

MADAME ROYALE



ERNEST DAUDET

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MARIE-ANTOINETTE AND HER CHILDREN, MADAME ROYALE AND THE DAUPHIN.

(From a picture by Westmüller, in the Stockholm Museum.)

MADAME ROYALE
DAUGHTER OF LOUIS XVI
AND MARIE ANTOINETTE
HER YOUTH AND MARRIAGE

FROM THE FRENCH OF
ERNEST DAUDET

BY

Mrs. RODOLPH STAWELL

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P R E F A C E

IN my *Histoire de l'Emigration* I have given a very detailed account of the varied experiences of Madame Royale, daughter of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette, and afterwards Duchesse d'Angoulême, from the day that she was condemned to share her parents' lot and to be imprisoned with them in the Temple Tower, until her marriage with her cousin, the son of the Comte d'Artois. But, owing to the force of circumstances and to the necessity of preserving the correct chronological order, I was obliged to scatter these alternately pleasing and heartrending details through the long epic of the Emigration. It seemed to me that they deserved to be offered to the public in a more coherent form.

With that object I have detached them from the general history in which they appeared rather lost, and have gathered them together in a single picture, which will give the reader a better view of my heroine, and enable me to show her in a more brilliant light, in her struggle with the misfortunes that clouded her whole life. The story that will be read in these pages, therefore, is really one that has already been told.

At the same time I must observe that it will be found to contain a number of fresh details that do not figure in my earlier work, notably some connected

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with Madame Royale's imprisonment. On the other hand, thanks to the papers of M. de la Fare, Bishop of Nancy, which were generously placed at my disposal by the family in whose possession they are, I have been able to complete my narrative, with the help of the information contained in that prelate's letters.

A short time before Madame Royale's arrival in the Austrian capital he had settled there, by Louis XVIII's command, to represent the King at the Imperial Court. It therefore devolved upon him to act as an intermediary between the King and his niece. Their correspondence passed through his hands; he was deputed to see that the young princess did not allow herself to be influenced by those among whom she lived, and to remind her constantly that her duty and her parents' wishes demanded that she should in every respect share her uncle's opinions, and should marry her cousin the Duc d'Angoulême. It was through La Fare, too, that she received the letters that came to her from every country that harboured *émigrés*.

The Bishop of Nancy's memories of this period of Madame Royale's life are to a certain extent embodied, day by day, in his correspondence, which constitutes a valuable authority on the subject. While writing my *Histoire de l'Émigration* I found several extracts from it among the King's papers; but on re-reading it, in the rough draft kept by La Fare in his note-books, I discovered various details that had previously escaped me, and these I now present to my readers. That I am able to do so I

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owe to the kindness of those who gave me access to the correspondence in question, and I hope they will accept my sincere and grateful thanks.

My thanks are also due to the publishers of this work, for their willing concurrence in my project, which dates from the day when M. le duc de Blacas most kindly placed the archives of Louis XVIII, and the letters of Madame Royale, at my disposal. It was through their efforts that the illustrations adorning this book were collected, and reproduced so artistically that the appearance of the volume is worthy of the princess whose sorrows I have told.

E. D.



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CHAPTER I

MADAME ROYALE : HER EARLY YEARS AND LIFE IN PRISON

AMONG the women who figure in the martyrology of the Revolution there is none—at least as far as her early life is concerned—whose name should rouse in us a deeper sense of admiration at times, and very often of pity, than the daughter of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette, Marie-Thérèse-Charlotte of France, who was known as Madame Royale, and after her marriage as the Duchesse d'Angoulême. The story of her sorrows is closely bound up with that of the sorrows of France during the same period, of which, with the exception of her brother, she was the most innocent victim.

She was born in 1778; and was attaining to years of discretion when the King, her father, after trying, with the help of Maurepas, Turgot, and Necker, to surmount and solve the terrible difficulties bequeathed to him by his predecessor, allowed the intrigues that beset him to discourage him to such a degree that his efforts were paralysed. From sheer lack of will-power he dropped all the work of reparation and reform that he had undertaken, and entered upon the phase that a very fine book by a brilliant historian, the Marquis de Ségur, aptly calls the phase of expedients.

Nothing could be more deplorable than the spectacle that the Court of France presented at this hour

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of crisis. The symptoms of the Revolution were already discernible. They were apparent in the disorder that reigned high and low, in the struggle of rival ambitions fighting for the mastery, in the multiplication of scandals, in the pamphlets that mocked and slandered the King and Queen and the imprudent friends to whom they clung from simple kindness of heart, and finally in the incessant efforts of the factions who sought the downfall of the House of Bourbon with such bitter enmity, and deliberately set themselves to degrade it.

It was in an inflammatory atmosphere, then, that Madame Royale passed her early youth. She was eleven years old when the Revolution broke out. At an age that, for nearly every child, is one of unmixed happiness a blood-red shadow lay across her life. She heard of nothing but disasters : some of them took place as it were beneath her eyes, others were fore-told in her hearing as inevitable and imminent. Over a young heart whose natural atmosphere was one of joy these disasters exercised a gloomy, melancholy influence, of which it bore the marks until it ceased to beat, that is to say for upwards of sixty years.

Yet Madame Royale deserved a happier fate. Those who knew her at the dawn of her life are unanimous in extolling the grace and charm that pervaded her whole person, the precocity of her intelligence, and above all the uprightness and firmness of her character. We shall soon see how she showed these qualities in the most tragic circumstances. We shall watch the young prisoner of the Temple developing into the strong and resolute woman of whom



MADAME ROYALE AND THE DAUPHIN.—BY MME. VIGÉE LE BRUN.
(Versailles Museum.)

HER EARLY YEARS

Napoleon said, later on, that she was "the only man of the family."

To realise the cruelty of the tests to which she was put, at this very tender age, we need only recall the famous dates that mark the successive stages of the Revolution: the taking of the Bastille on the 14th July; the night of the 5th October at Versailles, and the humiliating arrival of the royal family in Paris, with a horde of desperadoes round them, carrying before them on pikes the heads of the two bodyguards who were slain in their sovereigns' defence; the flight to Varennes in June 1791; the assault of the Tuileries by the mob on the 20th June, 1792; the 10th-13th August of the same year, when the palace was attacked and pillaged, the King's deposition voted, and the royal family imprisoned; in September the massacres in the prisons and the revolting episode of the Princesse de Lamballe's murder; and finally, in January 1793, the trial and execution of Louis XVI.

Madame Royale suffered the consequences of all these horrors. Indeed she even took part in them. She heard her parents insulted; she saw them encompassed by faces dark with hatred, and by armed hands that threatened those she loved. More than ever before she did her utmost to surround them with a daughter's love and care, and, to save them from being alarmed on her account, gave them an example of courage that no one could have expected from a child of her age.

Her uncle the Comte de Provence, in one of his writings, shows her to us in this rôle. He is describing the events of the 18th April, 1791. The King had

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been seriously ill, and at the same time wished to save the clergy of his chapel from the horrors that threatened every priest who was true to his faith. The doctors declared that His Majesty was in need of country air, and there was a more or less general belief that he would be able to go to Saint-Cloud as in the previous year. On the 18th April, the day fixed for his departure, the royal family drove away from the palace a little before midday, and had already reached the Carrousel when the National Guard, supported by the mob and the fish-wives, attacked the carriage, levelled their muskets at it repeatedly, heaped insults upon the King and his family, and rained blows upon his attendants. In defiance of the Rights of Man, which their originator, General de la Fayette, invoked with equal verbosity and futility, His Majesty was forced to give up his journey.

“It was on this occasion,” writes the Comte de Provence, “that I first saw my niece in her true colours. All the strength that the King and Queen and my sister had hitherto drawn from their natural firmness, courage, and piety seemed now exhausted. We stared at one another in melancholy silence. My niece, who was then twelve years old, stood alone in the centre of this miserable circle. Her expression, as she flitted from her father’s side to her mother or her aunt, showed that she was well aware of her position, but rose above it: tears were in her eyes, but her lips were smiling. Her innocent caresses, her tender thought for us all, and her comforting words were as balm upon all our wounds. When she came to me I clasped her in my arms, and said :

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‘ Oh, my child, may Heaven shower upon you all the happiness that is denied to your unhappy family ! ’ ”

No words of praise were ever better deserved. The qualities that Madame Royale showed that day she never lost. Condemned as she was to tread the path of martyrdom, she climbed every step of the way with equal courage and resignation.

And the incidents that I have just recalled were but the entrance to the *Via Dolorosa*. It was within the walls of the Temple that she was to give the most signal proofs of the shining virtues that endowed her youth with its imperishable halo.

The royal family was immured in the Temple on Monday the 13th August, 1792, at seven o'clock in the evening. The prisoners were the King, the Queen, Louis XVI's sister Madame Élisabeth, Madame Royale, and her little brother, the unfortunate child of seven who was soon, for a very brief space, to be Louis XVII.

The princess was not released from prison until December 1795. She was then the sole survivor of all these royal prisoners. Her father, her mother, and her aunt had all died upon the scaffold: her brother, too, was dead. Of the sinister events that orphaned her she knew nothing, save that the King had been executed. This she had learnt on the evening of the fatal day from the cries of the hawkers—or newsvendors, as we should call them now—who were selling, under the very windows of the Temple, the printed report of the judicial murder that had taken place that day. But with regard to her mother and aunt she had been left in total ignorance, and it

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was not till her brother had been dead for several days that she was told of her threefold loss.

She herself tells the story in her account of her imprisonment, which she wrote in October 1795, a few weeks before her release. It is an almost daily narrative of her cruel experiences.

First she describes her father's trial before the Convention, the sentence pronounced against him, the last heart-breaking farewells, and finally his execution. After recalling all the details of this tragedy, all that she saw with her own eyes, and all that was told to her, she adds :

“ Such was the life of the King, my father, during a severe imprisonment. Piety, magnanimity, firmness, gentleness, courage, kindness, patient endurance of the most horrible calumnies, whole-hearted forgiveness of his assassins, and the most profound love for God, his family, and his people—these and these only were the qualities he showed until he breathed his last, and went to receive his reward for them in the bosom of an almighty and pitiful God.”

These few lines vibrate with the very heart-beats of Madame Royale : they are instinct with her filial love and sorrow. They show, too, the spirit of forgiveness that she inherited from her parents, a spirit of which her father had lately given her an example, and by which she was inspired on the day of her release, when she wrote on the walls of the prison she was leaving these magnanimous words : “ May God forgive those who put my kinsfolk to death ! ”



J. B. CLÉRY, LOUIS XVI'S SERVANT IN THE TEMPLE.
AFTER DANLOUX.
(*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)



THE TEMPLE TOWER.
(*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)

HER EARLY YEARS

The trial she endured on the 21st January was terrible indeed. But it was to be followed by others.

“ On the 3rd July, at ten o'clock in the evening,” she writes, “ they read to us a decree passed by the Convention, to the effect that my brother should be separated from my mother and placed in the most secure room of the tower. The moment my brother heard this order he burst out into piercing cries and flung himself into my mother's arms, begging not to be parted from her. To my mother, too, this cruel order came as a shock : she refused to give up my brother, and defended his bed against the municipal officers. They insisted on having him, and threatened to employ violence and call up the guard to take him away by force. An hour was spent in parleying ; in insults and threats on the part of the municipal officers ; in resistance and tears on the part of us all. At last my mother consented to give up her son : we took him from his bed, and after he had been dressed my mother handed him over to the municipal officers, bathing him with her tears as though she foresaw the future, and knew that she would never see him again. The poor little thing kissed us all very tenderly, and went away in tears with the men.” It is hard to picture a more atrocious scene. A child of seven torn from his mother, dragged from his bed, and borne away to return no more !

The broken-hearted Queen still hoped that she might be allowed to see her son again. This favour was refused. It was refused not only to the mother, but also to the sister and aunt ; and the only consolation of the three unhappy women was to sit for hours

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at a time before a little window, waiting for the chance of seeing for a moment the beloved child of whom they could obtain no other news.

This parting took place on the 3rd July.

“ On the 2nd August, at two o'clock in the morning,” continues Madame Royale, “ they came to awaken us, and to read to my mother a decree passed by the Convention, according to which, by demand of the *Procureur* of the Commune, she was to be removed to the Conciergerie to await her trial. My mother listened unmoved to this decree. My aunt and I begged instantly to be allowed to go with my mother, but as there was no mention of this in the decree we were refused. My mother made a parcel of her clothes : the municipal officers never left her : she was obliged to dress before them. They demanded her pockets, which she gave them ; they searched them and removed everything that was in them, although there was nothing important ; and they made a parcel of the things, which they said would be opened before the revolutionary tribunal in my mother's presence. They left her nothing but a handkerchief and a scent-bottle, in case of her feeling ill. At last my mother left us, after kissing me again and again, and bidding me be brave and careful of my health. I did not answer my mother at all, being convinced that this was the last time I should see her.”

Madame Royale and Madame Elisabeth passed the rest of the night in tears. On the morrow and the days that followed they vainly begged to share



MARIE-ANTOINETTE IN THE TEMPLE PRISON—BY KUHARSKY.
(Versailles Museum.)



FURNITURE OF MARIE-ANTOINETTE'S ROOM IN THE TEMPLE.
(Carnavalet Museum.)

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the Queen's prison. They could neither secure this favour nor obtain any news of her. A whole year passed before Madame Royale knew that her mother had followed her father to the guillotine.

At the same time the two princesses were more closely confined in their prison, and treated with increased harshness. They were deprived of the servant who waited upon them, and were obliged to make their own bed and sweep out their room. Three times a day their wretched lodging was searched; the cupboards and drawers were ransacked; it was ascertained that they had not sawn through the bars of the windows; their very sheets were taken from the bed, in the fear lest they should tie them together and escape from the window. They were given sheets too coarse to be twisted. And when their meals were brought to them the door was quickly shut, to prevent them from seeing the men who carried up the food.

But these were hardships that they could endure without a word of complaint. They were far too heart-sick to be sensible of material privations. What did such things matter to women of their stamp, when a wall had been raised round them lest any news of the outer world should reach them, and when all they could contrive to learn was that a miserable child beneath them was being treated mercilessly by the cobbler Simon and his wife, the wretched creatures in whose hands he had been infamously placed!

In the interests of a cause that it would be useless to discuss here—especially now that it is irremediably lost—there have been many ingenious attempts, of

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late years, to show that the contemporary accounts of the ill-treatment of the royal child by his guardians were greatly exaggerated. Judging from these amended versions, of the truth of which there is absolutely no proof, Simon was not a cruel, violent, hardened, and brutal drunkard, nor was his wife incapable of humane feeling; and after all, notwithstanding an occasional outbreak of temper, they did not cause the death of their little prisoner.

To these statements Madame Royale's journal definitely gives the lie. She describes to us, not the things she saw—since it is certain that she saw nothing; but the things she heard.

She says: "We heard a little news of my brother from the municipal officers; but that did not last long. Every day we heard him and Simon singing the *Carmagnole*, the air of the *Marseillaise*, and a host of other horrors. Simon put a *bonnet rouge* on his head and made him wear a 'carmagnole' jacket. He made him sing at the windows so as to be heard by the guard, cursing God and his family and the aristocrats in the most appalling way. Happily my mother did not hear all these horrors; she had gone away. Before she went some one came to our rooms to fetch my brother's coloured clothes. My mother said she hoped he would not leave off his mourning; but the very first thing Simon had done was to take away his black coat. The difference in his life and the ill-treatment he received made my brother ill at the end of August. Simon made him eat horribly, and drink a great deal of wine, which my brother detested."



MARIE-ANTOINETTE'S SEPARATION FROM HER SON.¹
(*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)



THE TRIAL OF MARIE-ANTOINETTE
(*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)

¹ In the original this illustration is named "Marie-Antoinette's separation from her *family*," but this is impossible, as when she parted from her daughter and Madame Elisabeth the boy was not there. This must necessarily represent the first separation.

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I think the reader will agree with me that it is very difficult to believe in the humanity of the royal child's guardians. Moreover no one had been deluded as to the aim pursued by the persecutors of this unhappy martyr. When the news spread through Europe that he had been separated from his mother and placed in the care of Simon and his wife, the world was at once convinced that the object was, not only to ruin his physical health, but also to soil and pervert his mind. And it is unfortunately certain that this end was attained only too successfully. My eminent contemporary, Lenôtre, has somewhere produced the evidence of men who heard the little prisoner insulting his mother, his sister, and his aunt in the most abominable words. Who taught them to him, if not Simon ?

The echo of these things was heard even in Vienna. When the Austrian Archduchess Marie-Anne, the sister of the Emperor Francis II, heard of Marie-Antoinette's death, she wrote to La Fare, Bishop of Nancy, who was then in that capital :

“ Monseigneur, I heard of the unfortunate Queen's death in some black-sealed letters that I received from Dresden. It is a terrible event. One must submit to the decrees of Providence ; but it must be admitted that they are sometimes very harsh. It is said that Madame Élisabeth is already in the Conciergerie, which means death. What of Madame Royale ? Will she have the strength to bear all the tortures that are being prepared for her ?

“ But of all the individuals of that unhappy family the one I pity the most is the poor little King, who,

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unless God have the mercy to take him from this world, will become a little monster.”

This judgment was only too correct. It is truly fortunate that Louis XVI's heir did not live, for his guardians' evil teachings had corrupted him to such a degree that it would have been very difficult to make him forget them, and to cure the injury that they had done him. His moral health was permanently ruined.

As for his physical health, we know from the Chevalier de Frotté what it had become. After vowing to secure the release of the unfortunate child Frotté gave up all idea of doing so. “He had fallen into such a state of physical and moral prostration,” he wrote, “that there is no object in concerning oneself with him.”

Madame Royale, then, was not exaggerating when she described in her journal the ill-treatment that her brother received. The little she contrived to hear of him added the most horrible tortures to her sufferings, which were already sufficiently great. It must always be remembered that at the time when they were daily growing more and more poignant she was not yet fifteen; and the fact of her youth made her position even crueller and more pitiable than it would otherwise have been. The wretches who had made it their business to martyrise the royal family did not shrink, in the interrogatories to which they subjected this girl, from making the most slanderous and outrageous insinuations against her mother.

One day, in October 1793, she was summoned at



THE DAUPHIN, LOUIS XVII.—MARBLE BUST BY DESEINE.
(Versailles Museum.)



MADAME ROYALE.—BY MME. VIGÉE LE BRUN.
(In the collection of J. B. Chazard.—Photo by Braun.)

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noon from the room she shared with her aunt, and appeared as a so-called witness before the delegates of the Convention, who were engaged in preparing the Queen's trial. Their object was to trap her into admissions which could be transformed into charges against the royal prisoner. At first she was only questioned on the relations that the Queen had contrived to maintain with the outer world during her imprisonment. Her answers bore witness to her presence of mind, and to her anxiety to compromise no one. Showing no signs of intimidation she replied to every question with a denial, and was so completely mistress of herself that her questioners were disconcerted.

But suddenly her coolness vanished. Though Chaumette, *Procureur* of the Commune, who was plying her with insistent questions, had become somewhat enigmatical in his language, she was able to guess, through all the stream of incomprehensible words, that he was trying to make her accuse her mother. Accuse her mother! And of what?

"Chaumette," she tells us, "proceeded to question me on a host of dreadful things of which my mother and aunt were accused. I was overwhelmed by the horror of it, and so indignant that, in spite of the terror I was in, I could not help saying that it was an infamous thing to do. In spite of my tears they pressed me hard for an answer. They said things that I did not understand; but those that I did understand were so horrible that I wept with indignation."

The things she could not understand, in her young

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innocence and purity, were turned a few days later, in the revolutionary tribunal, into a charge against the Queen : that monstrous accusation, worthy of the ruffians who conceived it, which wrung from her the sublime answer that silenced them and will be remembered to all time. At this moment, one would think, Madame Royale must have drained the cup of sorrow to its last drop. But it was not so : she was to drink the very dregs.

Amid so many misfortunes one consolation was still left to her : the presence of her aunt, Madame Élisabeth. Although persecuted and tormented every hour of the day, in a thousand humiliating ways ; though left without news, either of the Queen, of whose death they knew nothing, or of the poor little boy who lived below them ; though deprived of lights, and obliged to go to bed when the daylight failed, they bore all these ills with patience because they were together, and could speak freely of the past and of the absent, and mourn the King, and pray for all they loved.

These circumstances revealed Madame Élisabeth as the heroine she was : a perfect model of courage and resignation, of piety and confidence in God. Madame Royale resolved to follow her example. To the tenderness and love of her saintly aunt, who tried to fill her mother's place, she responded with untiring devotion.

From September 1793 till May 1794 they were left alone and deserted, and entirely dependent on one another in their prison, the doors of which never opened even to let them breathe the outer air. They

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were completely ignorant of all that was happening in the world without. But despite all their sorrows, and all their fears of fresh disasters, there was one that Madame Royale never foresaw and never expected : namely, separation from her aunt. Fate, however, held this last blow in store for her. The following words are quoted from her journal, under the date of May 9th, 1794 :

“ As we were in the act of going to bed our bolts were drawn and some one knocked at our door; my aunt said she was slipping her gown on; the answer was that there was no need to be so long, and the knocking became so violent that it seemed as though the door would be broken open. My aunt opened it as soon as she was dressed. A man said to her—

“ ‘ Citoyenne, will you kindly come downstairs ? ’

“ ‘ And my niece ? ’

“ ‘ She will be attended to afterwards. ’

“ My aunt kissed me and said she would come back.

“ ‘ No, citoyenne, you will not come back : put on your cap and come downstairs. ’

“ They heaped insults upon my aunt, who bore with them patiently, put on her cap, and then kissed me and told me to be brave and to put my hope in God. She left the room with those devils.”

I need not remind my readers that Madame Élisabeth appeared on the very next day before the revolutionary tribunal, where she cut short the discussion by assuring her judges that it was useless to question her, since, knowing that her death was a

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foregone conclusion, she had "made the sacrifice of her life" and was ready to die. We all know that she was condemned, and taken to the guillotine in a cart with twenty-four men and women who had been sentenced with her; and that she was the last to be executed. It is a touching fact that while she was awaiting her death each one of the victims, before mounting the scaffold, came up to her and bowed respectfully. She received their farewells with the dignity befitting a daughter of kings. When her turn came she mounted the scaffold with a firm step, though at its foot stood the sinister basket, heaped with the twenty-four heads that had fallen before her own.

If I were a painter, and were minded to depict this butchery on canvas, I should show the princess at the moment of death, with a white dove issuing from her mutilated body and soaring towards the sky. This sacred image and parable would symbolise the beautiful soul of a martyr winging its way to heaven, not to demand vengeance upon its persecutors, but to ask forgiveness for them.

Perhaps this image might have arisen in Madame Royale's mind during her lonely night in prison, had she known that her aunt had been put to death. But she knew no more of it than she knew, as yet, of the death of her mother.

That this was the case she definitely states, not only in her journal, but also in a letter that she wrote in 1796, soon after her arrival in Austria, to her uncle Louis XVIII, whose refuge at that time was Blankenburg in Germany :



MADAME ÉLISABETH—BY MME. VIGÉE LE BRUN.
(Versailles Museum.)

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“ From the 10th August, 1792, until the month of August, 1795, I learnt nothing of the concerns of my family, nor of political affairs; we heard nothing but the insults that were heaped upon us. You have no idea of the severity of our imprisonment; no one who had not seen it all with his own eyes could possibly imagine it. Even I, who suffered so much from it, find it hard to believe in it. My mother knew nothing of my brother's life, though he was in the room below hers. My aunt and I did not know that my mother had been taken to the Conciergerie, nor afterwards that she was dead. I only learnt these things in '95. My aunt was torn from me to be taken to the scaffold. It was in vain that I asked why we were separated. The door was shut and the bolts were drawn, and no one answered me. My brother died in the room below me; even of this I was left in ignorance. Finally, the news of Robespierre's well-deserved death, which made so much noise in the world, only reached me a year later. Several times I heard the tocsin ringing and the drums beating to arms, but was never told the reason by my warders. No one could imagine the cruelty of those people. It must, however, be admitted, my dear uncle, that my brother and I were better treated after the death of that monster. We were given the necessaries of life, but we were still left in ignorance of passing events, and it was not till after my brother's death that I learnt of all the horrors and cruelties that had been committed during those three years.”

To complete this picture of Madame Royale's

MADAME ROYALE

captivity, which became the most absolute solitude after her aunt's departure, we must return to her journal. During the two months that followed, that is to say until the fall and death of Robespierre on the 9th Thermidor, the young prisoner was treated with unrelaxed severity and vigilance.

Several times a day her prison door was opened to admit men who were complete strangers to her. One morning she was visited by a man whom later on she knew to have been Robespierre. He was merely an apparition, however. The terrible personage looked at her insolently, she says, but said nothing and was soon gone.

After this she was visited three times daily by the municipal officers appointed to guard the Temple, who came to disturb the silence in which this innocent child lived alone with her own thoughts. They were often drunk. They hardly ever spoke a word to her that was not harsh, and although she carefully abstained from asking for anything that was not absolutely necessary they often refused her requests. She could not even drag from them any news of her mother, her aunt, or her brother. Even after the 9th Thermidor, when she was visited by Barras and was provided with attendants who were more humane than those to whom she had so long been accustomed, more ready to pity her lot and sincerely anxious to better it, the same silence was observed and there was nothing to show her that her imprisonment was nearly at an end.

Arrangements were being made for her release, however, though as yet she was unaware of it. She

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did not know that immediately after her brother's death the Emperor of Austria, Francis II, had asked the Republican Government to place the last survivor of the devastated royal family in his care. In exchange for the princess he offered to restore liberty to General de Beurnonville, formerly Minister of War, and to the people's representatives who had been handed over with him to Austria by Dumouriez, at the time of that general's treacherous desertion of his party.

What was it that prompted the Emperor to make this suggestion to France, after leaving Marie-Antoinette, his aunt, to die without the least attempt to save her? Several times during the Queen's imprisonment, as the dangers that threatened her came nearer and nearer, the Comte de Mercy, formerly Austrian Ambassador in Paris, had pleaded her cause to his government, without receiving any answer whatever.

On the 19th September, on hearing of the Queen's removal to the Conciergerie, he urged :

“ Is it consonant with the dignity, or indeed with the interests of His Majesty the Emperor, to see his august aunt threatened by such a fate without risking something to tear her from the hands of her executioners? Would it not be possible, for the sake of His Majesty's reputation, to employ some energetic measure? ”

The Court of Vienna answered nothing. On the 11th October Mercy declared that the danger was acute. But it was in vain that he awaited instructions to act. On the 17th he heard that the Queen had been put to death.

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This having been the conduct of Austria in these circumstances, the question whether she were disinterested in asking the government of the Republic, after Louis XVII's death, to place Madame Royale in her hands, cannot be answered in any way that redounds to her honour. One fact that throws discredit on her disinterestedness is that she evidently saw, in the sorrows of France and the monarchy, a means of increasing her dominions by annexing Alsace and Lorraine, and possibly Franche-Comté!

If Austria indeed cherished these hopes in '92 she could no longer believe in the possibility of their being realised. But perhaps she had other dreams. In the imperial family there was a young prince who might very suitably have married Madame Royale: the famous Archduke Charles. If this marriage had taken place it might have been possible to win the crown of France for the daughter of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette, and indirectly for an Austrian prince, who would have reigned in her name. This was the possibility feared by Louis XVIII, who was living at that time in Verona. It was not likely, however, that the government of the Republic would be troubled by fears of this kind. It listened to the Emperor's propositions, which may have been prompted by a feeling of remorse, similar to that from which the Convention was apparently suffering. For the Convention, according to the historians of these tragic times, grew tired of bloodshed during the last days of its life, and for that reason was willing to enter into negotiations with Austria with a view to releasing Madame Royale. But, as I have already said, the

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princess knew nothing of them. She admits in her journal that at this time she believed herself to be condemned to life-long imprisonment.

It is easy enough, then, to understand her surprise and agitation on the 15th June, 1795, when the prison in which she had lived for three years was entered by a young woman with a sympathetic face, who fell on her knees and looked at her with eyes full of love and tears, and told her she had come to live with her, by order of the Committee of General Safety.

The name of this unexpected visitor was Madeleine Bocquet-Chanterenne. Having heard that the Convention wished to provide Madame Royale with a companion while she was awaiting her release, Mme. Chanterenne had offered her services and had been appointed to the post.

Madame Royale's heart was instantly won. She understood that in coming to her Mme. Chanterenne had been prompted by pity and affection, and from the first moment she confided in her absolutely. It was not for long that she was to enjoy this pleasant and consoling companionship; but for the short time that it was hers she yielded without restraint to the dictates of her heart, a heart that was famished for affection. She felt instinctively that her companion was her friend. Naturally her first thought was to beg for news of her family and of public events, which for so long, with unexampled cruelty, had been withheld from her. The first interview between these two women must have been tragic indeed! Again and again it was interrupted by tears.

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“What of my mother?” asked Madame Royale.

“You have no mother.”

“And my aunt?”

“She is dead.”

“And my brother?”

“He, too, died a week ago.”

It was thus that the unhappy girl learnt that all she loved were gone.

Mme. Chanterenne's arrival in the Temple prison marked the end of Madame Royale's long martyrdom; but the relief she felt in having a companion and friend was ever after associated in her mind with the tragic revelations that were made to her that day.

The distress caused by these revelations very naturally recalled to Madame Royale's memory those of her relations who were still living, both Austrian and French. The Austrians were strangers to her: she had never seen them: but her French kinsfolk she remembered. There were her two uncles: Monsieur, Comte de Provence, now the King, and the Comte d'Artois; her aunts, the wives of these two princes; her great-aunts, the daughters of Louis XV; the Orléans family; the three Condés; Madame Clotilde, her father's sister and Queen of Piedmont; and the Bourbons of Spain, Naples, and Parma.

It was Mme. Chanterenne again who first initiated her into the lives and circumstances of all these more or less distant members of her family, of whom no one had spoken to her for so long. But when Mme. Chanterenne hinted that she would doubtless soon be set free she began to wonder which of her relations

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would give her a refuge, and naturally her thoughts turned to the head of her house, King Louis XVIII.

During the days that followed she enjoyed a variety of pleasures. Her former governess, the Marquise de Tourzel, who was imprisoned under the Terror and released after Robespierre's fall, was allowed to see her; and the same favour was granted to Hue, who had been her brother's first *valet de chambre*. They completed the information already given by Mme. Chanterenne. Little by little the vigilance with which she was guarded was relaxed; she was treated more humanely, and better fed. In view of her approaching departure, which had not yet been announced to her, a trousseau was prepared for her. By the time two months had passed she was living in a freer and fresher atmosphere.

In the meantime the negotiations for her release were being carried on at Basle, between Bourkhard, the head of the local government, who had undertaken to represent Austria, then at war with the Republic, and Bacher, the representative of France. The matter dragged on for months; and it was not till the 28th November that the Directory ratified the treaty.

Madame Royale heard the news from Bénézech, the Minister of the Interior. He was obliged to break to her, when congratulating her on this fortunate result, that Austria had stipulated that none of the women who had been with her in the Temple should accompany her to Vienna. She was bound, therefore, to part from Mme. Chanterenne, to whom she had become greatly attached on account, as I said before,

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of her winning qualities of mind and heart. She called her "my dear Renète."

This parting was a new grief added to all the sorrows that were still so fresh in her memory, and it was long before she was consoled. None the less in the letters she wrote to Mme. Chanterenne from that time forward she gave no expression to her own distress, but devoted all her efforts to comforting her last companion in imprisonment. She was authorised to fill her place with any other woman she chose, and after hesitating between the Marquise de Tourzel and Mme. de Soucy, the daughter of her former assistant-governess, Mme. de Mackau, she finally chose the Duchesse de Sérent, who had been Madame Élisabeth's lady of honour. "In the position I am in," she wrote to Bénézech, "in my loneliness and absolute ignorance of the manners of the world, I need some one who can give me good advice, and Mme. de Sérent is the person I think most capable of giving it to me, by reason of her age." If she were to have but one companion she asked definitely that this might be the one. If she were allowed two she would accept Mme. de Soucy.

She also asked for Hue, her father's last servant, whom the King had commended to her. And finally she begged, if she were to be accompanied by one of her warders in the Temple, that it might be Gomin, "the first person who had improved her lot in prison."

Her wishes with regard to Mme. de Sérent could not be carried out. The lady in question had left France, and it was not until four years had passed that Madame Royale met her at Mittau.

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All these arrangements having been made the departure was fixed for the 18th December, and in the evening of that day Bénézech came to fetch Madame Royale. Mme. Chanterenne was obliged to bid farewell to the princess. The touching scene took place in the Temple garden, and was witnessed by a number of persons from such of the neighbouring windows as overlooked the enclosure. As the two girls exchanged their parting kiss Mme. Chanterenne felt the princess's hand slip into hers, and leave in it a crumpled manuscript. It was the story of her imprisonment, which Madame Royale had written during her last weeks in the Temple, and which has since been published.¹

Bénézech offered his arm to the princess and led her to the spot, a few paces away, where her carriage was awaiting her. On reaching the boulevards opposite to the Opera House they found a postchaise, in which were already seated Mme. de Soucy and the captain of gendarmerie, Méchin, who was to escort the princess as far as Basle. She and Gomin entered this carriage, and when Bénézech had taken leave of her, she drove away. She was followed by a second carriage, containing Mme. de Soucy's son, the faithful Hue, and three servants, who had been placed in

¹ In 1805, while at Mittau, Madame Royale asked Mme. Chanterenne for her manuscript, which she returned after making a copy of it. Long afterwards it became the property of the Comte de Chambord, and, after his death, of his heiress the Duchess of Madrid, who published it a few years ago. The copy that Madame Royale kept, revised, and completed was given to Hue's family, to whom we owe our knowledge of it. This is how it happens that there are two versions of Madame Royale's journal, one being more complete than the other.

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charge of Coco, a little dog beloved by Madame Royale.

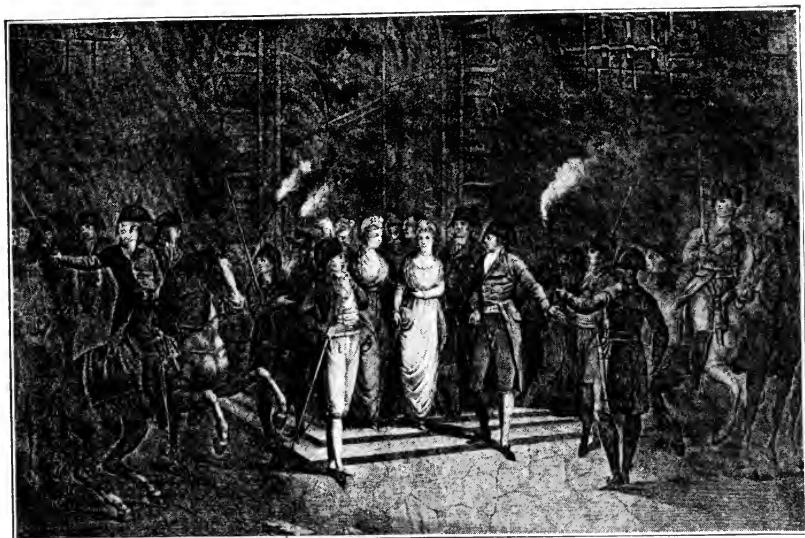
The journey was accomplished without incident, but was not without its emotions for the princess, for she was repeatedly recognised in the inns where she paused on her way, and everywhere met with signs of the greatest compassion and sympathy.

On the 24th December, at six o'clock in the evening, she reached Huningue, a short league to the north of Basle, on the left bank of the Rhine. Hardly had she alighted at the *Corbeau* Hotel when she wrote an account of her journey, intended for Mme. Chanterenne:¹ "I was recognised the very first day at Provins," she says. "Ah! my dear Renète, it hurt me cruelly and did my heart good at the same time. You cannot imagine how the people came running up to see me. Some of them called me their good Lady, others their good Princess. Some of them shed tears of joy, and I very nearly did so myself. My poor heart was greatly agitated, and more than ever regretted leaving the land that it still loves so dearly."

She had travelled under the name of Sophie, and Méchin, who was inclined to see danger everywhere, sometimes tried to pass her off as his daughter. "He must have seen that I disliked it. But he might have spared himself the trouble, for in all the inns I was called Madame or Princess."

She then added these sorrowful words, which show us, not only the sadness of her heart, but also her

¹ This account, and Madame Royale's letters to her friend, are given in the introduction to the Memoir published by the Duchess of Madrid.



MADAME ROYALE LEAVING THE TEMPLE WITH MME. DE SOUCY.—AFTER SILANIO.
(Carnavalet Museum.)



EXCHANGE OF FRENCH PRISONERS FOR MADAME ROYALE.
AFTER DUPLESSIS-BERTHAULT.
(Bibliothèque Nationale.)

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ignorance of the plans on her behalf that were being formed at Verona by her uncle Louis XVIII :

“ There is no one but you, my good Renète, to whom I can open my heart ; I am very unhappy ; there is but one person I should like to have with me, and I cannot have her. Pray to God for me, I am in a very unpleasant and embarrassing position. There is a rumour that I am to be married in a week’s time. Doubtless to my lover (?). But this cannot be so, or at least not for a long time. I shall see the French Ambassador to-day, and to-morrow I shall go on to Bâle.”

This letter is dated December 27th. The exchange took place on the following day in a little house that belonged to a merchant in Basle and stood at the gates of that town. The Prince de Gavre, one of the most brilliant of the Austrian courtiers, and Baron Degelmann, the Imperial Minister, awaited the princess with the whole suite that had been sent to meet her, which was sufficiently numerous to fill six carriages. A few moments later Madame Royale crossed the frontier, while Captain Méchin started on his journey back to Paris, bearing with him a document addressed to the Directory and signed by Degelmann. It contained these words : “ I the undersigned, in virtue of the orders of His Majesty the Emperor, declare that I have received from M. Bacher, the French Ambassador charged with this duty, Mme. la Princesse Marie-Thérèse-Charlotte, the daughter of His Majesty King Louis XVI.”

Before following Madame Royale to Vienna we

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shall do well to remind ourselves that she left this inscription on the walls of her prison: "My God, forgive those who put my kinsfolk to death."

In these words the noble-hearted girl showed her generous spirit, as plainly as her letters had already shown her mature reason and high principles. These qualities had been cultivated and developed in her, in the dark days of her imprisonment, at first by the Queen and Madame Élisabeth together, and when Marie-Antoinette was gone by Madame Élisabeth alone.

CHAPTER II

THE SCHEMES OF LOUIS XVIII

At this time, that is to say in 1795, Monsieur, Comte de Provence, was living in Verona, whither he had gone on leaving France in 1791, to recover from all his recent painful experiences. It was here that he learnt of the death of his nephew Louis XVII, and immediately proclaimed himself king under the name of Louis XVIII. In the absence of his scattered family ¹ his little Court was composed of a few nobles who clung to him faithfully in his exile: the Ducs de Villequier, de Fleury, de Guiche, de Grammont, and de la Vauguyon (the minister who conducted the King's political affairs); the Marquis de Jaucourt; the Comte de Cossé; the Baron de Flaschlanden; and finally the Comte d'Avaray, the King's right hand, who for several years had shared all Monsieur's cares and dangers, was his confidant in everything, and was already known as his favourite. Hardly had he heard of the death that placed the crown upon his head than he received from Paris the news, of which confirmation soon came from Vienna, that

¹ The Comte d'Artois was in Scotland, and his wife in Turin, where the new Queen was also living; his sons, the Duc d'Angoulême and Duc de Berry, were on the banks of the Rhine with the Prince de Condé and the Duc d'Enghien; and the Duc de Bourbon was in London. The Princes of Orléans were wandering hither and thither and were not yet reconciled with the King. Mesdames, Louis XV's daughters, had settled in Rome.

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Madame Royale's release was at hand and her position already greatly improved. This news was given to him by the Marquise, afterwards Duchesse, de Tourzel—the former governess of the Children of France—who had been imprisoned with her daughter during the Terror and released after Robespierre's fall; and also by Hue, who had long been in the Dauphin's service as first *valet de chambre*. Both Mme. de Tourzel and Hue had been authorised to visit Madame Royale, and offered to convey any messages that the King might wish to send her. The opportunity was as welcome as it was unexpected, and Louis XVIII eagerly took advantage of it. On the 8th July he sent to the Marquise de Tourzel, through his agents in Paris, a letter in cipher which was to be transmitted to Madame Royale after they had deciphered it. The Comte d'Avaray was the only member of the King's circle in Verona who knew the purport of it. It was he, indeed, who was chosen to despatch it.

“I am writing this letter on the chance of its reaching you, my dear niece, though I do not know if it will ever do so; but my affection for you refuses to be silenced at so heartrending a moment. Nothing can repair the dreadful losses we have suffered; but I trust you will let me temper their bitterness. Regard me, I implore you, as your father, and be very sure that I love you, and shall always love you, as tenderly as if you were my own daughter. If those who convey this letter to you can at the same time give you a safe opportunity of answering it,

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I shall be enchanted to hear that your heart accepts all that mine is offering. But in God's name do not be rash, and bear in mind that your safety is far more important than my satisfaction. Farewell, my dear niece, I love you and embrace you with all my heart."

The answer was not long in coming. It was received at Verona on the 18th September, being dated from the Temple on the 5th of the same month. Mme. de Tourzel, when forwarding it to the King through Hue, said that Madame Royale, who was always watched, "had found the greatest difficulty in writing it." She entreated His Majesty to burn these letters after reading them. "My own life, and perhaps Madame Royale's liberty, is at stake if they should discover that she has written. . . . I found her grown, and in good health, and full of fine feeling and dignity." Hue added: "Your Majesty's good and sensitive heart can guess, far better than I can describe, the touching nature of this delightful meeting. I will only say that Madame Royale, who has been told of all her losses, bears them with a degree of courage and strength worthy of her august descent."

As for the young princess, she had written these few lines in feverish haste :

"MY DEAR UNCLE,

"No one could be more touched than I am by the kindness you so graciously show towards a poor orphan, in wishing to adopt her as a daughter.

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The first happy moment that I have known for three years was when I received your assurance of good will. I love you as much as ever, and long for the day when I shall be able to tell you myself of my gratitude and affection. I am anxious to hear about your health, and to know everything that has happened to you during the three years that have passed since I had the happiness of seeing you. I hope that you are well. Every day I pray Heaven that you may be so, and also that your days may be prolonged, so that you may be happy, which perhaps cannot be the case for a long time. Farewell! I beg you to believe, whatever may happen, that I shall be attached to you until my last breath.

“MARIE-THÉRÈSE-CHARLOTTE.”

To the exiled monarch at Verona this letter came as a ray of light and warmth. His brother's daughter had always been his favourite. He often spoke of her. He loved to recall that, amid all the trials that darkened her youth, she had always won admiration by her courage in the face of danger and her resignation in misfortune, and most of all by the consideration and love she lavished on her relations in their hours of horror, as if with the aim of strengthening their endurance.

And it was this courageous girl who had used her first moment of freedom, her first opportunity of opening her heart, to express in these few eager words all her affection and devotion and submission to him, her uncle! He was deeply touched and comforted; and was forthwith seized with a desire to secure her

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companionship as soon as he could find a safer refuge than Italy, a desire so intense that four years of waiting did nothing to weaken it.

The letter that Madame Royale wrote from prison in answer to her uncle on the 5th September reached Verona, as I said, on the 18th of the same month. On that day the King and d'Avaray remained closeted together until a late hour in the evening, discussing the event that promised to cheer the exile's dismal solitude with the presence of this young princess, to whose innocence and charm the dignity of suffering had been added. At Basle she was to be met by the Austrian envoys, who were charged to receive her and escort her to Vienna. Therefore if the King—who could not himself intercept her on the way—were intending to communicate with her, there was not a minute to be lost. It was imperative that he should choose his messengers instantly, and that they should start upon their journey the moment that the date was fixed for Madame Royale's release.

The choice of messengers was neither a long nor a difficult matter.

“I choose you, my friend,” said the King to d'Avaray; “the Prince de Condé and you.”

The Prince de Condé was on the banks of the Rhine. D'Avaray was to convey the King's orders to him, and they would then decide between themselves as to the easiest point at which to intercept the princess on her journey from the frontier to Vienna. It was further arranged that d'Avaray should be the bearer of two letters from his master: the one, entirely filled with sentiment, being intended for

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Madame Royale, and the other addressed to Mme. de Tourzel, who would doubtless be allowed to accompany the traveller. The King depended on the former governess of the Children of France to impress upon his niece certain counsels that he thought necessary, in view of her visit to the Court of her cousin the Emperor of Austria.

These letters were written on the following day. The delays that postponed Madame Royale's journey destroyed their object, and no use could be made of them. But they deserve a place in this narrative none the less, because they show, not only the warm affection that Louis XVIII already felt for the future Duchesse d'Angoulême, but also the suspicions that were aroused in him by the eagerness of the Austrian government, immediately on the close of the Terror, to secure the person of Marie-Antoinette's daughter.

“At last, my dear niece,” he wrote to Madame Royale, “I can speak freely to you of my affection for you. It is a happiness for which I dared not hope, and which is all the more valuable to me on that account. If I had been in a position to follow the dictates of my heart I should not have written to you; I should have flown to meet you myself; but at least I am trying to obtain compensation through the persons I am sending to take my place. One of them is M. le prince de Condé, the glory of our name and the support of my crown; the other is the Comte d'Avaray, my liberator and friend. I hope, however, that I shall not be long deprived of the joy of seeing

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you, and hearing from your own mouth the words and wishes that must have been confided to your ear alone, and are to me as precious as they are sacred. But in the meantime, while I am waiting to enjoy this consolation, you can confide these secrets to M. le prince de Condé and M. d'Avaray: it will be the same as telling them to myself.

“It is my passionate desire to alleviate the sorrows that nothing can cure, and all I can do to this end is to offer you the care and love of a father, the love that has long been imprinted in my heart. Accept me as a father, I implore you, and look upon yourself as my daughter. I venture to say that after the sorrows we have had in common we owe this consolation to one another. There is no need for me to speak of the gratitude that you owe to the Emperor. You will certainly never forget that you owe your liberty to his generous affection, as I shall always remember that it is to him I owe it that I need no longer tremble for your fate.

“Farewell, my dear niece! Farewell, my dear daughter, if you will allow me to use so sweet a name. I love you and embrace you with all my heart.”

To Mme. de Tourzel, after congratulating her on her release from prison, and expressing his admiration and gratitude, he confessed that his mind was not altogether at ease in the thought of his niece being in the hands of the Emperor :

“I find it very difficult to believe in the entire disinterestedness of the Court of Vienna, and I cannot help suspecting that its apparent generosity hides

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ulterior views, and a definite plan to make me buy my niece's freedom very dearly some day. Moreover, after all that she suffered in France, it would probably not be difficult to inspire her with insurmountable aversion from her own country, which I desire, above all things, to be her own country always. It is only too likely that this may happen to her in Vienna. I am not explaining myself more fully here, because this letter will be given to you by M. d'Avaray. You know how much I owe him : you know that he is my friend and the confidant of all my thoughts. So you will feel that everything he says to you is the same as if I were saying it myself. I will only add that I count upon your efforts more than on anything else, to attain the end I desire. But I beg you at the same time, Madame, to be sure that nothing can increase my regard for you, which will endure as long as life itself."

The reasons for the anxiety that the King confided to Mme. de Tourzel naturally led him to use all his influence against his niece's transference to Vienna. As soon, therefore, as he learnt the Emperor's intentions he had hastened to beg that she might be confided to his own care. He meant to send her to Rome, to remain with his aunts, Madame Adélaïde and Madame Victoire, Louis XV's daughters, until the time when he could himself give her a home. But the first answers from the imperial Court made it plain that, however just his request might be, it would be deliberately ignored by means of some evasive subtlety, since the Emperor intended to keep

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the princess, and perhaps marry her to one of the archdukes his brothers. Indeed one of them was already named as her future husband : the youngest, the Archduke Charles,¹ a young man "of limited mind and deplorable health."

This was the subject discussed by the King and d'Avaray during the few days that they were awaiting news from Paris, while d'Avaray held himself ready to set out at any moment to carry out his master's orders. The King was resolved to let no one but himself arrange his niece's future, and especially to withhold his consent to her marriage with a foreign prince. It was these intimate conversations with the "confidant of his thoughts" that originated the idea of marrying the princess to the elder son of M. le Comte d'Artois, the Duc d'Angoulême, who had just entered upon his twentieth year.

In 1789 this prince had accompanied his father and mother to Turin. Under the eye of his grandfather, the King of Sardinia, he had finished the military education that had been begun in Paris by his governor, General the Comte de Sérent; and he now had a command in Condé's Army, in which his younger brother, the Duc de Berry, was also serving. Since Louis XVI's son was dead and Louis XVIII had no children, and since the age of the Comte d'Artois made it presumable that if he were to survive his brother he would not reign for long, the Duc d'Angoulême was regarded among the Bourbons as the future King

¹ The Archduke Charles, Leopold II's third son, who soon afterwards distinguished himself in the field of battle. In 1795 his age was twenty-four.

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of France. To give him for a wife the noble-hearted princess whom popular sympathy had already named the "Orphan of the Temple," would be to add a new jewel to the crown. For as much glamour is shed by undeserved misfortune as by illustrious ancestry. Madame Royale's sorrows, combined with her sex, her youth, and her innocence, had everywhere aroused a feeling of compassion and respect, the benefits of which, if her marriage to the heir to the throne were to become an accomplished fact, would no doubt be felt by the whole House of France. The marriage was therefore regarded by the King and d'Avaray as being dictated, not only by family reasons, but also by reasons of state.

As soon as they were convinced of this the King judged it necessary to write another letter to Mme. de Tourzel. The first letter, which she was to have received on leaving France, was not sufficiently explicit; but, since it had not been sent, all that was needed was to make the phrasing more precise, and to enlarge upon the motives that had dictated it. This, therefore, was what the King did in the second letter, which he hoped might reach her before she left Paris. To the letter he had already written he added, on the 29th September, in concert with d'Avaray, some more urgent expressions and a confidential statement of his plans.

"I am counting upon you to defeat any schemes that the Court of Vienna may have formed, and to remind my niece perpetually that, grateful as she ought to be to the Emperor, she is a Frenchwoman;

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that she is of my blood and has no father but myself; that she, like the rest of my family, ought to share my lot, whether happy or unhappy; and above all that she should form no ties, nor even enter into any engagement, without my knowledge and sanction. I will say more: I have been thinking of her future happiness, of that of my whole family, and of my own, and I can devise no more certain means of attaining these various ends than by marrying her to the Duc d'Angoulême, my nephew. I know it for a fact that when the King and Queen had no other child but her, they desired this marriage. After their boys were born, it is true, my nephew was no longer a suitable match for her, and they changed their views. But I am very sure that, if they had lived and had lost their boys, they would have reverted to their first intention. I am therefore merely carrying it out."

This is the first hint of the harmless trick to which Louis XVIII resorted, at d'Avaray's suggestion and in view of a possible refusal on the part of the princess, to win her consent to the desired marriage by presenting it as a plan conceived and arranged by her parents. After begging Mme. de Tourzel to explain his wishes to Madame Royale without delay, "though it is a delicate matter to discuss with a young girl," he added, lest his little ruse should be discovered: "Pray treat my letter as I treated yours; for though the dangers are not the same you can easily see that it would not be very agreeable for me if so confidential a letter were to become public."

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The letter never reached Mme. de Tourzel. I am in a position to make this statement with certainty, having found it, in its envelope, among the King's papers; where there is, moreover, the rough draft of another letter, expressed in almost the same terms and dated the 3rd January, 1796. By this time Madame Royale had been out of France for a week, and Mme. de Tourzel had been forbidden to accompany her. Of this, however, nothing was known at Verona. There they merely heard that a young woman, Mme. de Soucy—the Baronne de Mackau's daughter, fitted for the post by education and birth, and owning friends in the ministry—had been chosen by the Directory in concert with the Austrian Court, to be the princess's companion on the journey. This was no proof that Mme. de Tourzel was not to accompany her also.

It was d'Avaray who obtained this information. Having set out in November for Condé's camp, with a view to discussing with that prince the best means of approaching Madame Royale, he had returned to Verona without accomplishing his object. He had travelled no farther than Innsbrück, having been warned by the Austrian authorities that neither he, nor the Prince de Condé, nor any other Frenchman, would be allowed to see the royal traveller. After trying in vain to obtain some relaxation of these stern orders, and hearing that the date of Madame Royale's departure was not fixed, he had been reduced to confiding his indignation and regret, as well as the King's intentions, to a gentleman from Burgundy, a M. de Rancy, who was in the same inn as himself. M. de

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Rancy had quickly won his confidence by informing him that he was Mme. de Soucy's cousin, and offering to transmit to Madame Royale, through the lady in question, the letters that the King wished to send to his niece. At the same time d'Avaray had despatched to the agents in Paris a note which they only received after Madame Royale's release, and were therefore unable to use.

"Since it appears," he said in this letter, "that the plan of the exchange is not given up, but only postponed, it is important to inspire the young princess with the greatest dislike for Vienna, and to let her guess that there is an intention of marrying her to an archduke, which—over and above the unsuitability of the match—would give her an epileptic husband. It will be very easy to make her feel the comparative attraction of a truthful portrait of M. le Duc d'Angoulême, the husband intended for her by the King, with the crown in prospect. She could be made to feel that this young prince, whom the late King and Queen choose when they had no male heirs, and whom the King now chooses with a view to insuring her happiness, is the only match in Europe, even if his misfortunes should be of long duration, suitable for a princess of the blood of France, a princess who could take to any other husband no dowry save her troubles, or an excuse for fresh intrigues wherewith to torture her country anew.

"The princess will listen all the more willingly to these insinuations that she is full of dignity and pride, and very ill-disposed towards Austria and her Austrian aunts, whose authority she fears. It would

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therefore be easy, in the case of the exchange taking place, to make her demand vociferously to see the King, and to be taken to Rome to join her French aunts. She could even do this without interfering with the exact shade of affection and gratitude due to the Emperor, who is restoring her liberty. If she should pass within reach of M. le prince de Condé it would also be desirable for her to express a wish to see him."

Since, as I have already said, neither this note nor the letters to Mme. de Tourzel reached their destinations in time to be of use, there can be no manner of doubt that when Madame Royale left Paris no one had as yet been able to speak to her of Louis XVIII's intentions, because no one knew them. None the less Mme. de Tourzel declares in her Memoirs that she discussed them in the course of her visits to the Temple prison, and supported the King's views by revealing to the princess that they accorded with her parents' wishes. Of these wishes Marie-Antoinette herself—so Mme. de Tourzel asserts—had told her in confidence. Worthy of all honour though these records may be, they were written many years after the events they concern, and such is their improbability that they fail to inspire belief. They are, moreover, definitely contradicted by the King's letter of the 29th September, quoted above, in which Louis XVIII shows the true value of the deceased sovereigns' hypothetical wishes, confesses to the element of fiction that he proposes to add, and accurately describes the real nature of what Mme. de Tourzel calls "the very decided desire" of Louis XVI and

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Marie-Antoinette. As a matter of fact a week had passed since Madame Royale began her journey when her future marriage with her cousin, the Duc d'Angoulême, was first mentioned before her. This fact is established by the correspondence from which our information is derived. It is also noteworthy that she consented, without protest, to go to Vienna; that she did not ask to be taken to Rome; and that she expressed no desire to see the Prince de Condé; all of which sufficiently proves that neither the agents in Paris nor Mme. de Tourzel had been able to give her the instructions of the King, her uncle.

CHAPTER III

ON THE ROAD TO VIENNA

ON the 26th December the Emperor's envoy, the Prince de Gavre, who had come as far as the outskirts of Basle to meet the princess and escort her to Vienna, received her from the hands of the French authorities. On the 30th she arrived at Füssen in Tyrol, not far from Innsbrück, where she had twenty-four hours' rest. Here, as at the other halting-places on her journey, several of her fellow-countrymen came to pay their court to her. But she was not allowed to receive them. The same thing occurred at Innsbrück, where she met her cousin the Archduchess Elizabeth, who, to her secret surprise and irritation, alluded in the course of their conversation to the advantages she would derive from marrying the Archduke Charles. The door of her suite of rooms was vigilantly guarded by the Austrian police, and firmly closed against the French. Happily at Füssen she was allowed to see her great-uncle, the Elector of Trèves, and his sister Princess Cunegund. Finding that their affection could be relied upon, Madame Royale was able, for the first time since leaving Paris, to write a letter to the King, which Princess Cunegund undertook to send to Verona.

“SIRE,

“I am impatiently awaiting any orders that my King and uncle may be good enough to give me

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with regard to my future conduct. I am longing to be in your arms, and to be able to tell you how much I love you, and feel that my affection for you will never change. I am going to Vienna, where I shall show the Emperor all the gratitude I owe him for the service he has done me in giving me my liberty. But I assure my uncle that, whatever may happen, I shall never dispose of my future without your knowledge and consent; and you can count upon your niece, who, like her father, will always love the French and her own family.

“I ask my uncle’s forgiveness for the French who have gone astray, and entreat him to pardon them, and I bring with me, as an offering to him, the prayers and homage of every good Frenchman.

“This evening at Füssen I have seen my uncle the Elector of Trèves, and his sister Princess Cunegund. The latter, especially, having treated me with the greatest friendliness, I have begged her to be so kind as to send this letter to Your Majesty, since I mistrust every one about me. Mme. de Soucy begs me to offer her profound respect and homage to her King. She is here with me. I shall reach Vienna on the 3rd January, and shall there await my uncle’s orders. I beg him to rely upon my attachment.

“MARIE-THÉRÈSE-CHARLOTTE OF FRANCE.”

When the King received this act of submission, in which Madame Royale had been unable to allude to his projects, since she knew nothing of them, he was equally disappointed and surprised, being under the impression that they had been revealed to her. He

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was clever enough, however, to hide his feelings, and to pretend in his answer that he attributed the princess's silence to timidity.

“Your strength of mind delights me,” he wrote. “I do not misunderstand you; I see very well that your modesty, a most admirable quality, keeps you from expressing yourself openly on a very interesting matter, and I tell you frankly that I am going to send a copy of your letter to my brother and my nephew, who have long made me the confidant of their wishes and hopes in respect of you.¹ My brother will make no mistake, he will see your meaning plainly; but pray let me plead the cause of my nephew, who, being more bashful and less experienced than his father and I, will not, perhaps, see as clearly as we the engagement to which you pledge yourself in your letter. In answering this, therefore, I beg you to say something that I can show him, to prove that you will feel no repugnance in accepting the husband whom your father and mother chose for you, when he stood in nearly the same relation to them as he now stands in to me, and whom they would choose for you again to-day, if we were happy enough to have them in my position. Circumstances have greatly changed since that first choice was made; they were securing a throne for you: to-day it may be a throne or a cottage, but nothing between the two. The former is more brilliant, the other entails no degradation; and to a heart like yours the alternative is indifferent.

“I cannot persuade myself that the Emperor, who

¹ There is not a trace of them in their letters.

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cannot be ignorant of your parents' wishes, nor of the many reasons and elements of suitability that seem to have decreed in Heaven itself that you should marry the Duc d'Angoulême, can be intending to propose another marriage to you. He has not made the slightest overture to me in the matter. However, when I think of his repeated refusals to give you into my care; when I remember that M. le prince de Condé, if he had still been in the outskirts of Bâle, would not have been permitted to see you as you passed by, either in my name or in his own; and that M. d'Avaray, my friend, whom I sent to Innsbrück to assure you of my affection, and of my happiness in knowing you free and in safety, was forced to give up his hopes of presenting you with the letter I had entrusted to him, and also with his own respectful and devoted homage, since this sacrifice to prudence and necessity was the only way to avoid a public refusal, which would have entailed a scandalous scene; when I remember all these circumstances, I say, I cannot completely rid my mind of suspicion, and I think I owe you some advice in this matter.

“ If any proposition should be made to you merely in an indirect way, or through improper channels, it would be beneath you to take any apparent notice of them; but if a direct proposal should be made, this is the answer that I should wish you to give : *I was pledged to my cousin the Duc d'Angoulême by my own desire and in accordance with the wishes of the King my uncle, in whose hands I have deposited my promise.* This answer, you may be sure, will relieve you from any further proposal.

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“ I was moved to tears by your goodness of heart with regard to the erring people of France, and if I can find a way, I will let your feelings be known in France; I know nothing more likely to open the eyes of the most blind. The forgiveness that you beg me to give them is deeply graven on my heart; it is not for nothing that I am your father’s brother, and I think myself happy in resembling him in this respect. I thank you for the good wishes you bring me from the loyal French people; I can undertake to tell you with absolute assurance that you too have their prayers, and especially those of my own companions.”

The reader may perhaps be surprised by the last paragraph of this letter—the King’s answer to an entreaty that Madame Royale repeated more urgently a few days later. It is not an accurate expression of his opinion, it is true, and still less does it represent that of d’Avaray, who had many a time proclaimed his views with much fire. But it was above all things important to consider the young and sensitive heart that they wished to win: every satisfaction it desired must be yielded without parley. The King was as much persuaded that this course was necessary as he was desirous of marrying his niece to the Duc d’Angoulême, and at the moment he would willingly have sacrificed to this object the future policy of vengeance that d’Avaray declared would be demanded, on his restoration to the kingdom, by the interests of the crown.

The affectionate appeal addressed by Louis XVIII to Madame Royale, with the view of obtaining from

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her a definite statement of her intentions, left Verona on the 5th January 1796. The King and d'Avaray expected the happiest results from it. But the distance and difficulty of communication condemned them to a long time of waiting, which only increased the painful anxiety that devoured them. Again and again, in their perpetual discussions, they returned to the question; day after day they wondered whether the princess, by omitting to mention the Duc d'Angoulême, had intended to show that she was disinclined to marry him, or whether, on the contrary, she had resolved to fulfil her uncle's wishes, but was waiting to tell him so until she could find a sure hand to convey her letter.

M. de Rancy's arrival at Verona on the 12th, far from allaying their anxiety, did but increase it. He had contrived to see his cousin, Mme. de Soucy, as she passed through Innsbrück, although she was almost held a prisoner in Madame Royale's rooms; and he had given her the message that had been entrusted to him. He even brought a note from the princess. But, apart from the fact that this hastily written note said nothing of the essential point, Mme. de Soucy's words could not fail to increase the fears of the King and his friend.

If this valuable informant were to be believed, Madame Royale, although quite disposed to follow any instructions that her uncle wished to give her, was making no protest against the project of marrying her to the Archduke Charles, which was no longer a matter of doubt and had been made public. As soon as she was out of France this marriage had been

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mentioned to her, and was put before her as a certain means of securing a crown. "The princess," said Mme. de Soucy, "has a great deal of courage and high principle, with which she combines a quick intelligence and a feeling heart. But in France, by some means, she was given a bad impression of her uncles. She was allowed to read romances. Although there are great hopes that she may fill the rôle that has been chosen for her, there are also many obstacles to be avoided." These words, if they gave the King and d'Avaray no information with regard to the "vile intrigue at Vienna," at least confirmed their suspicions, which were only too fully justified by the recent proceedings of the Austrian Court.

Since the very beginning of the Emigration that Court had shown the most persistent dislike and ill will towards Louis XVI's brothers. In the campaign of 1792 it was Austria that objected to their taking command of the allied armies. They then asked for a declaration to the effect that those armies were operating in the name of the King of France, but the Austrian diplomatists contrived that the request should be refused. When, after Louis XVI's execution, the Comte de Provence proclaimed himself regent, Austria persuaded Europe not to recognise him in that capacity; and ever since Louis XVII's death she had been manœuvring to prevent the Powers from giving his successor the kingly title that was legitimately his. In short, whenever Louis XVIII had shown any intention of taking action Austria had intervened to paralyse his movements. At this very moment the road to the Rhine and Condé's army was

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closed to him, while he was held in bonds at Verona, in a state of humiliating and miserable idleness. This long series of malevolent actions was meaningless unless Austria were cherishing secret schemes and motives, and, to speak plainly, were intending to profit by the misfortunes of France to advance herself at that country's expense.

Louis XVIII was not alone in drawing this inference from Austria's attitude. The Prince de Condé—then living on intimate terms with the Austrian generals—the *émigrés* in Vienna, and those whom the echoes from that capital reached in London, Berlin, or Madrid, were all of the King's opinion. They were all equally convinced that the cabinet of Vienna wished to annex Alsace, and possibly even Lorraine and Franche-Comté, to the German Empire, and in the expectation of these coveted conquests had agreed with Prussia as to the portion of the spoils that should be conceded to that Power.

D'Avaray went still farther: he suspected the Emperor of wishing to marry his brother to Louis XVI's daughter, with the object of giving France a Hapsburg for a sovereign, who should reign in his wife's name. Was it not said in Verona that there was a faction in Paris whose dream it was to win the crown for the princess? Such were the conjectures that fed the irritation of the King and d'Avaray against the Austrian Court, "which had carried its effrontery to the point of proposing a marriage to Madame Royale without making the slightest overture to her uncle, because it was foreseen, doubtless, that he would never consent to it."

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But no amount of irritation and anger, nor even of protest, could ward off the danger that would result from this abominable scheme, if Madame Royale—whose cousin the Duc d'Angoulême was almost a stranger to her after six years of absence—should let herself be cajoled by her relations in Vienna, and if her other cousin the Archduke Charles should succeed in pleasing her. He had the advantage over his rival of being constantly with her, and already, at the age of twenty-four, had distinguished himself so brilliantly in the field that it was obvious his deeds of valour would soon make him a renowned general. There was reason to fear that the princess might be attracted by the splendour of his laurels. It was imperative, therefore, to take active measures without delay, to defeat the dark purposes of the Austrian Court.

It was at this juncture that d'Avaray, to whom it appeared absolutely necessary to provide the princess with an impenetrable armour against the base seductions that would doubtless be brought to bear upon her, bethought him of inclining her heart towards her cousin by persuading her that the prince had long loved her. He forthwith composed a complete romance, and, having won the King's approval, proceeded to sketch the chief scenes of his dramatic idyll, and to distribute the parts.

“Mgr. le duc d'Angoulême has long felt the tenderest sympathy for his cousin in her horrible imprisonment. The final delays in the negotiations for the exchange alarmed him more than ever for her fate, and developed his interest in her to the point of

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making him feel profoundly that there could be neither happiness nor peace for him until *his dear Thérèse* were out of France, however great the danger might be for his dearest wish. He is aware that certain persons have not been ashamed to speak to her of her marriage to the Archduke Charles, now, when she is hardly out of the hands of her assassins. He would be silent, he would not express a single wish, he would not allow the feeblest ray of hope to appear—founded though his hopes were upon the most sacred claims—if he did not know that Madame Thérèse, in her nobility and greatness of heart, would give him credit for his constancy, and also for his resolution in remaining at a post that was so far from her, but at the same time so honourable. He would entreat his father to let him approach the object of his affection, of whose renewed imprisonment there could be no doubt, in view of the way she was being treated and the care with which every Frenchman was being kept away from her.”

The next task was “to try to work up the Duc d’Angoulême’s feelings as much as possible, which would be no easy matter,” the young prince being of a naturally cold character and temperament. This would be the business of his father, Monsieur le comte d’Artois, and of His Majesty. It devolved upon them to write to him, to fire his heart, and to make him write answers that could be shown to his cousin, and would, without her knowing it, appeal to her pure and sensitive feelings.

“What is wanted is a touch of the romancer’s art,”

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says d'Avaray at the end of this memorandum. " I do not know whither my enterprise will lead me. But, if I should happen to be ruined by it, I need not reproach myself for leaving anything undone that I could possibly do, for the glory of my master, the confusion of the House of Austria, and the salvation of my country."

Without intending to neglect anything that was of practical use in d'Avaray's ingenious invention, the King, concluding that his niece had not received his previous letters, and would not now receive them, wrote her a new one :

" As soon as I saw that you had left France, my dear niece, I told you of my delight in knowing that you were at last safe from the assassin's knife. To-day I must speak to you on another subject, of which my truly paternal affection for you makes me think perpetually : namely your marriage. The husband I offer you is my nephew the Duc d'Angoulême. I know him well, I have studied his character carefully, and I am sure that he will make his wife happy. In other circumstances it might be thought that I was trying to dazzle you with the splendour of a crown, since naturally he will be my heir. But you know well enough that what I am asking you to share may be either a throne, or poverty and exile. You are too noble-hearted for me to be afraid of telling you these hard truths. I ought not to conceal from you that it is not only your happiness that concerns me, but also the happiness of my nephew—to whom I could not give a finer gift—and that of my whole

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family, as well as my own; for this marriage will assure the happiness of my old age. Farewell, my dear niece! How impatiently I shall await your answer! I love you and embrace you with all my heart."

This letter is dated the 17th January. On that same day the King was visited by Cléry, his late brother's faithful servant. At Wels, in Upper Austria, whither he came from Vienna to await Madame Royale, Cléry had the good fortune to meet her and talk to her. Having heard of the plans of her uncle the King from Mme. de Soucy, and of the Emperor's from the Archduchess Elizabeth, who met her at Innsbrück, she had been considering these contradictory suggestions for three days, and had made her choice in accordance with the wishes of her French relations. In her eagerness to tell her uncle of her decision she despatched Cléry to him at once, with the following admirable letter. The King and d'Avaray, as they read it, might well blush for having doubted her, and for having tried to influence her decision by so many entreaties, so many efforts of the imagination, so many paltry and romantic plots.

"SIRE,

"I shall soon reach Vienna, where I shall await Your Majesty's orders. But I must warn you that, greatly as I shall desire to have news of you, I fear I shall be unable to write to you often, because I shall certainly be closely watched. Already, during my journey, I have been prevented from seeing any

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Frenchmen, because the Emperor wishes to be the first to see me, and fears lest I should be told of his plans. I have long known them, and I can positively assure my uncle that I shall always remain faithfully attached to him, and also to the wishes of my father and mother with regard to my marriage, and that I shall reject all the Emperor's proposals for his brother. I will have nothing to do with them. My parents' wishes were opposed to them, and I aim at obeying my uncle's orders in everything. I long to be with you at Verona; but I shall do my utmost to report to you the Emperor's conversation with me.

“ *Mon oncle*, you have known me for a long time; but I hope you will never doubt me. My position is very difficult and delicate; but I have confidence in the God who has already helped me, and brought me out of so many dangers. He will never let me be false to the illustrious blood that flows in my veins. I would rather share the misfortunes of my relations, as long as misfortune is theirs, than be at the Court of a prince who is hostile to my family and my country. I have been well received in his dominions; but all this does not dazzle me. There are well-disposed people with me, but there are also some who are ill-disposed, for the Emperor has given me a household with the Prince de Gavre for Grand Master: he is much attached to his Emperor, and punctiliously carries out his orders against my seeing any one.

“ I have a favour to ask of my uncle: namely, to forgive the French and make peace. Yes, *mon oncle*, I—whose father, mother, and aunt they have put to death—entreat you on my knees to pardon them and

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make peace. It is for your own good. You can never be restored to your throne by force of arms, but only by gentle means; and for this reason I implore you to put an end to the wars that are devastating your unhappy kingdom. Alas! if the war were to last long you could only reign over the heaps of the dead. There is a great change in public opinion, but peace is necessary to the people, and when they know that they owe it to my uncle they will be altogether won, and will adore you. *Mon oncle*, your heart is so kind: forgive them and put an end to the war. Alas! if my good father were alive I am sure he would do so.

“I also implore you to publish another manifesto: the first had a very good effect. In Paris they are dying of hunger, and are also complaining of the government. In the provinces they refuse to have any more *assignats*; they detest everything that comes from Paris and boast openly of favouring the aristocrats. Public opinion has greatly changed; but the foreigners are hated, and with reason; and the people are still blind with regard to their King, whom they see in arms against his subjects.

“The members of the executive Directory are very ill-disposed; but M. Bénézech, Minister of the Interior, to whom I owe my release from the Temple, begged me to convey his homage to my uncle. This is really true; the man is ambitious, but he is an aristocrat at heart. He told me that he was an intimate friend of M. d’Avaray’s father.

“In short, my dear uncle, there is a marked change in public feeling. The people are sick of bloodshed

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and are dying of hunger, and you are too good-hearted to let Frenchmen die of hunger when it is in your power to give them life, and to make yourself beloved by giving peace to my unhappy country. It is in the name of Heaven, and of my parents' virtues and misfortunes, that I implore you to forgive the French and grant them peace.

“ I am sending Cléry to you : it cannot fail to give my uncle the greatest pleasure to see the person who remained with my father till his death. M. Hue is with me. I beg my uncle to let me know whether he have received this letter. I embrace him with all my heart, and pray a thousand times that I may see him again soon, and that he may be happy.”

If it be remembered that the girl who expressed these generous sentiments was barely seventeen years old, it will be recognised that Louis XVIII was not far wrong in feeling proud of the ties that bound him to her.

“ Our respect and admiration struck us dumb,” confesses d’Avaray. “ Our eyes were filled with tears. We read and re-read this masterpiece that the soul and heart of Madame Thérèse had produced. I blushed for shame at the thought of the petty intrigues with which I had been so seriously occupied on the previous day, and felt myself unworthy even to kneel at the feet of this adorable princess.”

As for the King, his feelings burst into expression in the answer he wrote to his niece two days later :

“ If my affection for you makes me suffer at seeing you in such a position, it makes me rejoice at the

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same time to think of the honour that this hard trial will win for you. A mere child, an orphan, with no support and no weapons but her sorrows, actually proposes to frustrate the wishes of a powerful sovereign and the intrigues of a cabinet renowned for its astuteness, and to prove, before the astonished eyes of Europe, the source of the blood that flows in her veins. I have given you advice—forgive me for it. I did not really know your heart ! ”

He then thanked her for her tacit consent to marry her cousin, and told her that the *émigrés*, fearing that she had but changed her prison, were vociferously demanding their Duchesse d'Angoulême, “ as they already call you.” He ended with this melancholy admission :

“ You ask me to grant peace to my unhappy subjects. Alas ! my dear niece, it is in my heart to do so, but not in my hands. . . . The infernal policy of Vienna keeps me shut up in Verona, far from the faithful subjects who are calling me, even as you are kept in Vienna, far from the kinsfolk whose arms are stretched out to you. . . . Ah ! my child, we need all our energy and all our firmness. If my heart were ever tempted to fail me, yours should be my model. But let us be content to walk in one another's foot-prints.”

By the 18th January Cléry was on his way back to Vienna, carrying with him bills to the value of five hundred louis. These funds, which could only be

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raised by making a large hole in the royal treasury, were destined for the princess, who refused them, however, the Emperor having provided for all her needs. It was by no means convenient for the King to send this money, but in the circumstances this mattered little. The important point was that his niece should be in a position to refuse pecuniary help from her Austrian relations.

Should those relations attempt to coerce her in any way Cléry was to advise her, in the King's name, to present herself one day at the imperial audience and declare publicly, in the presence of the foreign ministers, that deeply grateful as she was towards her liberator she none the less intended to follow no advice but that of her uncle. At the same time one of the King's most faithful servants, the Bailli de Crussol, was bidden to hold himself in readiness to start for Vienna. To him was to be entrusted the mission of taking possession of the princess and escorting her to Rome, where she was to live with her great-aunts until she could be married.

There was another matter that called for Louis XVIII's attention. Madame Royale and the Duc d'Angoulême, being blood-relations, could not possibly be married without the consent of the Sovereign Pontiff. It was necessary, then, to obtain a dispensation from him, and there was all the more need for haste that the Emperor of Austria might be expected at any moment to take a similar step on behalf of his brother, who was also Madame Royale's cousin. Wishing to be the first in the field Louis XVIII addressed himself to the King of Spain, who was a

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Bourbon. He begged him to authorise his ambassador to the Holy See, the Chevalier d'Azara, to take the negotiation in hand.

“The Emperor will also be obliged to apply to the Pope, since his brother, like my nephew, is my niece's cousin-german. It is very necessary, therefore, to be beforehand with him. It is no less important to observe secrecy in taking steps to obtain the dispensation itself; for, if the Emperor were to hear of it before the time when he must necessarily do so, he might be able to raise difficulties that it would be more prudent to avoid. The Pope might perhaps evade granting my request; he will not refuse Your Majesty's.”

Not content with asking for Charles IV's good offices, and never dreaming that that pusillanimous king, in his fear of displeasing the Emperor, would refuse to intervene, Louis wrote to the Chevalier d'Azara to inform him of what he was expected to do, and was more explicit with the ambassador than he had been with the King of Spain. He frankly gave his reasons for wishing that his niece should not marry the Archduke Charles, and for wishing, on the other hand, that she should marry the Duc d'Angoulême :

“Firstly, a touch of pride perhaps, but one that will seem to you not ill-placed, makes me regard the Emperor's second brother, a prince without a crown, and with no hope of having one, since his two elder brothers have children, as rather an unsuitable match

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for my niece, the only daughter of the late King my brother.

“Secondly, I do not wish to give my consent to a marriage that would doubtless be regarded in France as a means, a first step, towards the dismemberment of my kingdom, a thing for which my subjects, both good and bad, have a repugnance that is as natural as it is unconquerable.

“Thirdly, my niece’s prolonged misfortunes, and her courage and virtues, have made her a centre of interest, and have won her so much love from the French that it is very essential for me to take advantage of it, and make it my own by marrying her to my natural heir.”

It was well for the King that he had written directly to the ambassador. The Chevalier d’Azara had hardly received the letter when, without awaiting orders from his Court, he entered into negotiations with the Holy See, secured the dispensation without the least difficulty, and lost not a minute in informing the King of France of his success. Louis simultaneously received Charles IV’s confused and embarrassed letter, with its negative answer, and the Chevalier d’Azara’s news that the dispensation was granted.

It was at this moment that the Duc de Villequier, whom Louis XVIII on his accession had appointed first gentleman-of-the-bedchamber, arrived at Verona to take up his duties. He brought confirmation of the news that Madame Royale had reached Vienna on the 5th January. It was indeed true that she had escaped from the tyranny of her father’s murderers

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only to fall into the power of her country's enemies. The former had menaced her life; the latter intended to menace her honour, by trying to make her further their hostile designs upon France.

They had already parted her from Mme. de Soucy. Her travelling companion, in spite of all her protests, was bidden to return to France. She was replaced by Mme. de Chanclos, a Flemish subject of the Emperor, whose first wife she had brought up. It was therefore to be presumed that she was wholly devoted to the imperial family. Hue and Cléry, although permitted to remain in Vienna if such were their wish, were only admitted to the princess's presence as a favour. Even the Bishop of Nancy, La Fare, who represented the King of France in Vienna, was unable to communicate with Madame Royale. He was made to feel that he no longer pleased the Court. When his master entrusted him with a letter for the princess his request for an audience was refused: he was obliged to place the letter in the hands of the Emperor, who promised that it should reach its rightful owner. It was evident that a new period of imprisonment was beginning for Madame Royale, and that by maintaining the system employed during her journey, and cutting her off from everything French, the Court of Vienna intended to make her more susceptible to the measures designed to "Austrianise" her. Whatever her resolutions might be, would not the craft of those about her win the day?

The emotional d'Avaray was roused to frenzy by the melancholy prospect. His patriotism caught fire. In the excitement of his grief and rage the song of the

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Marseillaise rose to his lips: *Allons, enfants de la patrie!* He evoked the day when "the whole French nation, gathered round the throne," should sing: *Le jour de gloire est arrivé!* "O Genius of France! Watch over this precious child, this adored princess, daughter of so many kings, whom thou hast preserved to give birth to the glorious race destined to rule over the races of the future."

But his composure was soon restored. Knowing that the Comte de Saint-Priest was expected in Vienna he wrote to interest him in "the thing," and persuade him to lend his aid in the thwarting of the Austrian Court. He told him that the dispensation was secured, and that everything possible must be done to hasten "a marriage that at any other time would be a scene of the greatest magnificence, but to-day can only be an exhibition of sentiment, tears, pride, and poverty: a ceremony that once would have attracted every eye and now will touch every heart." To hasten this ceremony it was above all things needful that the princess should be given into her uncle's hands without any dissatisfaction or opposition on the part of the Emperor, who must be persuaded to show no anger on receiving the King's announcement of the marriage. In the letter containing this announcement it would be pointed out that the ceremony must take place wherever Louis XVIII should be living at the time. If the Emperor were obdurate the King was to be promptly informed of the fact, "in order that he might devise means to deliver his brother's daughter from the hands into which she has fallen."

CHAPTER IV

MADAME ROYALE IN VIENNA

MADAME ROYALE arrived in Vienna on the 3rd January. She found everything prepared for her reception. The rooms of the late Emperor Leopold, the finest in the palace, had been assigned to her and furnished with great magnificence. When Louis XVIII heard of these attentions and preparations the anxiety he already felt with regard to the imperial designs were greatly increased. He was alarmed by Francis II's decision to pay all the princess's expenses, and give her a household on the same scale as those of the archduchesses. He suspected that the Austrian Emperor wished to win the princess's entire confidence by all these acts of kindness and deference, his ultimate aim being to marry her to the Archduke Charles.

These suspicions, apparently, were not without foundation, and though it is true that the Emperor soon afterwards declared that such an idea had never entered his mind, there can be no doubt that he did entertain it for a time, and only gave it up when he learnt his young cousin's definite intentions.

One fact that makes it impossible to be blind to the existence of this scheme is that Madame Royale, during the first weeks of her life in Vienna, was to a certain extent treated as a prisoner. When she first entered the Emperor's territory all the French who

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had gone to meet her and offer their homage were, as we have seen, relentlessly refused access to her. Louis XVIII's envoys, the Prince de Condé himself and the Comte d' Avaray, had been warned that they would not be admitted to her presence. In the same way, during her first weeks in Vienna, she was prevented from seeing the French. It was with the greatest difficulty that she obtained leave to receive Cléry, who had so faithfully served the royal family in the Temple; and their interview took place in the presence of witnesses.

In the previous month of July Louis XVIII had accredited the Comte de la Fare, Bishop of Nancy, as his representative at the imperial Court. The bishop was a prelate of the highest merit, a man of the old *régime*, and was passionately devoted to the royal family of France as well as to all the political and religious ideas that the Revolution had aimed at destroying. He was an *émigré* of several years' standing, and, having been honoured with the King's confidence and entrusted by him with various messages for the princess, he had every right to be admitted to her presence. But at first every step he took to that end was in vain. On the 29th January he wrote to the Baron de Flaschlanden, one of Louis XVIII's secretaries :

“ Madame is always invisible to everyone, except to a few members of the family. My attempts to secure the honour of seeing her, and presenting her with the honage of all the French refugees, have been in vain. Mme. la princesse de Lorraine has been

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no less unfortunate. Mme. la duchesse de Grammont, in spite of all her special claims to that favour, has been refused admittance. There is a fixed determination to keep our interesting princess sequestered in this way until further orders. The reason given is the necessity to test her and learn to know her, and initiate her into the usages of the Court and the correct conversations to carry on in audiences, before she appears in public.

“All these precautions, which may be very necessary for many other princesses of her age, do not seem to be so for her. She combines dignified self-confidence with easy, courteous, and gracious speech; everything that she says is marked by perfect propriety, tact that rarely fails her, correctness of judgment, and profound thoughtfulness. The part she has to play here is a difficult one, however, and may become more so. Hitherto, according to the reports I have heard, her behaviour, from the point of view of policy, has not once failed in discretion or prudence.”

When Madame Royale was sequestered in this way she was parted from Mme. de Soucy and Hue, who, though they had come from France with her, were lodged in an hotel from the very day of their arrival. She had even reason to fear that they would be sent away. Cléry, who had come to her from her uncle, was in danger of the same fate. As far as Mme. Soucy was concerned the princess was prepared to be resigned; she was even anxious, indeed, that that lady should leave her, having never cared for her society. This plainly appears in the note

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she wrote to her on the 30th January: "Madame, I am writing to beg you very earnestly to go away from here without any further delays. If you cannot go to-day, let it at all events be to-morrow, after hearing Mass. It is time the matter should end. I wish you a pleasant journey."

The recipient of this note accordingly left Vienna on the following day, after receiving a gift of five hundred ducats from the imperial treasury, and the promise of a further sum of a thousand on reaching Basle. Her travelling expenses to that town were to be paid by the Emperor.

But though Madame Royale was resigned to Mme. de Soucy's departure she was by no means resigned to losing Cléry and Hue, whose allegiance to her was guaranteed by the devotion they had lavished on her parents. At her request they were permitted to live within the Emperor's domains until further orders, and provided with a pension.

Although Madame Royale was prevented in this way from seeing her compatriots she did not allow herself to be influenced by her surroundings. La Fare, though he had not been admitted to her presence, had obtained reports of her actions and words, and his information in this respect enabled him to reassure Louis XVIII.

On the 26th January he did so in these terms:

"Madame has hitherto been all that she should be: *a Frenchwoman, a subject, and a Bourbon*. I am sure that in each of these three capacities she has expressed herself in a way calculated to give the

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greatest satisfaction to the King and to all true Frenchmen. She makes open profession of her submission and obedience to the King, her genuine attachment to all her family, and her predilection for the French nation. Everything that she says or does shows a fine character, and a mind that is at the same time shrewd, quick, and amiably disposed. She chose exactly the right moment to bring forward the project of her marriage to His Royal Highness Monseigneur le duc d'Angoulême, and to declare that she would never marry without the consent of the King her uncle.

“Religious and moral principles are deeply engraved on her heart, and unless a complete change should take place in her there is no ambition nor personal interest that could overcome them. Her feelings were greatly outraged by a certain suggestion that was made to her at Innsbrück by Her Royal Highness Madame Elizabeth. I know that she has spoken of it since she came to Vienna, and always with indignation. This suggestion served not a little to forewarn her and put her on her guard. This overture on the part of the archduchess was concerned with a marriage with His Royal Highness Monseigneur the Archduke Charles, and the prospect of securing the crown of France.

“The Court has disavowed all thought of such a thing, and treated it as an extravagant idea, but at the same time was quite rightly much annoyed that the subject had been mentioned. Either as a consequence of this incident, a rumour of which may have transpired in Vienna, or merely owing to the

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natural mania for making a match between a young princess and a young prince whom the public have under their eyes, there was at first a great deal of talk about this marriage; but the idea was soon dropped and there is little heard of it now."

It plainly appears in this letter that if the Emperor contemplated the possibility of this marriage when the princess was first released from the Temple prison, he had quickly renounced the idea. Baron Thugut commissioned La Fare to assure the King that there had never been any question of it.

The day before the above letter was written was the third anniversary of the execution of King Louis XVI, and La Fare was able to add: "Madame had a Mass for the Dead offered in her presence at seven o'clock in the morning, and she herself communicated. It was four years since the last time she was able to approach the Holy Table. I was in the chapel incognito, not very far from the princess, and was able to add my prayers and tears to hers."

Many days were still to pass before he was admitted to her presence and allowed to talk with her. This happiness was only granted to him on the following 6th March.

At this time a change took place in Madame Royale's surroundings. After the departure of Mme. de Soucy the princess had been provided with a *chaperone* and director of her household in the person of the Comtesse de Chanclos, a worthy middle-aged lady of French birth, the widow of a French noble who had settled in the Austrian Netherlands. Joseph II had summoned

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her to the Court, where she became Grand Mistress to the first wife of that Emperor's son—now reigning under the name of Francis II with a princess of Naples for his second wife. In the exercise of her duties Mme. de Chanclos had won general affection and esteem, and she was treated with the greatest consideration at the Court, where she had remained as Grand Mistress to the reigning Emperor's daughter. She had with her two nieces, one aged twenty and the other eighteen, who both possessed every charm of mind and body. The attractions of these girls and their aunt's kindness soon won Madame Royale's heart: she confided in them completely and never had cause to regret it. She was all the happier in their society that she often met her cousins the archduchesses, the Emperor's sisters, who treated her with the greatest kindness and attention, especially the eldest of them, the Archduchess Marie-Anne. Her saintliness and beautiful character gave her friendship and affection for the princess a touch of motherliness. It was to her that the Bishop of Nancy owed the permission to visit the Orphan of the Temple at last, on the 6th March. He thanked her on the following day:

“MADAME,

“Before I do anything else I must renew my thanks to your Royal Highness for the happiness you obtained for me yesterday. I have grown accustomed since my emigration to deriving all my happiness from you. On thinking it over I remember a quantity of things I should have liked to say, and ought to have said, to Madame Royale. But I was

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inwardly agitated by so many thoughts that my ideas came out in utter disorder, and my mind refused to obey the dictates of my heart. However, my feelings were deeply moved: I was greatly touched by all the kindness that Madame Royale showed me, and I took careful note of every expression of her profound interest in the royal cause and in the *émigrés* of every class. It will give the sweetest consolation to many a sad heart."

A few days later he sent Louis XVIII an account of the audience that had been granted him:

"Last Sunday Madame Thérèse appeared in public for the first time, at a court that their Imperial Majesties held on purpose for her. Everyone who could possibly attend, whether Austrian or foreign, was eager to appear on the occasion. Madame won all the success that she deserves on so many grounds, and her praises were on every tongue. She showed marked pleasure on seeing the Frenchmen who were present, and was evidently moved very deeply by the reception that the Austrian nobility gave her. In the evening, to satisfy the demands of the public, she was obliged to go to the play, which was attended by some of the Imperial family.

"It had been decided that the Frenchmen who attended the Court should be led up and presented to Madame by the Neapolitan ambassador. To this circumstance I owed the honour of a special audience, and between three and four o'clock on the same day I was admitted to pay my court to Madame. The princess's conversation perfectly corresponded with



MADAME ROYALE.—FROM A PORTRAIT
ENGRAVED BY DE MEHEL WHEN THE PRINCESS PASSED
THROUGH BASLE, DECEMBER 26, 1795.
(*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)



MADAME ROYALE.
FROM A PORTRAIT GIVEN TO THE DUCHESSE DE LORGES
AT MITTAU, IN 1798.
(*Collection of the Duc de Blacas.*)

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the opinion I had formed of her. Verona, Edinburgh, Rome, and Turin were the first subjects she chose, after which she spoke of the various classes of French *émigrés* and the individuals she happened to know personally. His Majesty would have been touched by the interest and feeling with which Madame Thérèse questioned me on every matter that concerned him. . . . The audience that I was granted lasted for nearly an hour, and I was replaced by Mme. la duchesse de Grammont. During the week Madame received the ambassadors and foreign ministers who had asked leave to pay their court to her. To-morrow she will receive these ministers' wives. We have not heard as yet whether the princess will give regular audiences."

Not content with reporting these details, which he knows will delight the King, La Fare continues on the 24th March :

"I presume it will be agreeable to Your Majesty that I should seize a safe opportunity that has arisen, to repeat that you can securely count upon Madame's firmness of character, and on her determination to be absolutely faithful and submissive to her King's will, without failing in anything that her circumstances may demand of her. I have as yet had only one audience of Madame; but I was too intent on discovering the princess's real sentiments to miss the chance of convincing myself, without the possibility of doubt, of the facts of which I am so happy to assure Your Majesty to-day. Those sentiments are all that they ought to be. Madame's strength of

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mind enables her to repress her griefs, and does not allow them, in public, to affect her amiability nor the natural charms of her mind. Her success is unvarying, therefore, with all who come near her, of whatever age or rank they may be. There is only one thing that could daunt Madame's courage: the idea of anyone attempting to poison or influence Your Majesty's mind against her. The expression of the King's fatherly affection, in his habitual correspondence with the princess, will be all that is needed to encourage her, and reassure her charming delicacy of feeling. I leave it to the King's own discretion to judge whether it would not be best that Madame should be left in ignorance of his having received any hints in this matter."

The praises that La Fare lavished on the young princess were not exaggerated. Every one who approached her echoed them: in her conversation and her correspondence alike she did her utmost to deserve them. Whether she were receiving La Fare or the Comte de Saint-Priest—who stopped at Vienna on his way from Stockholm to Louis XVIII—or the Marquis de Rivière, or any other Frenchman or foreigner, she showed a combination of quick-wittedness and reserve, a desire for instruction, and above all a fixed determination to remain a Frenchwoman, that won the admiration of all who saw her. The reader has already seen these characteristics, and will see them again, appearing in the letters she wrote to her uncle, and to the princes and princesses of her family. We will give some examples.

When the Prince de Condé was prevented from meet-

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ing her during her journey from Paris to Vienna, he had written her a letter from his headquarters, dated the 6th January :

“MADAME,

“The position in which I found myself last November with the French nobility, who for the past five years have been constantly under arms in defence of their King, under the orders and owing to the kindness of His Imperial Majesty, made me hope for a time that I should be fortunate enough to pay my court to Madame on her leaving France. It would have made me very happy to fulfil this duty, and to lay at her feet the respect and sympathy that her sorrows, her charms, and her virtues inspire in every good Frenchman, and more especially in those who, like myself, have the honour to be bound to her by the ties of blood. But certain unfortunate circumstances, and obstacles that it was not in my power to overcome, deprived me of a moment of consolation that would have been very precious to me. Some of the gentlemen in my army were more fortunate than I, and are in a state of rapture at having been happy enough to see Madame. The account they gave me of her touching kindness made me shed tears of emotion, and admiration, and joy that Madame was at last in safety. I am filled with gratitude for her kindness in remembering me, and being good enough to ask for news of me and my children, who join with me in sending Madame their humblest and most sincere thanks. My earnest desire that she should see nothing now but such things as may console

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her, makes it incumbent upon me to restrain myself from expressing all that my feelings prompt me to say. I will confine myself, therefore, to begging Madame graciously to receive the homage of the most sincere and respectful attachment that the heart of a Bourbon can feel for her."

To this letter Madame answered on the 20th January :

" MONSIEUR MON COUSIN,

"I was extremely touched and flattered by your letter; it would have given me great pleasure to see a kinsman who is so gloriously upholding the honourable name of Bourbon, a name that will be handed down by history to all time. Your love for your God and your King wins you universal admiration, and certainly I shall not be the last to do you justice. It is true that I had the pleasure of seeing some of the gentlemen in your army : it was a pleasure to me because I shall always be pleased to see Frenchmen so devoted to their duty. I beg you to say, from me, to all the brave French nobles who are with you, that I feel the greatest friendship, gratitude, and admiration for them all, and that subjects so faithful and devoted to their King can always count upon my attachment ; the name of a Frenchman is always dear to me, and still more so when it is borne so worthily. As for you, *Monsieur mon cousin*, who have the good fortune to command them, I admire you and greatly envy your position, especially when it is filled so worthily as it is by you.

"I hope that MM. les ducs de Bourbon and

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d'Enghien are well; I know that they are following in their father's glorious footsteps. I was told that the Princess Louise was in Piedmont. She must be sorely grieved to be so long parted from her revered father. There is no need for you to tell me of your attachment to my family, everything you have done proves it sufficiently; but I beg you to rely upon the friendship and gratitude of—

“Your affectionate cousin,
“MARIE-THÉRÈSE-CHARLOTTE OF FRANCE.”

About the same time Madame Royale received a charming letter from her cousin the Duc de Berry :¹

“MY VERY DEAR COUSIN,

“I cannot express to you all the joy that I felt on hearing that you were at last out of the power of the monsters who are enslaving France, and that my many ardent prayers for your liberty were fulfilled. My satisfaction would have been complete if I could have had the happiness of expressing it to you myself; I was very envious of the *émigrés* who were fortunate enough to see you as you passed by on your journey; it was not in my power to do so myself. I sent one of the officers of my household, the Comte de Nantouillet, to see the Prince of Gavre at Bâle and tell him of my intense desire to obtain this pleasure; but reasons into which

¹ This letter and Madame Royale's answer are to be found in the *Archives of Vienna*. They are merely copies, taken from the dossiers of the Austrian *Cabinet Noir*. M. le Marquis de Pimodan, who discovered them, reproduced them, with several others quoted here, in an account of the princess's betrothal.

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I am not able to enter made me recognise the impossibility of it. You must not doubt, my very dear cousin, that my regret was extreme; it was softened by the reports brought by some gentlemen of our army, who assured me you were kind enough to show an interest in me and all my family, and to ask for news of us. I shall not leave my father [the Comte d'Artois] and brother [the Duc d'Angoulême] in ignorance of this proof of your remembrance and affection: they will share my lively sense of gratitude, and will be jealous of my pleasure in being the first to express it to you."

Madame Royale received this letter on the 21st January, and answered it on the following day:

"MY DEAR COUSIN,

"I was delighted to receive your letter and to have news of you. Your letter is charming, but I implore you not to treat me with so much respect, for I do not deserve it, being only your very dear cousin. I implore you to write to me often and quite unceremoniously, and pray give me some news of your father and d'Angoulême; I hope they are well; as for you, cousin, you must have grown a great deal since we last saw each other, and what a long time that is! I was touched by your having asked to see me, and it would have given me great pleasure to see you; but since that cannot be, please write to me often, and give me news of my relations and yours. Every one sings your praises; you are much beloved by the French *émigrés* and even by the foreigners; I have heard a great many pleasant

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things said about you. The Emperor told me a few days ago that my cousin Angoulême was to return to Condé's army; tell me if that is true, and where Monsieur [the Comte d'Artois] is now, so that I may write to him. If Angoulême should return to Condé's army beg him from me to write to me; he must remember our parents' wishes with regard to him and me; I shall never forget them, and I should like them to be fulfilled as soon as possible. I have written this badly; but I have bad ink and bad pens. Good-bye, my dear cousin, I love you dearly and wish for your happiness and for that of my whole family; count on the affection of your truly attached cousin."

But the pleasant letters that she answered in this friendly way were not the only greetings received by the princess during her first weeks in Vienna. There were also two from her uncle the King, dated from Verona :

Verona,
"25th January, 1796.

"It has given me great pleasure, my dear niece, to receive news of you directly from yourself. Not that I had not already received some through other channels; my aunt, Princess Cunegund, was kind enough, as I told you, to give me the first, after seeing you at Füssen; and others, who saw you at Innsbrück and at a place that was—I think—called Wels, also brought me news. Indeed, what I heard through these last was more satisfactory as regards your health than the news my aunt sent me; but I was none the less impatient to hear that you had arrived

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and were in good health. May God always keep you so ! This is my most earnest desire ; you may remember the wish I breathed for you, when I saw you showing your filial piety so touchingly on that dreadful 18th April, 1791. I renew it every moment, and I pray Providence to make me able to contribute towards its accomplishment. If our sorrows have increased the affection you have always shown me, how much have they not deepened my love for you ! And it would be made still stronger, if it were possible, by what you say of the distance that separates us. It will always seem too great to me ; but it is a profound consolation to me to think that I need no longer be afraid for your life. You ask for news of me. My health is good ; a little gout now and then does not prevent me from using my legs, nor from being able to take all sorts of exercise, in the way you remember of old. I do not think I am any fatter ; troubles do not keep a strong constitution from holding its own, but they do not let one grow fat. My brother, from whom I have been parted for more than two years by circumstances arising from this duty of ours, is at this moment in Edinburgh. He has had many more fatiguing experiences than I, since our separation ; but he is well. His elder son [the Duc d'Angoulême] is with him. When they wrote their last letters to me they had not heard of your release, and the delays connected with it were giving them the greatest anxiety ; the younger son [the Duc de Berry] was more fortunate, his fears being relieved even before mine. He is with Condé's army.

“I have a favour to ask you : that when you are

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writing to me you will forget this title of King, which grieves me as much as you; I am your uncle, your friend, your second father, and those are the names that I wish you to give me."

"Verona,

"1st February.

"I confess to you, my dear niece, that it gave me a heartache to see the date of your letter [21st January]; it is one of those horrible times of which the wounds are never healed, and of which no one knows the full horror more than I. Your intention on that day, in fulfilling the most sublime duty of our religion, was unnecessary, I venture to hope; the depths of God's justice are impenetrable, but it is impossible not to hope that so many virtues and sufferings, and so much resignation, must have instantly opened the gates of the heavenly kingdom to your unhappy father, and I cannot but believe that his intercession contributed much to your release. It is terrible to think that one must congratulate you on having been able to approach the Holy Table; but, the circumstances being what they are, I assure you that I sincerely share the consolation you received. I thank you for your portrait; my heart would have recognised it in any case; but I found the features I remembered, and since it was your wish to give me pleasure I assure you that your intention has been quite fulfilled. I could make but a poor attempt to tell you all I felt when I saw it; all that I can say is that I was taken back to the 19th June 1791, the last day that I had the happiness of clasping you in my arms—arms that were already like those of a

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father—and forgetting for a moment all the troubles that were yet to come.

“I am very glad that M. Hue is remaining with you, and that Cléry is going to join you; if that could not have been arranged I should have taken them both into my service; it would have been both a duty and a pleasure; but it is only right that you should have the preference; it is the reward that is due to them.

“The moment I knew that the Emperor had consented to the arrangements necessary for your release I wrote to thank him, but he gave me to understand that he did not wish me to write to him myself and for this reason I have not done so again. But I am not the less touched by what he said to you with regard to me personally, and I beg you to thank him for it. The account you give me of your rooms, your conversations, and the people round you, is a great pleasure to me; I think Mme. de Chanclos and her nieces are very fortunate.”¹

It was about the time when Madame Royale was receiving these letters from her uncle that she wrote, without waiting to hear from them, to her great-aunts, Mesdames Adelaïde and Victoire, then in Rome :

“ . . . I am taking advantage of a leisure moment to assure you that my respect and affection for you have never changed, that I often think of you, and hope that you have not forgotten your unfortunate great-niece : we must not think of the past any more, it is too dreadful. I hope, my dear aunts, that your health is good. It is certain that you must be very

¹ *Archives of Vienna.*

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learned in Italian, and I, in spite of all the time that has passed since I thought of it, have not forgotten it. . . . It would give me great pleasure, *mes tantes*, to be with you in Rome; but I am very quiet here, which pleases me much. . . . ”

On the 25th of the same month Madame Royale continued :

“ I have at last received news of you both, which gave me great pleasure. I hope that your health is good; yesterday I saw some one who told me that when he saw you last you were both well; but this news is a little old, as it dates from two years ago. My informant was M. Albani : he is just setting out to return to Milan, and thence to Rome; he wished to see me so that he could give you news of me; he told me that he often saw you in Rome. I should like very much to be in his place; but I do not at all despair of seeing you this year. The Emperor overwhelms me with kindness, but he knows that I am longing to see my French relations again, and I mean after Easter to ask his leave to go to you; I am sure of obtaining it. So, my dear aunts, I hope to see you at the end of May. On my way to you I shall go and see my uncle at Verona, and from thence I shall go at once to you. That is the whole extent of my projects; but as you know, man proposes and God disposes; however, I hope that my plan will be carried out; pray do not speak of it, because there is no necessity that any one should know of it before the time.” ¹

¹ *Archives of Vienna.*

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To avoid reverting to the subject we may as well say here that the journey in question never took place, although Louis XVIII eagerly gave it his approval. Not only did Madame Royale become less bent upon it as she grew more at home at the Court of Vienna, but she was forced to give it up on other grounds. Her uncle, having been expelled from Verona by the Venetian government, was condemned to wander from place to place, and could not possibly receive her.

CHAPTER V

THE JOYS AND SORROWS OF EXILE

UNTIL the 3rd March the relations between Vienna and Verona were strained to the utmost, Louis XVIII being more and more convinced that the Emperor Francis intended to retain Madame Royale at his Court, and would refuse to give her up. But on that day his fears were suddenly dispelled. The post brought him from his niece three letters written at different times, which were all of a nature to put his mind at rest. The earliest was dated the 30th January, and contained a formal and definite pledge.

“MON ONCLE,

“I am extremely touched by your goodness in thinking of my marriage. You have chosen the Duc d’Angoulême to be my husband; I accept him with all my heart, and I prefer this marriage to any other, even to the imperial crown if it were offered to me. The splendour of a throne does not dazzle me, and I would rather have a clear conscience, and lead a quiet and retired life in the bosom of my family, than own all the treasures in the world. I therefore joyously accept my cousin d’Angoulême; you could not have made a choice that would please me more; I greatly wish that this marriage might soon take place.”

“Many things have happened since my last letter,” says Madame Royale in another letter.

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“Mme. de Soucy, before leaving Vienna, absolutely insisted on seeing the Emperor in private. She told His Imperial Majesty that my parents had wished to marry me to my cousin Angoulême. The Emperor answered that it was not a secret; that every one knew it and thought it very natural; that personally he much approved of the idea and thought it an excellent one; but that he did not think the time had come for the marriage, and that it would be better to await the course of events. If I wished it to take place at once, however, the matter lay in my own hands.”

In repeating these details to her uncle, Madame Royale does not conceal her surprise and displeasure that the initiative should have been taken in this way by Mme. de Soucy, whom no one had commissioned to speak to the Emperor. She blames “this lady’s talkativeness, and the importance she wished to assume.” She protests, too, against a shameful rumour that was current in Vienna, to the effect that a party in France favoured her claims, and that she herself aspired to the throne.

“What an insult, and what an extravagant idea! All through the most terrible times I was faithful to my relations and my sovereigns, and I shall be attached to them till death. Nothing is farther from my thoughts than to desire the throne from which my father was driven. I shall always be very much attached and very faithful to you, *mon oncle*. But attempts are being made to create mischief between us. I hope that they will never

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be successful. . . . I do nothing but love my uncle, give to the King all that I owe him, and feel grateful to the Emperor too, from the bottom of my heart, for my liberty and for the way he treats me. There is not a word of truth in all that has been said. Everything is known, everything is clear. The Emperor knows of my parents' wishes and approves of them heartily. He has never had any views opposed to yours. He approves of everything. But he thinks the time has not yet come."

Madame Royale's earnest disavowal of the ambitious designs falsely attributed to her led the King and d'Avaray to suspect the Austrian cabinet of duplicity. Their own astuteness and Madame Royale's loyalty having frustrated its plans, it was now pretending that those plans had never been formed, though it had previously tried to further them by undermining Madame Royale's sense of duty towards her French relations. The scheme had now apparently been relinquished. None the less it was wiser to guard against the ruses so common among the Emperor's ministers, and to regard with suspicion the anxiety with which that sovereign tried to persuade his cousin that her marriage to the Duc d'Angoulême must be delayed. Was it not a pretext, perhaps, for keeping her in Vienna, and persuading her eventually to contract another marriage? Fears of this nature can be detected in d'Avaray's notes, but they do not appear in the King's answer to his niece :

" I regard you as an angel raised up by God to

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temper the sorrows with which His Providence has permitted us to be overwhelmed, and I am sure that this will be the effect of your marriage to my nephew, who for his part, I will undertake to say, deserves the happiness in store for him. The approval of the Emperor pleases me, but does not surprise me. That monarch is too wise to disapprove of so natural a union, and you have seen how little faith I placed in the calumnies that were invented, doubtless, by our false-hearted enemies. As for the date of the marriage, I am every moment expecting to receive news that will enable me to give definite instructions to my nephew."

It is plain that the King's original anger against the Emperor is now allayed. But Madame Royale knows nothing of this as yet: she believes him to be still annoyed. Her anxiety to pacify him leads her to give him fresh details of a nature to please him, in confirmation of the facts she has already briefly reported. When forced to depend upon the post she dares not explain herself clearly, but on the 12th March she is able to write to him through a safer channel, and she throws off all reserve:

"I entreat you to regard everything I am going to say as the truth, and as an act of justice that I owe to the Emperor. None the less you well know that I prefer you and all my French relations to those in this country, however affectionate they may be towards me. You are still alarmed by the things that were said at Innsbrück. I have already assured you, and I now tell you again, that there was

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not a word of truth in them: the Emperor has no thought of such a marriage, and I implore you not to listen to the rumours that his enemies, or people who do not know him, have spread abroad against him. I hope that you have enough confidence in me to know that I should reject any suggestions of the kind if the Emperor were to make them; but far from thinking of such a thing he knows my parents' wishes with regard to my cousin d'Angoulême, and respects them, and I am certain that he desires nothing else.

“It is complained that I am a prisoner because I see no one; but it was I myself who begged that I might be alone. It was not suitable for me, in my deep mourning and in my present position, to see people. But now, since my mourning will come to an end at Easter, I shall see a few people; but all these matters are left to me to decide, for the Emperor only does what I wish. You complain that the Bishop of Nancy was not able to give me a letter from you; but that was not the case, he has been able to remit them all to me, and a few days ago I saw him for an hour in private.

“You complain of Mme. de Soucy's dismissal: the Emperor thought he was doing something that would please you. How could he keep a woman who was begging to go away, a woman whom the Republic had commissioned to accompany me? How could he keep a woman who has a monster for a brother? She may have been well-disposed; but everything was against her, even the things she said while she was here. When she came to see me there

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was no question of counting the minutes, and it was she who first asked to go away.

“I have seen Hue and Cléry; but now that they have nothing to say to me it is not necessary that I should see them. The Emperor, at my request, has made provision for them, and I wish them to be happy, and I shall do my best to that end.

“Every day I receive letters from French *émigrés*, and I have commissioned the Bishop of Nancy to answer them for me. I can write to you, too, as often as I like, and I can swear that neither my letters nor yours are ever read, except in the post; but that is necessary in time of war. Such is the state of things, and this ought to prove to you that I am not a prisoner. I implore you not to listen to all these rumours, which only serve to make you more unhappy, and to make me unhappy too, for your letter gave me great pain. Please send all your letters for me to the Bishop of Nancy, who will see that I have them. The other day Mme. de Guiche employed methods that I do not like: when one is doing right one should behave openly. It is considered perfectly natural that you should write to me, and I swear that neither your letters nor mine are ever read. But I am obliged to warn you that the letter that Mme. de Guiche gave me was quite open.

“I am as happy here, moreover, as it is possible for me to be. I have masters to occupy my time. I very often see the archduchesses of my own age: their society is very pleasant, and I can assure you that not a day passes without my thinking of you,

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and I often talk to the archduchesses about you, and about all my French relations, whom I love and value very much and hope to meet again this year. I have no doubt that the Emperor will let me go away when I ask him; but in Heaven's name I entreat you not to be agitated, and to understand quite clearly that I am not a prisoner. If I were so I should tell you at once, and should not be at rest for a moment; but it is not true, and I implore you not to listen to anything that may be said by hot-headed folk in moments of excitement. I can undertake always to tell you the exact truth. I also beg you to rest assured of my affection for you, and to believe that my only object in writing this letter was to tell you the truth and to render justice where it is due. You speak of my character, and I can assure you it will never change, and if I remain here now I think it will be necessary to do so for several months; but I never lose sight of my design to rejoin my relations, and that design, if it please God, shall be carried out this summer. Farewell, my dear uncle; do not be disturbed, and count upon me as long as I live.

“The Archduke Charles went off to the front this morning, which ought to reassure you. When he returns I shall certainly be no longer here; so you see that no one has any designs, and Joseph is in Hungary and does not expect to be here for some time to come. So you see there is nothing to fear. The five others are children.

“Mme. de Soucy is bombarding me with letters. She is making a terrible fuss because Hue and Cléry

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have remained in Vienna and she has gone away. I do not know if you are pleased with her; but, personally, I think she would have done much better to keep quiet; she is entirely without brains, and she speaks ill of a number of people.

“It is hoped that peace may be made this year. It is my earnest wish that matters may mend in France, and I do not despair; your clemency ought to win all hearts. I do wish you would write another manifesto; the first had an excellent effect, and the people are so unhappy in Paris now that it would not take much to make them throw off the yoke of the monsters who govern them.

“Mme. de Chanclos is an excellent person. She is Flemish and has many admirable qualities. She knew my mother in this country; she is much attached to the Emperor, whose first wife she brought up; but she is good, and just, and upright. The other day she saw the methods employed by Mme. de Guiche when she gave me your letter, but she said nothing of it to the Emperor. She is very much attached to me, and she can really be depended upon, and the letters are never opened. The Emperor himself is more your friend, perhaps, than you think; every one here calls you the King; you and your misfortunes are alike respected, and your happiness is desired. In short I have really nothing but praise to give to this country.”

These explanations, while they revealed notable good-sense and a strong will, were not entirely calculated to charm Louis XVIII. Madame Royale's

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credulity, with regard to the sentiments professed by the Emperor for himself, must have made him smile : he knew how much to believe. On the other hand, his niece disturbed him by declaring that she was as happy in Vienna as she could be. In the attentions for which she showed herself so grateful he saw a continuation of her Austrian kinsfolk's efforts to make her prefer their country to France. Thenceforward, however, he was convinced that she would not fall into that trap. He doubted neither her good faith nor the sincerity of her resolutions, and all that remained to be done was to hasten the long-deferred happiness that he expected to derive from the presence of his newly adopted daughter.

With this object in view he wrote to the Emperor. After thanking him for "the generous treatment and delicate attentions that had been lavished on his niece," he officially informed him of the projected marriage, and begged for his good offices in facilitating it.

"Every reason of sentiment and expediency, the wishes of the late King my brother, and of the Queen, the wishes of my surviving relations, and I may add the wish that France is only prevented by her tyrants from expressing, all urge the matter forward. The Pope, at my request, has granted the necessary dispensation ; my niece has placed in my hands an expression of feelings and resolutions that are in conformity with those of her whole family ; my nephew is impatient to return to his post and make his happiness sure, and I have little confidence

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that he will even await my orders before joining me here; his father is equally impatient to send him hither. I feel, therefore, that I should lose no time in taking steps, in concert with Your Majesty, to hasten forward the celebration of this marriage, which will give me, and all who are near and dear to me, the only happiness that is now possible to us. This child, this precious child, who so touchingly reproduces all the virtues and great qualities that we mourn, now forms another link between us; to Your Majesty she owes her liberty and perhaps her life; to me she will owe a husband who will assure her happiness. By working together to bring about this marriage without delay we shall, perhaps, succeed in compensating her for the paternal care she has lost, and this combined action will serve as a guarantee for the harmony, the concord, and the agreeable relations that I should wish to exist permanently between Your Majesty and myself."

This letter was fated to remain unanswered for a long time. On the 22nd May, the princess replied to her uncle :

" You bid me speak to the Emperor on the subject of my marriage. I thought he had written to you. But since he has not done so I will tell you that he has nothing at all against the marriage, of which he strongly approves; but I doubt whether he will take an active part in the matter. I cannot speak of it to him myself before knowing your wishes on the subject—when and how you wish it to take

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place. As soon as I know your views I will tell him what they are."

In the face of this evidence the King's last suspicions disappeared. He had nothing more to fear from the intrigues in Vienna. He was free to fix the day and hour that best suited him for the celebration of the marriage, and in the meantime he ceased to be disturbed by the prolonging of his niece's visit to the Emperor's Court.

Although, at that time, communications between one country and another were slow and accomplished with difficulty, the news of Madame Royale's release and arrival in Vienna was not long in spreading, and wherever there were *émigrés* was received with delight. This last unique survivor of the prisoners of the Temple was the object of universal sympathy. Those who had grieved for her misfortunes were now interested in her future.

Of this fact she soon received proofs in the abundance of letters that reached her from all parts of the world—letters of homage and congratulation—some signed by former courtiers and servitors of her family, and others by persons unknown to her, who felt it incumbent upon them to express their devotion. But not all of them were prompted by devotion. There were some that appealed to her generosity, in the name of the honourable losses that the fall of the Monarchy had brought upon them. To understand the number of these appeals one must recall the terrible and countless miseries that the *émigrés* had to endure. Now and then, among these

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letters, Madame Royale came upon legitimate claims put forward by persons who had sacrificed the whole or a part of their fortunes in the service of her family.

Unhappily it was not in her power to satisfy them. This girl of sixteen possessed nothing of her own: her only means of livelihood was the pension that the Court of Vienna had given her. This pension was hardly enough for her needs, and it was impossible for her to find the means of granting the requests she received. These requests have been destroyed, but we may still read the rough drafts of the answers that the Bishop of Nancy returned by her orders, and may thus gain some idea of the hopes raised in the circles of the Emigration by Madame Royale's arrival in Vienna.

From the 10th March, 1796, to the 4th May, 1799, the date of her departure for Mittau, the letters signed in her name by La Fare are merely a series of refusals, returned, much to her regret, to requests for help.

She accompanied these refusals, it is true, with expressions of sorrow, and with promises that she hoped to keep in happier times, that is to say, when the King of France, then in exile, should have recovered his crown. Nevertheless, her heart was cruelly wrung by these revelations of miseries without number, the knowledge of which cast a shadow over all her thoughts, haunted as they already were by the painful and undying memory of her own sorrows. Among the claims that were laid before her there were some of which the justice was undeniable, and her powerlessness to satisfy them was a cause of constant distress to her. As an example, we will

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give a case that arose out of the journey to Varennes, and was negotiated by Count Fersen, who arrived in Vienna in June 1796.

When Louis XVI was preparing for his flight, and, in order to ensure its success, was trying to raise funds—which motives of prudence forbade him to take from the royal treasury—the Baroness Korff, widow of a foreign colonel who was killed in the siege of Bender, was living in Paris with her mother, Mme. de Stegelmann. She was presented to Queen Marie-Antoinette, to whom she became much attached. Such was the confidence with which she inspired the Queen that after having been entrusted with Her Majesty's diamonds for two months she was deputed, not only to make all the preparations for the journey, but even to secure the necessary money, that is to say, a sum of two hundred and sixty thousand francs. Being herself possessed of this sum she brought it voluntarily to the royal family, without even pausing to ask herself whether she were sure of being repaid. The King and Queen, who never doubted their ability to pay her at some future time, insisted that the Baroness Korff should accept two bills signed by them both, one being for ninety-three thousand francs, made payable to her mother, and the other for a hundred and sixty-nine thousand francs, payable to herself. It was further stipulated that the creditor should receive interest from the 1st June, 1791, at the rate of six per cent. per annum.

For two years this interest was paid, for Marie-Antoinette took especial care that the engagement

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into which she and her husband had entered should be kept. But after the imprisonment of the King and Queen had made them powerless the interest was no longer paid. The Baroness Korff and her mother were at once reduced to great straits, and very soon to the depths of poverty. These ladies were the intimate friends of Count Fersen, to whom the royal family owed a much larger sum : it amounted to six hundred thousand francs. Putting aside his own claims for the moment, Fersen took the opportunity of seeing the Emperor of Austria during a visit he was making to Brussels, and showed him the bills signed by the King and Queen of France. The Emperor gave him reason to hope that he would pay them on his return to Vienna, but the hope was never fulfilled. For several years the creditors, who were now in a terrible position, put forward their claims in vain. On hearing that Madame Royale was in Vienna, Fersen travelled thither from Stockholm, with a view to obtaining two promises from her : first, that she would restore the capital as soon as she could ; and secondly, that she would prevail upon the Emperor to pay all arrears of interest, as well as the interest for future years.

Unfortunately, as we have already said, Madame Royale was powerless. It appears from the correspondence to which we are referring that Fersen failed to understand this fact. His letters show as much surprise as impatience, and to cut the matter short La Fare was obliged to send him a letter from Madame Royale, in which she said, " that having done everything that it was in her power

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to do, as far as the present time was concerned, she would not undertake anything further for the moment."

"It is impossible for me," she said, "by reason of the war, which prevents communication with France, to find out the number and extent of the debts that may have been contracted by the King and Queen, my august parents; and until I can obtain this initial information, it is impossible for me to come to any definite decision with regard to any of them. I can only renew my assurances of unchanging regard for Mmes. de Stegelmann and de Korff." But at the same time she obtained from the Emperor a sum of a thousand ducats for these unfortunate ladies. It was not in her power to do more.

Three years later, however, the case was altered. By dint of imposing privations upon herself she had succeeded in saving three thousand Austrian florins, which she sent to the baroness and her mother as she was on the point of starting for Mittau. From that moment we lose all trace of the affair, of which we know nothing further, save that it was still unsettled in the reign of Louis XVIII.

There was another case by which the princess was no less disturbed. In August 1796 she received from the Marquise de Favras, who had emigrated and was living at Srzesnetz in Bohemia, a heart-rending letter begging for help. What tragic memories this name aroused! In 1790 the Marquis de Favras, with the object of delivering the King from the tyranny that beset him and threatened to destroy

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his power of action, had hatched a counter-revolutionary plot, and allowed himself to be condemned to death rather than compromise his sovereign and Monsieur, Comte de Provence, the King's brother, by admitting that they had been concerned in the conspiracy. The state of penury into which his unfortunate widow had since fallen was naturally very distressing to Madame Royale. Here again, however, she was reduced to lamenting her incapacity to improve matters. The Bishop of Nancy made this admission to the Marquise de Favras on the 8th September 1796.

“Her Royal Highness, Madame de France, has received, Madame, the letter you addressed to her. I am commissioned by Madame to answer you, and I am to tell you that the name of Favras and the devoted service it recalls are perfectly well known to her. They are very justly interesting to the princess, whose sensitive nature is every day most painfully harrowed by a host of public and private sorrows. Such being her feelings she cannot fail to regret very keenly that she is at this moment powerless to improve your lot. Neither is it in her power to obtain for you from His Majesty the Emperor any pension or temporary aid. None the less, Madame, you may rest assured of the sympathy that Her Royal Highness feels for the widow of M. le marquis de Favras, and of the interest that all the victims and martyrs of the good cause are always certain of arousing in her heart.”

This letter was delayed on its way, and the Marquise

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de Favras, in her impatience at Madame Royale's silence, wrote her a second. To this La Fare answered on the 15th October :

“MADAME LA MARQUISE,

“Being commissioned by Her Royal Highness Madame de France to answer your previous letter to her from Egra, I wrote to you on the 8th of last month, and addressed my answer to Egra, as seemed to be your wish. Since, in the two later letters you wrote to Her Royal Highness and Mme. de Chanclos under date of the 30th September, you state that my first answer did not reach you, I must repeat, Madame, that the name of Favras and the devoted service it recalls are perfectly well known to Her Royal Highness, and are as interesting to her sensitive heart as they deserve to be. These being her feelings she cannot fail to regret very keenly her inability to obtain for you, from His Majesty the Emperor, the pension or temporary aid for which you ask in your first letter, or to send you the sum that you mention to Mme. la comtesse de Chanclos as necessary for your present requirements. None the less, Madame, you must have no doubts of the sympathy that Her Royal Highness feels for the widow and children of M. le marquis de Favras. All the victims of the good cause are always sure to arouse the keenest interest in the princess's heart, which is very deeply moved by the public and private sorrows of the French of all classes.”

The Marquise de Favras took it very ill that her request had been refused :

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“MONSEIGNEUR,

“A week ago I received the answers that you did me the honour of writing to me in the name of Her Royal Highness Madame de France, and I confess, Monseigneur, that it caused me some surprise to be refused the more than moderate request that I had ventured to prefer. I had believed that the devotion of the Marquis de Favras had given his wife and children a special claim on the benevolence and sympathy of Her Royal Highness. I am, I need not say, infinitely grateful for the sympathy that this august princess expresses for me; but however deep this sympathy may be it effects no change in my position, and I should be dead of despair and want if the sympathy I inspired in Mme. la comtesse and M. le comte de Rollowrath had been of this sterile description. I still possess, Monseigneur, one great consolation: the courageous devotion and fidelity of M. de Favras to his King, the memory of which will live for ever: of this I am indeed proud, for he might have saved himself from the assassins' knife. But if it be a fine thing, Monseigneur, for a man to do his duty, it is very painful to see it forgotten by those on whom one thought one had some claim.”

Such letters as this made Madame Royale's heart ache, and added a fresh grief to all the sorrows of her exile. She continued to economise, not only in superfluities, but sometimes even in necessaries, in order to lighten misfortunes that distressed her as much as her own. She was therefore able, on

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the 17th March in the following year, to send some relief to the Marquise de Favras.

“I am commissioned, Madame,” wrote La Fare, “to inform you that in the distribution of relief that Her Royal Highness Madame de France is now able to make to poor emigrant families, you have been allotted a sum of twenty-five ducats. The necessity of dividing, among so many cases of need, the sum of money that her feeling heart prompts her to devote to their relief does not permit her to do as much for each person who requires her help as she would wish and delight to do. You can adopt the surest means, Madame, at once, of obtaining from me, in Vienna, the twenty-five ducats that I am commissioned to pay you.” Trouble had soured Mme. de Favras : she was offended at “being classed with the world in general.” La Fare had to tell her that she was, on the contrary, the object of especial favour. “Madame’s fortune does not permit her to give to each of the necessitous families whom she is relieving so large a sum as is allotted to you. She is grieved to the heart every day on this account.” These words were literally true : it is certain that the young princess’s life in Austria was really embittered by the stories of misery that so constantly came before her, in the letters of *émigrés* who sought her help.

CHAPTER VI

MEMORIES OF LOUIS XVI'S LAST HOURS

ON the 14th April, 1796, the Venetian government, instigated by the Directory, informed Louis XVIII that he must leave Verona. He therefore decided to defy the injunctions of Austria and take refuge in Condé's camp. He arrived there on the 28th April.

Madame Royale simultaneously received the journals that made his arrival known in Vienna, and a letter from himself, confirming the news and begging her to intercede for him with the Emperor, and obtain his permission for her uncle to remain with the army. This was a very serious mission for a girl of eighteen. Madame Royale did not shrink from undertaking it, but was unable to carry it out until the Emperor's return from the country, where he was to remain for another month. "By that time your affairs must surely be more securely settled. But pray believe that I shall always do everything in my power to serve you."

The hopes that deluded Condé's army, when the King arrived in the camp, aroused the princess's sympathy but not her enthusiasm, for her precocious good-sense, no less than the memory of her past misfortunes, had made her distrustful of the future. She had little belief in any immediate change of fortune. "I confess that we have so often been

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deceived by gleams of hope that I dare not trust them now." She was delighted, however, to hear that her uncle had been well received by the army, and that the Republicans "who gathered together to see him were touched by what he said to them."

"May they soon tire of the war they are waging so unjustly! I hope with all my heart that your presence with the army may recall these unhappy Frenchmen to their duty. This invasion is a terrible thing. I am delighted that you are no longer in Verona, for now that the republicans are masters of North Italy I should be very anxious about you. Happily you are there no longer, but are safe with the army, who would defend you well if you were attacked. The only thing that I venture to ask you is not to expose yourself too much near the frontier, for one cannot be at ease while those republicans are there."

When the King received these expressions of affectionate solicitude he was no longer exposed to the dangers that the princess feared for him; but he had just encountered another that was no less serious, and had escaped almost by a miracle. The retreat of the royal army had led him to Dillingen, and on the evening of the 19th July he found himself in a homely inn of that town. Being wearied by the heat he seated himself in the window of his room at about ten o'clock, with the Duc de Fleury and the Duc de Guiche beside him. He had been sitting there for ten minutes when a carbine was discharged from the shelter of a neighbouring arcade. The ball

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grazed the top of his head, struck the wall, and fell into the room.

The wound was slight, and with the help of the surgeons it was healed in a few days. None the less it kept him in Dillingen for a week. By the time he was quite recovered there was no doubt that the retreat of the Austrians was final, and he decided to leave it to the Prince de Condé to fulfil all the obligations of his corps towards the Emperor, for the troops were still in the pay of Austria. The King determined to part from the army, but did not yet know where he should find an asylum. The chances of his march having led him to Blankenburg he resolved to stay there for a time, after securing the permission of the reigning Duke of Brunswick. But this principality was surrounded by Prussian States and protected by the King of Prussia, and could only offer him a temporary refuge. This he knew, and although he was destined to stay there for fifteen months, his intention when he arrived was merely to wait there for an answer from the Tsar, Paul I, to whom he had written before leaving Riegel, to ask for a more permanent and safe asylum. It was not possible, then, to summon his niece to Blankenburg, nor could he dream of taking any steps as yet towards her marriage. His position was still too precarious, and it would have been cruel to expose a young girl to the adventures to which he was liable. At the same time he definitely gave up the idea, which he had previously entertained, of sending her to Rome. Since she said she was happy in Vienna, and wished to remain there until her marriage, he would leave

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her under the Emperor's protection. When, after reaching Blankenburg, he told her of his decision, he also gave her some details of the melancholy experiences he had been through since leaving Paris. The princess responded to his confidences with this letter, the simplicity of which is singularly moving. It gives us a heartrending picture of Madame Royale's imprisonment in the Temple.

“ I have received your last letter, and have read with great interest the account you give me of your position during those three unhappy years. I knew nothing of it. From the 10th August, 1792, to the month of August, 1795, I learnt nothing of my family's concerns, nor yet of political affairs; we heard nothing but the insults that were heaped upon us. You have no idea of the severity of our imprisonment: no one who had not seen it with his own eyes could picture it. Even I, who suffered so much from it, find it hard to believe. My mother knew nothing of my brother's life, though he was in the room below hers. My aunt and I did not know that my mother had been taken to the Conciergerie, nor afterwards that she was dead. I only learnt these things in '95. My aunt was torn from me to be taken to the scaffold. It was in vain that I asked why we were parted. The door was shut and the bolts were drawn, and no one answered me. My brother died in the room below me; even of this I was left in ignorance. And of Robespierre's well-deserved death, which made so much noise in the world, I heard nothing until a year later. Several times I heard the tocsin ringing and

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the drums beating to arms, but was never told the reason by my warders. No one could imagine the cruelty of those people. At the same time it must be admitted, my dear uncle, that after that monster's death my brother and I were better treated. We were given the necessaries of life, but we were not told of passing events, and it was not until after my brother's death that I heard of all the horrors and cruelties that had been committed during those three years.

“In the month of August 1795 I was allowed to see Mme. de Tourzel, who told me that you were in Verona. I learnt, from the woman whom they provided to wait upon me, of the death of my virtuous and unhappy parents, and that there was some talk of my release. I confess that by that time I had begun to lose hope entirely, and to fear that all my life would be spent in prison. Having been alone in my room for a whole year I had had time to think, and I suspected the fate of my unfortunate relations only too shrewdly; but, since the sorrowful like to flatter themselves, there were moments when I still had hope. Mme. de Tourzel only came to the Temple during two or three months, at the end of which it was discovered that she was corresponding with you, and she was prevented from coming to see me. I was more closely confined, and was questioned about her, and she was imprisoned for several days.

“This is rather a long letter; I am afraid I must have wearied you; please forgive me for writing at such length.”

This was not the only source from which the King

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gradually obtained details that revealed the full cruelty and barbarity of the treatment endured by the royal family in the Temple. He had heard something of it from Cléry, who had visited Verona in the month of January, and was now, by the King's advice, setting down his recollections in writing, with a view to publishing them. And during the last weeks of 1796 the Abbé Edgeworth de Firmon, Louis XVI's confessor, arrived at Blankenburg. After having lived in hiding for a long time in France, he had succeeded in escaping from that country. On crossing the frontier he had received this letter from the King, dated the 19th September :

“ I have heard, Monsieur, with the keenest satisfaction, that you have at last succeeded in escaping from all the dangers to which your sublime devotion exposed you. I sincerely thank Divine Providence for having deigned to preserve in you one of the most faithful ministers of God, and the sole confidant of the last thoughts of a brother whose loss I shall ever deplore, a King whose memory every good Frenchman will always bless, a martyr whose triumph you were the first to proclaim and whose virtues I hope the Church will one day consecrate. The miracle of your preservation makes me hope that God has not abandoned France. It is His will, doubtless, that an irreproachable witness should attest to the whole French nation the love that their King never ceased to feel for them, in order that, knowing the full extent of their loss, they may not confine themselves to barren regrets, but may seek, in the outstretched arms

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of a father, the only consolation that can relieve the sorrow that it is only right they should feel. I adjure you then, Monsieur, or rather I beg you earnestly, to record and publish everything that your holy office does not bid you to keep secret; this is the finest monument that I can raise to the best of Kings and the dearest of brothers.

“I would that I were able, Monsieur, to give you effectual proofs of my profound esteem; but I can only offer you my admiration and gratitude. These are the sentiments most worthy of you.”

The Abbé Edgeworth, instead of writing down the story that was asked of him, preferred to relate it in person. He soon afterwards arrived at Blankenburg, and presenting himself to d’Avaray announced that he was at the King’s orders. D’Avaray lost no time in informing the King of the new arrival, by means of one of the notes that they were in the habit of exchanging daily.

“It is not for M. l’abbé Edgeworth to take orders from me,” answered the King by the same means: “it is for me to take them from him. He cannot fail to know that I am longing to see him. The hour that is most convenient to him is the one that will suit me the best.” On the scrap of paper on which these lines are written we find some words added by d’Avaray, suggesting “that the Duc de Villequier might be sent to fetch him”; and above his friend’s writing the King has hastily added: “I had already written to Villequier to go and see him before *déjeuner*. But since receiving your note I have told him to go



ANNE-LOUIS-HENRY DE LA FARE.—BISHOP OF NANCY.
(*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)



THE ABBÉ EDGEWORTH.—LOUIS XVI'S CONFESSOR.
(*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)

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afterwards and bring him back at once. Had I not better ask him to dinner?"

So the Abbé Edgeworth dined with the King that day, and spent the evening recalling the painful memories of the 20th and 21st January, 1793, while the King listened with the tears running down his cheeks. On the following day he described the touching interview to his niece, and begged her to write a letter to the Abbé Edgeworth. He suggested that this letter might be dated the day that she had recovered her liberty, and might afterwards be published. Madame Royale did not agree to the suggestion; and it was on this occasion that she showed for the first time that strong will of which she gave so many proofs all through her life:

"My positive conviction, my very dear uncle," she answered on the 23rd January, 1797, "that in my position it is far more suitable for me not to appear in the public eye at all, is not the only motive of my refusal to write to M. Edgeworth just now. It is my firm belief that the Emperor would disapprove of such a step, and I cannot think that you would insist on it, at the risk of my displeasing my liberator. Moreover, I will not hide from you that it would distress me to antedate my letter. It is a thing that may be done by older people in cases where it is necessary. But it is more suitable to my age and character to be as simple and accurate as truth itself. I hope, my very dear uncle, that you will forgive this little act of resistance, in consideration of the reasons that prompt it."

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Whatever the King may have thought of this answer and of the lesson it contained he could not long be annoyed with his niece, in view of this striking evidence of her uprightness. The fear of displeasing her by being too insistent made him even hesitate as to the course he should pursue. We can see his perplexity in a note that he sent to d'Avaray through the Privy Purse: "Before writing to my niece I have been re-reading her letter, and I beg my friend to do the same. I confess that her refusal to write to the Abbé Edgeworth strikes me as much more definite than I thought it on the first reading; so much so that I hesitate to insist. Please think it over, *mon ami*, and give me your opinion." D'Avaray's opinion coincided with the King's wishes, and the latter repeated his request. But the princess held to her first decision. The publicity given to the letter that her uncle had written to the Abbé Edgeworth on his leaving France made her fear that her own would be published also, and she refused to allow her most sacred feelings to be made common property. "I should not like it to be published. Your letter appeared in the papers. That was quite right; it was a splendid letter. But I do not know how to write well, like you. So I shall deny myself the pleasure of writing to him, because I do not want my letter to be published." The King accepted the refusal, merely expressing his regret that his advice had not been followed. "The good Abbé Edgeworth is here, and it would have been a great pleasure to me to see the happiness that a letter from you would have given him." "Pray tell him verbally from me,"

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answered the princess, " of all the feelings that fill my heart for him, and how happy I should be if some day I could tell him of them with my own lips."

A few days later, on the 1st May, she returned to the subject :

" I very much envy you the happiness of talking about my father to his revered confessor. If I might venture to ask you to tell me about him too, and repeat what the Abbé said of him, it would be a consolation to me to know some further details of his last moments. It would have been impossible to love him more than I loved him; and indeed he showed me so much affection that I should have been very ungrateful not to love the best father that ever lived. His death was an irreparable loss for me, and as long as I live I shall not cease to mourn for him. I will make an end now, lest I should weary you with my regrets; but I do not doubt that you feel them very keenly too."

The King responded very eagerly to his niece's request :

" . . . How could you imagine for a single moment that any one in the world could be wearied by your regrets, or do you take me for a monster unique in the universe? If this were really your opinion it would be the keenest of all my sufferings. But I do not believe it. No, you know me too well; you know how much I respected my King, how much I loved my brother, how much I love your touching filial piety. I have often spoken of your father to the Abbé Edgeworth, and while these conversations have renewed

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my grief, they have strengthened me more and more in the consoling belief that we have in him another intercessor in heaven.

“ He was persuaded, and those monsters often said themselves, that their only object in murdering him was to cement their tyranny with his blood; but he was far from foreseeing the crimes that would follow his death. His pure mind could not even conceive the idea of a useless crime. And cruelly as his heart was rent at the thought of leaving your mother, my sister, and yourself, he was at least without anxiety as to your fate. As for him, he had long before made the sacrifice of himself. The inward knowledge that he had always kept his faith intact was a support and comfort to him. He spoke of it to the Abbé Edgeworth with a kind of joy.

“ The Abbé suggested that he should receive the Holy Sacrament. He said that it was his most earnest desire, but he dared not flatter himself that it was possible. Then the Abbé Edgeworth went to make the suggestion to his gaolers. They thought about it for a long time, expressed a fear that the Host might contain poison, and insisted that the Abbé Edgeworth should make his request in writing. Finally they consented. It seemed to the Abbé, as he gave him the Body of our Lord, that he saw before him one who was already enjoying the glory of heaven; and he told me that, all through the time he spent with him, his words and actions, and even his slightest gestures, were instinct with a grace that can only be described as supernatural. During the horrible drive from the Temple to the Square he was

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entirely concentrated on the sacrifice he was about to make, and never turned his eyes away from the breviary that the Abbé Edgeworth had placed in his hands.

“Do not ask me to tell you any more, dear child; I fear I have already told you too much, and from the pain it gives me to write I can judge of your pain in reading what I have written. Read, instead, the Passion of our Lord, and realise that insomuch as earth can resemble heaven your father followed in the steps of our Divine Model. A considerable time before his death, however, an incident happened of which I knew long before I saw the Abbé Edgeworth, and of which you perhaps know also; but I cannot refrain from telling you about it again. You know how calm he was in prison. But on the 19th December he remembered that it was your birthday.

“‘To-day,’ he said, ‘my daughter is fourteen years old. Oh, my poor daughter!’

“And for the first time since he was left alone with his gaolers his eyes filled with tears. . . . I cannot give him back to you, I know; but I will spare no pains in doing what I can.”

When the King wrote this letter to his niece he had already decided that the Abbé Edgeworth should remain with him permanently, and had appointed him first almoner of his household.

After a time some more questions came to Blankenburg from Madame Royale. Her justifiable curiosity, far from being satisfied by the details that her uncle had given her, was more than ever roused. She

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wished to know whether her father had left in the Abbé Edgeworth's hands any secret instructions in writing, or even a written account of his imprisonment; and she asked how the brave Abbé had escaped from Paris.

“ . . . I can well understand that these terrible details are interesting to you,” answered the King, “ and to satisfy you I will return to the subject. Your unhappy father left no writings with the Abbé Edgeworth, and this is not surprising. He had long been resigned to die, and did not dare to hope for the ministrations of a Catholic priest, as you must have known. That this was so, indeed, is plainly proved by his will. In this melancholy belief he had made certain arrangements of which I shall speak presently, and when he obtained leave to see the Abbé Edgeworth there was nothing left for them to discuss but the things that concerned his salvation. Everything relating to this world he confided to M. de Malesherbes, as you can see from the following literal quotation from a letter written to me by the latter shortly afterwards :

‘ I saw the King during the last days of his life : indeed it was I who had the painful task of informing him of the sentence that had just been passed in my presence.

‘ It was then that I saw the true greatness of his soul—the unwavering courage with which he listened to my story and questioned me on various points, as though he were hardly concerned in the matter, the resignation with which he made the

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sacrifice of his life, and at the same time his keen sympathy with the misfortunes of those who were condemned to survive him, his gratitude to those whom he believed to deserve it, and at the same time his indulgence to the errors of those who were so greatly to blame. Monseigneur himself must have seen this in the King's will.

'I saw him again in the evening of that same day, for it was not until the morrow that I was forbidden to go into the prison. Once more I admired the coolness with which he discussed everything and arranged for everything. He even confided some of his feelings and wishes to me.—DE MALESHERBES, *10th March, 1793.*'¹

¹ To these details the following should be added. They were sent to Madame Royale through La Fare, in September 1798, by M. de Montboissier, Malesherbes's son-in-law:

"After Louis XVI's tragic end the present King charged me to send to M. de Malesherbes, by a sure hand, a letter in which His Majesty expressed, in the deeply moving and eloquent manner natural to him, his profound appreciation of M. de Malesherbes's zealous efforts and perilous sacrifices. At the same time the King deigned to ask him to join him, and urged him to go and share his sorrow, his refuge, and his life.

"M. de Malesherbes at that time could have left this land of blood and tears, for a sort of general enthusiasm had won him the support of all classes alike, and public opinion would have protected him. The tyrant who had just struck such a terrible blow was himself anxious to give the impression that an honest man could still go free in France, and wished to avoid an objectless crime, which he committed afterwards in the intoxication of cruelty.

"M. de Malesherbes entrusted me with an answer to the King, expressing his gratitude to that sovereign and to Monsieur, and informing them of the fresh duties that bound him to France: *I do not consider my mission at an end [he said] as long as the Queen and Madame Élisabeth are still prisoners. There is sometimes talk of bringing those august princesses to trial. If this new crime were perpetrated they would need a counsel.*

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“ You see clearly from this letter that the feelings and wishes to which M. de Malesherbes refers must not be confused with the will that he mentions a little earlier. It remains to be discovered whether this precious trust has perished with the person to whom it was confided. I like to believe that it has not. Although the rest of the letter shows that he did not expect the fate that befell him he could not have been unaware of the danger he was in, and since he was able to leave Paris and live in his own house, we may hope that he was also able to place his charge in safety. I must admit, however, that I have heard nothing of it since then. But that fact does not alarm me much : all the members of his family who were living in France and had come to years of discretion were put to death with him. No one, therefore, could tell me anything ; but he must surely have had other confidants of an inferior class, and it is through them that I expect to discover everything some day.

“ Indeed the King, in his last interview with him, had expressed a wish that he should render the same service to the Queen, and this wish at such a moment was a command, bequeathed to the most faithful of servants.

“ He said to me at the same time : *I cannot leave Paris, you see. I know very well that I shall die here ; but it is my post and I will never leave it.*

“ Being the depository and witness of these things I thought it my duty to bring them to light, to do honour to the virtues of the King who is no more, to the goodness of the King who is left to us, and to the motives that actuated M. de Malesherbes. This second act of devotion, while less striking, was more dangerous than the first, and caused his death without giving the Queen a defender.³³

(The La Fare Archives.)

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“As for the Abbé Edgeworth, he was not persecuted at first; but about six months afterwards a letter that he wrote to the Archbishop of Paris was intercepted, and he was obliged to leave Paris. He found a refuge in Normandy, in the house of a friend. He lived there for nearly three years, in obscurity and peace, until the time when he determined, thank God, to go to England, which he did without the least difficulty.

“After all these painful and interesting topics, how can I tell you of the happiness your letter gave me? And yet I cannot help speaking of it, for my heart is full to overflowing. I will confess to you that I was beginning to think it was a long time since I had had any news of you; but I was well compensated when I read that you envied my nephew for being with me, and that you were hoping to be with me yourself before long. It is certain that you could not be in any place where you would be more tenderly loved, and as for me, my hovel would be a palace if my children were around me in it. Let us hope that the time is not far distant; but in the meanwhile write to me often in the same style; I am quite sure that your heart dictates the expressions that give such deep consolation to mine.”

From the last paragraph of this letter we learn that, when it was written, the Duc d'Angoulême was at Blankenburg. He had arrived there on the 27th April. His brother the Duc de Berry had been there since the 1st March. Their presence had created a fortunate diversion at this moment, for the King was

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violently distressed by the faithlessness of his minister, the Duc de La Vauguyon,—whom he had just sent away,—and by the arrest of his Parisian agents. It was to his brother that he first confided his happiness in having both his nephews with him.

“I shall certainly not undertake, my very dear brother, to describe to you the touching scene that I witnessed yesterday, and to a certain extent took part in : all that was lacking to make my happiness complete was your presence. Your son arrived in excellent health, although he had a crossing that was anything but good, for he was nine days at sea. But I fancy you are certain to have had news of him as soon as he reached Cuxhaven, so I shall say nothing of his voyage. I do not think he has changed in the least, either physically or morally : he is just the same—as good, impressionable, and affectionate as ever. His brother, if he were less good-natured, might have been displeased with me, for I called for help to put me on equal terms, and I delivered a letter and a portrait that were very well received. I greatly enjoyed their happiness, and the pleasure of clasping them both together in my arms. But I must confess that I cannot yet suppress rather a painful feeling. They had not been parted for quite three years, whereas we have been parted for four ! But our turn will come at last I hope.”

Seven years passed before their turn came.¹ But the King could not foresee that their separation would be so long. In spite of everything he persisted in

¹ At Calmar, in Sweden, in 1804.

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thinking that he and his brother would soon meet again, and in the meantime he drew comfort from the thought of his "children's" marriage. To this he imagined there were no obstacles, now that the young Duc d'Angoulême had entered upon the scenes.

CHAPTER VII

THE BETROTHAL OF THE EXILES

THE elder son of the Comte d'Artois, the Duc d'Angoulême, whom the King had chosen to be the husband of Madame Thérèse de France, was now twenty-two years old, that is to say, three years older than she. Since the earliest days of the Emigration he had shared the lot of those of his family who had left France. In 1789 he went to Turin, to the Court of his maternal grandfather the King of Sardinia; in 1791 he moved to Coblenz, where he served his military apprenticeship on the staff of the royal army, with his young brother the Duc de Berry; in 1793 he was at Hamm in Westphalia with his father, whom he afterwards accompanied through all the various stages of his wandering life—in the Netherlands, in England, and finally in Scotland. He was too young to feel the trials of exile very keenly, and they had passed over him imperceptibly, without making any change in his indolent nature. For a long time he remained an apathetic, listless child, entirely wanting in initiative and as cold as ice; very different in temperament from the Duc de Berry, who as time went on became more and more fiery, violent, hasty, and pleasure-loving, and was a soldier from his head to his heels. Therefore, although the elder brother was regarded as the heir-presumptive to the throne, it was the younger who won all the good graces of the army.



THE DUC D'ANGOULÊME.

FROM A PORTRAIT GIVEN TO THE DUCHESSE DE LORGES
AT MITTAU, IN 1798.

(Collection of the Duc de Blacas.)



THE COMTE D'ARTOIS.

FROM A PORTRAIT GIVEN TO THE DUCHESSE DE LORGES
AT MITTAU, IN 1798.

(Collection of the Duc de Blacas.)

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Only those who were on intimate terms with him did justice to the Duc d'Angoulême's good qualities : his uprightness, his kindness of heart, his natural generosity, and the courage that was in his blood and only needed an opportunity to show itself. But even those who recognised these qualities regretted that they were not accompanied by the attractive gifts that redeemed the faults of the Duc de Berry, far more serious though they were than those of his elder brother. There was one fault that characterised both the brothers, one quality that they had in common : mental indolence, and a complete lack of the love of study. This earned for them both many a reproach from the King.

The King loved them with all his heart. Having founded great hopes upon them he was troubled by their want of seriousness, even while their youth and their unsettled life might very well have been accepted as sufficient explanation and excuse. When he first conceived the idea of marrying Madame Royale to the Duc d'Angoulême he could not hide from himself, as he read his niece's letters, that she was mentally very superior to the husband he had chosen for her. But that was no reason for giving up a marriage that was so eminently suitable in every respect. Moreover he hoped that, as time went on, the young prince's intelligence would develop and his mind would mature. He determined to put his own hand to this work of education. To this end, having informed his nephew through the Comte d'Artois of the arrangement to dispose of his person and future by marrying him to his cousin, he expressed a wish for the

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prince to join him as soon as circumstances would allow.

After what has been already said no one would believe us if we were to assert that the royal decision, when it reached the Duc d'Angoulême in Edinburgh, had the effect of awakening old, long-forgotten feelings in his heart for the cousin from whom he had been parted for years.

The romance invented by d'Avaray, to persuade Madame Royale that the compassion her cousin felt for her misfortunes had suddenly been transformed into love's young dream, was most touching and ingenious, and could not fail to appear convincing in the eyes of an orphan girl whom solitary confinement had made hungry for affection. But it was nothing more than a romance. True though it may be that the Duc d'Angoulême, in common with every other tender-hearted person, had felt the deepest pity for Louis XVI's daughter in all her sorrows, it is no less true that his pity was not transformed into a genuine desire to devote his life to her, until the King's decision was announced.

His summons to his nephew reached the latter at an opportune moment. The prince was wearied and bored to death in Edinburgh. He had repeatedly begged his father to let him return to Condé's army, where the Duc de Berry, more fortunate than he, was in a fair way to win his spurs. But, first for one reason and then for another, his departure was perpetually postponed. He felt himself much aggrieved, and wondered, with many a sigh, how much longer he would be condemned to lead this

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melancholy, inactive life. It was therefore with all the enthusiasm of which he was capable that he greeted the important news imparted to him by his father in the spring of 1796. He gave his entire and willing consent to a plan that in any case he would not have dreamed of rejecting, since the King had spoken; and he impatiently awaited orders to set out upon his journey. But the King, having been driven from Verona and forced to seek another refuge, was obliged to postpone the fulfilment of his wishes until he was settled in Blankenburg.

In the meantime the Duc d'Angoulême had been authorised to write to his cousin, and she had answered him. Of their correspondence hardly anything is left to us: three letters from the prince—that is all. This will surprise no one who knows the character of Madame Royale. She was not the woman to keep her cousin's confessions of love, or her own avowals to him, for the use of future historians of her misfortunes; and it is most probable that the letters they exchanged in the course of their long betrothal were destroyed after their marriage. The three that are left to us cannot fail to make us regret the destruction of the others. We learn from them that the Duc d'Angoulême possessed delicacy of feeling in a rare degree, and that, beneath the apparent coldness of which d'Avaray tells us, there beat a heart by no means incapable of fire. From this day forward it belonged entirely to his cousin:

“ My very dear cousin,” said the first letter,—“ You have given me leave to write to you often, and the

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permission is too precious for me to neglect to profit by it. If I thought only of myself I should make this my daily occupation.

“The sentiments with which my charming and very dear cousin inspires me are at once my happiness and my torment. I cannot help feeling the greatest distress at all this postponement of the hopes that are my chief concern. It seems to me that I am being robbed of days that I would fain devote to your happiness.

“By preserving our uncle’s life so miraculously from the terrible danger that threatened him,¹ Heaven has given us some hope that Providence at last designs to put an end to the terrible chastenings to which we have been subjected. And amid this general hope for us all, I leave it to you to guess of whom I am thinking, dear cousin, when I form individual hopes of my own.

“Farewell, my very dear cousin; I wish that your heart could read in mine all the tender respect and eternal devotion of your very affectionate cousin.”

His language is as yet very stiff and timid. One can detect the young prince’s hesitations, as he makes his first essay in the lover’s art, fearing equally to displease by saying too much, or by saying too little. In the two other letters he is more self-confident, and consequently bolder. He expresses himself frankly and directly, having doubtless received encouragement from his betrothed :

“Yes, my very dear cousin, it is with the liveliest

¹ An allusion to the attempt upon his life at Dillingen.

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pleasure that I shall take advantage of your permission to write to you often : I value that expression too much ever to forget it ; I should find it hard to describe the happiness with which your letter filled my heart ; but my cousin can easily imagine what an effect it had upon me. How impatiently I am waiting for the moment that will take me to you ! My father and I are treated as well as possible here by the Scots : neither the country nor the climate is very fine, but the kindness of the inhabitants, who are really perfect in every respect, much more than compensates for these two defects. I do not know, and my father himself does not know, how long he will stay here ; he is here in the King's service, in the hope of joining an expedition against the coasts of France ; there was more certainty of success when the royalists were in full force ; they are now scattered, but not destroyed ; we are still hoping for an expedition, and then all the honest folk, who are now forced against their will to submit to the yoke of the Republic, will rally round us in large numbers. Nothing but the hope of being near you could make me give up two wishes so dear to my heart as the desire to remain with my father permanently, and the desire to render useful service to the King in this way ; but that hope is one that will take me anywhere, and it makes me long very impatiently for the moment when I shall be allowed to set out for some place within more easy reach of the place where you are." ¹

¹ *Archives of Vienna* : published by the Marquis de Pimodan.

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A little later the prince wrote again :

“ My very dear cousin, if I had any influence over the management of the posts the one from Vienna would not take so long to bring your letters to this place. I have only just received your letter of the 26th December. It would be no easy matter to depict to you all the happiness your goodness and kindness give me. But it is only, my very dear cousin, when my lips are pressed upon the line traced by your hand that this fleeting sense of happiness can reach me. How can I hope for a more solid kind of happiness as long as this cruel inaction lasts, and as long as I am separated from the person who occupies all my thoughts ?

“ M. de Rivière, when he talked to you about me, was very far from giving a faithful account of me if he did not tell you how unbearable I find this useless life. Glory and my dear cousin are the only influences capable of enlivening my existence : everything apart from these is dead to me. I am beginning to hope, however, that fate is growing tired of putting obstacles in the way of all my wishes, and will soon break a portion of my chains. My father and the King, who is also ready to be the best of fathers to me, are holding out hopes that I may soon return to Condé's army. Then I shall be in the continent where my cousin lives, and I shall fight for her ; and if I should be fortunate enough to win a little glory, how happy I shall be to go and lay it at her feet ! Do me the kindness, my very dear cousin, to accept the homage of all the ardent and tender feelings that fill the heart of your most affectionate cousin.”

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Of the princess's answers we have none but this :

“ You are very good, my very dear cousin, to take advantage of all the opportunities that arise to write to me, and you may be quite sure that it always gives me great pleasure when I receive news of you. I heard from M. de Rivière that you had been away from Edinburgh for some time and had been hunting a great deal; I am very glad that you should have that pleasure, as it will at all events divert your mind from your melancholy situation. My uncle Monsieur [the Comte d'Artois] must surely have been greatly affected by the death of the Empress of Russia; it is a great loss to him; but I hope that her son's feelings towards my family will be the same as hers—feelings of the most admirable kind, a desire to relieve the unfortunate. I have lately been seeing some of the officers of Condé's army as they passed through Vienna, and they told me my cousin de Berry was distinguishing himself very much, and was even too fond of bullets, for he was always exposing himself.

“ I have twice written to Turin to my aunt Madame [the Comtesse d'Artois]; I have received no news of her, because there is great difficulty, I believe, in transmitting letters; but I hope she is in good health, notwithstanding the grief that her father's death must have been to her.”¹

It appears from the Duc d'Angoulême's letters that the King had determined to send his nephew to Condé's army, and let him remain with it until

¹ *Archives of Vienna* : published by the Marquis de Pimodan.

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such time as the marriage could be celebrated. But he considered it as above all things essential that a meeting should take place between the betrothed pair; that they should have an opportunity of seeing one another again, of refreshing their memory of one another, and, to put it briefly, of talking things over. This was his most pressing concern. The Duc d'Angoulême reached Blankenburg on the 26th April, and by the 1st May the King was making arrangements to send him to Prague, where Madame Royale had just arrived. Vienna being threatened by the French the Emperor had resolved to place his youngest sisters and brothers in safety, and had despatched them to Bohemia, and Madame Royale with them. It was in Prague, therefore, that the Duc d'Angoulême was to meet his cousin for the first time after their long separation, unless, indeed, the Emperor should object to the meeting. Perhaps it would have been more prudent to discover his views in the matter before the Duc d'Angoulême started on his journey. But the King had no illusions with regard to the ill-will of the Court of Austria: he feared that his plans might be frustrated, and thought that the surest way of thwarting the malevolence from which he never felt safe was to precipitate matters, and send off his nephew without waiting to ask for the Emperor's permission. It might possibly have been refused, whereas if the Duc d'Angoulême were actually in Prague, no one, surely, would dare to prevent him from seeing his cousin.

His departure was fixed for the 3rd May. The Duc de Berry, who was returning to the army, was

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to travel with him as far as Leipzig. In that town the two brothers were to part : the younger, and the gentlemen in attendance on him, were to take the shortest route to the camp, while the elder, accompanied by the Comte de Damas, was to go on his way to Prague "in the strictest incognito." The Comte de Damas was to take with him, not only a letter from the Comte de Saint-Priest to the princess's companion, Mme. de Chanclos, but also written instructions from the King, providing for every difficulty that could possibly arise in Prague, including a refusal on the part of Mme. de Chanclos to allow the interview without first taking orders from the Emperor :

"On reaching that town M. le comte de Damas will seek out Mme. la comtesse de Chanclos, will deliver M. de Saint-Priest's letter to her, will inform her of my nephew's arrival, and will make the necessary arrangements with her for the interview to take place as soon as possible. In the very unlikely case of a refusal from Mme. de Chanclos, M. de Damas will try to secure a refusal in writing."

He was also to find out if hostilities had been resumed between France and Austria, or if the armistice were still in force, or if peace were concluded. In the first case, after a single interview between Madame Royale and the Duc d'Angoulême, he was to escort the latter to the army without further delay ; in the second case the prince was to spend a day in Prague, and to see his cousin, and all the members of the imperial family who were with

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her, as much as possible; in the third case, that is to say if peace were already concluded, the Comte de Damas was to take the prince back to Blankenburg.

These arrangements were definitely made and the final preparations for the journey completed when, on the 3rd May, the very day that the two princes were to leave Blankenburg, the news arrived that peace had been concluded, or rather that it was being negotiated between the Emperor and the Republic. This event obliged the King to modify his plans. There was no longer any object in sending the Duc d'Angoulême to the front.

“It would be ridiculous for him to arrive at the camp when peace was made,” wrote the King to his brother; “it might even lead to foolish things being said. He has shown his good intentions by leaving Edinburgh the moment he was able, when there was still far more idea of war than of peace; that is enough; anything more would be too much. But if England should save the army from being disbanded and enable it to resume active service I should not hold our boy back; you can rely on my love for him. . . . As for Berry, it seemed to me that this event only made it all the more incumbent upon him to join his comrades in arms, and he set out to-night with the Comte de Damas, who was, I thought, far more necessary to him in camp than to his brother, who will stay here with the Abbé Marie and myself. This parting between the two brothers has been a cruel ending to my delight at seeing them meet in my arms. . . . I have begged that my niece may

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remain in Prague, so that she may be spared the sight of the republicans, and I think the time has come to consider the matter of the marriage more seriously than ever. You will understand that I had to put a stop to my nephew's expedition to see her."

Not only, therefore, did the Duc d'Angoulême miss the opportunity of returning to the army, for which he had so greatly longed, but he was also deprived of the pleasure of seeing his cousin. If this was a disappointment for him, it was none for her; she had been told nothing of the projected visit, which the King wished to be a surprise to her; and the matter was carefully kept from her now. On the other hand, the King told her of his wish that she should live in Prague rather than in Vienna, where the conclusion of peace was about to open the town and Court to the French diplomatists :

" My affection for you made me think at once of your position. I think it would be as unseemly in itself as it would be painful to you if you were in Vienna just now, when these men—who, if they are not your parents' murderers, are at all events their murderers' representatives—are going to be publicly admitted for the first time. I am therefore asking the Emperor to leave you, until such time as your future fate can be finally settled, with the Archduchess Marie-Anne in Prague; and I am all the more ready to make this request that I know how well this excellent princess deserves that you should love her, both in return for her love for you, and

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also on account of all her good qualities. I do not think you can do better than second this request, and I hope you will do so. I dare not venture, until the Emperor's decision be made, to write to Mme. the Archduchess Marie-Anne and make a fresh appeal for her good offices on your behalf; but, as you will certainly speak to her of the matter, pray tell her that it would be a great pleasure to me to know that you were with her, and tell her, too, of all my feelings towards her."

We have already seen that Madame Royale was quite capable of disagreeing with her uncle, when she refused to write a letter to the Abbé Edgeworth for publication in France, and quite frankly told the King her reasons for feeling unable to comply with his wishes. On this occasion, again, she disapproved of his advice, and did not shrink from saying that she did so. She was grateful for his kindness in thinking of her position; but that very kindness gave her confidence to speak openly.

"You wish me to remain in Prague with the Archduchess Marie-Anne, so as to avoid seeing the Frenchmen who may be coming to Vienna. You are right. It would be hateful to me to see those men; but, on the other hand, let me venture to point out that if I return to Vienna I shall not stay in the town, but shall go to the country, where I shall see no one, and least of all those men; and it seems to me that there is nothing against that. I will also remind you that you are kind enough to wish the Emperor to do something for me, for my

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future. If I be there, close to him, there is more likelihood that he will think of it. People are often forgotten when they are absent; I might very easily suffer that fate; that is the reason that I venture to put forward for my return.

“As for remaining in Prague, I am keenly alive to the kindness that makes you wish me to stay there; but you do not know my position here. I know you are only thinking of my welfare; you very often prove it; so I am not afraid of displeasing you by speaking freely to you.

“I do indeed love my cousin Marie-Anne; but I do not know if you are aware of the state she is in. She is suffering from chest-disease, and has been ill for several years, and is now reduced to drinking human milk. I am sure that if I remain here I must be constantly with her, and to be with a person in that state would certainly do me harm; I feel that it is weak of me to be afraid of that disease; but I cannot overcome my fears, and every one here thinks they are justified. Moreover, my cousin treats me with the greatest affection, but if I were to stay here I should be obliged to live at her expense, and I do not know if that would be convenient to her. I will also add that Mme. de Chanclos is obliged to return to Vienna with the Archduchess Amélie, and I should even be afraid that she might not return; it would be a great grief to me to lose the only person here in whom I can confide, and one to whom I owe much. All these considerations I venture to put before you, and I hope you will accept them. I will end by assuring you again that I detest all those Frenchmen,

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and should be very sorry to see a single one of them ; but none the less, for all the reasons I have alledged, I am very anxious to return to Vienna, to the country, and to remain there quietly without seeing any one, instead of staying here, even until my fate is settled. I feel perfect confidence, my very dear uncle, in the affection you are good enough to show me, and in your wish to make me happy, and I do not doubt therefore that you will listen kindly to the considerations that I have taken the liberty of laying before you."

The King recognised the reasonableness of his niece's arguments, and yielded without hesitation :

" I am touched by your confidence in me : it is a proof of your affection for me, and you know that I have no sweeter consolation in the world. When I thought it would be pleasanter for you to live in Prague than in Vienna I was altogether ignorant of the Archduchess Marie-Anne's state of health. God forbid that I should ever knowingly expose you to any danger, and I am more likely than most people to fear the dangers of chest-disease for you, since I have seen my eldest brother, my father, my mother, and my grandmother all die of it under my eyes one after the other. I therefore give up that idea entirely. Heaven grant that your refuge at Schönbrunn may be respected, and that you may never set eyes on one of the men whom you fear, with so much reason, to see ! I confess that, while I yield to your arguments, my mind is not quite at rest on that point ; but this will only give me another motive

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—though truly no other was needed—to hasten the moment that will crown all my prayers. To bring it more quickly I am doing my best to further your interests. There is no doubt that the presence of the person for whom one is negotiating greatly tends, as a rule, to success; but can you have any fear of being classed with the absent? It is not because you are my child, nor because you are all that remains to me of those I have lost, nor because Heaven seems to me to have robbed you of your parents to give me fatherhood; if you were a stranger to me I should still think you the most interesting person in the universe, and the Emperor has given you too many touching marks of his affection to leave any fear in my mind lest he should belie them.

“ Having reassured you on this point I must confess to you that I was really grieved to find no note for your cousin in your letter; I quite understand that you were in a hurry to send off the express messenger, but a few lines are quickly written. Reticence, no doubt, is the first of virtues in your sex and at your age. But everything has a limit, and considering the terms on which you are, coldness can only distress him uselessly. I hope that this omission, whether forgetfulness or negligence, will soon be repaired. Remember that this is the time, above all others, for laying the foundations of your future happiness, and that it is only just to pay back some of the tender feelings you so rightly inspire. You may be sure that you will find it best to follow the advice that my age, my affection, and our sorrows give me the right to offer you.”

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Madame Royale hastened to acknowledge her faults :

“ You are right to tell me that I ought to have written to my cousin. I thought so myself immediately. But I confess I was in such a hurry to send the messenger to you, that I only gave myself time to write to you. To-day I am delighted to enclose a letter for him.”

The King was enchanted with the letter, with the expressions of affection it contained, and most of all with the delight it gave to his nephew. “ His ardent and genuine delight made me feel twenty years younger,” he wrote to his brother. He thanked his niece effusively: “ Yesterday you gave me a most delicious moment, my dear child. My nephew was with me when I received your letter, and I did not lose a moment in giving him the one that was for him. I cannot attempt to describe his delight; he will do so himself far better than I could. I will confine myself to saying that, if I had ever had any doubts of the future happiness of either of you, I should have done with doubt to-day. You can imagine, then, how happy I have been myself; but you need not think that my happiness on my children’s behalf in any way lessened the happiness I derived from your letter to myself. It is a necessity to me to love, and to be loved; and the tenderness and confidence you show me are the fulfilment of all my prayers. Remember always that I am your father, and remind me often that you are my daughter.”

While the King was lavishing loving words upon

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Madame Royale he was eager to prove his affection by deeds as well, and, with a view to hastening on the marriage, was trying to secure some less precarious asylum than Blankenburg, whence the King of Prussia might expel him at any moment. He had applied to the Tsar Paul I, whom he knew to be sympathetic with his cause, having already appealed to him successfully. The negotiations between that sovereign and himself resulted in the offer that was made to him a few days later, of the town of Yever in Westphalia. But this offer had not yet reached him on the 21st June, on which day he wrote a letter to the Comte d'Artois, expressing his anxiety as to a possible place of refuge supposing he were obliged to leave Blankenburg.

“ . . . I will now answer the great question *ubi* with regard to the marriage of our children. It certainly cannot be here: the bare idea of such a crime would give a fainting-fit to the very polite but still more timid sovereign who winks at my presence in his territory; and yet I have no other place of refuge, and if circumstances were to force me to leave it I literally do not know where I could lay my head, and still less where I could set up a nuptial bed. *Ubi igitur?* you will ask me again. Frankly, I can give you no answer save the vaguest suggestions. I shall repeat no fine phrases of hospitality and generosity, to which jargon one pays little heed now, although one still hears it: this is all that I can say to you, and even this I cannot as yet regard as a certainty.

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“ Without putting Paul on a par with his mother one must admit that, of all the sovereigns, he is the only one who has preserved any sense of honour. He has pride, and he is a man of feeling. The first quality led him to recognise me as King, the second moved his heart to favour a marriage that will be—as I should still say even if we were quite unconcerned in it—the most interesting marriage ever seen. It is on him that I am founding my slight hopes of securing an asylum.

“ In another quarter, the Bishop of Nancy says he has it on good authority that the Emperor is trying on his own account to secure one for me : this is a forlorn hope, and if I were offered it I should feel it necessary to say ‘timeo Danaos.’ However, it is possible that the creature may chance to have a decent impulse, and we must wait to see what his intentions are. But I am counting more on what may come from Russia than on what may come from Vienna.”

While awaiting the solution of a matter that was so important to himself the King did not give up the idea of making an opportunity for his nephew and niece to meet. Since the interview he desired had been prevented from taking place in Prague, he hoped it might take place in Vienna. Saint-Priest had written to Mme. de Chanclos on the subject, and her answer was not discouraging to the hopes of the King, who had himself informed Madame Royale of his wishes. The Comte d’Artois having sent him a letter for his future daughter-in-law, and begged him to forward it to her, he took the opportunity of urging the matter.

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“ I am delighted, my dear child, to execute my brother’s commission by sending you the enclosed letter. He left it open; I concluded that he intended me to read it, and sure as I already was of his affection for you I was charmed to find it expressed in words. I greatly wish, as he does himself, that his son could be the bearer of it, and could talk to you for a moment of the feelings of which he discourses to me all day long. I wish it on his account, for that happy moment would give him greater strength to await the time that is the object of all his prayers and mine. I also wish it for your own sake, for you would see that I am speaking the truth when I talk of your future happiness. I hope that this is not altogether a dream, and that the opportunity missed in Prague may soon occur again.

“ My brother wishes me to speak to you of his position, which is unaltered. He is still fixed at the post where he is best able to serve our common interests, but it is a consolation to him in this kind of exile to feel that he is where his duty bids him to be. But, as you see from his letter, his thoughts are fixed, like mine, upon the future. He sees the happy day coming when we shall all be together again, and though he was not present, as I was, at that horrible time that developed your character so early, in a way that was equally fine and touching, yet he knows every detail of the circumstances, and, independently of his affection for you is proud that he is destined to call you his daughter. At this moment he is doing me a service, by giving me another opportunity to speak to you of the paternal love that I, too, feel for

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you, and to receive marks of your affection. This is the greatest consolation I can have, and I tell you frankly that the post never arrives from Vienna without rousing in me a feeling of pleasure or sadness, according as it brings me news of you or not."

When the King employed all this ardour and persistence in assuring his niece of her French relations' eagerness to see her again, and of the importance he himself attached to an early interview between her and the Duc d'Angoulême, it never occurred to him that she would not be equally impatient to meet her cousin. But it was the unexpected that happened. Hardly was she informed of her uncle's plans when she called to her aid the spirit of decision that always characterised her, and explained to him, without circumlocution, the difficulties that would arise, in her opinion, from the Duc d'Angoulême's visit.

" . . . You wish my cousin to come incognito; that is very difficult, not to say impossible. At the Court there are no mysteries, and every one who comes to see me is known. On the other hand, if his identity be known, and the Emperor does not treat him with the honour that is due to him, the blame for this act of discourtesy will fall on me, though I shall have caused it quite innocently. And then, if I may venture to say so, it seems to me too that when people see one another like that their marriage ought to be close at hand, and I believe you do not think of mine taking place before the conclusion of peace and the settlement of affairs, which surely cannot be before the winter. Taking one



LOUIS-ANTOINE OF FRANCE, DUC D'ANGOULÊME.
AFTER DANLOUX.
(*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)



MARIE-THÉRÈSE CHARLOTTE OF FRANCE.
AFTER DANLOUX.
(*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)

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consideration with another it seems to me, earnestly as I wish to see my cousin, that it would be better to go on quietly and wait to see how things settle down. If the Emperor be really concerned about us he must surely consider you in his treaty of peace, and, if I may venture to say so, myself as well. If peace be really made it must soon be declared. If it be not made I believe it is your intention to send my cousin to Condé's army. In that case what would be the use of our knowing each other better? I am quite sure that all the good you say of him is true; but I think we must go on waiting patiently; the present state of things cannot last long. Affairs in France, and here too, must soon be cleared up. Then, when I have the happiness of being with you again, I shall also have that of renewing my knowledge of my cousin, whom I still remember, though I have not seen him for nearly eight years. I do not doubt that, since those days, the school of misfortune and the good education he has received from M. de Sérent have contributed to make him all that he is said to be.

“I ask your pardon, my very dear uncle, for all these observations; but my affection for you and my whole family makes me speak frankly when their interests are at stake.”

In spite of these arguments, the wisdom of which he recognised and could not fail to commend, the King did not consider himself beaten. “It no longer depends upon me,” he answered, “whether your cousin shall pay you a visit. . . . It depends entirely

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on the will of the Emperor. If His Imperial Majesty should see disadvantages in it we must give up that hope, as we have given up so many others that were not more pleasing, but were apparently nearer to fulfilment. But however delighted I may be with your answer, if the Emperor should consent I feel it would be impossible for me to withstand my nephew's natural impatience, and I am quite sure that no one could make any reasonable objection."

The question, therefore, remained in abeyance, and was left in the hands of Mme. de Chanclos, who promised to bring it before the Emperor when he returned to Vienna. When he did so at the end of September he disapproved of the King's plan all the more strongly because the event that had taken place in Paris on the eighteenth of Fructidor made it necessary for him, in all matters likely to attract the Directory's attention, to behave with special caution. He considered it impossible for the Duc d'Angoulême to arrive and stay in Vienna incognito. Madame Royale, in transmitting his answer to the King, repeated what she had already said. It was not a favourable moment. It was best to await events.

"I am bewildered when I try to look into the future. It seems to me that everything is constantly becoming worse, and hardly does one have a moment of hope before things grow suddenly worse again, as has just been the case, for there seemed to be good reason for hope. What with the *émigrés* and priests returning to France everything seemed to be going well. And now I think matters are worse than ever. It is a terrible thing."

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The King could do nothing but resign himself. But, without holding his niece responsible for the Emperor's answer, he was made uneasy by the eagerness with which she approved of the imperial decision; and the suspicion that an attempt was still being made in Vienna to "Austrianise" Madame Royale again took possession of his mind and d'Avaray's.

It is certain that both in Vienna and at Schönbrunn, where she often stayed, Madame Royale received a great many attentions from her cousins the archduchesses, and valued them extremely. The younger princesses were like sisters to her, and the eldest, the Archduchess Marie-Anne, cared for her like a mother, and gave as much attention to her moral education as the Bishop of Nancy. The bishop and the archduchess, indeed, kept up a regular correspondence. The interest that they both took in the princess is very apparent in the following two letters, which deserve to be given here on that account.

On the 21st April, 1797, La Fare wrote to the archduchess :

"MADAME,

"The national misfortune has given your Royal Highness a personal pleasure that you little expected. Bonaparte's alarming advance has obliged their Royal Highnesses Madame Amélie, Madame de France, and our lords the Archdukes to seek a refuge in Prague. On both sides this temporary reunion must be a great pleasure, which has been enjoyed all the more keenly during the last few days, no doubt,

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on account of the prolonging of the armistice and of the reasonable hopes we now have of an early peace on honourable terms.

“My equally sincere and respectful devotion to your Royal Highness and Madame de France makes me delight in your being together. Now that confidence is firmly established between you, the innermost thoughts of the heart will be poured out unreservedly. All the counsels of friendship will be valued and followed. God, who makes all things work together for His will, perhaps intends the events that we see going on around us to mark a period of great moral progress in Madame de France. The princess has qualities worthy of her birth: it devolves upon herself to develop them and bring them to perfection. There is no one who can guide her in this noble task more wisely than Madame. Reflection and reasoning will not suffice for it. It is necessary to saturate the mind with the sublime truths so eloquently expressed by Bossuet, Fénelon, Massillon, and so many others. I should wish Madame de France to acquire the habit, not only of reading, but also of meditating regularly on the following works: *L'Histoire universelle* of M. Bossuet; the same author's *Politique sacrée tirée des livres saints*, and his principal *Oraisons funèbres*; Massillon's *Petit Carême*; and *Télémaque*, *Les Entretiens de Phocion*, *Les Dialogues des morts*, *La Vie de Constantin le Grand*, and *La Vie de Théodose*, all works by M. de Fénelon.

“To these profound studies Madame should add a daily reading of the *Livres sapientiaux*, from which she should extract the finest maxims, that is to say,

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those that are most appropriate to her condition and destiny.

“I say nothing of secular reading: Your Royal Highness’s amazingly profound knowledge in that respect can tell you what will be the most useful books to read, and to advise her to read.

“For a long time, Madame, I have felt strongly urged to open this subject. My motive is the desire to see Madame de France as perfect as possible. Whatever her destiny may be, she must remember that for the rest of her life she will perpetually have a stream of brilliant light directed upon her; every eye will be fixed upon her and will follow her wherever she goes. She must be great and perfect in every respect. She can become so by dint of constant and energetic endeavour.”

On the 2nd June the archduchess answered this letter:

“My cousin is perfectly well, and has greatly improved since I saw her last. She has always shown me the greatest affection and confidence. All that you say on the subject of the books you would like her to read is certainly quite right. But in this country it is difficult to procure good books in French, and indeed I think if you yourself, Monseigneur, would mention to her the books that you would like her to read, it would make more impression upon her than if it came from me, who am not a competent judge like yourself; and she would try to procure them. I know that she has Bossuet’s *Politique sacrée*, all Massillon’s sermons, and also the *Petit*

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Carême. If I have an opportunity I will try to find out whether she has the others. With regard to the *Livres sapientiaux* I do not know if she would venture to read them, since there are many people who do not think it right to read those books of Holy Writ. It would be best for Father Antonin to suggest the idea to her, especially as it seems to me she places great confidence in him, and even attaches great importance to all that he writes to her. I know how greatly your attachment to my cousin makes you wish for everything that is likely to develop her character, and I am as firmly persuaded as you are that she is destined to become something very great.

“ During the last few days I have made a discovery that gives me great pleasure : some prayers that she has compiled for herself. One sees her soul so plainly in them, and one can even detect feelings that as a rule have no opportunity of appearing : perfect submission to the divine will, and the keen desire she had to shed her blood for the Faith. How earnestly she appeals to Heaven for her country, for the guilty, for all the good clergy who are destined to be martyred, and for those who are not ! It is all as beautiful as it can be, and made a profound impression upon me, which I did not expect when I began to read them. How she thanks God that there is no feeling of hatred in her heart for the authors of her misfortunes !

“ All that I am telling you on this subject is confidential, for you know how simple and modest she is : and she would be deeply distressed if she had any idea that it was known. She has written down the

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names of certain people for whom she wishes to pray, among them being : *For the Emperor my liberator* ; and she said to me so simply with regard to them : ‘ I wrote this for the days when my own mind provides me with nothing,’ which shows that she can converse with God without the help of books. Nothing escapes me, observing and loving her as tenderly as I do ; and you are not a person likely to regard these things as trifles. For it seems to me that one may sometimes learn to know others better by observing them in little things, when they are not thinking of themselves, than on great occasions, when they are more on their guard.”

This tribute from the good archduchess to Madame Royale gives us an insight into the princess’s mind and character at this time, eighteen months after her arrival at the Court of Austria. It was then the beginning of June. On peace being concluded between Austria and the Directory the archduchesses who had been sent to Prague with Madame Royale, a few weeks earlier, returned to Vienna and joined the Emperor and Empress at Schönbrunn ; whereas the young princess, to her great annoyance, remained in the capital with her household, in the palace of the Belvedere. It grieved her to be parted from her cousins, says La Fare, and she missed the leafy shades of Schönbrunn.

CHAPTER VIII

PASSING CLOUDS

THE King was quite alive to the importance of his niece's material interests, and to the necessity of obtaining an income for the support of the young couple. He had every right to count upon the help of Austria in furthering the marriage he so ardently desired; and he hoped against hope that the imperial Court would not refuse to come to the aid of Marie-Antoinette's daughter. But he knew the egoism of that Court; he knew it to be self-interested and avaricious; and he was by no means certain of obtaining all that he wished—namely, an annual pension, the advance of a sufficient sum to pay the expenses of setting up a household, the restitution of the late Queen's diamonds (which she had succeeded in sending out of France before her imprisonment), and the payment of certain sums that she had inherited from her mother, but had not received at the time of her death. At the same time, whatever might be the result of the measures employed by his representative in Vienna, Monseigneur de La Fare, Bishop of Nancy, he did not mean the marriage of his children to depend upon it. He would neglect nothing that could serve to crown his efforts with success, or win further help for the young couple from the Spanish and Neapolitan Bourbons. But whether he were successful or not the marriage should take place.

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The marriage *must* take place; and if he should have nothing but poverty and exile to offer his niece, he knew her too well to imagine she would be afraid to accept them.

“I feel very sure,” he wrote to her on the 28th July, “that our relations will make it their business to provide for you until a happier time comes. Indeed, I should think I was mortally insulting them if I were to allow a doubt on the subject to enter my mind. But I do not know what their means will permit them to do as regards the amount; I am quite resigned in any case. It is a long time now since I knew what it was to be even comfortable. I should have no regrets if it were not for my children. But my nephew is accustomed to the same life as myself, and as for you, dear child, can I ever forget the life that the murderers of your family made you lead for so long? My greatest regret is that I cannot fix the time that will make us all happy. But I hope soon to have a settled place of abode, and whatever it may be like it will certainly be preferable to the Temple Tower, and the love we give you shall compensate you for the twenty months you spent alone in that frightful place.”

The resignation expressed in this letter, and the pessimism it betrays, are more apparent than real, for the King at this time was quite convinced that, in default of his relations, the Tsar would come to his aid. Being already sure of an asylum at Yever, in Westphalia, he did not doubt that this generous monarch would also provide him with funds to live there decently with his family. To obtain them it

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was only necessary, thought the King, to ask for them; and in this same month of July Saint-Priest set out to Russia,¹ charged with various requests to the Tsar. Of them all, the one on which he was bidden to lay especial stress was the request for help in facilitating Madame Royale's marriage to her cousin. The necessary means, in the King's opinion, might easily be forthcoming as the result of an understanding between the cabinets of Vienna and St. Petersburg, and that understanding might be brought about if the Tsar were willing.

Affairs were at this point when it came to his ears indirectly that his niece in Vienna was disturbed because the Austrian government, in negotiating peace with France, was making no stipulation for an indemnity for her. He was surprised—and told her so—that she could dream of accepting anything whatever from her parents' murderers. She should have no desire but the fall of the Republic.

“Who could imagine,” she answered, “that I have any desire but the ruin of that usurping government? Assuredly I detest it for all its horrors; and my own interests, even if I had no other motive than that, would lead me to desire its ruin. As for being included in the treaty, I confess that I should like the Emperor to do something for me, so that I might live independently—independently of the Republic especially, but also of all other Powers. I do not like being a burden, and I think that at this moment there is not a single

¹ For an account of Saint-Priest's mission see the 1st vol. of my *Histoire de l'Émigration*, pp. 395 et seq.



THE DUC D'ANGOULÊME AS A CHILD.—BY MME. FILLEUL.
(Versailles Museum.)

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ally to be depended upon. I even think that you need not congratulate yourself on the Spanish ones. That is why I feel, since we can count on no one, that it would be best to live independently. These are the reasons that make me wish the Emperor to do something for me, in his treaty with France. But from the Republic I look for nothing in the world; I detest it quite as much as I should."

"I have received, my dear child, your letter of the 27th July," answered her uncle, "and, to enter at once upon the subject in which my heart is most concerned, God forbid that I should ever imagine you capable of degrading yourself so far as to accept the least thing from those monsters; I know well that you are far too high-principled. But I was obliged to say what I said to you, because I know how malicious people are, and others than I might have made this odious suggestion. But no one desires more ardently than I that the Emperor should care for your interests in the treaty he is about to conclude, and it gives me a pleasure too great for words to see the soundness of your views as to the necessity of being independent. As for a dwelling-place, we could not have hoped for anything better than to be given one by the Emperor of Russia. The asylum he offers me is the principality of Yever, in Westphalia, on the left bank and not very far from the mouth of the Weser, a few leagues from Bremen. I have accepted it gratefully, as you can well imagine, but nevertheless I cannot go thither at once; it would be imprudent as long as the patriots have troops on the right bank of the Rhine and even

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in Holland; but when those countries are free I shall be as much so myself, in the territory of this worthy son of Catherine II, as it is possible for me to be.

“ You say that you imagine my nephew will accompany me; but do you really think, when the general peace is concluded, or at all events our lot is determined, and I am therefore able to settle down in a fixed abode to await happier days, that I could possibly fail to gather round me all who are dear to me? I do not know if Yever is a pleasant place to live in; but I know that with my children I shall think any place an earthly paradise, and I should be too unhappy if I thought that you did not agree with me. But even to conceive such an idea would be useless self-torture, and if I wish you to reassure me it is only that I may have yet another proof of the affection on which my happiness depends.”

To pacify his niece more completely he redoubled his attentions and kindnesses. On the 1st August she received from him, through La Fare, “ a charming coat of embroidered linen. It is not the embroidery, pretty though it be, that pleases me, but the fact that it is sent by you.”

He next held out hopes of a portrait of Marie-Antoinette, and promised her one of himself, and one of the Duc d'Angoulême. She awaited the last all the more impatiently that she was herself, at that moment, sitting to a Viennese painter, in order that her betrothed might have a picture of her. Her wishes in this matter, however, by no means signified that she was in any haste to be married. She had

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already said that she would prefer to wait for happier times : she said it to the Comte de Saint-Priest, and also to La Fare. How could she think of marriage while the royal family was penniless and homeless ! The letter in which her uncle recalled the cruel memories of the Temple Tower furnished her with an opportunity of urging her views.

“To be unhappy, my very dear uncle, it is not necessary to be in the Temple Tower. Certainly there is nothing worse than a prison. But the losses I have suffered are enough to make me unhappy always, especially if I were to incur the just reproach, as time went on, of bringing others into the world to be unhappy too. It is this that makes me feel sure you will not think of my marriage before peace has definitely been concluded, and affairs have quite settled down, and we know for certain what my relations and I have to fear or hope. That is my way of looking at the matter. I am sure it is yours too. You are too wise and too reasonable to look at things from any other point of view.”

This fresh indication of a resolute will, which the King had already seen set up in opposition to his own on more than one occasion, could not fail to displease him ; but he loved his niece too much, and was too anxious to humour her, to let his annoyance appear. His answer was affectionate, if brief.

“I know very well, my dear child, that sorrow is not only found within the walls of a prison : though I have recovered my liberty, my wounded heart is as sore as ever. But, comparing one dwelling-place with

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another, there is none that is not preferable to a prison. I do not think you can imagine for a moment that I wish to make you unhappy, either in your own person, or through others who are no less dear to me than to you : that idea would be too insulting to me. It is, on the contrary, your happiness that is the chief object of my prayers. You can trust to my affection to fix the best time for the event that will contribute to it the most. If I had only consulted my heart's desire that time would have already come. But although it does not entirely depend upon me to hasten it, it will be the constant object of my most ardent wishes, and of the wishes, I may add, of all good Frenchmen."

Although these words gave complete satisfaction to Madame Royale, she remained under the impression that an attempt had been made to override her will, and hasten her into a marriage in regard to which her attitude was one of resolution rather than readiness, and which she was determined to postpone. This was the first cloud that rose between her and the King, and—let us hasten to add—it was the last. It was quickly dissipated. But in the meantime it had the effect of calling the princess's attention to various circumstances that had not yet struck her, but that now, as she thought of them collectively, seemed in her eyes to prove that she was being treated with neglect.

She had no accusation to bring against the King, nor the Duc d'Angoulême, nor the Queen, who was then at Budweiss in Bohemia, nor her great-aunts in

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Naples : they all wrote to her regularly. But in eighteen months she had received only one letter from the Comte d'Artois, not a single one from the Comtesse d'Artois, who was living in Turin, and none from her Spanish cousins. The Queen of Naples, too, had waited for a long time before giving her the least mark of sympathy or remembrance. She concluded that a portion of her family regarded her with a degree of indifference that she felt to be a slight. She found further evidence in the fact that she only heard accidentally of events that were interesting to her : she was informed of nothing that took place. Most frequently it was from the gazettes or from visitors that she received news of her relations, and when she realised this she began to fear that she was disregarded.

To these grievances, which her Austrian relations were far from dispelling, and indeed took pleasure in exaggerating, there was added another—the last straw. On the 22nd August the Duc d'Angoulême, while riding in Blankenburg, fell from his horse and broke his collar-bone. The princess learnt the news a few days later, from a newspaper. She was deeply wounded. She considered that the King, in omitting to write to her, had treated her with marked discourtesy ; and the imperial family did not fail to make the most of the humiliation. As a matter of fact all the blame lay with the post, for the King had written to his niece a few hours after the accident. But this she refused to believe until her uncle's letter reached her on the 2nd September, after a delay of several days, and brought her news of the invalid.

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“Yesterday, my dear child, I received your letter of the 12th, and I gave my nephew the one that was for him. You can imagine how grieved he is to be obliged to apply to me to answer such a charming letter; but he cannot help it. This morning a fall from his horse, which might have been much more dangerous, broke his collar-bone. This accident did not prevent him from walking three miles, and, as his good heart never fails him, instead of going to his own rooms to have the bone set he came himself to tell me what had happened, so that I should not be so anxious as if I had heard the news before seeing him. My surgeon, who is very clever, set the bone immediately afterwards; it is a simple fracture, and I hope it will not be long before he has quite recovered: but the operation could not fail to be painful. I had not the courage to be present at the most painful moment. I arrived when the bandaging was nearly done, and he was so brave and natural and calm that, if I had not known otherwise I might quite easily have thought he was merely at his toilet. He was bled as a precautionary measure, and he is as well as is possible in his condition.

“But if he is in a poor way physically his mind, thanks to your letter, is in a very different state, and his only regret is that he cannot himself tell you of his happiness.

“‘Do please, my dear uncle,’ he said to me, ‘give my sweet cousin a faithful description of all the feelings that I hardly dare mention to her. In her kindness she wishes to contribute to my happiness; she little knows how far she succeeds by merely

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expressing the wish. It is I, rather, who should wish to contribute to hers, and every day and moment of my life shall be devoted entirely to that object. I feel very keenly what she says to me of your affection for me, and I even venture to regard it as a sign in my favour. The cruel things that took place under her eyes no doubt tended to develop her courage; but if mine should ever fail it would be in her that I should seek an example, and the desire to be always worthy of her would suffice to make me banish every thought that was unworthy of myself."

"That is, word for word, what I heard from his lips less than an hour ago; but I wish I could describe the expression with which the words were said to me: then they would make an equally strong impression upon you."

It is very probable that the King's customary eloquence contributed something to his nephew's passionate phrases, but none the less they were eminently calculated to put an end to Madame Royale's grievances, and drive away her resentment. Her answer shows that her annoyance was instantly dispelled. She thanked her uncle for writing to her "at once," and her cousin for thinking of her "in the midst of his sufferings."

"But I must venture to entreat you, my very dear uncle, to forbid his writing to me until he has quite recovered, since quiet is absolutely necessary to him. I am delighted with the courage, and the affection for you, that he showed by walking three miles after the accident, and going in search of you;

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I pity him very much for all he must be suffering, and I hope he will soon be well."

It is obvious, from these words, that the cloud was dissipated. But a little negligence in the direction of Blankenburg, in the matter of sending further news, was all that was needed to bring it back. This is apparent in a letter that the princess wrote a fortnight later. She had just received one from her uncle, on her return from a pilgrimage to a certain shrine of the Virgin, at a distance of "nine posts" from Schönbrunn. "I was beginning to be anxious," was her reply, "on account of receiving no news from you; I even asked the bishop if you had said nothing to him on the subject. But he seemed very much surprised when I spoke to him about it, and apparently he had heard nothing of the accident."

In a short time the Duc d'Angoulême was perfectly well. A word in a letter from the King informed the princess of the fact, but so briefly that she suspected the truth was being concealed from her. She feared that her cousin had been permanently injured, but did not venture to speak of her fears to the King. It is none the less a fact that, during the time with which we are dealing, he was more disturbed than he had hitherto been by his niece's state of mind. It seemed to him that the style of her letters showed her to be no longer "so firm and determined in her resolution as she had been when she first left France." D'Avary, to whom he confided his anxiety, thought it was justified, and advised him to employ every possible means of discovering the truth.

The Marquis de Bonnay, a French noble who had

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formerly been a brilliant and familiar figure at the Court of Versailles, and was now, as an *émigré*, often entrusted by the princes with confidential missions, happened at this moment to be at Blankenburg. He had paused on his way to Austria, in order to pay his court to his master, and take his orders for Vienna. On d'Avaray's advice the King determined to confide in him, and make use of his loyalty and zeal to discover the true condition of Madame Royale's mind.

“There is one thing that really torments me, my dear marquis,” said the King. “My niece's letters make me afraid that they have succeeded in *Austrianising* her. It seems to me that her resolution is not as firm as it was, and I am told that the French who are permitted to pay court to her do not receive the welcome they have a right to expect from her. I do not doubt that she would obey me if I were actually to order her to join me, and carry out her parents' wishes. But may it not have been constantly impressed upon her that a marriage with my nephew would condemn her to a temporary state of obscurity, and may she not at last have begun to shrink from the idea of it? It is this that disturbs me. You are going to Vienna, you will see her: try to find out what she thinks, and, if necessary, revive her interest in the marriage and make her wish for it. Do your best to further my desires, which are those of the Duc d'Angoulême, and also those of France.”

Bonnay began by making objections. He was not in a position, in Vienna, to carry out the King's

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wishes. But the latter insisted. He knew the devotion and ability of this faithful royalist, and trusted his quick discernment; and, after all, he only asked that the marquis should make himself useful in so far as it was possible. Bonnay finally yielded, and promised to do his utmost to satisfy his master.

After reaching Vienna and being received by Madame Royale, whose treatment of him was everything he could wish, he was in a position to assert at once that even if the Emperor, when he negotiated for his cousin's release, had hoped to make her of use in the aggrandisement of his House, her opposition to the idea soon led him to give it up. Her resistance was mainly owing to Mme. de Soucy. That lady had done her best to forearm Madame Royale, and put her on her guard against the wishes of the Court of Vienna. And, "to add the weapon of disgust to all the others," she had not even shrunk from confiding to the princess some very intimate information with regard to the Archduke Charles's health and person. It was she, too, who had advised Madame Royale to write to the King as soon as she left France, and before she reached Vienna.

Being thus forewarned, and little accustomed to dissimulation, the princess had shown herself unmoved by the caresses of her relations, and had met the Emperor's advances so coldly and unresponsively that, at the end of forty-eight hours, he had felt it necessary to ask for an explanation. The explanation was given, and the result was that Francis II had made a solemn promise not to thwart Madame Royale's wishes. From that moment the situation

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had remained unchanged, and there was no reason to assert that Louis XVI's daughter had been "Austrianised," unless by this it was meant that she had been unable, in the places where she had been living, to learn to know and value the French.

"As a general rule we are by no means beloved among foreigners," said Bonnay in his report to d'Avaray. "In Vienna we are loved less than elsewhere, and in the imperial palace even less than in other classes of society. Not six weeks ago the Empress, wishing to disparage Mgr. le duc d'Enghien, said of him: 'Oh, as for him, he is a thorough Frenchman!'"

Madame, then, must have been accustomed to hearing satirical anecdotes more often than praises of her family and fellow-countrymen. But this had not prevented her from giving a good reception to such of them as she thought worthy of her esteem and confidence. Of these there was a large number: the Duc d'Enghien and his officers, the Comte d'Albignac, the Comte du Cayla, the Marquis de Bonnay himself, and many another. It was only to men of whom she had heard that their conduct was irregular that the pious princess showed coldness and reserve.

As for the King's fears with regard to his niece's intentions—fears arising from the fact that "her style was not as resolute" as when she first left France—Bonnay came to the conclusion, after careful inquiry, that they were ill-founded. When she was first released Madame Royale was exasperated by Mme. de Soucy's insinuations, and by the rumours she had heard with regard to the Emperor's intentions.

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Then, when she was hardly out of prison, she was told of her parents' wishes, and in her determination to carry them out she felt it was impossible to use too much energy of expression. Hence the resolute tone of the letters she wrote at that time, to show that her will in the matter was not to be doubted. But two years had passed since then. Her will was known and accepted; no one thought of thwarting it; there was no use, therefore, in manifesting it with the heat that was necessary when the Court of Vienna seemed to be opposing it.

Bonnay did not fail to recognise, however, that if there were any relaxation in the princess's determination, it might well be for one of two reasons. It might be because her heart and her vanity were wounded by the lack of energy that had been shown in trying to please and charm her, and win her love; or else because an attempt had been made to hasten the marriage without her consent and in opposition to her views. On this point he expresses himself very plainly in the report that is our authority. Was it possible, unless she had a romantic temperament that neither her education nor her experience was likely to have given her, that Madame Thérèse should love her cousin so passionately as to brave everything in her desire to hasten her marriage?

“No, Monsieur le comte, Madame Thérèse is not passionate; she is essentially reasonable; she sees and judges things coolly. She sees that the King has had until now, and indeed still has, a very precarious and uncertain dwelling-place. She pointed

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this out herself. Where could she have joined him? At Verona, whence he was expelled? In Condé's camp, where he found it impossible to remain? At Blankenburg, whence the King of Prussia's slightest sign, or even Madame's arrival itself, might make his departure necessary, and where it is doubtful whether he can stay if Hanover should be invaded? This is what Madame thought and said; it is this that has kept her hitherto from either wishing or intending to conclude an affair that does not seem to her to be endangered by being a little deferred.

“ She believes herself to be free, she is determined to be free, and the very idea of constraint has only the effect of alarming her. The aim of every effort must be to win her, not to hasten her decision; it is to be feared, if she were treated otherwise, that she might—not, perhaps, enter into another engagement, for her religion and principles would forbid that—but defer and evade the fulfilment of the one she has already contracted, sacred as it seems to her now . . . With her character, if she were once to bring herself to resist, or, if you will, to disobey, it is to be feared that she would never yield, and there can be no doubt that she would have the support of this Court. On the other hand, if she were to force herself to obey, and her obedience were a sacrifice, could Mgr. le duc d'Angoulême feel flattered, or could he be made happy, by an acquiescence that Madame's heart had not ratified? ”

To avoid the sad consequences that he had just been considering, though he had no real fear of them,

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there was but one means, said the Marquis de Bonnay ; namely to make every effort to convince Madame Thérèse that she was loved. But this means could not be employed in Vienna, where she lived alone and in retirement, and was constantly watched. She received visits but rarely, and those always in the presence of Mme. de Chanclos or her niece, Mlle. de Roisin, “ a very agreeable girl, of rare merits, whose marriage has been arranged with the son of a Comte Esterhazy, the brother of the one who is the minister in Naples.” This means could only be employed at Blankenburg, and was in the hands of the King and the Duc d’Angoulême. With them alone it rested to ensure that they were not forgotten, and to prove that they did not forget. Any attempt to prove this to Madame Thérèse through the intervention of the French residents in Vienna would be labour lost. Communications “ from mouth to mouth or even by writing ” would in the first place be almost impossible, seeing that the princess was surrounded by persons who were altogether devoted to the Emperor, but who nevertheless possessed her entire confidence ; and in the second place they would be injurious to the persons entrusted with them, and would “ infallibly spoil everything.”

“ There should be frequent letters, and letters from all the members of the royal family. Monsieur, who is the greatest defaulter of all, should write—write affectionately and write often. He should send his portrait ; the King, the Duc d’Angoulême, and the other princes and princesses should do the same.

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Without entering into political affairs her correspondents should give Madame detailed news of her family, their situation and movements, and in a word should keep her informed of everything, and constantly prove to her that they associate her both with the present and the future.

“ . . . There are little details of Mgr. le duc d'Angoulême's private life that could not fail to produce a good effect if they were told at the right moment, and with skill. For instance, Monseigneur is attached to his religion and fulfils its duties. I heard that when he left Edinburgh he asked, of his own accord, to perform his devotions, and did so. Madame Thérèse, who is extremely pious, would have been immensely pleased to hear of this, and the Bishop of Nancy regretted very much that he had not known of it. You know, Monsieur le comte, how much may be effected with women in general—and why not with princesses?—by the art of showing off to the best advantage the men whom one wishes them to love. You must devote all your energies to making Mgr. le duc d'Angoulême appear to the best advantage in Madame's eyes : you must do this on all occasions, but especially in such matters as appeal to the princess's temperament and tastes.

“ . . . Madame Thérèse is courageous and pious and has been cruelly tried ; for two years and a half she languished amid the horrors of a dreadful prison ; she drank the cup of sorrow almost to the dregs when her lips had hardly touched the cup of life ; and for these reasons she would never be held back by secondary considerations, such as the disadvantages

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of a fate sadly inferior to that which she has a right to expect. But if it were possible that the sight of honourable discomfort, or the fear of having children whose position was unworthy of their birth, could ever overcome her sense of duty and shake her resolution, this would be yet another reason for trying to influence her heart beforehand, in favour of the match that she is desired to make."

To win this young heart by every possible means—this was the advice, then, with which the author of the report concluded his interesting confidences and pithy reflections. He then added one final piece of information, which threw considerable light on Madame Royale's delicate situation at the Austrian Court :

"There has been, and indeed there still is, a rumour in Vienna that the Empress has little love for Madame Thérèse, or rather that she is jealous of her. Some think that she fears the effect of the princess's charms upon the Emperor; others, and these are in the majority, think that she is afraid of the credit or influence that the princess might possibly gain. I venture to hold an opinion of my own, and believe that the Empress, if the feelings that are imputed to her be really hers, is jealous of the love of the people, which is denied to her, generally speaking, and is universally accorded to Madame Thérèse . . . However this may be, and whatever may be the cause of the slight estrangement that has been thought to exist, it has had no effect upon the outward observance of proper respect, and indeed, if I

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am to say frankly what I really think, I believe it cannot fail to render the greatest service to the King's wishes and the interests of Mgr. le duc d'Angoulême."

This report bears the date of the 24th December, 1797. When the King read it, early in the following year, its revelations and advice had lost much of their significance, for he had already convinced himself that his fears concerning his niece were ill-founded. His conviction was grounded on the generous outburst of sympathy with which she entered into two fresh trials that had befallen him : the one in Paris—the events of the 18th Fructidor (7th September)—and the other at Blankenburg itself. The Duke of Brunswick had just presented him with an order from the King of Prussia, which obliged him to leave his place of refuge.

CHAPTER IX

THE KING IS DRIVEN FROM BLANKENBURG

THE news of the recent events in Paris reached Vienna on the 23rd September. Madame Royale hastened to write to her uncle, without waiting for a letter from him.

“ It is with the greatest distress that I have read in the newspapers of all that has been happening in France. *Mon Dieu!* if all they say be true, you are compromised in the matter, and many others with you. It is at least fortunate that as yet no blood has been shed; but I fear very much that it will happen soon; indeed it is rumoured here that both Pichegru and Carnot have been killed: I do not know either of them; but it seems to me that they favoured the good cause. The person I pity most in the whole affair is the poor Duchesse d’Orléans, who had had her property restored to her, but has now been banished, I believe, to Africa. She, at least, has always been blameless and unfortunate. It seems that it is the Jacobins who are triumphing now. Of all the things that could happen this is the worst. I am very curious to know, now, whether there will be peace, and whether those people still wish for it. I fear not, because they will be afraid of their own troops, who are discontented, and if they should return to France, will spread their discontent there.

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On the other hand, however, I believe they cannot continue the war, for surely they can have no money left. I am curious and anxious to know how things will settle down. I am waiting with the greatest impatience for fresh news of events in Paris."

The King answered: ". . . I recognised your own good heart in all that you say to me of the recent events in Paris. It is certainly most fortunate that this crisis entailed no bloodshed, but I think this must be attributed less to the moderation of the triumvirs than to their consciousness of weakness. I deeply lament, with you, the fate of those who were victims on this occasion to their zeal on behalf of our party; but we must not allow our courage to be shaken; nothing can hold it back. As for me, it matters little to me that my name has appeared in the affair; my faithful subjects had no need of these events to show them that my first concern is to restore their happiness, nor did the usurpers of my authority need to be convinced that I shall remain quiet as long as they tyrannise over my country."

A few days later, Madame Royale having expressed her alarm at the tragic confusion that reigned on all sides, and the fresh complications that threatened to arise, the King wrote to her again:

". . . The future is indeed, as you well say, surrounded with a thick veil, and the past does not incline us to think that the veil hides anything good. However, one can lift one corner of it, and the sight that is revealed is not so alarming, I think, as one

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might imagine. The priests and *émigrés* are, I admit, being persecuted at present, but public opinion tends to recall them, and its inclination towards religion and the monarchy does not change. It is held in restraint, it is true, but nothing can check it for long except the revolutionary *régime*; and that the tyrants now in power dare not revert to that terrible *régime* is proved by the fact that they are afraid to execute—though they have not annulled—the law of blood that condemns every returned *émigré* to death. A usurping and unnatural government can only be maintained by violence, and every half-measure of this kind only reveals its weakness and irritates its subjects. This is the state of things in France, and although it is a hard moment to live through, this state holds out great hopes for the future. Would to God that the great question of peace or war were no more obscure !”

The treaty of peace between France and Austria was signed shortly afterwards: “. . . I had heard the news of the peace,” wrote Madame Royale, “but I know no more than you of the conditions; they are very important. As for coming events, they are covered with a thick cloud, and it would be a clever man who could pierce the cloud and reveal the future. It is a great problem whether the peace means good or bad fortune for us, that is to say for France, for the words are synonymous. Time will give the solution, and I am very much mistaken if we do not have to wait a long time for that solution.”

As far as the solution was concerned there was but

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one that could please the King: a solution, namely, that would enable him to return to his kingdom, and would show the French nation—whom the peace must bring to their senses—that the only remedy for their ills was the restoration of their legitimate sovereign. He was told on all sides that this opinion was growing more and more popular in France, that the royalist party was persistently growing, and that the prayers of good citizens were all in the King's favour. But was it true? Was he not being deceived? The future alone could tell him. In the meantime none of his affairs prospered; every circumstance seemed to be turned against him, and Bonaparte's glory was making ready to postpone, for seventeen years, the Bourbons' return to their country. Any one who had dared at that time to predict that the King's exile would last for so long would certainly have provoked him to a most energetic denial; he could not, and did not, believe that his triumph was so far distant. In the meantime everything that occurred was contrary to his wishes. Though he had just established himself, in Blankenburg, in a larger and more comfortable house than the one he had hitherto occupied, he was well aware that at any moment he might be driven from this wretched little town. Neither could he any longer count upon the place of refuge for which he had hoped in Westphalia; and it seemed that he might soon be forced to accept the hospitality that the Tsar offered him in Mittau.

At this same moment Condé's army—his last resource—turned its back upon France and marched away to Poland. Some weeks earlier Europe had

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been amazed to learn that Paul I was taking it into his service, in order that these few thousands of Frenchmen, whom England and Austria had abandoned to their fate, should not be totally unprovided for. He gave them the choice of serving in the Russian army, or in the Crimea.

The sight of all these brave fellows going off into exile made the King feel that he too, perhaps, had better take the same road, and even go farther than they, to the remote country of Courland. But however flattering his welcome there might be, it would not console him for being so far from his brother, so far from the Tuileries and Versailles, so far from the French frontier, and from the foreign towns where his partisans were working on his behalf.

The letters that he exchanged with his niece at this time reveal a fresh access of affection on both sides, and a more earnest desire to be together, the better to resist the blows of fortune. At the beginning of November the Duc d'Enghien, being on his way to Poland with his grandfather's army, travelled round by Vienna in order to see his cousin. She received him without a moment's delay, and he came out of her presence both pleased and moved. On the following day he presented his officers to the princess : the Marquis du Cayla, the Comte Étienne de Damas, the Baron de La Rochefoucault, and MM. de Seran, de Millet, and de Cheffontainé. She also received Mlle. de Rohan and her father, who were on their way to Russia. The Prince of Nassau and the Russian Embassy fêted these travellers, in a way that contrasted very noticeably with the cold and stiff reception

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given to them by the imperial ministers and courtiers. It is true that the Empress had scarlatina and that the salons of the Court were closed. On this occasion Madame Royale wrote to her uncle :

“ Please forgive me for not having written to you by the last post; it was because I was expecting the Duc d’Enghien, and did not wish to write to you until I had seen him. He was expected here on Sunday, and only arrived on Tuesday evening. I saw him yesterday. *Mon Dieu*, how it moved me to see one of my own family again at last! It is extraordinary that it should be my fate to see him the first, considering that he is my most distant relation. I am still very sorry that the Prince de Condé did not come here; I should so much have liked to see him, and express my admiration and gratitude for all he has done for the good cause. In default of seeing him, I took care to commission his grandson to say it all for me. The Duc d’Enghien, too, deserves a great deal of praise; for he has distinguished himself very much, considering his age. I had not the slightest recollection of him, nor of his appearance; but I should have recognised him easily by his dignified and sorrowful air.

“ There are plenty of Frenchmen here, nearly the whole of Condé’s army. To-day I shall see them all, or at least all who are in Vienna. It really tears my heart to see all these wretched people going at this season of the year to a country like Russia, so far away from their own land. There are old men being driven in carriages through the cold—and with what

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object ? That they may live in deserts, for it is said that the places to which they are going are inhabited almost entirely by Cossacks. They will be all alone there, and will hardly know anything of passing events. I know what it is to be ignorant of all that is going on, especially if you happen to be deeply concerned. I was two whole years without knowing anything at all, either of the death of my relations in France, or of my family, or of the war, or even of events in Paris. There is nothing worse than to be in that position. So I pity those who are in it very sincerely. These poor men who are going to Russia have left a family in France, perhaps. There, they will have absolutely no news of them. It pains me terribly to think of it. It is true that it is better than dying of hunger ; but it is a sad life. I will say no more on the subject, for it makes me too unhappy, and I am quite sure that it grieves you too."

These expressions of his niece's pity went to the King's heart. His sympathy was roused by the sincere sorrow that Madame Thérèse felt for the fate of the poor exiles, and he expressed his conviction that her own experiences had been still more terrible :

"The effect that M. le duc d'Enghien's visit had upon you touched me to the bottom of my heart. I envy him for having seen you. But when I remember that it was only for a moment I am less jealous. I would pay a great deal, no doubt, for such a moment ; but it would not suffice me ; for what I wish is not only to tell you of my affection, but also to prove it to you by doing everything in my power to make you happy.

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“I am not less touched by the feelings with which Condé’s army inspires you; but you must remember that those who compose it are sustained by honour, and that with a support of that kind a man can brave anything. Moreover, their fate in Poland is not in any degree comparable with yours during your cruel imprisonment. The greatest difficulty that they will have in securing news of those dear to them is that of transporting the news across the frontier; and that difficulty they have already experienced in Germany. When once that obstacle is surmounted there is nothing worse than delay; whereas you, in the horrible place where you lived for more than three years, had a door between you and the world, and knew it to be an insurmountable barrier. I do not wish to fix your thoughts any longer upon the ills you endured; but be sure that they make you dearer to my heart.”

Four days later, as though to prove that these were not empty words, the King sent his niece a present that he had long promised her, but had hitherto found no means of conveying to her.

“I have at last, my dear child, found the opportunity that I have so long been awaiting to send you the treasure that was entrusted to me for you. I hope you will be pleased with the likeness, though your unhappy mother was much younger, when this stone was engraved, than when you knew her. The lady whose gift it is, and whose name I did not wish to entrust to the post, because she is in France, is

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Mme. de Champcenetz, who is none the less a good Frenchwoman for having been born in Cleves. She has to her credit several courageous and touching acts of kindness towards our poor *émigrés*. My only merit in the matter consists in being the channel by which she conveys to you this undeniable proof of her attachment. None the less I share the sad pleasure you will feel, and it seems to me that, by sending you this likeness of your mother, I am acquiring a fresh claim on your affection, that this ring is a new link between us, and you can imagine how eager I am to seize the idea."

On the 19th November the princess sends the news of the King of Prussia's death, of which she has just heard.

"It is said here that the King of Prussia is dead. I do not know whether, at this moment, the event is fortunate or unfortunate. His son, I believe, is little disposed to favour the French *émigrés*; indeed it is said that he has already had two of them arrested. This is a bad beginning. I believe, however, that we have little reason to regret the other. His campaign in Champagne and its unfortunate result is a thing I cannot understand. At the time I always believed that people were romancing when they told us that the King of Prussia was retreating; it was a thing that seemed to me impossible, seeing that he was so near Paris. However, we must forget everything that took place, for the whole affair is too sad and distressing."

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The King was of the same opinion. But he could not resist showing that these painful memories were not effaced from his mind. “. . . The King of Prussia’s death has reminded you of a very terrible time. Imagine what I suffered from our fatal retreat! We were not more than twenty-five leagues away from you, I saw your arms stretched out towards us, and we were forced to go back. I could have borne to leave my country for the second time; but I knew all that you must be enduring, and the certainty that your feelings were the same as mine made my suffering all the sharper. Let us worship Providence, my dear child; it is the only resource left to us amid such melancholy thoughts as these.”

On the 19th December his niece’s birthday gave him an opportunity of repeating, in a rather more solemn way, the affectionate promises that he had so constantly made to her in the course of the past two years. It was an opportunity he was not likely to miss.

“. . . It is nineteen years to-day since you were born; I need no special date to make me think of you; but this day seems to claim my particular attention. I remember all my wishes for you when I presented you at the altar; I renew them more ardently to-day. I was far from foreseeing the disasters that were so soon to overwhelm us, and I will be faithful to the pledges I took as your godfather’s representative; and if I was neither able nor called upon to watch over you in your childhood, I will do so in your youth. My first care—the most

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important and the sweetest—will be to assure the happiness of the rest of your life, and I hope, as I have already told you, that this will be one of the firstfruits of the peace.”

On this point the King was not mistaken. It was true that his niece's marriage became possible in consequence of the peace, and when he wrote the above words he believed it to be at hand. But he was still in a state of uncertainty as to where it could be celebrated. For the moment he was content to hope that the new King of Prussia would follow the late King's example, and, although at peace with the Republic, would tolerate his presence at Blankenburg. Anxious as he was to discover the King's inclinations he dared not write directly either to him or to his ministers, for fear of embarrassing him. On d'Avaray's advice, therefore, he had recourse to the good offices of a certain Frenchman who had already been employed in England, the Comte de Moustier, who lived on the outskirts of Potsdam, and whom he intended to appoint as his agent at the Prussian Court, when he should be able to have one in Berlin. He wrote him a letter full of sentiment, expressing his sorrow for the death of the late King, and his good wishes for the reign of his successor. “You will doubtless find a way of letting His Majesty see this letter,” wrote d'Avaray to Moustier when he sent it.

Moustier lost no time in doing what was expected of him. He brought so much skill to the task that shortly afterwards, on the 7th December, he received from the King of Prussia a most flattering letter for

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the King of France. Affection for his person and fervent prayers for his prosperity—nothing was lacking. Moustier, moreover, was begged to convey these sentiments “in the terms most calculated to express their strength and sincerity.” The letter ended with these words: “Above all do not be afraid lest your own energy of expression should endow them with too much force.” Louis XVIII, when he read this letter, imagined it to show “all the characteristics of frankness and uprightness, and of deep, sincere feeling.” But in the course of December, Cailhard, the Republican Minister in Berlin, armed with a despatch signed by Talleyrand, demanded that the King of Prussia should instruct the Duke of Brunswick “to dismiss from his territory certain guests whose sojourn might sooner or later become dangerous.” The King of Prussia, fearing that Lower Germany might be invaded, decided to yield. The Duke of Brunswick was bidden to inform the “Comte de Provence” of the motives, contingencies, and perils that made it undesirable for him to remain any longer within the line of neutrality, where, indeed, he ran great risks of being in personal danger before long. All questions of method, and delay, and humane procedure were left to the judgment of the Duke of Brunswick; but he was instructed to make the prince leave Blankenburg, and to expel all the French *émigrés* from his domain.

The Duke of Brunswick himself did not dare to make this communication to the proscribed King. He therefore employed the services of the Marshal de Castries, who made a special journey for the purpose

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from Leipzig to Blankenburg, bearing a copy of the King of Prussia's letter, and of the letter that the reigning duke had written to himself when forwarding it. Having no choice but to obey, Louis XVIII resigned himself. Although he did not yet know whither he was to go he spent the weeks that followed in making preparations for his departure, and in these occupations wiled away the weary time of uncertainty until the 26th January. On that day he heard disastrous news from Switzerland. The 'hopes that he had founded on that country vanished away ; he saw it "suffering the fate of Venice and Genoa." This, no doubt, was the frame of mind in which we must picture him when he decided to accept, without a moment's hesitation, the offer of the Palace of Mittau, which was brought to him on that very day by Colonel de Lawrof, aide-de-camp to the Emperor of Russia.

On the 30th January the King informed Madame Royale that he was about to leave Blankenburg.

"I received the letter you sent me by Cléry, my dear child; and I saw him again, himself, with the feelings of tender interest that he must always inspire in every good Frenchman, and I have read his heart-rending journal. It gave me all the more pain that I learnt from it various details of which I was ignorant, with regard to the barbarity of your infamous gaolers. But I could not tear myself away from it. Everything that recalls to me those whom we have lost, even in the most deplorable condition, will always be dear to me. I read your letter at the same time. Your desire to

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be with me, which you express so touchingly, comforted me in my distress; but at the same time I said to myself: 'Who am I to take the place of all that she has lost so cruelly?' I have nothing but my love for you; but indeed, my dear child, you possess that entirely. I trust that your tender heart will be satisfied with that feeble compensation!

"My affection, however, has not prevented me from behaving badly to you. I have not written to you for six weeks, but all that time I have been in a state of complete uncertainty as to what was to become of me—certain only that I should not long remain here, but knowing neither when nor whither I should go, and thinking every moment that light would be thrown upon the subject. It was a painful position; I was afraid to tell you of it, lest I should be making you share in its discomforts, and I said to myself every time that a courier left: 'I'll not distress her to-day; next time I can tell her something more positive.'

"But my guilt is even deeper than this, for the same motive kept me from sending you three letters from the Duc d'Angoulême, and one from his brother, which I now enclose. Two days ago my future at last became less obscure. The Emperor of Russia, with the graciousness and generosity that characterise all his actions, has offered me a refuge in his palace at Mittau, in Courland, to which place I am setting out on the 10th of next month; and the Duc d'Angoulême is going with me. His brother will start for Scotland at the same time, or even sooner, and will come back to Russia in the spring. Pray

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repeat all these details to the Bishop of Nancy, to whom I have only time to write a word or two.

“It is not without the deepest regret that I go still further from my country; but I regard this very safe refuge and Paul’s friendship as the first real step towards the accomplishment of my most ardent wishes. This hope is my consolation and support.”

On the 13th March, after travelling for thirty-one days, the King of France made his entry into Mittau. The principal nobles of Courland, with the military governor, General Fersen, at their head, met him at the gates of the town and escorted him to the ducal palace. There he found his own bodyguard awaiting him, under arms. The sight of them filled him with the most acute emotion and pleasure, and repaid him for all the fatigues of his long journey.

On the same day he received a letter from his niece :

“MY VERY DEAR UNCLE,

“It gave me infinite pleasure to have news of you at last, for I was feeling the want of it acutely, and the past six weeks have seemed very long to me; but since it was from kindness that you deprived me of your letters I can only thank you. I had already heard that you were to leave Blankenburg, as is the case, and I too have not written for a long time, because I didn’t know how to address my letters to you. But at last the Bishop of Nancy has found an opportunity for me, of which I am eagerly taking advantage in order to obtain news of you. I



LOUIS XVIII.

(From a portrait in the possession of M. Ernest Daudet.)



MITTAU : ENTRANCE OF THE PALACE.

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hope that your journey has been safely accomplished. It is very sad for you to be obliged to go so far away; we must hope that at least you will be undisturbed at Mittau. I deeply sympathised with all the anxiety you must have endured; but at the same time I cannot sufficiently admire the Emperor of Russia: he stands high above all the other sovereigns, and his behaviour does him the greatest honour.

“It was too good of you, my very dear uncle, to write to me again on your journey, at Leipzig. It gave me the very greatest pleasure, and I do not doubt that all went well for the rest of the way; at least that is my earnest hope. Thank you for sending me my cousin’s letters. No one could be more attentive than he is, and it always pleases me very much when he gives me news of you. But I flatter myself that, far away as Mittau is, I shall have news of you sometimes: it will be one of my greatest consolations.”

Thus, at the very moment when painful circumstances were placing them at a greater distance than ever from one another, the King and his niece bade farewell to their doubts. Thenceforward each of them was sure of the other’s affection, the affection they so often expressed in their letters. Their long correspondence had taught them to know one another; they were bound together by the closest ties. They were bound, in the first place, by their mutual gratitude for the determination that was so apparent in both of them to fulfil their duty—his duty as a father and a king, and hers as a daughter of the House of France. They were bound together, too, by their

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common sorrows; and most of all by the affection they both bore to the young Duc d'Angoulême, in whom all the hopes of the monarchy were vested, and to whom, therefore, Madame Royale had voluntarily promised her hand, without pausing to ask whether her heart—the heart from which the shadow of the tragic past would never lift—were capable of love.

CHAPTER X

'TWIXT THE CUP AND THE LIP

As soon as Louis XVIII, thanks to the generosity of the Emperor Paul I, was established at Mittau, he turned his attention once more to the hastening of Madame Royale's marriage. His first care was to interest his powerful protector in the matter, and his second was to convince the Duc d'Angoulême, who was with him, that the princess he was to marry possessed every talent and every virtue, and that, to be worthy of her, he must make himself equally perfect.

To this period belongs a composition called : *The Duties of a King*. In it Louis XVIII put together all the advice he thought calculated to improve the mind and disposition of his nephew, whose indolence and thoughtlessness sometimes concerned and saddened him. He ended with these words :

“ The marriages of princes are always the work of policy ; yours will be the work of nature and your misfortunes. They marry princesses who have had no opportunity of developing their character, and who are only known to them by reports that are very often deceptive ; whereas the princess who is to be your life-long companion is, at the age of eighteen, the object of the respect and admiration of all Europe. She was hardly more than a child when she experienced

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every form of misfortune, and her troubles became for her so many titles to honour. Her filial piety was the consolation of her unhappy parents. Her courage overawed their persecutors. Would that you had been present, as I was, on that terrible day, when the frenzied populace finally turned the palace of our fathers into a prison! You would have seen the King whom God endowed with the patience of the martyrs, the Queen whose courage amazed our sex, and that angel from heaven who, before she left this world, moulded a heart to match her own—you would have seen them overwhelmed with misery, crushed with insult, until the tender caresses of a child of twelve restored to them their serenity of mind, which, for the first time, was on the point of breaking down. How many duties her sorrows lay upon you! Never forget that it is your duty to restore to her all that she has lost. In giving her to you I am carrying out the will of her parents; and I am fulfilling the wishes of the French nation, who, with transports of repentance and love, will see her near you on the steps of the throne. In her you will find virtue and intelligence and charm; may she find in you unvarying respect, tender love, and thoughtful care! In short, my dear boy, she will make your happiness; complete my work by making hers."

The Duc d'Angoulême could not remain unmoved by this fatherly appeal, and his determination to respond to it obediently brought him nearer in spirit to the princess who was to be the companion of his

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life. But—such was the unfortunate position of the Bourbons of France—the marriage of the Duc d'Angoulême and Madame Royale could not take place without the consent and assistance of the House of Austria, to whose care the princess's fortune had been entrusted. It consisted of a sum of five hundred and forty-nine thousand Viennese florins, which, in June 1791, at the time of the flight to Varennes, Marie-Antoinette had contrived to send to her brother the Emperor, through the intervention of the Comte de Mercy. In addition to this capital, which had been converted into Netherlands stock, there was the interest arising from it, at the rate of four per cent. On the Emperor alone it depended whether this interest should be calculated from the day when the Court of Vienna received the money, or only from the month of October 1793, the date of the Queen's death.

On the other hand there was a conviction in the King's circle that the Austrian Treasury had never paid Marie-Antoinette's dowry.¹ In that case a sum of "two hundred thousand golden sun-crowns"²

¹ This question was not settled. Austria refused to pay, on the grounds that the dowry had already been paid, and supported the assertion by producing a perfectly correct receipt. The King's party declared that it was a fictitious receipt, and had only been given to save the Austrian Court from an awkward position, since at the time it was too deeply in debt to be able to pay. To this it was objected that the dowries of princesses were never paid. "In the position to which Madame Royale is reduced," said d'Avaray, "it is ignoble, and disingenuous, and indeed unjust, to make use of such a plea to rob her of a patrimony that her unparalleled misfortunes have made a necessity for her support, and for that of the prince she is to marry."

² The *écu d'or au soleil* was one on which a sun was engraved above the crown.—(Translator's Note.)

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was owing to Madame Royale, with the addition of the interest that had accumulated since 1770. It was further necessary to demand an inventory of the diamonds, and to discover whether the Empress Maria-Theresa and her husband had not bequeathed some money to their daughter, then Queen of France. Finally, it was important to prevail upon the Emperor to leave the capital due to Madame Royale in the public funds, and to see that the interest was paid to her regularly.

The arrangement of all these matters would be easy enough if the Court of Vienna were to undertake the task in a willing spirit. But of that Court, as we know, Louis XVIII expected no good will. Had not the Emperor already declared that he would not allow the marriage to take place within his dominions, nor the young couple to live there, since "he did not wish to run the risk of having to support them"? When he received Madame Royale into his own family, on her leaving France, it might have been thought that he would make himself responsible for all her expenses. But, later on, had he not stipulated that she should pay a monthly sum of fifteen hundred florins towards her own maintenance, and had he not shown considerable reluctance in promising to pay the expenses of her journey to the frontier, whenever she should leave his dominions? Was there any reason to hope that the Court of Vienna would show itself "less sordid in the matter of Madame Royale's claims" than in these previous matters? On this point Louis XVIII was very sceptical, and it was for this reason that he thought

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of employing the influence of Paul I in his dealings with this Court.

He would have preferred to appeal to that monarch in person, and it will be remembered that, before leaving Blankenburg, he asked the Tsar's permission to travel to Mittau by way of St. Petersburg. But the Tsar had refused his request: it was not an opportune moment. The King had been neither offended nor distressed, but had placed the matter in the hands of La Fare in Vienna, and of Saint-Priest in the Russian capital, whither he had been sent for the purpose. The mission of these two negotiators was to create an understanding between the two cabinets, which should result in the settlement of all the difficulties in question, in the way that would best serve Madame Royale's interests.

Thanks to the proverbial delays of diplomacy this negotiation was fated to last for more than a year. But the King not only believed that it would be much sooner concluded, but was also convinced that the Tsar, by ordering it to be opened in his name by his ambassador in Vienna, Count Razoumowski, intended to show his firm determination to see the matter through. He was strengthened in this conviction by the fact that the Tsar, in the previous September, while refusing to send "special funds in view of the marriage," had tempered the refusal by promising to raise subscriptions, so to speak, from the Courts of Madrid, Naples, Lisbon, Vienna, and London, and by sending in the meantime a sum of two hundred thousand roubles, which had really been as manna fallen from heaven.

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The Tsar's appeal for subscriptions from the various Courts had had no result whatever. But the King none the less continued to put all his faith in this sovereign, who lavished marks of friendship on him, and had given him a place of refuge. He never doubted that Paul I would persuade the Austrian cabinet to facilitate Madame Royale's marriage, in so far as it lay in its power to do so. By the 24th July the negotiations were beginning to promise so well that the King bade Marshal de Castries hold himself in readiness to go to Vienna, to bring Madame Royale to Mittau. On the 31st August he repeated this command, and informed de Castries that the Queen, who was then living at Budweiss in Bohemia, would travel to Mittau at the same time as the princess, and that they would both be in his charge during the long journey. He was then convinced that they would both be able to travel incognito. "You will receive a letter from Vienna. I have sent it to the Bishop of Nancy, with orders to have it delivered to you as soon as the affair is settled."

Madame Royale's eagerness to go to Mittau, however, was not as great as her uncle had hoped. Having made her resolution known to the Emperor, and received his assurance that he would put no obstacles in her way, she was content to let the matter rest. As for concluding the affair, she appeared disinclined to be hurried.

"The first suggestion that she should go to Mittau so soon was a surprise to Madame," wrote La Fare to the Comte de Saint-Priest on the 28th August, 1798,

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“ and I saw very plainly that we must be in no undue hurry in the matter. I must do her the justice of saying, however, that from the first moment she spoke of nothing but submission and obedience, but none the less she begged to be allowed to wait until the fine season, that is to say, for several months. She supported her case with various plausible reasons, most of which did honour to the maturity and wisdom of her views.

“There is one difficulty arising out of the circumstances, and of her opinions, which I thought it advisable for the moment to evade or ward off: the immediate meeting of the Queen and Madame with a view to their travelling together. You saw during your visit to Vienna how deeply Madame is prejudiced against the Queen her aunt. I have lost no opportunity of trying to weaken and overcome her dislike; but I have not made sufficient progress to prevent this idea from proving a veritable stumbling-block. At all events it would entail real unpleasantness, both for the Queen and for Madame, if they were obliged to set out on the journey together at once, before the way had been skilfully prepared by some one of weight and authority. This important task could not be undertaken by any one better than the King. His Majesty must act as mediator between the aunt and niece; and all prejudice, I hope, will quickly melt away, when they meet for the first time under his eyes, without any previous knowledge, so to speak, of one another.

“ I must warn you that Madame's prejudice is very strong. She brought with her from France the idea,

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or rather the conviction, that the Queen was the late Queen's personal enemy, and consequently her own."

On the following day La Fare wrote to Louis XVIII himself. Here again Madame Royale's prudence is more apparent than any very keen desire to set out to Russia, until the problems that disturbed her should have been solved.

"SIRE,

"The Emperor has answered Madame's communication with a letter full of expressions of sympathy and friendship. He promises her to enter willingly into negotiations with the Court of Russia, with regard to Madame's concerns. I had the honour of paying my court to the princess, on the day after she received this letter. She was gracious enough to tell me of it, and she allowed me to talk to her, on this occasion, of the subject that I saw was occupying her mind. As soon as Madame and myself became engaged in this conversation her Grand Mistress, Mme. la comtesse de Chanclos, retired from the room and left us alone.

"At the beginning of the interview I reminded Madame of her august parents' wish that she should marry Mgr. le duc d'Angoulême, of the written promise she sent to the King her uncle, of the suitability and the natural and political advantages of such a marriage, the favourable disposition of the Court of Russia, the anxiety and expectation of all the loyal French, etc. Madame said to me, with much frankness and good feeling, that she was, and always had been,

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resolved in favour of the marriage that was proposed to her, and that she meant it to take place; that hitherto she had felt it was prudent, both on her cousin's account and her own, to postpone it, but that Russia's intervention, might, and probably would, improve the position and give it a solid basis that it would otherwise lack; that circumstances made this a propitious moment for persuading the Emperor of Russia to guarantee, before the celebration of the marriage, the present and future benefits that might naturally be expected from his generosity; that in view of these things it would perhaps be better not to hasten either her departure or her marriage; but that Madame was willing to leave everything to the wisdom and decision of the King her uncle, and was ready to conform to his wishes.

“ Here I thought it well to reassure Madame's fears for the future, by giving her a list of her own resources for her future maintenance. I told her of the sums that are due to her from the Emperor: the dowry of her mother the Queen, the arrears of interest for past years, and the money brought by M. le comte de Mercy's heirs and deposited in the bank of Vienna. To this, her own undoubted property, I added a less certain resource—the yearly income that the Emperor Paul had just accorded to your Majesty. I saw that this list, and the observations with which I accompanied it, had some effect upon Madame's mind.

“ I then returned discreetly to the question of the arrangements for the journey. Madame is convinced, and M. le comte de Razoumowski is of the same opinion, that notwithstanding the progress of

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the negotiations the journey cannot possibly take place before the coming winter."

In another letter La Fare asked, on Madame Royale's behalf, for a two-fold portrait of the Duc d'Angoulême: "a painted portrait and a moral portrait." While waiting to procure the "painted portrait," the King sent the "moral portrait" to begin with.

"My nephew has been with me for a year to-day; I have studied him well, and I venture to say that he is worthy of the wife whom Providence so obviously destines for him. His heart is upright and pure; he has been fortunate enough to keep his religion intact in a very corrupt century. He is full of feeling: I have had this proved to me by all his attentions during my recent indisposition. His character is brave and gentle; his temper is equable. I will not boast of the courage he showed at the time of his accident last year: that was quite a simple matter. But the treatment was tiresome and long, and the journey we have just ended was no less so; and throughout these two periods of time I never detected in him the smallest sign, I will not say of ill-humour, but even of impatience."

A few days later La Fare wrote again:

"I could have wished that in this case it had been practicable to revert to the method so often employed between royal persons, of marrying by proxy. This step would make the marriage a certainty, and pre-

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serve every one concerned from the fear of possible contingencies. It is not that I believe there are the slightest grounds for such fears in the present case. We have unimpeachable guarantees in the religious and moral character of Madame Thérèse, and in the strength and persistency of her determination. We must follow her example, and resign ourselves fearlessly to the inevitable delays entailed by the time of year as well as by the natural course of the negotiations. The Russian Ambassador does not believe we must count on all the arrangements being concluded before the end of the winter. He grounds this belief on the great distance between the places concerned, the obligation to refer every step he takes to his own sovereign, and the necessity that the two imperial Courts should be agreed on the subject of Madame Thérèse's departure. The princess's determination is supported by this opinion, as well as by the inconveniences of the cold weather and the bad accommodation on so long a journey. But there is no doubt that this last consideration affects Madame less on her own account than on that of the people who will be with her. To all these reasons we must add the Russian Ambassador's opinion that Madame ought not to leave Vienna until a definite conclusion has been arrived at, with regard to the money that belongs to her. Thus the postponement of Madame Thérèse's departure has become, through a variety of circumstances, an inevitable misfortune. It is to be regretted that the Russian Court should have been unable to begin its operations here two months earlier."

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In spite of the delays that La Fare foresaw and explained, the King, in view of the concurrence of the two imperial Courts and the consent of all the parties, regarded the matter as definitely concluded. He had feared for a moment that the Directory might intrigue to prevent the marriage; but he was now reassured. In a conversation with the princess La Fare had given her to understand that the Directory, the mortal enemy of the House of Bourbon, would probably attempt to raise obstacles by urging the Emperor of Austria to prevent her departure.

“I do not think it,” cried the princess; “but even if it were to make such an attempt, have I not given my word to marry my cousin the Duc d’Angoulême? And who could dream that the Emperor, to please the Directory, would wish to keep me a prisoner here? He did not restore my liberty merely to take it away again at once. Whatever the Directory may do I shall go away when I choose.”

On the 11th September a very voluminous post left Mittau. The King had written to the Queen his wife, to the Comte and the Comtesse d’Artois, to his aunts Mesdames Adelaïde and Victoire, to his sister the Queen of Sardinia, to the Queen of Naples, to the King and Queen of Spain, to the Prince de Condé, to the Duc de Berry, to his agents in France and elsewhere, and finally to the Pope. He announced to them all that every difficulty was removed, “thanks to the friendship of the Emperor of Russia and the good will of the Emperor of Germany,” and he asked them to rejoice with him.

When giving the news to Marshal de Castries he

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added: "But, owing to the time that must still elapse before the rest of the negotiations are over, I cannot tell you when the marriage will take place; nor is this my greatest cause of annoyance. The Bishop of Nancy tells me that the Emperor will certainly wish to have my niece escorted to the frontier of his dominions as she came from France, that is to say exclusively by Germans, and, as the two imperial frontiers join, I cannot doubt that they will place her in the charge of an envoy sent from Petersburg for the purpose, who will be commissioned to bring her to me. Therefore I now see no possibility of giving you a mission that I was especially desirous should be executed by yourself. I know how sorry you will be; but I defy you to regret it more than I."

In distributing his expressions of gratitude he had forgotten neither the negotiator La Fare nor Mme. de Chanclos, whose kindness, charm, and devotion had won Madame Royale's heart. He said to her: "If, in your friendship for my niece, it grieves you that you are so soon to be separated, it is impossible that that same friendship should not give you a real sense of satisfaction in the thought of the happiness she will enjoy with a husband who is worthy of her." To the Bishop of Nancy he expressed his admiration for that prelate's conduct throughout this important affair. "My niece's letter filled me with delight. Ah! if her parents were alive, how keen their joy would be! It could not be greater than mine, however, for I should dare to defy even their love to surpass the love that fills my heart for that adorable child."

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The letter from Madame Royale to which the King alluded was in answer to one from himself. He had written to her on hearing of the Tsar's consent to take the initiative in the negotiations with the Court of Vienna :

“ I was never more conscious, my dear child,” he said on that occasion, “ of the truly paternal tenderness that fills my heart for you, than I am in writing to you to-day ; nor have I ever felt a greater longing to hear the expression of your love in response to my own. Since our sorrows left you without any father but myself, I have regarded it as my first duty and my most cherished aim to care for your happiness. You were then in chains, and I could not break them ! A generous sovereign had that happiness : I envied him without being jealous. Since then my one desire has been to restore you to your relations, and to give you the husband whom Providence itself seems to have intended for you, and has been pleased to make worthy of you. The wishes of your parents, your acquiescence in those wishes, the desire of our whole family, and the precaution I had taken, as soon as I knew your feelings in the matter, of obtaining from the Holy See the dispensations necessary for your marriage with your cousin, all seemed to point to a speedy conclusion. But the time had not yet come. I was suddenly driven from the place where I had lived for two years, and was forced to wander hither and thither, or to have but a precarious dwelling-place. How could we fix either a time or a place for the celebration of this much-desired

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marriage? But now the friendship of the Emperor of Russia has come to my aid. He has given me a settled, suitable, and peaceful refuge. His thoughtful generosity has guaranteed us against a state of poverty which, however honourable its cause, would not have been the less unpleasant. He has kindly consented to treat with the Court of Vienna, with regard to the arrangements necessary for our reunion, and to secure the small amount of money that belongs to you, and place it in your hands.

So the moment we have so long awaited seems to be drawing near: for it would be an insult to the two sovereigns who are going to negotiate this important business of ours to suppose that there can now be any long delay. This is the first really happy moment I have enjoyed since our misfortunes came upon us. Make it complete, my dear child. Tell me that your heart is touched by the trouble I have taken to secure your happiness. Tell me that it will be some consolation to you to be once more in a father's arms—a very different father, alas! from him whom we shall always mourn, but one who resembles him at least in his love for you."

It was this appeal that Madame Royale answered on the 24th August. To please her uncle she renewed her previous promises, although she had already repeated them many times, in such a way as to leave no doubt of her intention to fulfil them:

"Yes, my dear uncle, the wishes of my unfortunate parents and yourself are also mine, and I am resolved

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to carry them out, as I assured you as soon as I was able. My resolution has never varied, and I am determined to fulfil my engagement. When the Bishop of Nancy gave me your letter he asked me what answer I wished him to send you; all I could do was to assure him again of my docility with regard to your wishes. I thought that I ought not to say anything of the time, nor of the arrangements for my departure—which you do not definitely settle in your letter—before communicating with the Emperor on the subject. Thinking that was my duty, I did so at once. His Majesty answered me in the most amicable way, assuring me of the interest he takes in my future, of his earnest wishes for my happiness, and of his keen desire to contribute to it. He told me he would gladly enter into negotiations with Russia on the subject of my concerns. So, my dear uncle, far from fearing that your wishes will meet with any opposition in this quarter, rest assured that they will be energetically supported.

“The Russian Ambassador has explained to the Emperor the object of the negotiations that he has been commissioned to open. The answer he received, and communicated to me, conforms with the answers the Emperor had already given me. The ambassador will at once inform his Court of the result of his first measures; he will then wait for further instructions, and this, in spite of all his efforts, means a long delay and makes him fear that nothing can be concluded before the winter. And I must confess to you, with the sincerity that your kindness sanctions, that I should feel very averse from undertaking so long a

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journey, at that time of year, as the journey to Courland; and I should be afraid, from what people tell me, that I might perhaps have to wait in a village for a month or six weeks, until the weather and the roads should allow me to continue my journey. My heart is fully sensible of the pleasures I shall find in your company, and in the bosom of my father's family; but in spite of all this I cannot, without being guilty of ingratitude, bid farewell with a light heart to a sovereign who restored my liberty, and a family who show me so much affection. If you think with me, my dear uncle, that the end of the winter would be a suitable time for me to leave Vienna, I shall make a point of profiting by the few months that remain to me, to show my gratitude and affection to the Emperor, his family, and the public, more openly than has hitherto been possible in my position. It seems to me that, my position being what it is, I ought to try to do everything for the best, and to leave as good an impression here as possible. I am sure that this is one way of pleasing you, and am therefore all the more bent upon it.

“But now that I have told you my views and wishes on the subject, my dear uncle, I know my duty and your tender interest in me too well not to submit my will to yours, and leave it to you to fix the time of my departure. You are so kind as to postpone a detailed discussion of the arrangements connected with my household, and of the persons of whom you wish it to be composed. When the time comes I shall venture to put forward my views and wishes in the matter with perfect confidence,

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for I feel sure they will meet with your approval, in view of the opportunities I have had of forming an opinion on the subject, both while I was with my unhappy family and in the course of my various experiences.

“I intreat you, my very dear uncle, to play the part of interpreter between my cousin and myself, and express all my feelings to him as you have expressed his to me. With the very greatest sincerity I venture to assure you again that my heart is touched beyond all words by the trouble you have taken to secure my future happiness, and that it will be the sweetest consolation to me when I can tell you so with my own lips.”

To these reassuring protestations the King answered :

“The time cannot possibly come soon enough for me; but I must check my natural impatience, as I know but too well, in view of the necessary arrangements between the two Courts that are busy over our interests. I am touched, as a friend, by the sincerity with which you speak to me on this subject; I am no less so, as a father, by the deference you show me : I shall not abuse it. When all the arrangements are made, and nothing remains but to fix the time of your departure, it is you, and you alone, that I shall ask to fix it. I shall say nothing of the fact that journeys are often less unpleasant in the winter than in the autumn or spring, because roads that are covered with snow, or at all events

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frozen roads, do not present nearly so many difficulties as when they are drenched with rain. I shall only tell you that a father—for I am your father and feel it more every day—and a husband, who both live for you alone, are counting the moments till you come, and I am sure you will not prolong our time of waiting.

“The way in which you wish to employ your time until then is worthy of your noble heart, and you may feel certain of my approbation. Yes, my dear girl, show your gratitude; give your benefactors more and more reason to know how worthy you are of all they have done for you. Increase, if you can, the affection they have proved in so many ways. I should rejoice on your account; I should feel it a matter of congratulation for myself. May you be a bond of union between the Emperor, my nephew, and myself!”

The King would have liked to thank the Emperor Francis II, to whom, after all, he was indebted for his niece's liberty, for the peace she had enjoyed since her release from the Temple, and for the marriage that was now possible. But that sovereign having insulted him by leaving his letters unanswered, he gave up the idea of writing to him, and commissioned his niece to express his gratitude. “Pray be my interpreter. Tell him that all the sentiments you feel towards him—the sentiments he has so fully earned—are as deeply engraved in my heart as in yours. I know you too well to doubt that you will strive to cultivate his friendship, even when you no

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longer live in the place that his kindness has adorned. May you thus become a bond of union and friendship between your generous benefactor and myself ! ”

As a way of expressing his delight the King authorised his nephew to resume his correspondence with his cousin. It had been in abeyance since the 24th July, in consequence of an incident that deserves a passing notice.

On that day the Duc d'Angoulême, knowing that his uncle was writing to Madame Royale, had written to his betrothed, and, according to his usual habit, had submitted his letter to the King, begging him to enclose it in his own. The prince's feelings, far from growing cooler in the course of his long engagement, had been considerably stimulated in spite of his cold temperament. It was not for nothing that he was twenty years old. For the first time he expressed himself so ardently that the King thought the style too passionate. He suppressed the letter and explained to his nephew that it would be more decorous not to write in such terms until the final negotiations, which were then in progress, should have produced the desired results. He told his niece the reasons that had led him to act in this way :

“ Do not be surprised that you have received no letter from my nephew to-day, and blame no one but me. He wished to give expression to all the feelings that his heart can hardly hold ; and I discouraged it.

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“‘Perfectly legitimate as they are,’ I said to him, ‘they might, at this moment, make your cousin blush, and it is as much your duty to respect her as to love her. It is best that I alone should be your interpreter. But as soon as I have received an answer from my niece, who will be less embarrassed with a father than she would be with you, I shall put no obstacles in the way of your very excusable eagerness.’ All his confidence, and all his affection for me, were required to make him yield to these reasons. But he insisted on my telling you that no sacrifice ever cost him so much.”

On the 11th September, when it was officially announced that the marriage was soon to take place, although the date was uncertain, there was no longer any reason for this prohibition.

“As you can well imagine, I have revoked the injunction that I laid upon my nephew. I need say nothing of his raptures : he lays his heart bare before you in his own letter. I tried to give you a sketch of his character in one of my earlier letters; it is high time for me to yield to the pleasure of making you acquainted with his face as well, for you must have only a vague recollection of it. For a long time I have wished to do this, but I thought I ought to suppress the desire. Now, however, I should feel it wrong not to yield to it. The happy conclusion of the affair demands it of me. I am going to have him painted, and as soon as the portrait is finished I shall send it to you.”

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From these quotations we may safely conclude that Mittau was a scene of rejoicing. The joy would have been unshadowed, indeed, if the King could have instantly fixed an early date for the marriage.

It was about this time that Madame Royale received a letter, dated from Edinburgh on the 3rd August, from the Duc d'Angoulême's father, the Comte d'Artois. It was brought to La Fare by Cléry, who was returning to Vienna after having his journal printed in London. This was the first time that Madame Royale's future father-in-law opened his heart to her. Hitherto his letters had been so rare and so full of trivialities that she had been a little hurt by them. It is true that he had an excuse. The post was not safe, and the opportunities of writing with the certainty of secrecy were not very frequent. However, when one sees the numerous letters that the Comte d'Artois contrived to send safely to his brother, and the very serious subjects with which he dealt in them, one cannot help admitting that he had rather neglected his elder son's future wife. This time, however, he repaired his omissions; Madame Royale had the satisfaction of knowing that he was no less eager than the King for the projected marriage.

“ I am taking advantage with the greatest eagerness, my dear niece, of the faithful Cléry's departure to write to you as freely as I could speak to you. For a long time I have been waiting for so safe an opportunity as this, and my heart was impatient of the delay.

“ I will not now recall our past sorrows; they are

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graven on our hearts in a way that can never be effaced. Some day we shall be able to take comfort in remembering the virtues of those who are the objects of our eternal regret. But at present our only concern and care must be to honour their memory, by carrying out the duties that they laid upon us.

“The King, who quite rightly desires as ardently as I to see the conclusion of a marriage that appears so strongly to our feelings and is so important from a political point of view, has informed me of the decisive step he has been obliged to take in the matter, involving both the Emperor of Germany and the Tsar, and of the letter he wrote to you in consequence.

“The opinion I have always held of the Emperor's moral character prevented me from lending any faith to the rumours that were spread abroad, with regard to that monarch's supposed schemes to take advantage of your present position, and of that of your relations, to marry you to one of his brothers. God forbid that I should ever believe the Emperor capable of forming such an unrighteous scheme! I do not doubt that his heart will prompt him to agree unhesitatingly to the request that will be made to him in the King's name, and with the Tsar's approval.

“But, my dear child, in spite of my well-founded confidence in the integrity of the Emperor's intentions, I am unhappily in a position to foresee that in our present circumstances we may very well have further difficulties to encounter, and it is my duty to warn you of them. The more the good and faithful French show their anxiety that the knot binding you

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to my son should be quickly tied, the more our enemies will fear the day of your marriage, and the more they will try to delay it, if they cannot contrive to prevent it.

“Motives of policy as baseless as they are dangerous, and an ill-judged desire to secure peace, have placed the cabinet of Vienna, for the moment, in apparent alliance with the tyrants of France. We must therefore expect that the Directory, profiting by the measure of influence that it has acquired over the Austrian ministers, will employ every imaginable intrigue and promise and threat to persuade, and possibly even force, the Emperor to oppose the celebration of your marriage, and delay it indefinitely. We can foresee that the policy which admitted a republican minister to Vienna might well overcome, in these circumstances, the noble and generous sentiments that distinguish the Emperor; and if my fears should be realised, (as is only too probable,) I leave it to your intelligence and powers of reasoning to estimate all the dangers and disasters that must result from this fresh triumph of the enemies of God and humanity.

“But if I confide my anxieties to you I must add at once that nothing can destroy, nor even shake my hopes, since they are founded on your tender heart and your undaunted spirit. The blood that flows in your veins, and the unassuming courage that you have already shown, give me confidence that your noble pride will never be shaken. The last sacred wishes of your father and mother are, and will be, ever present to your mind; they will guide your

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actions and add strength to your natural energy, and in fulfilling a religious duty you will feel that inward joy that is always granted by Providence to pure and tender hearts.

“ It is my most earnest desire that the Emperor’s conduct in this matter may increase the gratitude that is justly due to him, for all the courtesies and marks of friendship that you have received from him and his family while you have been in Vienna. But if the perfidious manœuvres of our enemies should reduce us to the extremity that I cannot help foreseeing, I feel that the great happiness of calling you my daughter will acquire a new charm in my eyes, since I shall owe it entirely to the child of the brother and sister I so tenderly loved, the beloved niece of the angel whom I shall mourn as long as I live; and my son will owe his bliss to the courage and energy of his future helpmate.

“ From what I have just said, my dear niece, you can judge for yourself of the extent of my affection for you; of my desire to hasten the moment when I can clasp you in my arms; and of the happiness it will give me to endeavour to compensate you for the loss of those dearly loved ones whom Heaven has taken from us.

“ The faithful Cléry, who will give you my letter, is commissioned at the same time to take you the portrait that you are good enough to wish for. I know too much of your kindness to this loyal and courageous servant to commend him to you again; but it is a pleasure to say that I, personally, think him very worthy of your confidence.

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“Farewell, my very dear niece, my dear child. All the feelings that you arouse in me will last as long as I live. I embrace you a thousand times with all the love of my heart.

“CHARLES-PHILIPPE.”

This letter, with which the prince sent a “gown from India” as a present to his niece, gave evidence of the most affectionate feelings, but also of that want of thought for which the Comte d’Artois has been so often and so justly blamed. It was ill-advised in two ways. In the first place it was inopportune, for it reached Vienna when the Emperor no longer deserved the suspicions it expressed; and it committed the far more serious mistake of supplying the Court of Austria with a legitimate cause of offence, supposing it had been read by any one in Madame Royale’s circle—a form of indiscretion that was very common among the *émigrés*. The princess saw nothing, or pretended to see nothing in it but an expression of affection. But the King, to whom it was forwarded by La Fare, was by no means pleased with it, and did not hide his feelings from his brother.

“I should have liked it better if it had been differently expressed, and had contained nothing but words of affection and hope. It is not that the anxiety you show in it may not have had some foundation at the time you wrote it. But if the letter had arrived before the conclusion of the affair I should have been afraid it might produce quite the contrary effect to the one you hoped it would have, and especially that

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it might annoy a Court that is only too ready to take offence, in spite of the careful language you used with regard to it. I will even confess that, if Cléry had arrived here before the return of my courier, it is quite possible that I might have kept the letter back, at all events until I had been more sure of my position. It is not so dangerous now, though I am by no means comfortable when I think that others may have read it."

Whenever the King disagreed with his brother, and felt obliged to express his views or wishes, he always made a point of wrapping them up in very cordial words. But the cordiality of the form detracted nothing from the clearness of the meaning, and if he thought a thing should be said he invariably said it. On this occasion he wished his niece to know what he had said, and he took the opportunity of paying her fresh compliments on her wisdom and good sense.

"The oftener I read your letter of the 24th August, the more the feeling and good sense that prompted it increase—not my love for you, for that would be impossible—but my esteem. You may think this a cold word: but it is very delightful to esteem those whom one loves. I could not deny myself the pleasure of sending my brother a copy of this precious letter, which could not fail to make him feel how happy we shall both be in the happiness of our children. If he had received it two months earlier, his affection for you would not have prompted the fears he expressed in the letter that the excellent

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Cléry delivered to you from him. But I do not know that I am not very glad he should have had those fears. He will feel all the more delight in being delivered from them, and, for your part, you will know all the better how much he loves you, and how happy he expects to be when he has become your father. That is a name that I shall never give up, but I will very gladly share it with him. Neither shall I be jealous when you divide your filial affection between us: on the contrary, I shall take pleasure in the division, and I know it will double his happiness.”

CHAPTER XI

PREPARATIONS

A NEW and most important question now arose, to decide which it was necessary that the King, the Comte d'Artois, and Madame Royale should all be agreed. For the time had come to appoint the officials who were to compose the household of the bride and bridegroom. That household, of course, could not be the same in exile as it would have been at Versailles. But at Mittau Louis XVIII was treated as a king. He had his ministers, his gentlemen-in-waiting, his almoners, (with the Cardinal de Montmorency at their head,) and his bodyguard; and it was therefore only right that the princes and princesses who lived with him should also be treated in accordance with their rank and the usages of the Court. It was especially desirable that Madame Royale should have at least one lady-of-honour, one lady-in-waiting, and one gentleman-in-waiting. When she left France the King had offered the first of these posts to the Marquise d'Hautefort, wife of d'Avaray's most intimate friend, a man who had once been a familiar figure at Versailles and had never varied in his devotion. At that time the marquise had been living at Munich. But when the Austrian Court refused to allow any French attendants to Madame Royale the appointment had been postponed. Since then Mme. d'Hautefort had aged; she had grown

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infirm, and neither the state of her health nor her years left any room for hope that she might one day fill the post she had previously accepted. The King had then thought of the Princesse de Chalais.

“ It seemed to me that Mme. la princesse de Chalais would be the most suitable person. There is not such a great disparity between her age and yours, although she is not in her first youth, and it seemed to me that her admirable character, and her charming and sterling qualities might be both useful and agreeable to you. It was therefore for her that I destined the most flattering appointment it is in my power to give. But—shall I confess it? Your letter so greatly surpassed my hopes with regard to your excellent judgment that I no longer feel it possible to give an appointment, however temporary, to any one whom I do not already know to be pleasing to you. I therefore beg you, my dear child, to give me your opinion without reserve, both with regard to Mme. de Chalais and any others of whom you may have thought, as well as persons of an inferior order.

“ I will only make two observations on this subject : the one being that our present position, and more especially mine, demands that you should have a very small household. A lady to fulfil the functions of a lady-of-honour, and one other at most, will be enough, and it must be the same in the case of the inferior attendants. My second remark is that the choice I make in concert with you, however provisional, will infallibly influence the final choice that my brother will make later on. I am too sure of his

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confidence in me, and more especially of his love for you, to have any doubts on the subject. I am, at the present moment, in the position of your father, an intermediary between you two; it is a part I delight in playing; yet I long to have done with it."

Before the King had been in a position to give this mark of confidence to his niece, he had received from his brother a list of those whom the latter thought suitable, and wished to submit to him for approval. The list was long: it would seem that the Comte d'Artois, when he drew it up, had forgotten that the royal family was living in exile, that the King, being deprived of his civil list and without resources, was forced to be economical, and that it would be quite impossible to provide the Duchesse d'Angoulême with a numerous and sumptuous household. As lady-of-honour, in default of Mme. d'Hautefort, whom it was apparently necessary to give up, he proposed the Duchesse de Sérent, wife of the Duc d'Angoulême's former governor, whose sons had lost their lives in Vendée. The duchesse had returned to France after Robespierre's fall, and was there still.

"If she could make up her mind to leave France, there is no one I should like better," wrote the King to his brother. "A woman of considerable ability and merit, a Montmorency, the wife of the Duc de Sérent, the lady-in-waiting and personal friend of the angel we deplore—to whom she proved her attachment to the very end with a degree of courage worthy of the Maréchal de Luxembourg—the mother of two

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sons whom she has lost, and of daughters who are fortunately still left to her—what claims she has! What qualifications! Could anything be more suitable? I dare not let my mind dwell upon it, for I hate disappointment. If Mme. d'Hautefort were to fail us, and Mme. de Sérent could not take the post, I should like the Princesse de Rohan or the Princesse de Chalais. What do you think of them?"

The gentlemen-in-waiting suggested by his brother also met with his approval, especially M. de la Charee, or, if he could not be secured, M. de Durfort. "I only knew the former when he was a child. His father was in your household for twenty-five years; his mother's conduct was always perfect in her relations with Mme. la duchesse d'Orléans. M. de Durfort distinguished himself greatly in the late war, and won an excellent reputation."

As for the other ladies on the Comte d'Artois's list, the King not only disapproved of their number, but in some cases had personal objections to them. There were two especially whom he regarded with disfavour, suitable as they might appear at first sight in virtue of an illustrious and glorious name.

"As for the other ladies—I mean ladies-in-waiting, for one lady-of-honour is all we need—it is not necessary to appoint many; indeed it would make a bad impression at this moment. But important as it is to bear this in mind, it is still more important to choose them well. Now you must remember that it is your brother, your oldest friend, the father of your daughter-in-law, the second father of your son,

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who is speaking to you. If we were still at Versailles we might do violence to our consciences and take certain risks, for our choice would give an air of respectability to those on whom it fell, even if they had little to recommend them. But now it is to ourselves that we must do credit, and neither birth, nor family services, nor the oldest ties of friendship, nor amiability, nor personal charm can take the place of reputation. Unfortunately the reputation of Mme. de G——, which was not good in France, has not improved since. Remember that your daughter-in-law is, and should always remain, an angel of purity; and, however brilliant a diamond may be, its setting may detract from its lustre, and it is the jeweller who is blamed. You need have no illusions: if our choice should meet with general disapproval an immense amount of blame will fall upon you, and, in our present position, upon me too!

“ If the reasons I have given you should not strike you as convincing, I entreat you as a mark of affection, as a favour, not to make a choice of that kind. You told me that you had not definitely pledged yourself, so you will not be placed in any great difficulty. But even if it were so, I am at your disposal; put it all on me; my affection will help me to bear all the unpleasantness involved in the rôle of expiatory victim. . . . Pray think well over Mme. de V——. Her personal qualities, to which I am delighted to do full justice, cannot alter the fact that her name—in itself a fine name, and a good one to hold up to our enemies by land and sea—could not without the greatest imprudence be made prominent at the Court just

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now, and much less at Mittau than at Versailles. Another and a still stronger consideration is that her husband, whom we should not separate from her, is a *mauvais sujet*, and, if all I have heard be true, had far too much influence with our young man. . . . This has been a very painful task; but I owed it to you to be frank."

Louis XVIII on this occasion might have played the King and issued orders; he preferred to make the request as from one brother to another. The Comte d'Artois was no less annoyed on this account. The King had already refused, some time before, to grant his request for certain favours—a *cordons bleu* and some patents—which were doubtless intended to reward acts of noble devotion, but which Louis XVIII considered inopportune. Quite recently, too, Monsieur had asked for a "brevet as lady-in-waiting" for Mlle. de la Blache, and had been refused, though the lady in question was betrothed to the Comte de Sombreuil, who was shot after Quiberon.

The Comte d'Artois was so much annoyed by this refusal that all his self-control was required to keep him from showing his feelings. But this last letter from his brother, which disputed his candidates' merits so frankly, exasperated him all the more that the ladies in question, who had formerly been closely allied with the Duchesse de Polignac, were now on the most intimate terms with his own mistress, the Comtesse de Polastron, and he considered them his dearest friends. While observing all the forms of outward deference he urged his views upon the King,

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and even insinuated that the latter's refusal was inspired by the dislike he had always felt for the Polignacs. The prince, exaggerating and distorting his brother's meaning, declared that it was "barbarous and impolitic to oppress those who enjoyed the favour of our predecessors, for no other reason than that they did enjoy it." The claims of those whose cause he was pleading, far from being weakened by the memory of the favours with which Louis XVI had honoured them, should derive additional strength from them in the eyes of Louis XVIII, and should reap the profit now of the affection these ladies had formerly shown towards Mme. de Polignac, "that victim of her devotion to the Queen."

The King was in no wise disturbed by this dissertation. He did not think it necessary, in inheriting the crown, to inherit personal feelings with it; and he thought it above all things important to weigh public opinion, to resist it with all his strength if it were unjust, and to yield to it if it were sound.

"You regard the Duchesse de Polignac as the victim of her devotion to the unfortunate Queen: the public does not agree with you. Ask the public who was the victim of her devotion, and the answer will be: the Princesse de Lamballe. The Duchesse de Polignac, whose very good qualities are recognised by few, because only a few people have been in a position to judge of them, is considered—forgive me, my dear brother, for this painful statement—as having been one of the causes of the Revolution, owing to the immense quality of favours she accumulated for

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herself, her family, and her friends, and to her influence upon the actions of the government at a time that was so near to that of our disasters. This opinion is unfortunate; perhaps it is even exaggerated; but it would be difficult to overcome, and all the more so that it is difficult to refute. I should regard it as a cowardly concession to it, however, to deprive the Duchesse de Polignac's family and friends of the favours they enjoy, and have saved from the general wreck: I am far from wishing to do so, and you ought to remember what I said to you, some time ago now, on the subject of the *cordons bleus*. On the other hand it would be an imprudent defiance of public opinion to grant them new favours, and to give people occasion to say that the Restoration would bring back the old abuses, and that the very same people would gather up all the favours, etc., etc., and this at a time when it is almost out of our power to grant a favour to any one."

For these reasons the King held to his opinion, while regretting that he could not sacrifice it to his brother's. "If, in your two letters, you had expressed an intention to summon your children to your side, the tender interest that I take in you would have given me strength to employ the same language to you. Is it strange, then, that I should do so when you intend, as I flatter myself, to let them stay with me? . . . But after all, what are we disputing about? You are not thinking, of course, of appointing your daughter-in-law's entire household at present; that would be absurd and impolitic. So

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the Duchesse de Sérent and her daughter will suffice us."

This time the Comte d'Artois yielded. Submission was made easy to him by the news, which was received in the course of this discussion, that the Duchesse de Sérent would shortly join Madame Royale. She was ready to set out to any place that the King chose to select for the meeting. Louis XVIII lost no time in announcing this fact to his niece, who had asked for time to consider before definitely fixing upon one name or another.

"You are quite right to take time for thought, before choosing the name that I asked you to submit to me. But let me give you a proof, both of my confidence in your discretion, and of my extreme desire to see you happy. I know that my brother wishes the Duchesse de Sérent to be your lady-of-honour. I share this wish, and if it only rested with me to choose her definitely I should make no other choice, being very sure that I could not make a better, nor one that would please you more. This being the case you will be surprised that I should not have mentioned her; but I could not dream of securing her, knowing her to be in France. Since the last time I wrote to you, however, I have learnt that she has just left that country. I will now return to what I wished to say to you. Think of the pleasure it would give to your father-in-law and to your husband, who regards Mme. de Sérent as his second mother, if you were to express a wish to have her for your lady-of-honour! You might say to me then: 'If the

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Duchesse de Sérent were at liberty, I should be very happy to have her as my lady-of-honour.' This wish, which would be an extremely natural one for you to have, would give immense satisfaction to those whom it is most essential for you to please.

"The little plot I am proposing is surely very innocent. I should feel no embarrassment in confessing that I had put the idea of it into your head; but I should much prefer it to appear to come from you, and you could not give me a greater mark of affection than to adopt it.

"I must now tell you of the pleasure that I derived from your letter to my nephew: it is so delightful for a father to see his children learning to treat each other with such confidence! He showed me his answer; but I did not tell him my secret. The life he has described to you is the life I have led since the end of 1792. It closely resembles that of a community of Chartreux monks. It suits me, I think, more from habit than for any other reason. But it is extremely probable that it might not suit you. If that should be so, my dear child, tell me frankly. Tell me the changes you would like. I only wish it would be a sacrifice to me to adopt them, for my love would turn it into a joy; but as a matter of fact it would not even be a sacrifice; so be sure you do not hesitate."

Madame Royale enthusiastically complied with her uncle's wish:

"The desire you express, my dear uncle, to attach Mme. de Sérent to my household is perfectly in accord-

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ance with my wishes. I have always had the greatest esteem for that lady, both on account of her way of thinking on every possible occasion, and because of her unwavering devotion to my relations until the time of their imprisonment, and especially to my Aunt Elisabeth, to whose household she was attached and who thought a great deal of her. Indeed I think you must have heard, my dear uncle, that I asked, when I left France, that she might accompany me. My request was refused. On every account, then, if the Duchesse de Sérent were at liberty, I should be very happy to have her as my lady-of-honour, and to find her at Mittau on my arrival.

“I thank you heartily, my dear uncle, for sending me the portrait of my cousin; it gave me great pleasure and seems to me very different from the first. As for the letter from him to which you allude, I have not received it, but I still have hopes that it is not lost, and that you may perhaps have forgotten it.”

The winter was nearly over by the time the Duchesse de Sérent was definitely appointed to the post of Madame Royale's lady-of-honour. On the 13th March 1779, in answer to her thanks, Madame Royale expressed her satisfaction :

“The letter that you wrote to me from Münster, Madame, informed me that you were safely out of France. I congratulate you, and am delighted at the news, for I feared you would not be able to leave the country without surmounting a great many difficulties

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and dangers. My consent to your appointment as my lady-of-honour was given all the more willingly that I learnt early to know and value your virtues.

“My departure from Vienna is at present fixed for the 20th April. As I shall be accompanied as far as the Russian frontier by the guard of honour provided for me by His Imperial Majesty, I think it will be best for you to go to Theresienpol, a town on the Austrian frontier, where I am to part from my escort. You will there receive the orders of the King my uncle, either to accompany me from the Russian frontier to Mittau, or to travel to Mittau in advance of me, according to the arrangements made by the Court of Russia. The Bishop of Nancy will send you, with my letter, the passports necessary for crossing the Emperor’s dominions and staying in them. He will also take care to inform the King my uncle of your departure from Münster for Theresienpol, so that future orders may be addressed to you there. It will be a real pleasure to me to have you with me, and to be able to express the sincere regard with which I am, Madame, yours very affectionately.”

The King meanwhile, foreseeing that several weeks would pass before his niece arrived at Mittau, was occupied in arranging all the concerns of the future Duchesse d’Angoulême, even those that appeared to be of the most insignificant nature.

“During the last few days I have been inspecting the rooms you are to have. I hope you will be pleased with them. I am anxious about one thing,

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however. They look towards the south, and I have been told that you are sensitive to heat in your rooms. If that be true you would be doing me a great kindness by telling me so, as I would then suggest to my nephew, who is to have the corresponding suite of rooms on the north side, that he should exchange with you, and though he is also afraid of heat he would be happy to make this small sacrifice for you. There is one thing I must tell you, however : in my opinion the south rooms are prettier than those on the north side, though the two suites are the same size ; but the former seems to me the better arranged. I cannot tell you how much pleasure it gives me to discuss all these little arrangements with you ; they seem to bring the happy moment nearer."

Madame Royale could not fail to be greatly touched by these constant attentions :

" I was much affected by your kindness in going into so many details with regard to my rooms. Those that you intended for me would in any case have suited me, but I must confess that a south aspect suits me extremely well. I think the heat cannot be excessive in that climate, and the south seems to me the healthiest aspect ; I should have been very sorry that my cousin should be inconvenienced on my account, and I see very plainly from this how he looks at things."

Every kind action on the King's part incited Madame Royale to fresh expressions of gratitude, and whether the affair in question were important or

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of secondary interest there was not one, as her letters plainly show, that left her cold or indifferent. It is true that the King's letters always give evidence of deeper affection. Everything served him as a pretext for showing it. For instance, he begged his niece to take possession of a store of diamonds that he had placed in the care of the Elector of Trèves while living in Coblenz, and in order that she might have no difficulty in obtaining them he sent her the receipt that had been given him. His only fear was that some of the diamonds might have belonged to Madame Élisabeth. "That is a thing that can easily be cleared up," answered Madame Royale when she thanked him, "for I know she made a will. But I doubt whether these can be hers, since they were placed in safety in '91, and she knew nothing of the journey to Varennes until a few hours before it took place. Consequently I do not think she could possibly have sent them away at that time."¹

On the 30th December, 1798, a far more serious matter had been the King's theme.

"I have just heard, my dear child, that the Directory has at last thrown off the mask it has worn so long with regard to the King of Sardinia, and has declared war against him. You can easily imagine how much the news distresses me. This act of perfidy

¹ See *The Flight of Marie Antoinette*, by G. LÉNÔTRE, p. 227: "The luggage-carrier of the cabriolet in which Choiseul and Léonard had travelled from Paris, contained a garment worn by the King on state occasions—the red and gold Cherbourg coat—his linen, some of the Queen's jewels, and Madame Élisabeth's diamonds."²—(*Translator's Note.*)

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has been preceded by so many others that, failing a miracle, this unhappy King is lost if he be reduced to defending himself with his own forces only. I do not doubt that the generous heart of the Emperor, my nephew and his, will have felt for his cruel position. I am also only too well aware of the time that has passed since the declaration of war, and of the many events that must have already occurred. None the less I cannot hold my peace, when I think of the great danger that threatens the only sister remaining to me, and the whole of my wife's family. If it were not for the reasons of which I have already told you it would not be to you that I should appeal, but to the Emperor himself. But at this moment I am almost glad that my happiness should have been delayed, since you can act as my substitute in so important a matter. I know the discretion that you feel to be your duty; in every other case I approve of it; but in this case you must rise above it. Follow, if there be still time, the example of Esther. Remember that the matter at stake is the safety or ruin of your aunt, and of a whole family who will soon be closely allied to you. Urge him and entreat him; make use of the gift of persuasion with which Providence has so richly endowed you; secure the help that is so indispensable for them. You could not do a better action, nor at the same time give me a more touching proof of your love for me. I ask it in the name of all the love that fills my heart for you."

Before this appeal could reach his niece the King wrote again :

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“ Twice in the course of last week I told you of my distress and anxiety, on account of the position in which my sister and brothers-in-law are placed. My feelings were made still more acute by the rumour that they had moved to Chambéry. Finally I learnt that they had gone to Sardinia. Their condition is still very deplorable; they had some terrible days to live through, and I am sure that the memory of those you had the misfortune to experience must have given you special sympathy with their sufferings. But at least we need fear no more for their personal safety. In the first moments of my grief I invoked your aid for them; but my letters cannot possibly have reached you until long after you know the true state of things, and you will feel, with me, that there is nothing to be done for the moment, and that a turn will come in their fortunes, as in ours, at some time that I venture to hope is not far distant.”

When these grief-laden letters reached Madame Royale she had heard of the disastrous events that their writer feared. Indeed she had informed her uncle of them, but their letters had crossed one another :

“ You must surely have heard, my very dear uncle, of all the disasters that have taken place in Turin : the imprisonment of the King and his whole family, and their alleged departure to the island of Sardinia. I am greatly grieved by all these horrors, especially on the Queen’s account, for she is a saint, and had already suffered quite enough from the cruelty of those

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people. I had a letter from her, too, only a little time ago. It is certainly a terrible business. It does not seem to me that matters are improving; on the contrary, I think they are growing worse and worse. When, I wonder, will there be an end to all these troubles?"

One day in the following week the princess wrote that she had appealed to the Emperor. "He answered that, if it were possible, he would do everything to save them, and indeed that it was to his own interest to support them. I am afraid there is not much that can be done for them at this moment. But I look for time to do everything. Meanwhile the latest news is that they have remained at Parma, and it was hoped that everything would be settled for the best." The King was particularly delighted by his niece's conduct. "I am all the more pleased because, when you received my letters on the subject you were aware—as I found out at once after I had written to you—that everything was lost for the moment. No matter; it has increased my love for you, if possible, and moreover you have done a good work, for which you will be rewarded by Him in whose eyes no good work is ever wasted. I have heard, since your letter was written, that those unfortunate people have left Parma; but I shall not be altogether at ease about them until I know they have reached Sardinia."

In the meantime the King had sent Madame Royale a portrait of himself painted many years earlier by Mme. Bonn. The princess already

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possessed a picture of him, signed by Mme. Vigée-Lebrun and given to her by La Fare, who himself owed it to a happy chance that he was able to offer it to her. "When the one by Mme. Bonn was painted, so many years and misfortunes had not yet passed over my head. Although it was a good likeness in those days, therefore, it is very flattering now. But neither of the portraits can tell you, as well as I soon hope to tell you myself, how dearly I love you.

"I hope you received my nephew's letter describing the life we had here; but do not forget that all these arrangements are subject to your pleasure, and speak to me with absolute confidence, I entreat you, on this matter. My nephew told me what you said to him with regard to your tastes. I will confess to you that I had already tried to guess them, and I hope you will find some books here, and some materials for drawing and working. I had also asked for a harpsichord: but, as I see you care for music no more than I do myself, I will not encumber your room with a useless piece of furniture."

The various interests that figure in this correspondence were still occupying the King's mind at the opening of the year 1799. He had been awaiting the new year with especial impatience; for on the one hand a new coalition, including Russia, had been formed against France, and some decisive result might be expected in the spring; and on the other he was convinced that the same spring would see his niece's arrival at Mittau. But for Madame this year opened with a deep sorrow; she lost her greatest

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friend, the Archduchess Amélie, the Emperor's youngest sister, with whom, ever since her arrival in Vienna, she had been on the closest terms of intimacy. Even in December she had foreseen this loss. "I have the additional sorrow here of seeing the Archduchess Amélie at the point of death. She is attacked by such a violent malady that it is greatly feared she will not recover. I shall be inconsolable, both because of her affection for me, and because it is so sad that she should die so young. It is true that her constitution, which is strong, may save her. But I dare not flatter myself that it will."

The archduchess died in the evening of the day that Madame Royale wrote this despairing letter to her uncle. "I can assure you that her loss gives me the greatest pain. She had all the qualities that make a person beloved, and she showed me a great deal of affection. I miss her terribly; she was my one and only companion; not a day passed without my seeing her. Even while she was ill she liked me to visit her for a moment every day. It is terrible to see a young woman of her age die of so painful a malady; it is an irreparable loss for her whole family, who adored her, and for me too!"

It was not likely that the King would fail to sympathise with the mental disturbance this premature death had wrought in his niece; and he poured out his consolation with his usual effusion. "It is not mere disquietude that I have been trying to express, my dear child, but real sorrow. The affection you had for your charming cousin, and the affection for you of which she gave such touching evidence to the

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very last, won my sincere attachment, and make me regret her as though I had been able to judge of her worth for myself. I know your piety too well, however, to have any doubts of the consolation you will find in thinking of the happiness that so pure a soul must be enjoying now. Compared with such a thought as this, what are all our thoughts of earth? None the less I entreat you to think of those who love you. If it were not for my nephew I should call myself the first of them; but it is only to him that I can and will yield on that point."

At the same time, in the midst of her grief, Madame Royale received a small consolation. Among the treasures that were restored to her by the Elector of Trèves she found her father's coat.¹ "I regard it as a real relic; it gave me the greatest pleasure. It seems to me that the portrait of a child, which is in the portfolio, must be that of my elder brother. But as I confess I do not remember him very well, may I ask you to tell me if it is so?" The isolation in which Madame Royale lived, although she had now laid aside her mourning, was doubtless increased by the death of the archduchess, and her life in Vienna had become more wearisome in consequence. Possibly the letters of her betrothed had at length touched her heart, or her uncle's love had entirely and utterly subjugated it. Be that as it may she was now ardently longing to be with them, and was overjoyed that the fulfilment of her wishes was so close at hand.

¹ See note on p. 228.

CHAPTER XII

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At the beginning of April, 1799, there was no longer any reason to prevent the Queen and Madame Royale from undertaking their journey. It was arranged that they should both reach Mittau in the month of June. The King had thought at first that they might travel together, but Paul I had decided otherwise. A route was mapped out for each of them, according to which they would only meet at the end of the journey.

Now that the princess was so soon to be united to a family from whom her misfortunes had so long kept her apart, and to whom she was a stranger, the King thought it advisable to make its various members known to her. In his letter of the 17th April he described them to her, and began with his nephew, as though to prepare the mind of the bride-elect for the good qualities, and the faults, of the prince she was about to marry.

“I have already depicted my nephew’s character for you. I hope you were pleased with the portrait, and am certain you will think it a good likeness. It will be all the more easy for you to be happy with him that his heart has been protected by his conscience, and has been given to no one but you; and that his principles, aided by your own worth, make

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it a certainty that this first attachment will also be the last. But, unless I am much mistaken in you, you will not be content with domestic happiness, but will wish your husband to be equal to everything that circumstances may demand of him; and for my part I will confess that in this respect I place my hopes upon you, far more than on anything I have been able to do myself. The difference in age, the habit of respect, and even a slight feeling of fear, always make a young man suspect the existence of a little pedantry in the lessons of his elders, whereas, on the lips of a charming woman who is equally loved and respected, reason is transformed into sentiment, and acquires an empire that is none the less strong because it is also sweet.

“Though he has naturally a great aptitude for work my nephew was for a long time forced to lead a life that made him lose, not only the habit of application, but the taste for it. I have done my best to combat this fault, the only real one that I have detected in him; I have partially succeeded; it is for you to complete the task, and when he finds out from yourself that the best way to please you is to make himself worthy of you in every respect, these bad habits will soon disappear. You will be all the happier yourself, you will cause rejoicing throughout the family, and some day France will owe her happiness to you. This task that I look to you to perform will cost you no trouble. Deeply beloved as you are, you need but to breathe the wish and your husband’s confidence will be won. He has a retiring nature, but his soul is frank and loyal,

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and asks nothing better than to lay its secrets open before you."

Having given his views on the Duc d'Angoulême, the King proceeded to introduce the other members of the family of the Bourbons of France.

"I should be attempting to teach you your duty—and that, as I have already said, I would not presume to do—if I were to remind you of what you will owe to my brother. He is fully conscious of a father's claims, but he has an excellent heart. I do not love you more than he : I can say nothing stronger than that, and since you will show him all the consideration and submission that he has reason to expect, he will never use his rights except to contribute to your happiness. Your conduct towards my sister-in-law will be a still easier matter. Her delicate health makes her shun society, though she has succeeded in it whenever she has had a mind to do so ; but she prefers a retired life. The consideration that she has a right to expect from you will be quite enough to make her adore you.

"So tender an affection exists between my two nephews that you may be sure the Duc de Berry will take every pains to please you, and no doubt you will feel towards him as he deserves. The affection that bound me to your mother has taught me that a brother-in-law may easily become a real brother. I need not speak to you of all that is due to the age and virtues of my aunts. The Queen, whom you will see at first more than all the rest of the family, has always had an especial love for you, and the more

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you know her the more you will see how good-humoured she is, and how easy to live with.

“I have nothing to say with regard to those who will be most with you. You know all the excellencies of the Duchesse de Sérent ; her daughter is worthy of her ; and as for the Duc de Damas—who is to be your gentleman-in-waiting—your unfortunate father, to whose household he was at one time attached, thought very highly of him.

“And finally, my dear child, I must say a word about myself. I am about to lose my direct authority over you, and I do not regret it ; but I shall never give up the right of being a father to you, and as a father I hope I shall always have your confidence. Your own intelligence will always be your best guide. But a long experience of men and things may be of use to you, and I shall always be ready to give you advice when you ask me for it. If you should ever be in trouble, and should be willing to confide in me, I should regard the confidence as the most perfect proof of your affection. For my part I regard you as destined by Providence to take the place of my poor sister, and to be, like her, the bond of union between the whole family, our universal confidant, the angel of peace whose office it is to smooth over the little differences that arise from time to time between the best friends. This is the rôle that will suit you the best, both during our troubles and when they come to an end.”

This letter was the last, save one, that Madame Royale received from her uncle. It reached her as

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she was on the point of starting on her journey. "It is her heart's dearest wish and longing," wrote the Bishop of Nancy. All was ready for her departure. The Duc de Villequier had come to Vienna to fetch her, and escort her to Mittau. The Emperor had consented to send her, under the protection of Mme. de Chanclos, as far as Theresiopel, on the Russian frontier, where orders had already been received from the Tsar that her safety and comfort were to be insured for the rest of the journey. She had with her, as her lady-in-waiting, Mlle. de Choisy, whom the King had attached to her household at her request, and who was a niece of the Marquis d'Ourches, formerly chamberlain to the Comte de Provence. The Duchesse de Sérent and her daughter, having left France too late to join her in Vienna, were to meet her in Courland. The two *valets de chambre*, Hue and Cléry, with three waiting-women and two footmen, were also with her on the journey. When the King learnt these details Madame Royale had already left Theresiopel, whence, immediately on her arrival on the 17th May, she had sent a short note to her uncle by an express messenger. He received it on the 23rd May, as was recorded by d'Avaray on that day in his report to the King.

"An express messenger sent by M. le duc de Villequier brought us news this morning that Madame Royale reached Theresiopel at last on the 17th, that she was to leave that town two days later, and that after travelling for thirteen days she would arrive at Mittau.

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“ Monseigneur le duc d'Angoulême came to see me in a state of rapture, and assured me, with a great deal of feeling and in the most gratifying terms, that he would never forget that he owed the project of his marriage, and its successful conclusion, to my zeal and labours.

“ When, in answer, I told him how fortunate I felt myself in having been able to contribute to his happiness, I took the opportunity of observing that the marriage of princes was usually a matter of policy alone, whereas his marriage combined sentiment of the sweetest description with policy in a most interesting form, and that he could not have found a worthier ambition, even if he had been peaceably seated on the highest step of the throne. By these remarks I intended to engrave his love for Madame Thérèse more deeply than ever on the young prince's heart, and to strengthen him in his resolution to devote himself always to making his wife happy. I have reason to believe that my words did not fail of their effect.”

On the 29th the King despatched the Duc de Guiche, with orders to follow the direct road to Theresiopel until he met the princess. He carried with him these words of welcome from her uncle :

“ It fills me with the most delightful feeling of happiness to write this letter to you, my dear child. The moment of your receiving it from the Duc de Guiche will be but a very short time before the moment of my receiving you, after our long separation

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and our many common sorrows. As I have often told you, I do not presume to hope that I can make you forget those sorrows, but at least my love and care shall do all that is possible to soften the memory of them, and I hope to receive the same consolation from you. All your letters have seemed to promise it to me. The one you wrote to me from Theresiopel proved your confidence in me, and there is no sentiment that a father desires so greatly to win from his daughter. All the other sentiments will soon belong to my nephew; he will earn them with his own; and the more I see them reciprocated between you, the more I shall believe that there may still be some happiness for me."

In the evening of the 2nd June, when Madame Royale was approaching Mittau, the Queen arrived there. Her journey had been the subject of long negotiations, and the cause of painful discussions between her and her husband. When she left Budweiss she aspired to travel with an amount of pomp, and a retinue, that were quite incompatible with the slender resources of the royal treasury. Numerous letters, painful revelations, and the whole force of the King's will had to be brought to bear upon her before she would consent to give up her pretensions. She was obliged to content herself with a very modest retinue; and when determining the sum that was to be spent upon her journey the Comte de Saint-Priest was driven to make this melancholy comment: "The estimate sent by M. de Virieu to M. de Villequier would be very modest, truly, for the Queen of

France; but circumstances oblige us to reduce it still further."

This difficulty being settled, she raised another. She insisted on bringing her reader, Mme. de Gourbillon, whose harmful influence over her was already so strong that Louis XVIII had resolved not to tolerate the woman's presence at Mittau. The Queen's obstinacy and the King's opposition gave rise, first to a voluminous correspondence, and on the Queen's arrival at Mittau to some painful scenes. She had completely disregarded the King's definite orders, and Mme. de Gourbillon, at her request, had come with her to Mittau, and actually dared to enter the town in her suite. So much the worse for her. While the Queen's carriages were passing through the town on their way to the palace, one of them was seen to turn aside and make its way to the governor's house. In this carriage sat the Queen's reader. In the governor's house she was shown an order for her immediate return to the frontier, whereupon she burst forth into piercing shrieks. Standing on the steps of the governor's house she attacked the King in a stream of gross insults. A crowd gathered, and excitedly discussed the incident; and it was only the incarceration of the Gourbillon that put an end to the scandalous scene. She was taken to Vilna that very night.

In the palace, meanwhile, the Queen—still in her travelling-dress—was in a frenzy of rage and tears. She refused to enter her rooms, and cried that she would rather go away again than be parted from the friend whom the King, she declared, held responsible



MADAME ROYALE, DUCHESSE D'ANGOULÊME.—AFTER KALTERER.
(*Bibliothèque Nationale.*)



MEETING OF LOUIS XVIII AND MADAME ROYALE.
FROM A DRAWING BY TOFFANELLI.
(*Versailles Museum.*)

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for all the misunderstanding that had so long reigned between him and herself. She was only quelled when Louis XVIII exerted his authority, and declared that he would not allow her to go.

The arrival of Madame Royale, which took place on the following day, effaced the painful impression created by this incident. The 3rd June was surely a happier day for Louis XVIII than any he had known since leaving France. The night had brought counsel to the Queen; she had recovered her self-control, and though she and her husband had long been at variance they were delighted to be together at this solemn moment. They went together to meet their niece beyond the outskirts of Mittau, and took the Duc d'Angoulême with them. On seeing their carriage the princess immediately ordered her own to draw up, and, rushing to meet the King, who was alighting as quickly as his weight would allow, she fell on her knees before him. He raised her from the ground, clasped her to his heart, and placed her in the arms of the Queen, who, after kissing her, gave way to the Duc d'Angoulême. "The young man" was deeply moved and very pale, and could only stammer a few words as he raised his cousin's hand to his lips. He found her presence less embarrassing, however, than that of the King, whose overflowing affection manifested itself so effusively that, had he been younger, he might have been mistaken for the princess's betrothed. And indeed, during this long engagement, he had played the lover's part even more energetically than the young prince.

An hour later those who had been left behind in

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the palace heard his voice echoing through the ancient halls of the bygone Dukes of Courland.

“Here she is! here she is!” he cried.

One and all they hastened to greet her, and were admitted to pay their court to this new-comer, who was to bring a touch of happiness into their dreary life of exile. That the King foresaw this happiness was plain, for his eyes and lips were eloquent of joy. After four years of waiting he saw his efforts crowned with success, and his dearest wish fulfilled. He had wished to win a daughter: she was his—and how worthy of his love!

The marriage was celebrated on the 10th June in the chapel of the palace, in the presence of all the French in Mittau, the Russian officials, and the delegates of the nobles of Courland. The ceremony was conducted by the Cardinal de Montmorency, Grand Almoner of the Court, with the assistance of the Abbés Edgeworth and Marie, Almoners in Ordinary. At eight o'clock on the previous evening the contract had been signed: a laconic contract, such as was suitable to exiles, postponing to happier times the settlement of the young couple's personal estate. The Comte de Saint-Priest read it aloud. “When he read the names of Louis XVI and the late Queen, Madame Thérèse was overcome by emotion, which was observed by the spectators, but was quickly suppressed.” The contract was signed by the King and Queen, the Cardinal de Montmorency, the Duc de Fleury, the Duc de Villequier, the Duc de Guiche, the Marquis de Nesle, the Comte de la Chapelle, the Comte de Cossé-Brissac, the Comte d'Avaray, the

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Abbés Edgeworth and Marie, the Comte de Saint-Priest, the Marquis de Dancourt, and the Vicomte de Virieu.

On the same day a messenger arrived from Paul I, bringing a diamond necklace and a letter for the princess. "Your misfortunes, your virtues, and your heroic courage," wrote the Tsar, "have won for you the lasting respect and sympathy of every well-disposed and good-hearted human being. May you be happy in the midst of your loving family, and never leave my dominions till you return to France, to find there a repentant nation, weeping for the crimes of the monsters it has had the misfortune to produce." The Tsar, moreover, had consented to sign the contract, and to deposit it among the imperial archives. The Duc d'Angoulême wrote to him, after the religious ceremony, to express his gratitude :

"SIRE,

"My first duty and my first impulse, on leaving the altar where I have just been united to my cousin, is to lay the offering of my deep and respectful gratitude at the feet of Your Imperial Majesty. But the happier I am, the more I desire to show myself worthy of my happiness. Every man who is not deaf to the voice of honour is making all the haste he can upon the road that Paul I has opened to him. I have seen Your Imperial Majesty's soldiers speeding upon the path to glory : Europe is ringing with the exploits of Marshal Souvarof and the Archduke Charles ; and meanwhile the husband of a princess whose courage, quite as much as her sorrows and

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virtues, has attracted the eyes and thoughts of all Europe, is condemned to inaction! Ah, sire, at such a cost there can be no happiness for me! Will Your Imperial Majesty deign to consider my position, and crown your many kindnesses by permitting me to fight under your flag? To serve as a volunteer in the cause of my God and my King, to fight in the front ranks of Your Imperial Majesty's army, to show the world that I am not unworthy of my ancestors, that is all that I wish and all that I ask. Being assured of the safety of the wife who is dearer to me than life itself, since I shall be leaving her in the dominions and under the protection of Your Imperial Majesty, I shall summon my honour to stifle the regrets I might otherwise feel, and shall devote all my efforts to justifying the choice of our parents and the kindness of our august benefactor."

As for the King, he despatched an official announcement of the marriage to every Court, and every member of the family.

"The portraits you have seen of our daughter," he said to his brother, "cannot give you an accurate idea of her; they are not in the least like her. She so closely resembles both her father and her mother that she recalls them absolutely, together or separately, according to the point of view from which one looks at her. She is not pretty at first sight; but she becomes so as one looks at her, and especially as one talks to her, for there is not a movement of her face that is not pleasing. She is a little shorter than

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her mother, and a little taller than our poor sister. She is well made, holds herself well, carries her head perfectly, and walks with ease and grace. When she speaks of her misfortunes her tears do not flow readily, owing to her habit of restraining them, lest her gaolers should have the barbarous pleasure of seeing her shed them. It is no easy task, however, for her listeners to restrain theirs. But her natural gaiety is not quenched; draw her mind away from this tragic chapter of her life, and she laughs heartily and is quite charming. She is gentle, good-humoured, and affectionate; and there is no doubt that she has the mind of a mature woman. In private with me she behaves as our poor Élisabeth might have behaved with my father; in public she has the bearing of a princess accustomed to holding a Court. She not only says courteous things to everyone, but she says to each individual the most suitable thing that could be said. She is modest without being shy, at her ease without being familiar, and as innocent as on the day she was born. Of that I have been absolutely convinced by her manner with my nephew since Tuesday, the day of her arrival here. In fact, to put it briefly, I recognise in her the angel we have lost."

After giving this charming portrait, which we should have been very sorry to keep from our readers, the King paid a tribute of praise to the Duc d'Angoulême. "To spend six days with a girl who was to be his wife on the seventh was a really difficult affair, and from the very first moment he adopted exactly the right shade of manner, and never departed

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from it for a second—always trying to please, always gallant and even tender in a respectful way, and quite without embarrassment. We went out to meet her at a spot three versts away from here, and the time we spent on the return journey was quite enough to overcome his shyness, which was what I feared most in our young man.”

D’Avaray, in a letter to an Italian friend, Signora de’ Colonia, goes even farther in enthusiasm. “Mme. la duchesse d’Angoulême is in face, bearing, accomplishments, and virtues, everything that the heart of a true Frenchman can desire. The King—the kind, good King who has contrived to accomplish this interesting marriage despite so many obstacles and difficulties—has grown ten years younger, and for the first time is enjoying unmixed happiness. Our young prince’s satisfaction is complete, and we ourselves are intoxicated with delight. An onlooker would think we had everything we desired, that we had lost nothing, or else had recovered all that we had lost; and if it were not that our charming princess, in her sweet tenderness of heart, often takes our thoughts back to the unequalled sorrows of her august family, all the tears we should shed in her presence would be tears of emotion and joy.”

On the 31st July the King, in a letter to his brother, sang the princess’s praises anew. “All that I told you about our daughter is the exact truth; I said neither too much nor too little of her. Now, at the end of seven weeks, I repeat it all, and supposing I had been a little over-enthusiastic at the first moment I should have calmed down by this time; but I still

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see her with the same eyes. There is now only one thing lacking to complete our satisfaction; but that is not a thing that depends upon me; there my responsibility ends. They are both young and in good health; and they love one another. So I hope we shall not have long to wait for the event in question, and that we shall live again in their children."

It was in another letter to his brother, written on the 7th of the following August, that he indulged in this confidential outburst of asperity: "If you can believe it, the people in Vienna are pretending to pity your daughter-in-law, and representing her as the victim of her obedience to her relations. I wish the rascals could see things with their own eyes, not that they might be converted, but that they might burst with spite and rage: *virtutem videant, intabescanique relicta.*"

His satisfaction was not unreasonable. For indeed, not only at Mittau, but everywhere else it was believed that the effect of this marriage upon France would be immense, and would result in the speedy restoration of the monarchy. This hope was not to be realised. But at this moment, beneath the smiles of the Orphan of the Temple, it grew and flourished in the King's heart as vigorously as if the long-desired marriage had been celebrated, not in the depths of Russia, but in the Tuileries or at Versailles.

Our purpose, in the foregoing pages, having been merely to tell the story of Madame Royale's youth until the time of her marriage, our task would naturally be ended here. But we feel it would not be inappropriate, before bringing the tale to a close, to describe

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an episode that called out, in very trying circumstances, all the princess's high spirit and courage.

When she arrived at Mittau she seemed to have drained, to its very last drop, the cup of bitterness that she had been doomed to drink when hardly more than a child. But it was written that the rest of her life was to be spent in emptying it to the dregs, and that her many previous sufferings were to be followed by a host of miseries and trials. She was not long allowed to enjoy the happiness of being reunited to her family, nor the satisfaction of having accomplished her duty by obeying her parents' wishes—as she believed—and marrying her cousin the Duc d'Angoulême.

In the month of January 1801, that is to say a few months after her arrival at Mittau, the peace that the King and his family were enjoying was shattered by a fresh shock. After welcoming them to his empire and treating them very generously, Paul I, who was already showing signs of the madness that afterwards made his rule so oppressive, suddenly and without any apparent cause ordered Louis XVIII to leave, without delay, not only the asylum that had been given to him, but even the Russian dominions. We have elsewhere¹ fully described all the circumstances that attended this incomprehensible and brutal action, and it will suffice to give a very brief account of them here.

It was on the 20th of January, the eve of the anniversary of Louis XVI's death, that the King heard of the Tsar's order for his immediate departure.

¹ See vol. iii of my *Histoire de l'Émigration*.

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The Duchesse d'Angoulême, at the time, was secluded in her own rooms, celebrating the tragic event with prayer and meditation.

The King would have preferred not to disturb her. But he could not leave her in ignorance of the fresh blow that had fallen, so he went to her rooms in search of her.

The door was closed, and was guarded by the faithful Cléry, who only opened it at the King's express command. The princess was on her knees before her almoner, the Abbé Edgeworth. On her uncle's unexpected entrance she rose and ran to him, threw her arms round him, and in answer to her questions heard that their refuge at Mittau was lost to them.

She received the news with great courage. After thanking God that the misfortune had befallen her, and not France, she did her utmost to reassure the King. She would be happy, she said, if only she might be with him. On her uncle telling her that they need not leave Mittau for two days (thanks to the governor, who had taken upon himself to give them forty-eight hours' grace), she returned to her devotions.

On the appointed day the exiles set out upon their journey. Their passports were drawn up in the names of the Comte de l'Isle and the Marquise de la Meillerage. Their suite was composed of the Comte d'Avaray, the Duchesse de Sérent, the Duc de Fleury, Mlle. de Choisy, the Abbé Edgeworth, the Vicomte d'Hardouineau, and three servants. Two carriages contained them all. The Duc d'Angoulême was not with them :

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he had returned to Condé's army a few weeks earlier. The King had written to inform him of the sad event, and to tell him that he was on his way to Warsaw, where he hoped to remain.

By means of his letters we are able to follow him on every stage of his journey. From his letters, too, we see how deeply grateful he was from that time forward to his niece, whose affection and courage never faltered for a moment, though her own sufferings were increased by her anxiety on account of her absent husband, of whom she had no news. In a letter to the Comte d'Artois the King lavishes praises upon her. He blesses her for all the consolation he owes to her; he calls her "our admirable daughter."

To the Prince de Condé he used similar language :

"My position is painful, no doubt. But how can I distress myself on that account, or even feel it, when I think of my niece, who, like a new Antigone, devotes herself to me in my sad fate? She is far more to be admired here than she was in the Temple, for here her duty is very far from being the same. All her care is for me, and she bears her own discomforts with an amount of courage and equability of temper that would make me forget them myself if it were possible."

Thus, in a few sentences, the King described Madame Royale's devotion during this melancholy journey. The cold was intense: snow was falling fast, and covering the great plains round Mittau with its thick and shining mantle. On the first day the



THE TWO WANDERERS.
(From a print in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*.)



THE FRENCH ANTIGONE.—FROM AN ENGRAVING PUBLISHED AT THE
BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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journey was continued until the evening without a pause, except at the posting-houses. At night the travellers were given a respectful welcome and a comfortable shelter by a gentleman of the country; but for the two following nights they had no resting-place but miserable inns. The fourth day was terrible. A gusty wind blew the snow hither and thither in clouds, and made the roads impassable for carriages that were weighed down by so many travellers. The King and his companions were forced to walk. This struggle through the storm was a terrible experience, especially for the unfortunate King, whose immense weight made movement very difficult for him. He dragged himself along slowly and painfully, clinging to his niece's arm. As for her, she was heroically patient and serene.

At last they reached Memel, in the territory of the King of Prussia; and it became necessary to inquire whether that monarch would allow the exiled King to remain in his dominions. It would not be possible to show any special favour to Louis XVIII without a risk of offending, not only the Tsar, who had just expelled him from Russia, but also General Bonaparte, who so easily took umbrage at any sign of sympathy with the Bourbons of France. With a view to solving the difficulty the Duchesse d'Angoulême, on her uncle's advice, wrote to the Queen of Prussia. A favour that reasons of state would prevent from being granted might possibly be won through the intercession of a compassionate, generous woman, moved by the sorrows of another woman, her equal in birth and rank.

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The princess begged the Queen to obtain her husband's permission for Louis XVIII to travel through his territory, and, if necessary, remain there.

Three weeks went by before the answer arrived. The Queen had referred the matter to her husband, and he, before coming to any decision, wished to ascertain the views of the First Consul. A messenger sent by the latter to Berlin informed the King of Prussia that Bonaparte was quite willing that the persecuted royal family should find a refuge in Prussia, "on condition that the head of the Bourbons should discard his empty title." The answer received at Memel, therefore, was everything the travellers could desire.

"*Madame ma sœur et cousine,*" it ran, "it was with feelings of mingled pleasure and pain that I approached the King on the subject of Your Royal Highness's gracious commission. When you made the request no doubt you knew the answer, and when I tell you, Madame, that the length of your sojourn in Prussia depends only upon yourself, and is an honour at this moment, I shall be informing you of nothing that you could do us the injustice of doubting.

"Your Royal Highness is travelling at a fatiguing time of year and under skies to which you are not accustomed. I entreat you to travel slowly, lest your health should suffer unduly. Where so much courage is needed there is also great need of health, and it would grieve me to hear that you had come to Prussia—where you will be everywhere surrounded

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with sympathy and respect—only to find fresh suffering.”

It would be impossible to grant a favour with a better grace. Between the two women only the language of the heart was heard; but it was another matter when reasons of state intervened, to regulate the conditions on which the King of France was permitted to remain in Prussian territory. He was allowed to live at Warsaw, but on condition that he lived there under the name of the Comte de l'Isle, and held no Court. Louis XVIII accepted the terms, having, indeed, no power to refuse them. There was nothing now to prevent him from continuing his journey, and he was on the eve of doing so when, to his dismay, five of his bodyguards arrived at Memel, and gave him the news that all the French in Mittau had received orders to quit Russia. The poor men had set out helter-skelter, mostly on foot, and had been reduced to asking charity of the peasants. The King determined to remain at Memel until they had all arrived; and he was then faced by the difficulty of providing for them. Here was another opportunity for Madame Royale to show her greatness of heart.

Since funds were absolutely lacking she spontaneously offered to pledge or sell her diamonds, more especially the necklace of brilliants that the Tsar had given her on her marriage. The King at first refused: he shrank from the idea of despoiling his niece. But she insisted so urgently, and the embarrassment caused by the destitution of the bodyguard was so great, that he finally yielded. A sum of two thousand

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ducats was raised on the diamonds, and enabled the King to relieve the want of his faithful guard.

At the end of February the fugitives reached the ancient capital of Poland, at that time belonging to Prussia, and installed themselves in the Lazienki Palace. There they lived in obscurity and oblivion till 1804, when, after a short sojourn in Sweden, the King decided to return to Courland, and again accept the shelter of the palace of Mittau, which the Emperor Alexander had placed at his disposal.

From that day forward, in Russia first, and later on in England, the life of the Duchesse d'Angoulême was merged in that of the exiled royal family, and it was on the domestic hearth alone that she was able to show her resignation, courage, and other shining virtues. Amid endless difficulties and bitter sorrows she developed, more and more, that marvellous strength of mind and spirit of resolution which she had already shown at the time of her release from the Temple, and was afterwards to show more plainly still in all the changes and chances connected with Napoleon's return from the island of Elba.

When that time came her youth was over; for although in years she was still a young woman she was prematurely aged. It was as though she were crushed by the burden of her memories and the prolonged sufferings of her exile; crushed to such a degree that there were times in her life when she seemed to have forgotten the generous feelings of her youth, and to have grown hard beneath that great load of sorrow. At these times she appears like another woman. When, in the early days of the

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second Restoration, one sees her turning pitiless eyes upon the great victims of the royalist reaction—on Marshal Ney and Colonel de La Bédoyère—when one sees her unmoved by the prayers and tears of two women pleading for their husbands' lives, one is constrained to ask if this be really the same person who, twenty years earlier, when her prison doors were hardly opened and the wounds of her long martyrdom were still fresh, rejected the very thought of vengeance, forgave her parents' murderers, and implored her uncle's pardon for their crimes.

This hardness of her later years would be incomprehensible if one did not know that great misfortune sometimes distorts the most beautiful characters. If, after the long period of crushing disaster through which we have followed her, the Duchesse d'Angoulême had entered upon a life of permanent happiness; if, after her release from the Temple, her young heart had been left free to grow, no doubt its wounds would have healed. The memory of the tragedies of the Temple, and of the catastrophes that orphaned her, would never have faded from her mind, it is true, but her early ideals of mercy and forgiveness would not have faded either.

But her trials, which she might well have expected to be at an end, were by no means over. Her days in prison were succeeded by many years of exile, the humiliations of poverty, the endless misfortunes of the Bourbons, perpetual disappointment, and, from time to time, some murderous tragedy such as the death of the Duc d'Enghien, and of many another valiant supporter of the royal cause. And at last,

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to this burden of nameless woes was added the fatal return from Elba, which sent her again into exile. She returned to her own country only to be exiled for the third time, and this time for life.

We need not, then, be too much surprised if the Duchesse d'Angoulême should sometimes be very different from Madame Royale, and if, on one or two occasions, the generosity that warmed the heart of the girl should seem extinct in that of the woman. If she grew hard, it was because her later sorrows revived and embittered her memories of the past, and these in turn made the present more galling and exasperating. When a sapling is struck by lightning, but not destroyed, it very rarely grows into a tree without bearing upon its bark some sign of ravage; and, in the wind that blows through its leaves, it surely sometimes feels the burning breath that scarred it in its youth.

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