, at least that every day's delay would bring her nearer to a pardon, the idea of which she could not relinquish. She was not forgotten. On July 30 the doctors returned to satisfy themselves of her real condition, and she was compelled to confess that on May 4 she had not told the truth; but she added immediately that she had been pregnant since the 8th or 9th inst., and thus gained another three months. On November 3 she tried again to impose upon the doctors, but this time she entered into very full and even repulsive particulars. She may be excused on the plea that they were not true. She told the doctors that on September 20 she had had a miscarriage, but had kept it secret. And to strengthen their belief she showed them a fœtus pre-

served in spirits of wine. Unfortunately for her, it was a four-months'-old fœtus, and she had asserted that her miscarriage took place at two months and ten days. Once more she told the doctors that she was pregnant; but they declared it to be an impossibility, and positively refused to believe her. She realised that there was no hope for her on this ground, and took other means for obtaining pardon. First she sent her children to the Convention with a petition for pardon. Then she wrote again to Fouquier-Tinville.

We give her letter, dated 'the 4th of the 2nd decade of the 2nd month of the Republic one and indivisible (November 4, 1793)':

'Citizen Public Prosecutor,—After the visit I received yesterday, I have not the slightest doubt that you have been made acquainted with my statement; but notwithstanding the delay which my situation may render necessary, I have this morning sent my children to the Convention Nationale, begging for my pardon. I only regret that you have no voice there in behalf of innocence, for you are aware, citizen, that there has been no evidence against me, and no informer, while there were twenty-one witnesses for me.

'I trust that if the citizens Robespierre, Thuriot, Lecointre, and Moïse Bayle, to whom my children have taken my request, should ask your opinion, you who are so kind will neither be against me nor my children, for whose sake alone I implore my life. Salutation and fraternity,

'DERABEC, WIDOW KOLLY.'

The poor woman was defending her life with unrelenting perseverance; and yet what would her life have been? She had only with her her youngest boy, Théodore, whose name recurs so often in her correspondence with Beauvoir; she was no longer allowed to see her other two boys. The eldest, René Foucault, gifted with rare energy for his age, managed to have news from his mother and to send her some loving messages.

One of the prisoners at La Force tells a most touching story of this son's filial affection :

'There was only a wall between the yard, in which we breathed a little fresh air, and the women's department. A sewer was the sole means of communication between the two. It was there that, morning and night, the young René Foucault went to communicate with his mother, the citizen Kolly, who was sentenced to death, and who has since been executed.

'That boy, hardly in his teens, had already tasted the bitterest miseries of life. He used to kneel in front of that foul sewer, and, his mouth on the hole, speak to his mother ! At the other end his baby brother, a three-year-old child, as beautiful as love, as sad as grief itself, gave his mother's messages. "Mamma did not cry so much last night ; she has had a little rest, and wishes you a good day. It is your loving Lolo who is speaking." Lastly, it was through that same sewer that his mother sent him her beautiful hair, with a request that "he would claim her body, as was his right by law, and bury her beside her husband and friend who had died on the same day."'

Some time had passed. The guillotine was permanently erected on the Place de la Révolution (now Place de la Concorde). It devoured its victims, whether humble or illustrious : Marie Antoinette and the Girondins were gone ; and the executioners, whose duty it was to give bloody satisfaction to the revolutionary rage, knew no more pity than the knife itself. When Fouquier-Tinville received Madame de Kolly's last letter, he was struck with one fact, viz. that a sentence passed on May 3 had not yet been executed ; and, the doctors' report being contrary to the poor woman's statement, he requested the court to order the execution at once. This was complied with.

On November 9, 1793, Madame de Kolly was led to the

scaffold. No doubt her death, from having been long delayed, was harder to bear. Most of the Terror's victims died bravely and impassive; but in her last hour Madame de Kolly could control neither her grief nor her fear; as an eye-witness wrote, 'one minute before the blade fell she uttered a long and frightful cry.'

THE MEMBER OF THE CONVENTION AND THE MARQUISE:

OSSELIN AND MADAME DE CHARRY[1]

I

A STRANGE rumour spread among the prisoners of the Conciergerie on the morning of the 20th of brumaire, Year II (November 10, 1793); Osselin, they said, had been incarcerated during the night. Was it not extraordinary? Osselin, a member of the Convention, and of the *Sûreté générale*! Osselin, the president of the seventeenth of August Tribunal! Osselin at last, who had been the instigator and the author of the Emigrants' Law!

Was this not enough to rouse the prisoners' curiosity? for most of them had fallen victims to measures proposed or passed by their unexpected companion.

Thus the news was spreading from mouth to mouth. Osselin is here! Have you seen Osselin? You ought to go and see Osselin!

These exclamations were not free from joy, and the newcomer was received somewhat maliciously. And although the prisoners avoided being too malignant, they did not abstain from pelting the patriot of patriots—Osselin—with jokes.

[1] The documents which have served to reconstruct this episode have been drawn from (1) papers of the Revolutionary Tribunal, W 300, No. 298, National Record Office; (2) M. C. A. Dauban's work, *La Démagogie en* 1793, *à Paris*, which gives the narrative made by Bailleul, who was a prisoner at the Conciergerie at the same time that Osselin and Madame de Charry were there.

True, he laid himself open to his companions' sneers, much more so than they thought at first. This member of the Convention was extremely careful of his own person. Afraid of the severe cold, he had taken with him a number of blankets, which provoked the prisoners' admiration. Among them were a cotton blanket, a knitted one made of fine wool, and an eiderdown quilt in pale blue silk. What a contrast with the coarse woollen blankets which covered the prison folding-beds !

There was a real procession before Osselin's door, who felt very awkward; they forgot for the time being their captivity and their fears for the future. The man with the quilt, as they had nicknamed Osselin, was generally sneered at. People who have made a duty of inflicting cruelties on others cannot expect much sympathy when they get into trouble; his companions therefore applied to him the phrase, *Patere legem quam ipse fecisti.* And yet they were puzzled as to the reason for his incarceration.

Bailleul wrote: 'Osselin and his blankets formed the subject of every conversation, when a tall handsome woman arrived. Every look was then turned upon her; the malicious jokes stopped at once, making room for an inquisitive attention.'

The new female prisoner was above the average height; she measured exactly five feet three inches; she was very elegantly dressed, but ladylike; her chest and body were well developed; she had dark hair and eyes, a small *retroussé* nose; her mouth was rather large, but the teeth being very white, this was hardly a fault. On the whole, she was more than graceful, she was charming.

Yet her expression was full of fear and sadness; so that those prisoners who had most mercilessly laughed at Osselin forgot him at the sight of this lady; they pitied her from their hearts, wondering who she was and what had brought her there.

They soon found out that she was inscribed on the prison

books as 'the woman Charry,' but that she was the ex-marquise de Charry, and that her case was connected with Osselin's; she was, in fact, the victim of the man she had loved. Her history might be called a love novel. Are there not, indeed, novels as well as affections of all kinds?

II

Charlotte-Félicité de Luppé was born at Versailles in 1767; at an early age she married the marquis de Charry, a major in the Lorraine regiment.

This marriage seems to have been like many others, at a time when husbands and wives did not think they were bound to be either faithful or loving. A short time after their wedding the young couple saw that they had nothing in common; this seems to have been the only point on which they agreed. They decided to give each other their freedom, and after having signed a mutual understanding, they parted as two friends. The husband secured to his wife an annuity of fifteen hundred francs and retired to Leuriot, a small village of l'Allier.

The marquise de Charry was, at the age of one-and-twenty, free to act as she pleased. She therefore put into practice the theories she had explained in a confession written with all frankness when she was eighteen.

'My Portrait

'*To a lady friend*

'You have demanded it, Eglé, and in order to gratify the pleasure of obeying you, my pen shall trace a faithful portrait. I am eighteen, and a woman, and I shall dare to tell the truth without hiding either my qualities or my faults. . . .

'As a rule, people begin by speaking of their outward appearance. . . .

'Without being pretty, I am not bad-looking; my eyes are

dark, not large, but very expressive, especially when they sparkle with joy ; my eyebrows are black and thick, perhaps a little too close together; my nose is short, not big, and a little *retroussé*; my mouth is large, and the lips are thick; I have fine teeth, black hair, dark complexion, with little animation ; my figure is neither good nor well shaped. I am a little above the average in height. On the whole, my appearance is not too dreadful, and nobody makes any remarks upon it.

'Yet I am convinced that any one who cares to study me will say that I deserve some praise. I have a very kind heart, am quick-witted, sometimes sarcastic, but always just, and rarely malicious. I do not believe I am so superior to others that I can afford to laugh at those who might have a right to find fault with me. . . .

'I rather aim at being loved than flattered; yet I do not dislike flattery. I have always succeeded in making friends. My loving nature has enabled me to hide many faults without correcting them. Having a right to indulgence, I seldom fail to obtain it, although inwardly I have none for others. . . .

'I appeal to the heart more than to the brain; I win love rather than admiration. I am flighty, very often in an unpardonable manner. I have committed in my short life, perhaps, a million imprudences ; however, I can flatter myself that I never betrayed my friends' secrets. . . .

'My will alone rules my actions, and often those of others, for I am a very insinuating girl; people give up their notions in order to adopt mine, almost without perceiving it. I am most affectionate with my relatives and friends, and mine is a tried fidelity. . . .

'I indulge in every possible comfort; I enjoy society, pleasures, and wealth. My idleness and laziness are unequalled. . . .

'Reading amuses me. . . . Morals weary me; I hate sermons or religious books. I love God with all my heart, but serve him badly. . . .

'. . . I should have liked to speak of my virtues. I know

vice, and although I am not inclined to it I have to fear it. It would be vain to boast of being invulnerable when you have not been in danger. I pray God that He may instil into my heart a love for what is good, so that I may be inclined to it. I end by saying, that without taking any pains I shall be loved by all who know me; and, if necessary, I shall take trouble to win esteem.'

She was not mistaken when writing these last lines, for it is very apparent that all who knew her loved her. With the exception of her husband, she inspired very affectionate feelings in those who lived about her; and she did not answer with coldness to the homage of her lovers. According to the fashion of the time, she was sensitive, and could without blushing reckon among those whom she favoured the duc and the prince d'Arenberg. Besides those two, other men of mark were attracted by her. One of them made himself conspicuous; he was formerly agent for the marquis de Boulange; his name was Desplasses. Young—nine-and-twenty—and rich, he lived at No. 17 Quai Voltaire.

This Desplasses was an amiable man who studied Madame de Charry's pleasures. He sent her box tickets for the theatre, and wrote her very nice notes in an elaborate style, full of eighteenth-century wit. Those contained in the *dossier* witness to this:

'Monsieur Desplasses has the honour of greeting Madame de Charry, and of sending her the ticket for the box which he secured after leaving her. He is all the more indebted to the friend who sent it to him, that the three ladies will be placed so as to see the stage very well.'

'M. Desplasses sends Madame de Charry the box ticket, which she may have been afraid she would not receive as he is late in forwarding it. He had arranged to take it to her this morning, but was prevented from doing so through

business. He trusts Madame de Charry will be able to give him good news of the affair in which she kindly takes an interest. Everything makes him wish it should succeed : first, the good which may come out of it; but above all the desire of being among those whom she has obliged, and to whom, as she said yesterday, she was bound through her own kindness.'

He was evidently a very polite and most attentive man, and the marquise de Charry must have valued his merits; at least, this may be inferred from the following two notes:

'M. Desplasses—in his impatience to show his gratitude to the persons who have taken an interest in him, and fearing that the expression of his feelings may appear to them as being too cold, as he is prevented by fever from calling on such persons before a certain time—begs Madame de Charry will accept his best thanks for the trouble she has taken in calling on him personally. There are corporal evils which are as a balm to the soul, because they bring to the latter the assurance of an interest which one delights in having inspired.'

This ex-agent wrote like a gentleman, and the way he ended his letters may well have pleased the charming marquise. She was not sparing in her tokens of interest in his health, and, for his part, he multiplied the assurances of his gratitude:

'M. Desplasses, moved by a kindness which he cannot feel too deeply, has received a new and delightful reward for his attentions when Madame de Charry was in trouble. His fever is over; but, having escaped a dangerous illness, he has to take a series of unpleasant medicines, from which he expects a prompt result. The first leisure his position leaves him will be for Madame de Charry, in order to assure her of the rights she has acquired to the warmest feelings of his heart.'

III

From the above it would appear that Madame de Charry led in Paris the life, not of a woman of pleasure—the expression

would certainly be too strong—but of a lady who was perfectly free. She lived rather luxuriously; she even hired a carriage, which leads us to suppose that her gentlemen friends were generous towards her. Certainly, the fifteen hundred francs of annuity which her husband paid her cannot have been sufficient for her expenses.

Fond of pleasure, leaving politics alone, she did not suppose that the government or zealous patriots would trouble themselves about her, and she acted accordingly. She had friends who had emigrated, and she did not think she was committing a crime by crossing the frontier to go and see them; and there is no doubt she did so without any desire to take part in any conspiracy.

She had gone to Brussels in 1791, and had returned from that place only in the beginning of May 1792; again, she had gone there in January 1793 and stayed two months. She had met the duc and the prince d'Arenberg, Madame de Beaumont, and Madame de Castellane-Norante; in a word, people who were most compromising at such a time.

It was during her second journey that the Emigrants' Law was passed, on a motion presented by Osselin; and all those who had left Paris without a passport were considered as emigrants. Moreover, although Belgium had been conquered by the republican armies, it was not yet officially part of France, since the act of annexation was signed only on February 21, 1793.

A few days before this latter date the marquise de Charry was returning from Brussels with her maid, Emilie Cottray, when on arriving at Valenciennes she heard of the law passed against French people travelling or residing abroad. Moved by a fatal inspiration, she thought she would escape by taking every precaution; not only were these tardy, but they attracted attention to her and made known her absence, which might otherwise have been totally ignored.

She was living at No. 114 Rue du Cherche-Midi; but

she dared not apply to the committee of the section in which she resided—the Luxembourg section—this committee being composed of fierce republicans, who called their section after Mucius Scævola. This committee had earned the reputation of being unrelenting, and this was not promising. She therefore thought it wiser to write to the Mayor of Issy, requesting him to send her a passport.

She based her request on the fact that she had resided at the château of the prince d'Arenberg, situate in that district. This was a very unwise step, as she thus confessed that she had started without a passport.

'Citizen Mayor,—The citizen Charry, who resided at the house of the Spanish ambassador at Issy, having been called to Brussels for her private affairs, did not think it was necessary to ask for a passport, as she considered the country as a French province; it was, besides, hardly across the frontier, and close to the enemies' armies. She heard at Valenciennes that a passport was indispensable, and begs in consequence that you, Citizen Mayor, will kindly send her one, signed by the municipal officials; you will thus save her the trouble of being treated as an emigrant. The certificates which she showed you when residing in your commune cannot leave you in the slightest doubt, and she will be most indebted to you.'

The citizen mayor answered that he did not know her, and asked her to come to Issy and prove that she was entitled to the favour she was asking. She did not go, but wrote again, beseeching him to send the passport. He refused point-blank.

Not knowing what to do, and finding it impossible to stay indefinitely at Valenciennes, she decided to return to Paris. Besides her maid, she was bringing back a man who was called sometimes Saint-Jean, sometimes Hiernaut or Renaud, and whose duty was officially that of a *valet de chambre*, but often that of secretary, as he wrote many letters for her; in

the neighbourhood, however, people attributed to him still more intimate relations.

This took place about the middle of March. Madame de Charry, being very anxious concerning her position, took some new steps, which were to lead to a very strange result. But during that time denunciations had been numerous, and the maid, Emilie Cottray, was no stranger to an episode which so suddenly changed the young lady's fate.

A few weeks later, the committee of the Mucius Scævola section was informed of the return of a lady emigrant. Two inspectors of police, Soulès and Froidure, were at once ordered to go to her house during the night of May 1, 1793, and ask admittance in the name of the law.

The first person they saw was a man of about forty. They recognised him at the first glance, and were much surprised, for this man was no other than Osselin, the member of the Convention.

IV

They might well wonder. What could this *sans-culotte* be doing at this ex-marquise's? Who would have dreamt that it would be at the house of a suspected person, and at such an hour, that the police would meet a man known for his revolutionary principles?

Born in Paris in 1754, Charles Osselin had published, in his youth, a few licentious books, suitable to the taste of the period; after that, he passed his examination as barrister.

His ambition urged him next to become a notary; but the Company of Notaries, frightened by the doubtful reputation of the candidate, refused to admit him as a member. Osselin sued the company before the Châtelet, and lost his case, although he pleaded his own cause.

This check made him very bitter; he therefore threw himself joyfully into the Revolution, which gave his grudging mind a hope for revenge. He made himself conspicuous by

his advanced ideas, and it was not long before he was taking part in political meetings. He was a member of the Paris municipality of July 14, 1789, and of the Conseil de la Commune of August 10, 1792; and when the Criminal Court was created on August 17, he was elected second after Robespierre. The latter having declined the honour, Osselin found himself by right president of the court.

He did not long retain his post. His appointment had brought him forward and made him a possible candidate for Paris. In September 1792 he was elected a member of the Convention, and resigned his legal office for parliamentary duties.

As member of Parliament he voted the death of Louis XVI. Afterwards he entered the *Comité de Sûreté générale*, and took an active part in the proscription of the Girondins.

Though a fervent Montagnard, he was not a bad man nor uninfluenced by certain recommendations; he even sometimes interfered in favour of persons who were more or less compromised. Such acts of humanity caused him to be denounced to the Jacobins, and in 1793 Rasson charged him with having aided in the release of several suspected persons.

Osselin parried the blow by being more violent. He proposed that the members who had protested on May 31 should be tried; he supported the motion which enabled the Revolutionary Tribunal to cut short debate by stating that it was already sufficiently instructed—this was a most dangerous law, which suppressed all defence; lastly, he presented and upheld the bill against emigrants.

It was these last acts that brought him into relations with Madame de Charry. Her anxiety concerning her situation as an emigrant was increasing daily, and the lady thought it best to apply to the author of the law himself. She called on Osselin; and he, who bore a grudge against the Company of Notaries, against the old form of government, against the Girondins, was moved by this ex-marquise who had such pretty eyes, this handsome woman, this lady who came to beseech

him. She threw herself into his arms as into those of a friend, according to a saying of the period.

Their intimacy went on growing under the complacent eyes of Desplasses, who, keeping step with the advance of time, was not jealous ; he even left the first place to Osselin. He lost nothing by it ; but, as a man of the world, he made a moderate use of his advantages. The member of the Convention was not so discreet, and called very often on the marquise ; he used to go at about ten o'clock at night—'to have a cup of tea.' The episode of the 1st of May shows that he even took tea after midnight.

His love had made him another man, or rather had reawakened the poet of his youth. He composed a song for his lady-love, and his verses to 'Zélie' were set to music by Plantade.

> Te bien aimer, ô ma chère Zélie,
> Est pour toujours le charme de mon cœur,
> Et désormais tout m'attache à la vie
> Si mon amour suffit à ton bonheur.
>
> Pour apaiser le feu qui me dévore,
> Le feu divin qui va me consumer,
> O ma Zélie, à l'amant qui t'adore
> Donne un regard, un soupir, un baiser.
>
> Va, ne crains pas d'abandonner ton âme
> Au sentiment que je veux t'inspirer ;
> Rien ne plaît tant qu'une amoureuse flamme,
> Rien n'est plus doux que le plaisir d'aimer.

—On condition, however, that this pleasure should not be disturbed. The intrusion of two inspectors of police in their *tête-à-tête* was a regrettable *contretemps.*

V

The inspectors sent to arrest an emigrant and a suspect found themselves face to face with a very influential man. His presence not only caused wonder, it created embarrass-

ment. However, their orders being definite, they resolved to execute them.

They questioned Osselin, and asked him to explain how he came to be at such an hour at the house of Madame de Charry.

He replied that he was there as a friend, managing the lady's affairs.

He was then requested to exhibit whatever papers he had in his pockets. He refused to comply with this request, saying that the papers belonged to the *Sûreté générale*, of which he was a member.

After this, the inspectors tried to make a regular search; they came to Madame de Charry's desk, and were in the act of taking what was in it when Osselin again interfered.

'This belongs to the Committee of the *Sûreté générale*,' he said.

The inspectors protested. How was it possible that the *Comité de Sûreté générale* should entrust its papers to a person who was declared by the public voice to be suspect?

Osselin would not retract, and maintained his declarations with so much energy that the inspectors had to give in and simply proceed with their search.

Madame de Charry had with her a young boy, aged three years. Was it her son? Not at all. His name was Félix Cavailhac, she said; and if they wanted to know any more, she declared that the child belonged to the citizen Jean Devaillant, whom she had never seen. She did not explain very clearly how the boy belonged to that citizen. Probably she did not herself know; for she added that a woman named Damas had been keeping him at her house, but as this 'citizen' was unable to keep him any longer, she had taken him since January.

Madame de Charry stated also that she had in her house a man called Hiernaut or Renaud. The inspectors going into the *entresol* found him, and asked him what he was doing there.

He said he was waiting for a passport to go back, Osselin having promised him one.

Osselin denied this.

In spite of the strange and certainly suspicious answers, the inspectors, abashed by the member's presence, withdrew after having written their *procès-verbal.*

However, they returned two days after. But this time Hiernaut was not there; he had disappeared, and no one, not even Madame de Charry, knew what had become of him.

On this second visit the inspectors were not so easily put off. They recalled to the marquise her numerous journeys, her emigrant brother, and all that caused her to be suspected and in danger of arrest.

But Osselin was still there, and they left the marquise at liberty on bail. The member of the Convention answered for her, and a second surety was found in an ex-field-marshal and friend of the family, the ex-baron Gailhac.

Actual danger was past, but Osselin was too well acquainted with the committee's ways to think that he and the lady were now safe—far from it; and the first moment of energy being over, he began to think a little anxiously of his lady friend's situation and a good deal of his own. He felt himself gradually less safe.

Overpowered by his apprehensions, which already showed deep moral depression, this man, who had always manœuvred so cleverly, took one wrong step after another. He persuaded Madame de Charry that she had better leave her house in the Rue du Cherche-Midi, and found for her several places of shelter in Paris. First, he took her to his friend Danton, in the Faubourg Saint-Marceau. Danton, to whom she had been introduced under the name of Petit, gave her a few days' hospitality.

Afterwards Osselin took her to Saint-Cloud, where he paid her frequent visits.

She was still there when Desplasses, who had never lost sight of her, found a retreat for his friend at Fosseux, near Beaumont.

But what was the use of all these changes? Osselin had answered for her, and was responsible. Madame de Charry's

removal made the situation of her sureties more critical still. This thought troubled him and made him anxious, and, little by little, fear took hold of him. He realised what danger he was running; he knew he had enemies; and his relations with an ex-marquise charged with being an emigrant were well known. Soon he would himself be suspect.

Suspect! This was a word which entailed a death sentence. He felt he was compromised; he believed he was lost. Then the fear of death made a coward of him. He reproached the woman whom he had loved—who had given herself to him—for having taken flight, although he had advised her to do so; he who had helped and prepared her flight begged her to surrender.

She felt more surprise than indignation at hearing such language; and she answered gently, with noble and touching resignation, to the shameful proposal of her lover:

'I do not flee! Where and wherefore should I flee? What crime have I committed?

'You tell me that the law sanctions my confinement on account of my birth, and you remind me of your bail. The law does not strike any one because of gentle birth, but for not being a true citizen; it allows me to clear myself. I can do so without being in a prison; sentence ought not to precede judgment.

'I respect your bail. Let me know of a place where I can breathe in liberty, and where you can send for me if you are molested. I shall not leave it. Let me know as soon as your personal safety is at stake, and I shall save you the trouble of informing against me—an act of which I do not think you are capable as long as you are not obliged to do so. Remember that Collot d'Herbois said that going to prison was going to meet death—and slow death, prepared for by cruel torture. I would, however, do so rather than implicate an honest man who has answered for me. Nevertheless, I shall wait until he himself thinks the time has come for me to die.'

From this letter we are entitled to believe that Madame de Charry had not much faith in Osselin. Yet, whether she had still some affection for him, or perhaps trusted him a little—whether she felt that, being abandoned by all, she was at his mercy—she still followed this 'honest' man's advice—not believing him capable of turning informer, so long, at least, as the results of his being bail should not make it necessary.

According to Madame de Charry's wish—if such a word could be used in the circumstances—the member of the Convention found a house 'where he could send for her if he were molested.' He sent her at once to Saint-Aubin, a small village in Seine-et-Oise, of which his brother was priest.

VI

The presbytery where the ex-marquise was to find shelter was a strange one.

The priest Osselin shared the revolutionary ideas of his brother. He had willingly taken the oath which was imposed on priests, and, as a good *sans-culotte*, he had renounced the superstitions of olden times and had married a wife. She had given him two children—a boy, and a girl who had been christened Iphigénie.

Madame de Charry thought she was in safety at Saint-Aubin. As soon as danger was over, she gave up all thoughts of it; she therefore resumed her natural ways, and was once more the loving and light-hearted woman she had always been. She allowed Osselin to come and see her, and his visits were not objectionable to her. Desplasses came also; he even spent a night, the weather being too bad to allow of his leaving.

All these visits were not to the taste of the priest, or rather the religious director, as he called himself. He thought the young woman was intruding, and let her see it in many ways, showing himself sometimes brutal.

Cold weather had set in, and Madame de Charry had sent for a mason to build a fireplace in her room. The priest lost his temper and sent away the mason without allowing him to finish his work.

However, the situation was on the point of having a dénouement which would have been comical had it taken place at any other time, and if, under the Reign of Terror, such comedies had not too often turned into tragedies.

The religious director of Saint-Aubin had resolved to extricate himself from his awkward situation, and with this view resorted to radical means. He went to Paris and denounced Madame de Charry to the Mucius Scævola section. But his evil action had a different result from the one he expected: he himself was arrested.

He was more than surprised at this; but, thinking there must have been a mistake and that his name was the sole cause of it, he pretended to accept his fate, and wrote to his 'fellow-citizens' a letter intended to show his grand soul and his pure revolutionary feelings.

'This 19th of brumaire—Saturday in the old style—Year II
of the French Republic one and indivisible.

'Dear Fellow-citizens,—Certainly, you no more than myself ever expected that I should endure the trial which is my lot. Be not troubled by a mere *contretemps*; I am only paying a tribute to fraternal affection and submission to laws, the love of which I have always preached to you, and which I shall always endeavour to maintain in you, either by words or by example. This trial I endure without grudge against my enemies.

'As I have not the slightest anxiety as to the result of my incarceration, I do not request you to stoop to supplications which are unworthy of a heart as pure as mine. . . .'

Indeed, he was not asking them for such a thing; he was merely sending them a form of petition which he wished them to sign—asking also that they should end with a protest.

They were to state that 'he had *scolded hard* the citizen Ducros for having told that lady that he had been forbidden by Osselin to go on with his work.' This showed plainly that he did not want that lady to remain much longer at Saint-Aubin. True, she had been already denounced, yet he was troubled about it.'

Was it really possible for her to have been denounced before? It was so, indeed, and her informer was no one else than her paramour Osselin!

The wretch, in hope of saving his own life, had got the start of his brother in his shameful deed.

He had not hesitated to cowardly betray the woman who had trusted him; more than that, hoping that he would thus clear himself, he endeavoured to ruin her completely. He was not ashamed to commit a greater infamy by saying that if he had sent her to Saint-Aubin it was to make sure that she should not go further away. He even charged her with having tried to escape, when it was he who had found for her the various retreats in which she had been living from the time of her leaving the Rue du Cherche-Midi.

'The law of September 17,' he said, 'referred to the female Charry; and fear of being arrested having made her leave her abode, the respondent, who was bound to produce her, took the necessary steps to fix her residence in a place where he would be certain to find her. He therefore, under pretext of preventing her from being arrested, proposed to take her to his brother, a married priest of Saint-Aubin, in a very lonely village of Seine-et-Oise. She had agreed to go to this retreat, and the respondent and his brother had devised means for keeping her until she could be arrested, after the respondent had given information to the department, in order to release him from his bail. . . .'

Osselin's denunciation, which had been made to the *Comite de Surveillance* of Versailles, was forwarded to the Mucius Scævola section, and thence to the *Comité de Sûreté générale*,

which had issued an immediate warrant for the arrest of all persons included in the affair—Madame de Charry, the Saint-Aubin priest, Desplasses, and Hiernaut, who had disappeared long since.

This occurred on the 14th of brumaire. Osselin was entitled to think he was safe; yet his hope was a short-lived one. Five days later, the Committee, having received further information, prosecuted him, as well as Gailhac de la Gardie and the two inspectors of police, Soulès and Froidure, for having left Madame de Charry at liberty.

The warrant was at once put in force; that is why, on the 20th of brumaire, the Conciergerie prisoners witnessed the arrival of Osselin and his blankets.

VII

Osselin had not stopped to listen to the jokes showered upon him. Hardly was he in his cell before he thought of preparing his defence.

He wrote to his colleagues of the Convention a letter in which he claimed for himself the benefit of the law which 'no longer allowed a member to be inculpated without having previously been heard.'

He ended with the following sentence: '... I will prove that I never knew the cases of emigration which I am accused of having favoured, and that I was the first to disclose the retreat of her who is charged with having emigrated.'

To further safeguard himself, he asked his mother to go to the Mucius Scævola section and ask for a copy of his denunciation.

'*To the citizen the Widow Osselin, Rue de Lille, Faubourg St.-Germain, No.* 688.

'My Mother,—On the evening of the day before yesterday I handed to the Revolutionary Committee of the Mucius Scævola

section, formerly the Luxembourg section, a copy of the declaration which was given to me by the *Comité de Surveillance* of Versailles; this is an acknowledgment both of the denunciation which I made on the 25th day of the first month of the woman Charry's retreat, to the *procureur général* syndic of the Seine-et-Oise department, and the step I took on the 6th inst. as a sequel to my denunciation.

'I have handed over this document, which is most important for my justification, in order to enable the committee of the section to communicate it to the Committee of the *Sûreté générale* of the Convention. It appears that this paper has not been handed over to the Committee of the *Sûreté générale*, as I have not seen it mentioned in the report.

'I therefore beg you will go, on receipt of this letter, to the citizen Delahaye, solicitor, Rue Merry, opposite the old Hôtel Jabach.

'You will ask him to go with you to the committee of the Mucius Scævola section, which sits in the house formerly occupied by the Saint-Sulpice Seminary, and claim the paper; in case it should have been sent to the Committee of the *Sûreté générale*, you will kindly ask for an authentic copy of the deed I mention.

'My conscience is pure. I am your son

'OSSELIN.

'The Conciergerie: 20th of brumaire, Year II of the French Republic one and indivisible.

'Do not pay the carrier, but give him a receipt for this letter.'

In the meanwhile, the priest Osselin, who was detained at the Mucius Scævola section, heard of his brother's arrest. Was the member inculpated? In that case the situation was altered, and he must alter his own plans. He was not long in doing so; and, worthy in every way of his brother, Osselin the priest acted towards the latter as shamefully as the latter had

acted towards Madame de Charry. He disconnected his case from his brother's, and threw him overboard with an ease little in keeping with the brotherly love on which he had prided himself the day before.

'This 20th of brumaire, Year II of the French Republic one and indivisible.

'Republican Citizens,—Following the example set by Brutus and Mucius Scævola, I trample upon the feelings of adoration I had for my brother, and no longer recognise a brother's name in him who is named in the charge, but that of a cowardly and perfidious mandatory.

'If the charge brought against him be true, I shall have the courage to say to him: "You deceived me when you assured me that you were without reproach. I saw you were passionately fond of a certain woman, but I did not suspect you of sacrificing your duty and your conscience for her, and therefore I could not know there was a worm gnawing at your heart! Your mother, who is mine, will be able to certify how pure my intentions were when, thinking it was mere weakness or complacency for this enemy of our common peace that actuated you, I promised to do my best to cure you one way or the other."

'O divinity of the republicans! you know how incorruptible my intentions are and how honestly I acted in this case. The history which I wrote of it is convincing in itself; it would take too long to write it over again, but it will come in due time. O truth! you know that I wished for one thing only, the safety of this brother who I thought was incapable of lying or deserting. You know that I wanted to send this coquette to prison adroitly, who, if she was not dangerous as a conspirator, was so by her bewitching ways; and if I had not put so much confidence in your denunciation of her at Versailles more than a month ago, I should have made to the committee of the Mucius Scævola section the statement

which I made on Tuesday last, being tired of all your delays—and which you permitted, O divinity! you, the guardian of pure hearts, that I should make early enough to prove and show my innocence, I even say my citizenship. For you must know that I was afraid Desplasses with his gold, and you through the means which your weakness for this woman induced you to use—yes, I was afraid she might escape; and this fear filled my soul when, to preserve you from abusing your power, I took her, according to the desire I had instilled in you. Do not think, moreover, that in acting thus I was not a good brother; you would mistake, not understanding so sublime an affection. Prison horrors, even death, are nothing compared to tampering with the truth! There is the whole story. . . .

'. . . Without troubling about myself, I heartily wish that the accusation made against a guilty brother should be cleared up. If he be innocent, he will be glorious; if he be guilty, he will die covered with shame.

'These are my sentiments. I am cordially your co-citizen

'OSSELIN, *Worship Director at Saint-Aubin.*' [1]

This letter, which was written in the style of a bad preacher, did not modify the arrangements of the Committee of *Sûreté générale*, and all the prisoners were sent before the Revolutionary Tribunal.

The priest Osselin made a last vain attempt to escape; his letter, which was as ridiculous as the preceding ones, produced no effect.

'From the Barracks of the Mucius Scævola section: 24th brumaire, Year II of the French Republic one and indivisible.

'Honest Republicans,—Nature in me grieves over the harshness of a long incarceration, which would frighten the least guilty man. Innocence, truth, justice are on my side,

[1] The whole of the original document is obscure, mixing up as it does the divinities and the brother.

to answer the weakness which is natural to and inseparable from manhood. I love to repeat to you, citizens, that it is with true republican abnegation and austerity that I endure the trial of my captivity; but be certain that I deserve your attention. I long to fathom in the most scrupulous manner this undertaking, which may not have been followed by success, but whose intentions were as pure as they were civic, not to say revolutionary. Yes, citizens, I flatter myself that after having passed through the crucible of your supervision and your second examination, I shall come out of your hands as pure as I fell into them.'

VIII

Several weeks elapsed between the arrest of the prisoners and their appearance before the Revolutionary Tribunal. The attitude of each of them was in keeping with their respective dispositions.

Osselin spent his time reading over and over again the Emigrants' Law—which he ought to have known well, since it was his own work. As it showed itself applicable to him, he realised all its severity, and shuddered; it caused him many bitter reflections on his work as a legislator. Fear, which had made a coward of him, now made him ridiculous. He used to go about the prison naïvely questioning the prisoners on his case, and they took real pleasure in increasing his anguish by telling him that *his law* condemned him.

As for Madame de Charry, she still spoke to him, showing no indignation for the way he had acted towards her. She perhaps still placed some hope in his cleverness as a jurisconsult. It is indeed very probable that the letter she sent on the 2nd frimaire to the Revolutionary Tribunal was written with the aid of Osselin, for it contained a judicial argument which the young woman could not have thought of alone.

Differing from the letters of the two Osselins, Madame de Charry's was very dignified:

'*Charlotte-Félicité Luppé, the separated wife of Citizen Charry, incarcerated at the Conciergerie, to the Revolutionary Tribunal in its Council Chamber.*

'Citizen Magistrates,—I am charged with having emigrated, on the main ground that I took a journey to Brussels.

'I can prove that this town had been annexed to France at the time I went there and when I left it to come back to Paris. . . .

'My name has never appeared on any of the lists of emigrants; and I have never been denounced as such.

'I need not justify myself for an offence of which I am not guilty.

'Clause 64 of the 28th of March law grants a delay of one month to all those whose names are mentioned in the emigrants' lists, either to obtain a decision of the court on exceptional cases fixed by law, or to justify their residence in France.

'Clause 75 says that in case a prisoner should assert himself to be within the limit of time justifying his residence, or plead exceptions fixed by law, the Tribunal will keep him in prison and will refer to the board of directors of the department, which will decide.

'I am within the legal limit, my name not having been mentioned before on any list, and I am now for the first time advised that I am charged with this offence.

'The exception which I plead is one fixed by law.

'My residence cannot be doubtful, unless I am refused means of justification.

'The law grants me the means. I depend on the Tribunal to grant me the application of article 75 of the law of March 28; that, in consequence, it will send my allegation to the board of

directors of the department, which will decide before I can be accused.

'LUPPÉ-CHARRY.

'The Conciergerie: the 2nd frimaire, Year II of the Republic one and indivisible.'

Such judicial means might have moved magistrates, but not the Revolutionary Tribunal. Neither Madame de Charry nor Osselin put much confidence in its justices. Osselin was beginning to realise all the consequences of his acts, and he formed the wildest plans to escape the fate which was awaiting him.

He planned an escape, and, with a remaining sense of shame, invited his former friend to flee with him. He had some Spanish snuff and a powder which he believed to possess some narcotic power. He mixed the powder with the snuff and went one evening to the warders. With his barrister's loquacity he began to tell jokes which he was the first to laugh at, stopping every now and again to offer his mixture.

The jailers were laughing, listening, snuffing, yet sleep did not come. Osselin was the first one asleep; he was obliged to go to bed and finish the night under his fine blankets. His attempt to escape stopped there.

The Conciergerie prisoners were full of sympathy and compassion for Madame de Charry. The fate of this beautiful woman interested them all, and they let her see it.

One of them, Bailleul—he who left us the narrative of her captivity—relates that Madame de Charry was often asked 'How, clever as you are, did you not see that Osselin had not even enough common sense to give himself the appearance of honesty?'

She felt deeply how wrong she had been; but what was the use of recalling the past? She was terrified by the future she expected. 'She shuddered with fright when thinking of the scaffold; her face was distorted.' And from a very human, although unreasonable, feeling she dreamt of killing herself,

as if the guillotine were worse than another mode of death. But at bottom she was fond of life, and if she was to die, it must be knowingly.

One day she questioned her companion in captivity :

'Do you think that I shall be sentenced to death? Answer yes or no.'

The question was an embarrassing one. The Revolutionary Tribunal sentenced to death seventy-five times out of a hundred, but among the twenty-five who escaped there might be prisoners quite as far compromised as Madame de Charry. The other gave evasive answers.

'But what would be the use of your knowing in advance whether you will be sentenced?'

'They would not try me.'

'Have you any means of preventing them from doing so?'

'Yes.'

She had no sooner spoken this word than she seemed to regret it. Yet, after a few minutes' reflection, she confessed to having some opium in her possession.

The prisoner told her that she would always have time to use this, and that it was after all preferable to wait until things had reached such a point that she could no longer have any doubt as to her fate. He, however, suggested a means of deferring, not her sentence, but its execution—and this delay might be her salvation. She had only to state that she was pregnant, and her execution would be put off.

At first she felt repugnance against using such means; then gradually the hope of escaping death, faint as it was, conquered her disgust, and she decided upon using it, should she be sentenced.

The legal inquiry was soon over; and after an examination in which she endeavoured to clear herself without implicating any of those who were charged with being her accomplices, she was sentenced to be tried before the Revolutionary Tribunal, the 2 frimaire, year II (December 2, 1793).

IX

On that day the sitting began at ten o'clock A.M., under the presidency of Dobsent, who had for assessors the justices Denizot, Bravet, and Masson.

The substitute Naulin filled the office of public prosecutor.

The indictment, which was written in a ridiculous and bombastic style, stated that 'the woman Charry, born in the class of enemies of Liberty and Equality, of those conspirators who were fierce against their country and fellow-citizens, had emigrated in order to serve the enemies of the country in their plots against the Revolution.'

They reproached her with her luxurious life and her long journeys; it was not with the fifteen hundred francs which her husband gave her that she could afford such expenses. They reminded her of her settling in the house of d'Arenberg, whom she joined in Brussels. On her return she compromised 'a representative of the people, the defender of the laws which she has infringed.' 'Day and night she kept Osselin with her!' Lastly, she had assumed the false name of Petit, and changed residences repeatedly.

Yet she was not the only one accused. There were also Osselin and his brother, Desplasses, Gailhac de la Gardie, the two inspectors of police, Soulès and Froidure (who had left her at liberty with bail), a Madame Duliège who had had relations with her, and lastly M. Grivelet, the doorkeeper of the prince d'Arenberg's house at Issy.

The case lasted three days.

The *dossier* contains nothing but the indictment, which is very long, and a list of the numerous witnesses; among them must be mentioned 'Georges-Jacques Danton, aged thirty-four, a native of Arcis-sur-Aube, living in the Rue des Cordeliers,' and 'Jean-Baptiste Michonis, aged fifty-eight, coffee-house

keeper, of the Rue de la Grande Friperie, à la Halle, and now a prisoner at the Conciergerie as a suspect.'

The *procès-verbal* of the case mentions none of the evidence, nor the prisoners' answers.

Bailleul relates that Madame de Charry came before the court in a simple, modest, and ladylike way ; she spoke composedly, gently, and gracefully, and moved the whole audience.

Osselin, faithful to the part he had assumed, tried to clear himself by throwing everything on to the young woman. Her maid, Emilie Cottray, who had gone to Brussels with her, accused her also.

The jury did not share the emotion of the audience ; they were not moved. Their verdict was without pity, but only with regard to Madame de Charry.

Osselin was sentenced to transportation, and the others were acquitted. Madame de Charry alone was sentenced to death.

This occurred during the night of the 14–15 frimaire, at four A.M. The only resource left to the poor woman to delay her execution was the one suggested by Osselin. She resolved to appeal to it. As the magistrate was ordering that the prisoners should be removed, the *procès-verbal* of the case says, the woman Charry stated before the court that she was pregnant. The court ordered that her execution should be delayed, and that the officers of health and the matrons should examine the prisoner.

X

The examination did not take place at once, and Madame de Charry was put into the cell of the prisoners sentenced to death. It was a horrible black hole, lit by a candle, and there she remained three days. Then the doctors and matrons fulfilled their duty. Their statements leaving room for doubt, Madame de Charry was brought back to the women's quarter.

She was not recognisable. She was altogether overwhelmed.

At times she repeated the words, '*Sentenced to death!*' and her very accent made one shudder.

Osselin was confined in the same prison. She had every reason to reproach him with his infamous conduct: he had acted towards her as the worst of cowards. But, always kind and gentle, she merely told him that 'he had defended himself at her expense.' The member of the Convention did not know very well what to answer, and after that he avoided meeting her; as she was not anxious to see him, they no longer spoke to each other.

Soon after, he was transferred to Bicêtre and she to the Salpêtrière, where she was separated from the men's quarter. She might have remained there forgotten to the end, but apparently her former maid, Emilie Cottray, who had accused her during the trial, denounced her anew.

A second examination proved the falseness of her declaration, and she was handed over to the executioners.

Madame de Charry ascended the scaffold on the 13th of germinal, year II (April 2, 1794). She certainly was one of the most pitiable victims of the Terror.

As for Osselin, his cowardice did not profit him. Included in the Prisons Conspiracy, he was tried a second time. His first sentence could but lead him to anticipate the fate which awaited him. Like the woman whom he had loved and betrayed, he was afraid of the guillotine. Hardly had he heard the news, when he pulled an old nail from the wall of his cell and buried it in his ribs. But the wound was not fatal, and as the Tribunal did not choose that people should avoid justice, he was carried into the court, tried, sentenced, and executed, still with the nail in his chest, on the 8th of messidor, year II (June 26, 1794).

Thus he followed very closely the poor woman whom he had driven to death.

THE END

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