A SISTER OF LOUIS XVI

D'ARTEMONT


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A SISTER OF LOUIS XVI

MARIE-CLOTILDE DE FRANCE.

(From an old engraving.)

A SISTER OF LOUIS XVI

MARIE-CLOTILDE DE FRANCE

QUEEN OF SARDINIA

(1759—1802)

BY

LOUIS-LEOPOLD D'ARTEMONT

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D. J. S.

PREFACE

THERE has been of late a considerable production of historical memoirs and biographies, both in this country and on the Continent, mainly relating to the latter part of the eighteenth century and the French Revolution. This is no doubt due to the permanent interest of the general public in a period whose fateful connection with our own times, with their political tendencies and with their social problems, is increasingly realized, with satisfaction by many, with apprehension by some. We wish to know more of those days, so near to us, yet in many respects apparently so remote; we are never tired of reading how the people of that period lived and spoke and dressed; we copy their style of furniture (more or less successfully), since only very few can afford to possess real Louis XVI. tables and chairs; we seek in the literature of the period for an explanation of the great Revolution; we read the lives of its chief

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men—great men few of them really were. But we rise from our reading not seldom unsatisfied, unenlightened; for most of those innumerable memoirs only "see in part and prophesy in part"; and in spite of the arduous labours of modern historians, we feel that the whole tale has not yet been told, the whole secret of that mighty upheaval has not been fully revealed. We are left wondering whether we have reached a complete account of what took place, or merely a theory of it, drawn up to fit in with a point of view.

On the whole, biographies, if conscientiously written, are most useful to us. They show us what men and women were when Louis XVI. and Marie-Antoinette ascended the throne; when Voltaire and Rousseau were writing; when Beaumarchais was introducing Figaro to his countrymen; when the États-Généraux were assembling at Versailles; when the *émigrés* were seeking safety beyond the frontier; when the Temple had become a royal prison, and the Convention sat at the Tuileries, and the guillotine knew no rest. For the most part those biographies are sad reading, but they are truly instructive. They may not fully reveal the meaning of the play, but they show us, at any rate, the actors; and these, acting their part, as most of them did, without com-

prehension of what was happening, are all the more useful to us for that reason, when we endeavour to form a judgment upon the events in which they were involved. They have no theory to offer; they just tell us what they did or what they thought right not to do. They represent their epoch with its own prejudices, its own aspirations, its partial blindness, and also with the passions, the unreasoning impulses, the sublime heroisms, and the unworthy deeds, which all epochs have to show.

Thus, we have a very full and detailed account of the Royal House of France as it was represented about the year 1785 by Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette, and their children; by the daughters of Louis XV., Mesdames Adélaïde and Victoire, and their sister Louise, the Carmelite of St. Denis; by the brothers of Louis XVI., the Comtes de Provence and d'Artois, and his sisters, Madame Elizabeth and Madame Clotilde. About Louis XVI. and Marie-Antoinette there is an immense amount of literature; the lives of the Comte de Provence (Louis XVIII.) and the Comte d'Artois (Charles X.) are also well known; the beautiful character of Madame Elizabeth is fully revealed to us by her letters, her sufferings, and her death. But very little indeed appears to be generally known of her sister Marie-Clotilde. Married to the

Prince of Piedmont (later Charles-Emmanuel IV.) before she was seventeen, she passed out of the life of the French Court, and in the storm of the French Revolution she is heard of no more.

Beyond the fact that she was a sister of Louis XVI.; that from an early age she was remarkable on account of her abnormal stoutness of body; that she was involved through her marriage in the misfortunes of the House of Savoy at that period; and that she died in exile at Naples, with a reputation of sanctity, in 1802, that French Princess is hardly remembered even in France, and her eminent virtues, her noble character, her firmness and good sense in practical matters, have remained unnoticed.

Yet, whether by way of comparison or by way of contrast, the study of her life should prove interesting. Her life raises some of the difficult problems of heredity; it shows us, for instance, great similarity in some physical characteristics, joined to a striking dissimilarity in certain psychological tendencies. The course of the following narrative should illustrate this very clearly.

Then, Marie-Clotilde's life introduces us to a most interesting chapter of European history—namely, the relations of France and Piedmont during the last years of the eighteenth century and the beginning of

the nineteenth. We can study there the first-fruits of the French Revolution, and the extension of its principles to neighbouring countries, and see how much true liberty and fraternity went with their propagation. At the same time, we are able to watch the beginnings of the movement which was destined in our own times to change the face of Italy, and to more than fulfil the traditional aspirations of the House of Savoy. But our main object here is to render more complete our knowledge of the French Royal Family during the last days of the old monarchy by adding the portrait of that sister of Louis XVI., at present so unfamiliar, and yet in many respects so worthy of our notice.

REFERENCES

THE materials for a life of Queen Marie-Clotilde are somewhat scanty. There is a life in Italian by Monsignor Luigi Bottiglia de Savoulx, published in Turin in 1804; republished in Rome in 1816, and again in Turin in 1820.

M. Idt, Professor of the Collége Royal of Lyons, wrote in French a short book on the same subject in 1823.

There is also a "Vie de la Vénérable Clotilde de France, Reine de Sardaigne," by Grimouard de Saint-Laurent, Paris, 1883.

We have the documents for the Beatification of Marie-Clotilde, in four volumes in folio, gathered for the use of the Congregation of Rites.

For her correspondence we have the "Lettres Inédites de Marie-Antoinette et de Marie-Clotilde," edited by the Comte de Reiset, Paris, 1877; and the "Lettere di Ven. Maria-Clotilda alle Monache

Cappucine di S. Lucia di Foligno," published by Don M. F. Pulignani (Foligno, 1887).

To these may be added—

The " Life of Madame Elizabeth," by M. de Beauchêne.

The History of the House of Savoy, by Fréset (Turin, 1827).

"Mémoires Historiques de la Maison de Savoie" (Turin, 1816); " Charles-Félix de Savoie, Roi de Sardaigne" (Haute-Combe, 1881); and "Un Homme d'Autrefois," by Marquis Costa de Beauregard.

" La Mère des Trois Derniers Bourbons," by Casimir Stryienski, Paris, 1902.

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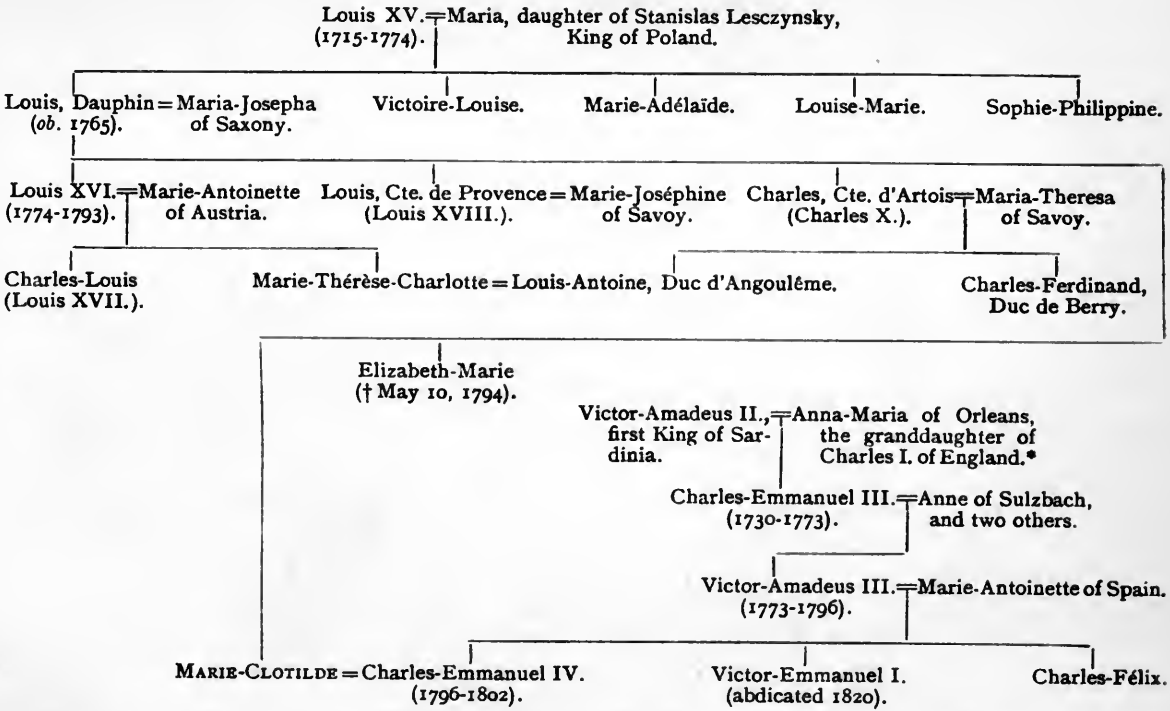

* Also, by the marriage of Marie-Adélaïde (daughter of Victor-Amadeus II. and Anna-Maria of Orleans) with Louis, Duc de Bourgogne, the father of Louis XV., Queen Marie-Clotilde numbered Charles I. of England among her ancestors.

A SISTER OF LOUIS XVI

CHAPTER I

MARIE-CLOTILDE DE FRANCE: HER BIRTH AND EARLY CHILDHOOD.

In the early morning of the 9th of February, 1747, a great event was attracting large crowds of people to Versailles. The Dauphin, son of Louis XV. and of Maria-Lesczynska, was about to marry a second time, his first wife, Marie-Thérèse-Raphaelle of Spain, having died in July, 1746, leaving him a widower with a little girl, who was herself to die about two years later.

The new bride was the Princess Marie-Josèphe of Saxony, daughter of Augustus II. We have a portrait of her drawn by a diplomatist, the Comte de Vaulgrenant, which enables us to form some idea of the Princess at that period. "The Princess of Saxony," he writes to the Marquis d'Argenson, "has blue eyes, the nose somewhat large, the mouth

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and teeth neither good nor bad, the face rather white, with some reddish spots. Her waist seems to me what it ought to be; her *maintien* is noble and pleasant to behold, and the expression of her physiognomy sufficiently animated. On the whole, although she is not really pretty, there is nothing in her that can repel or displease. As to her mind and character, there is nothing but good to say; she is gentle, polite, considerate, and says obliging things with much tact. She has received a very good education; her mind is cultivated; she is naturally cheerful, and endowed with much penetration and judgment. She delights in reading for instruction rather than for mere amusement. She prefers to everything else the fulfilment of her duties." On the whole, it was a fair portrait of the young Princess, and even more could have been said of her noble character and of her moral qualities.

The marriage was celebrated in the royal chapel, in presence of the King, the Queen, and all the members of the Royal Family; in the evening a great Court ball followed, and the long day ended for the Dauphin and his bride with the quaint ceremonies around the nuptial couch which, in those times, at Versailles, were considered an essential part of the programme of a royal wedding-day.

At last the curtains were drawn, the Court left the bedroom, and the newly married pair found themselves alone. The Dauphin burst into tears. Only two years before he had gone through the very same ceremony, and the thought of the beloved woman, so recently taken from his side by death, was more than he could bear. For he had loved Marie-Thérèse-Raphaelle with a most sincere love, and this new marriage, so soon after her loss, at the express command of the King his father, was positively repugnant to him. Marie-Josèphe, with a tact and delicacy of feeling truly above her years, understood her husband's sorrow, and said to him: "Give free course to your tears, and think not that I am offended by them; on the contrary, they show me what I may be permitted to hope for myself, if I have the happiness to deserve your esteem."

It was a sad beginning, but gradually, very gradually, the Dauphin came to realize the sterling qualities of his wife, and an unexpected event brought about in his heart a complete revulsion of feeling. His little girl by his first wife died, and thus an occasion presented itself for Marie-Josèphe to show all the tenderness and tactful affection of which she was capable. The Dauphin was profoundly touched by her evident sympathy in his

great grief, and from that moment Marie-Josèphe's married happiness became assured. In spite of the peculiar psychology of the Dauphin, due perhaps to the admixture of his mother's Slav blood with that of the Bourbons, that Prince had great moral qualities, a heart capable of much solid tenderness, a deeply religious nature; and when he had once given his love to his wife, that love grew day by day in intensity, and their union became at last the deepest, strongest reality of their lives.

In 1750, their first child was a girl, who received the name of Marie-Zéphyrine. A year later their eldest son the Duc de Bourgogne was born. The event caused immense excitement at Versailles and throughout the kingdom. On receiving the news at Trianon, Louis XV. almost fainted. The Dauphin, in his uncontrolled joy, embraced everybody. Soon after three more sons followed: the Duc d'Aquitaine, the Duc de Berry (the future Louis XVI.), and the Comte de Provence, who was to become known as Louis XVIII. In October, 1757, the Comte d'Artois (Charles X.) was born. At last, on the 23rd of September, 1759, Marie-Josèphe had a daughter, Marie-Adélaïde-Clotilde-Xavière, the subject of this biographical study. She came so suddenly into the world that

THE DAUPHIN, SON OF LOUIS XV.

THE FATHER AND MOTHER OF MARIE-CLOTILDE.

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the Dauphin, the first *femme de chambre*, and the midwife, were the only witnesses present. It was a quarter to six in the morning. The King, however, soon came, followed by the whole Court, and the new Princess was at once baptized by the Bishop of Autun.

The event caused little excitement in Paris: no *Te Deum* was sung; no feast was held. The birth of a daughter who had so many brothers alive and well was not considered a matter of great importance. The same was the case on the 3rd of May, 1764, when her sister Madame Elizabeth was born. No one then could realize that those two girls were to be the noblest, purest ornaments of their Royal House.

The Dauphin and Marie-Josèphe took from the first a serious interest in the education of their children. By their position, they were naturally obliged to surround them with ladies and gentlemen who filled the usual Court offices, and with a multitude of servants; but in thus placing the children in the hands of those people, they did not altogether leave them in their hands, as was, and still is, too often the case with parents of exalted station.

They saw their children every day, and not merely at stated times; the Dauphine, with her

native German instinct for discipline, her love of order, and her devotion to duty, went herself into every detail affecting the well-being of her progeny. She was assisted in this work by Madame de Marsan, the *gouvernante* of her children, a lady of high birth* and of extreme piety, who had solid if somewhat narrow views on education. After the death of Marie-Josèphe in 1767, the care of Madame Clotilde and Madame Elizabeth almost exclusively devolved upon her, and she was truly a second mother to them.

The two sisters presented in their characters a striking contrast. Madame Elizabeth in her earliest years was a decidedly difficult subject. Proud and disdainful, easily provoked to anger, even by the gentlest remonstrances, firm to the point of obstinacy, and impatient of all control, she presented to the solicitude of Madame de Marsan the same obstacles which the wise Archbishop Fénelon had once encountered in his pupil, the Duc de Bourgogne,† whose blood flowed in Elizabeth's veins. It was a clear case of heredity. Madame de Marsan saw

* Louise de Rohan-Guemené, widow of the Comte de Marsan, a Prince of the House of Lorraine, descended through the Dukes of Elbeuf from the seventh son of Claude, first Duke of Guise.

† Not to be confounded with Madame Elizabeth's brother who bore the same title.

this, and adopted Fénelon's methods, which in the case of his own pupil had proved so eminently successful. By judicious firmness and gentleness, by a tactful appeal to the real qualities hidden beneath the surface of a strong nature, the *gouvernante* came victorious out of that conflict of several years, and Madame Elizabeth, like her ancestor the Duc de Bourgogne, became gentle, patient, affectionate, without losing the native firmness of her character, which, as we know, she carried with her, without alteration, to the Temple, to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and to the Scaffold.

Her sister, Marie-Clotilde, presented an entirely different disposition. She was one of those privileged beings in whom almost perfect mental and moral equilibrium exists, and manifests itself simply and easily without effort or conflict. She was naturally what Madame Elizabeth became only after years of sustained discipline. All that Madame de Marsan had to do was to watch and assist the growth of that beautiful character.

Deeply pious herself, the *gouvernante* saw in her young charge an ideal ground in which to sow the seeds of piety, and she did not fail to do so. There were many people who thought she went too far in that direction; it would have

been wonderful if the majority of courtiers, in those times, had thought otherwise. Yet we must not imagine that their view was shared by all, either at Court or in the society outside it.

The memoirs of the time, the books and pamphlets which were steadily preparing the coming Revolution, if alone considered, would make us believe that a state of universal corruption and irreligion prevailed during those last days of the monarchy. Nothing is farther from the truth. Even in this Court of Louis XV. there were brilliant exceptions. Around Queen Marie-Lesczynska and her children were found a number of men and women as much distinguished by their virtue as by their birth, such as the Duchesse de Villars and her daughter, the Comtesse d'Egmont, the Duc and Duchesse de Luynes, the Comte de Muy, and many others, of whom the Queen often spoke as "ses honnêtes gens."

The Dauphin and his wife, Marie-Josèphe, had also a circle of friends who could admire the beauty and follow the example of their married life, and it is impossible to read without emotion the story of Madame Louise, one of Louis XV.'s daughters, as it shows her daily efforts to live at Court without yielding to the temptations of her position, and the

steady growth of her spiritual life. She also, it is true, was said to go too far, and her desire to live a Christian life did not escape the criticisms of the worldly. Nevertheless, there were also many who understood her and admired her openly.

In favouring eagerly the religious dispositions of Marie-Clotilde, Madame de Marsan was only conforming to the views and feelings of her parents, and it may probably be said, without fear of error, that, like her aunt Madame Louise, the young Princess would have been the holy soul she proved to be even if she had had no such *gouvernante* as Madame de Marsan. Goodness and piety in her were not merely the result of training. She was what she was, we may say, by instinct.

When she was still only a little girl, Queen Marie-Antoinette could write of her to her mother, the Empress Maria-Theresa : " Clotilde est la douceur même, raisonnable, avenante, et un sourire de bonté sur les lèvres." Those words say exactly what she then was, and what she remained to the end. Even as a child she was universally loved for her goodness, her charity, her gentleness, for the total absence of false pride or vanity in her. As she grew up, those qualities grew also, but her piety had always the supreme distinguishing note

of genuineness. It was the highest piety, but it never was bigotry. Her severity to herself never made her unfairly severe to others.

From the first she was a serious child, with little inclination to the ordinary amusements of childhood. There was probably a physical as well as a moral cause for this. Like her father, she manifested from her earliest years a tendency to stoutness, which gradually became so pronounced that she was spoken of usually as "Gros Madame." This condition unfitted her for much exercise. She preferred quieter occupations, but it did not make her lazy. She was always busy with her studies, her reading, or her tapestry. In this way she acquired considerable skill in needlework, and a maturity of judgment far above her years.

It is certain that Marie-Clotilde, more or less unconsciously, did help Madame de Marsan in her difficult task of softening and forming the character of Madame Elizabeth. This Princess was at first very jealous of Marie-Clotilde, because of the affection which the *gouvernante* evidently felt for her and could not hide. One day, when Madame de Marsan had refused to give Madame Elizabeth something she wished to have, the young Princess at once exclaimed: "If my sister Clotilde

had asked you for the same thing, she would certainly have got it!" Had Marie-Clotilde been otherwise than she was, all the efforts of the *gouvernante* with her sister would perhaps have proved fruitless. Somehow, Madame de Marsan could not find her way to that young heart.

Such failures, even where the best intentions exist, are common, and can hardly be avoided. Sympathy is a mysterious thing; without it how powerless we are, even when we do our best! What the good *gouvernante* found so difficult, the gentle little sister accomplished. She made Elizabeth love her, and the thing was done. It seems very simple. Yet how long it takes most of us to learn so simple a lesson! Marie-Clotilde was then about ten years old.

CHAPTER II

THE EDUCATION OF A PRINCESS—MARIE-CLOTILDE'S LIFE AT VERSAILLES—OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF HER MARRIAGE WITH THE PRINCE OF PIEDMONT.

WHAT was the education of a Princess in the eighteenth century? Fénelon, writing towards the end of the seventeenth, has shown us, in his celebrated "Traité de l'Éducation des Filles," what was then the ideal of such an education. He makes religion the foundation of his system, as being the only one upon which can be securely established the happiness of the family and the ordered structure of society. But Fénelon's idea of religion was hardly the popular idea of his time. Men and women, he says, need a thorough knowledge of religion, but that knowledge must be solid and free from all superstition. He adds: "We must never introduce into the faith or the practices of piety anything that is not drawn from the Gospel or authorized by the constant approbation of the Church. Accustom

the children not to accept lightly certain stories lacking in authority, and not to take up certain devotions which an indiscreet zeal has introduced without awaiting the Church's approval of them."

Then, examining what should be taught to girls, Fénelon lays down the principle that, generally speaking, we must equally avoid a system of instruction which aims at teaching women too much, and one which deliberately aims at teaching them too little. In his day, this principle had an obvious reference, on one hand to the aspect of female education so well sketched by Molière in his "Précieuses Ridicules," and on the other to the system of educational training too generally followed in many convent schools and in great families.

In a word, Fénelon does not believe that the best in womanhood is fostered by a course of teaching merely analogous to that which makes men; nor does he believe that the best in womanhood can be brought out by a superficial education in which music, dancing, a smattering of literature, and external practices of religion, take the place of solid instruction. He is afraid of everything which may tend to develop the young imagination at the expense of the mind, or to instil a spirit of vanity. His view is summed up in the beautiful sentence:

"Rien n'est estimable que le bon sens et la vertu."

Such were, no doubt, the principles which guided those who were entrusted with the education of the young Princesses, Madame Clotilde and Madame Elizabeth. We have already seen how thorough was their religious training. Madame de Marsan was not likely to fail in that. It was, indeed, whispered about that she overdid it, and that Madame Clotilde in particular, being more completely under her influence, was being trained for the cloister rather than for the throne. However, as de Beauchêne finely says in his "Life of Madame Elizabeth": "The firmness of soul exhibited by the Queen of Sardinia [Marie-Clotilde] in days of adversity showed the world that the courage which can brave trials and dangers is not incompatible with the faith which teaches us to accept them as a discipline."

To judge of the instruction given to Marie-Clotilde and her sister, we must chiefly rely upon the remarks of contemporaries and upon such information as can be gleaned from their letters. We know that history was taught them with special care, and not merely the history of France, but ancient history also. One of the favourite books of

Madame Elizabeth was Plutarch's "Lives," and we can hardly doubt that she often read that book with her sister Clotilde.

Botany was also taught, and during the residence of the Royal Family at Compiègne and Fontainebleau, the celebrated physician Lemonier gave them lessons in that science, and accompanied them when they went out to herborize in the woods.

Painting and modelling in wax were assiduously practised by the two sisters, and we know that Madame Elizabeth excelled particularly in the former art. On the other hand, Madame Clotilde was specially gifted as a musician, and we are told that she played on the guitar most agreeably.

The austere Madame de Marsan allowed her royal pupils to act short plays and proverbs, some of which had been written by herself, before a select audience, mainly composed of members of the Royal Family. Thus Marie-Antoinette wrote to her mother in 1773: "Next Thursday I am to be present when my little sister [Marie-Clotilde] will act in a proverb. I send it to you so that you may have an idea of our amusements."

This proverb had been composed by Madame de Graffigny. Had it been one written by Madame de Marsan, the Queen might perhaps have shown

less interest in it. For it must be admitted that, with all her kindness and innate goodness of heart, Marie-Antoinette was not altogether friendly to Madame de Marsan. First of all, she was a Rohan, and the Queen did not like that family. When we remember the subsequent "Affaire du Collier," and the part played in it by Cardinal Louis de Rohan, we must admit that her instinctive prejudice proved to be singularly justified.

Moreover, Madame de Marsan, by her position and her high family connections, had a very considerable influence in Court circles, and an influence which often stood in more or less open opposition to the views and desires of the Queen. Hence the following remark in one of her letters at the time of Marie-Clotilde's marriage: "Madame de Marsan takes my sister as far as Chambéry, and on her return she appears to have decided to retire from the Court. In spite of her piety, I think we shall not sustain a very grave loss; it will be one source of intrigue and malice the less." Later on the Queen writes again, when Madame de Marsan had finally left the Court: "We are now nearly clear of that famous *gouvernante*. I say 'nearly,' because she retains her apartment, although she has resigned her duties."

If we read all this, remembering at the same time the inexorable rules of etiquette, the external demonstrations of deepest respect, required of the one, and the ever-gracious smiles forced upon the lips of the other by the law of her exalted rank, at public receptions, on the way to chapel, or on any other occasion which rendered their meeting inevitable, we shall no doubt feel how true it is that times may change, and dynasty may replace dynasty, but that the moral atmosphere of Courts is always everywhere the same.

But to come back to Marie-Clotilde. As early as the year 1773, her marriage with the Prince of Piedmont, Charles-Emmanuel, the eldest son of Victor-Amadeus III., King of Sardinia, had been seriously discussed at Versailles, and the political aspects of such an alliance were receiving due consideration. In January, 1775, the question had so far advanced that it was deemed advisable that the Princess should become acquainted with the Italian language as a preparation for the destiny which awaited her. She was therefore given as Italian master no less a person than the poet Carlo Goldoni, who had in former years taught the daughters of Louis XV. In his memoirs he speaks of the part he played in the education of Marie-Clotilde, and acknowledges with

evident pleasure the excellent dispositions of his royal pupil. She made admirable progress, he says; she was extremely docile, had great facility for learning, and a most retentive memory. She soon was able to speak Italian fluently, and to read it quite easily. "Unfortunately," he adds (apparently with a sense that his own literary greatness deserved better treatment), "our lessons were often interrupted by the visits of jewellers, goldsmiths, merchants, painters, etc., brought to the palace by the necessity of making preparations for the Princess's approaching marriage." Anyhow, she learnt Italian sufficiently well to be able to express herself easily in that tongue when she arrived at Turin.

So far, however, the project of an alliance with the House of Savoy was only known in France, and even at Court, through vague reports which nothing official had yet confirmed. At last, on the 13th of March, 1775, the King, after an audience granted to the Comte de Viry, Ambassador of the King of Sardinia, publicly announced the marriage of his sister with Charles-Emmanuel, Prince of Piedmont, and on the same day a similar announcement was made in Turin.

Nevertheless it was not Louis XVI.'s intention that the marriage should take place before the

ceremony of his own coronation, his *sacre* at Rheims. There, on the 12th of June, Marie-Clotilde was present when her unfortunate brother assumed the crown which was to prove so heavy a burden to him, and a fatal gift of destiny to his children. Then, on the 8th of August, the Comte de Viry made the public request for the Princess's hand; the formal betrothal followed on the 16th, and on the 21st took place the marriage by "procuration," the Comte de Provence, brother of the bride, representing the Prince of Piedmont. The Cardinal de la Roche-Aymond performed the nuptial ceremony, and from that moment Marie-Clotilde became known as the Princess of Piedmont. She then wrote this letter to her father-in-law, the King of Sardinia:

VERSAILLES,
August 21, 1775.

"MONSIEUR MY BROTHER, COUSIN, AND FATHER-IN-LAW,—I cannot express to your Majesty how much I desire to be able to show my gratitude for all your goodness to me. My gratitude is most ardent and sincere, and the more I hear about your Majesty, the more impatient I am to know you, to devote myself to you, and to deserve your kindness. Precious as this is to me now, it will be still more

precious when I have the happiness to be near you. I trust that you do not doubt it, nor the continual attention with which I shall ever endeavour to please you.

"I am, Monsieur my Brother, Cousin, and Father-in-Law, of your Majesty, the most affectionate Sister, Cousin, and Daughter-in-Law,

"MARIE-ADÉLAÏDE-CLOTILDE-XAVIÈRE."

A similar letter was addressed at the same time to the Queen of Sardinia. On the 25th of August, the feast of St. Louis, and therefore a great family anniversary, a magnificent ball was given in Paris, at which Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette, the new Princess of Piedmont, and all the Court, were present.

On the 27th of August our young Princess took leave officially of the King and Queen, and started for Choisy with Madame Elizabeth, Madame de Marsan, and the ladies and gentlemen of her household; and almost immediately afterwards Louis XVI. and Marie-Antoinette followed her to Choisy, in order to bid her a final good-bye. It was a sad moment for Marie-Clotilde. She well knew that this meant a permanent separation from those she

MARIE-CLOTILDE AS A CHILD, WITH HER BROTHER,
THE COMTE D'ARTOIS.

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loved. In these days of easy and rapid communications, to go to be married a few hundred miles away from home means little or nothing; we know that such an event can, at most, entail a temporary absence from those dear to us. They can always easily come to us, or we can as easily go back to them. But it was very different 150 years ago. Turin was then a long way from Versailles. We may therefore imagine the feelings of the tender-hearted girl when the carriage started for Choisy. The postilions were ordered to drive slowly, in order to give the crowds watching her departure an opportunity of having a last look at the little French Princess on her way to another kingdom beyond the Alps. Seeing some ladies more specially known to her, Marie-Clotilde said to them, with tears in her eyes: "Adieu; I leave you with great sorrow, for I shall not see you again."

Marie-Antoinette was deeply grieved at not being able to accompany her sister-in-law as far as Chambéry, with the Comte and Comtesse de Provence. "I am oppressed," she wrote to the Empress Maria-Theresa, "by the joy of Monsieur and Madame. Their joy is certainly very natural, and I have hidden my tears in order not to spoil it. . . . But how dreadful for me not to be able to share their

happiness!" Poor woman! she, too, had left her home once, and was never to see it again.

We must not weary our readers with the details of the journey as far as the Bridge of Beauvoisin, on the frontier between France and Savoy. At Lyons, on the way, the Princess of Piedmont remained about three days to take some rest, and to afford to the population of that great city the satisfaction of seeing her. Her reception there was truly splendid. The authorities of the town gave, in her honour, a dowry to eight young girls of Lyons about to be married, and the Princess made a request that their husbands might also receive certain privileges which it was in the power of the town to grant. Her request was, of course, acceded to. When the nuptial blessing had been given by the Abbé de Beaumont, one of the royal chaplains, she graciously desired to kiss the eight brides, and she admitted their husbands to the honour of kissing her hand. Then, having visited the principal factories of Lyons, she asked that six prisoners, condemned as deserters from the army, might be released for her sake, and this was done. The six poor fellows were allowed to approach her and to express their gratitude. The enthusiasm of the people was immense, and at that moment Marie-Clotilde could

well believe that she had helped to increase the popularity of the Royal Family. Indeed, she could have had no doubt about it, unconscious as she must have been of the trend of public opinion, and of the intrigues which were already preparing the Revolution. She was not destined to see on French soil the eruption of the volcano, but in her new country of Piedmont she was to feel the earthquake which followed it, and shook the foundations of her throne.

On the afternoon of September 5, at about 4.30, Marie-Clotilde arrived at the Pont de Beauvoisin, where various bodies of troops had been stationed to render military honours for the last time to her as a French Princess. But the impression that she was still a daughter of France was soon dispelled by the arrival of the ladies of the Sardinian Court, who were henceforth exclusively to attend her as Princess of Piedmont.

The next day, after Mass, took place the official transfer of the Princess by the Comte de Clermont-Tonnerre into the hands of the Comte de Viry, acting in the name of his Sovereign the King of Sardinia. A few moments after this ceremony it was announced that the Prince of Piedmont had arrived, and before Marie-Clotilde could prepare herself for the ordeal, her Lord and Master, whom she had

never seen before, stood in her presence and was kissing her hand.

However simple and submissive a well-trained young girl may be, such a moment can hardly find her unmoved, and, in spite of the careful instructions of Madame de Marsan, Marie-Clotilde must have felt a pardonable emotion at the thought that the Prince was examining her, and that he was receiving his first impression of her.

Simple-minded though she was, she was well aware that her physical appearance was not ordinary. It was no secret for her that people at Versailles spoke of her as "Gros Madame"; in fact, ever since her marriage had been decided upon, the thought of what her future husband would think of her excessive stoutness had been a positive obsession. Her portrait had, indeed, been forwarded to Turin; but, while doing justice to her charming face, it could convey no real idea of the appearance of the rest. The poor girl, in presence of the Prince, could find no other words than these, after he had paid her the usual compliments: "You will find me very stout!" It is said that Charles-Emmanuel answered without hesitation: "I find you adorable." Yet he admitted in conversation afterwards that the stoutness of the Princess, however prepared he had

been by the reports made to him, had struck him at first sight as truly prodigious. But there was something so pure and noble in her face, such modesty and withal such dignity in her attitude, and such transparent innocence and honesty in what she had said, that he at once forgot her stoutness, and felt he could love her for the sake of the soul which the face revealed.

In the evening, when the King his father questioned him with some apprehension about his first interview with his bride, the Prince declared himself entirely satisfied, and said that the touching humility of her first words to him had almost affected him to tears. He declared that her physical infirmity was nothing to him in comparison with what she seemed to be in herself.

Thus began a union which, through good and evil fortune, was to prove a true union of souls. Marie-Clotilde had gained the love and esteem of her husband by the honest simplicity of one word; but she could only succeed in this because there was in Charles-Emmanuel a nature which could understand that word, and a heart capable of responding to its appeal.

CHAPTER III

MARIE-CLOTILDE AT TURIN.

At Les Echelles, the first town of Savoy reached after crossing the French frontier, King Victor-Amadeus awaited the arrival of Marie-Clotilde. As soon as she saw him, she left her carriage, and, falling on her knees, kissed his hand. Then the journey was resumed, and the royal party reached Chambéry in the evening. There Marie-Clotilde met the Queen, Marie-Antoinette-Ferdinande of Spain, who received her with the greatest cordiality. Without any delay, that same evening, the ratification of the marriage was solemnized in the Chapel Royal. Madame Badia, one of the ladies specially attached, by the choice of the King, to the service of the Princess of Piedmont (she remained in her service from that moment until Marie-Clotilde's death), has recorded the charming grace and modesty, joined to the remarkable piety, shown by the Princess during the religious ceremony.

Splendid fêtes and popular rejoicings kept the usually quiet little capital of Savoy in a high state of excitement for several days. We are told that as many as seventeen Princes were present on the occasion, among them the Comte de Provence, brother of Marie-Clotilde, who had brought with him his secretary, the poet Ducis, himself a native of Savoy.

His works are little read—indeed, hardly known to-day ; yet such neglect should not make us forget his merits and the originality of his talents. He conceived the idea of making the chief plays of Shakespeare known to the French public, and thus brought out successively, in verse, "Hamlet," "Romeo and Juliet," "King Lear," "Macbeth, 'Othello." His plays are not mere translations of Shakespeare's plays, they are more in the nature of a paraphrase ; his object was to convey the essential character of each play, and to make the French people realize the beauties of the original, while maintaining those canons of literary taste which French traditions required, and which he and most of his fellow-countrymen considered to have been sometimes sadly neglected by Shakespeare. The result was what might have been expected : Ducis's plays treat of the same subjects

as those of Shakespeare, but they do not convey the same impression; their very refinement does away with the strength and power so characteristic of the English poet. Yet Ducis has many passages which even Shakespeare might have acknowledged as his own, although they are not a reproduction of anything that can be traced in the original, and these passages are often among the best. The same thing has occurred, in our own times, in the immortal paraphrase of the Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám of Edward FitzGerald, whose best inspiration was not always suggested by the text.

The esteem in which Ducis was held by his contemporaries is shown by the fact that he was chosen to succeed Voltaire in the French Academy.

On the occasion of the royal marriage, it was decided that a *représentation de gala* should take place, and that the play should be the "Roméo et Juliette" of Ducis. He himself superintended the rehearsals and all the preparations for that great event, and, in order to adapt the play to the circumstance, he composed a special passage in which occurred a graceful compliment to King Victor-Amadeus. The passage was greatly admired and loudly applauded. The King, much touched, took the printed play from the hands of Marie-Clotilde

to read the passage in question, and to ascertain whether the words really occurred in the text. Then the Comte de Provence, who was seated next to him, made him notice that a printed slip had been stuck over the page. The passage was so happily conceived that it seemed to be an integral part of the play. Ducis also composed and presented to the Prince and Princess of Piedmont a poem in which their union was duly celebrated in the traditional style of an epithalamium. But that piece has not been printed in the complete edition of his works.

From Chambéry the Royal Family proceeded by easy stages to Turin, where their solemn entry took place on the 30th of September. At the city gate the Governor presented the keys of the town to the King, who desired that they should be offered to the Princess of Piedmont. Here, during a whole fortnight, there was a succession of fêtes, balls, illuminations, and fireworks, in honour of the married pair.* Crowds eagerly gathered, wherever they

* Those festivities were brought to a close on the 15th of October, by the exposition of the Sindone, or Holy Shroud, which is preserved in the chapel of the Royal Palace at Turin. Such expositions always excited a deep interest, because of the rare occasions on which they took place. There had been no exposition since the marriage of King Victor-Amadeus in 1750. We cannot refer in detail to the

went, to obtain a sight of the bride, but, unfortunately, Goldoni's lessons had enabled her only too well to understand the remarks of the populace as she drove slowly through the streets of Turin. "How big she is! how big she is!" she heard people say. In spite of all her humility, she could not resist a sense of mortification, for those exclamations, she felt, must be heard also by her husband. In the evening, with tears in her eyes, she mentioned the circumstance to her mother-in-law. "Oh, pay no attention to that, my dear child," answered the Queen. "When I arrived here at the time of my marriage, the people exclaimed wherever I went: 'How ugly she looks! how ugly she is!'" How much consolation Marie-Clotilde derived from this kindly-meant rejoinder, we cannot tell. But her gentle character, her sweet disposition, and her deep piety, soon

controversies which, from time to time, have arisen concerning the Holy Shroud—*i.e.*, the piece of coarse linen in which our Lord's body was wrapped up after death, which is said to have retained some outline of the sacred body, indicated by brown marks visible upon the linen. It is known to have been, since the middle of the fifteenth century, in the possession of the Dukes of Savoy, who obtained it from Marguerite de Charny, widow of Humbert, Count de La Roche St. Hippolyte in Burgundy. Kept at first in the chapel of the Ducal Palace at Chambéry, the Sindone was transferred to Turin in the year 1578, and has been kept there ever since as a most precious treasure of the House of Savoy.

triumphed over the momentary mortification she had experienced, and, on the other hand, the people of Turin were not slow in perceiving the high qualities of her mind and heart, in spite of her physical appearance. Her graciousness and her tactful manner with all who approached her very soon obtained for her a popularity which time only increased, and gradually transformed into affectionate veneration.

Her letters at that period show her truly happy in her new life. For instance, she writes to one of her dearest friends at Versailles, the Marquise d'Usson :

"I beg your pardon for my delay in answering your letter; indeed, I much desired to write, but there was not a minute in which I could have done so. I can assure you that I have felt deeply our separation, but I believe your friendship to be such that I may hope to console you by the assurance that I shall be perfectly happy. Heaven has given me a husband who is charming, very amiable and very attentive to me. The King and Queen are full of goodness and friendliness for me. In a word, I should be quite content if I was not separated from those dear to me. I pray you will not doubt my affection, but will always consider me as one who loves you with all her heart.

"MARIE-CLOTILDE."

To another friend, the Marquise de Soran, she also wrote:

"I am perfectly happy; my husband is full of affection for me, and the most delicious union exists between us. But for the regret of being so far from my native country and from those I love, my happiness would be complete. . . . Piedmont desires to be kindly remembered to you, and sends his compliments."

She constantly speaks thus of the Prince, and she also spoke in the same way of other members of the family. Thus the Dukes of Aosta, of Montferrat, of Génevois, the Comte de Maurienne, are regularly mentioned in her letters as Aosta, Montferrat, Génevois, Maurienne; she also makes use of the pet names by which some of them were known. For instance, the Duc de Génevois is Zeno, and the Comte de Maurienne, Mauria. This shows the friendly spirit which united the members of the Royal Family at the Court of Turin.

It is indeed pleasant to be able to record the fact that there never was a time when Marie-Clotilde had to suffer from any of those dissensions which too often embitter the relations of family life. She was affectionate to all, and all loved her.

The King had every reason to be pleased with

his daughter-in-law; respect, obedience to his wishes, and gentle influence for good in his family, characterized her constant attitude. The Queen found in her, also, a most devoted and affectionate daughter, and one with whose deeply religious nature she felt a genuine sympathy. Yet there was a radical difference of temper between them. The Queen's piety was cold, formal. She had brought from her native land of Spain the severe etiquette of Madrid, and imposed upon the Court of Turin a rigid code of manners which seemed hard to the cheerful, amiable Piedmontese society of that period.

For brilliant fêtes, for joyous intercourse where gallantry had its natural place, had been substituted solemn ceremonies and grave receptions, frigid like the Princess who presided over them. The life of the Court had in it something of the convent, and much of the discipline of barracks. Marie-Antoinette-Ferdinande thus inspired more respect than love. Yet she was not without certain high qualities, and she promptly discerned the merits partly hidden under the simple humility of her daughter-in-law, who in return gave her her entire confidence.

Marie-Clotilde consulted the Queen in everything, and always acted upon her wishes without

the least hesitation. The cold exterior of the Queen was largely due to natural shyness, and shy people always feel attracted to those who, in some way, make them feel more at their ease. Marie-Clotilde had that effect upon her. For her piety, strict, strong, serious as it was, was neither cold nor stern. There was that touch of tenderness in it which ever distinguishes genuine holiness from mere pietism. She was severe to herself, but always kind, considerate, and indulgent, to others.

Her attitude towards inferiors was especially remarkable. She never seemed to command, but rather to beg, a favour; her politeness to servants was striking in an age when social distinctions were so sharply defined, and barriers between class and class were almost unsurmountable. Her forbearance was such, even when her attendants failed to render her a necessary service, that the Prince her husband often reproached her, and said that she did not know how to make people serve her.

Needless to say that the members of her household were profoundly attached to her; they reported in the town all they saw of her prolonged prayers, of her mortifications, of her touching humility, of her constant charity and admirable patience, and

the people of Turin, when the Royal Family walked in state to church on Sunday mornings, would gather in large crowds, saying affectionately: "Let us go and see the saint pass." The process of her canonization had begun.

Was Marie-Clotilde so pious, so patient, and so sweet, simply because such was her temperament? This question raises difficult points of psychology which we must not attempt to solve. We should have to ascertain whether she was what she was easily and naturally, or whether the sanctity of her life was the fruit of sustained effort. She certainly had a firmness of will, a determination, and a perseverance, which are not found in weak characters.

The Prince her husband, in spite of his love and veneration for her, has admitted that his saintly consort was not so naturally inclined to gentleness and sweetness as one might have thought from her constant manifestation of those qualities. On the contrary, he believed that she had often to do violence to herself in order to resist a natural disposition to impatience; she was by no means free from involuntary movements of irritation and ill-humour; while her habit of body was in itself hardly calculated to promote activity and firm-

ness of will. Here we are reminded that she was, after all, the sister of Madame Elizabeth, whose natural temper, as we have seen, originally was not of the best. Without being as wilful, as haughty, as self-opinionated, or as rebellious, as her sister once was, yet there were, it would seem, in her the same seeds mysteriously deposited by heredity. Madame Elizabeth had been cured of those natural impulses by the firm direction of Madame de Marsan, and the same direction had proved even more completely successful in the case of Marie-Clotilde, because she was from the first of a gentler, easier disposition. But the work had not been accomplished without effort, and we may well assume that it was not continued day by day, now that she was free from external control, without similar effort on her part. Thus we can understand the spirit of her piety, so unlike that of those who only seek themselves while believing they are seeking God. The following story is a good illustration of the spirit which was in her:

Her husband's younger brother, the Duc d'Aosta, had married in 1789 the Archduchess Maria-Theresa, granddaughter of the great Empress of that name, and daughter of the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria.

Proud, beautiful, capricious, Maria-Theresa felt strongly the dulness of the Sardinian Court at that period; she scarcely endeavoured to respond to the Duc d'Aosta's deep love for her, and she found little sympathy in the family circle. Yet, in spite of the apparent incompatibility between such a character and that of Marie-Clotilde, the Duchesse d'Aosta felt attracted to her sister-in-law, and found in her a friend ever ready to help and to sympathize with her in her difficulties. Always in search of some amusement to break the monotony of Court life, she came one morning to the Princess of Piedmont, and asked her, not without some embarrassment, whether she did not propose to go to the theatre on that evening.

"Oh, again the theatre!" said Marie-Clotilde with some ill-humour. "The King has not ordered me to go."

"The King allows me to go," answered Maria-Theresa, "if your Royal Highness would just be willing to go yourself."

"Could I give you so pernicious an example, dear sister? My solicitude for your soul's happiness would not let me do such a thing."

"But where is the harm in going to hear some good music?"

"Ah! that is not all. What of those infamous ballets which compel me to shut my eyes? What of those voluptuous songs? Do you think there is no danger in these things? Believe me, dear sister, let us avoid such distractions."

Maria-Theresa bent her head, and her eyes filled with tears. An expression of sorrowful disappointment came over her lovely face. She rose to leave the room.

"Sister," said Marie-Clotilde, "what is it? Is there something that gives you pain?"

"Ah!" exclaimed the Duchesse d'Aosta, "is not my fate dreadful?"

"What! does not your husband love you?"

"Oh, he loves me only too much. It is not that."

'But what is it, then?"

"Here I am, alone, far from my mother, my family, my country, without a friend to whom I could tell what I suffer, and I am denied the smallest amusement."

"Yes, you are right, dear sister. I deserve your reproaches. I was forgetting my age and yours that you need company, that you need a mother. Let me be yours. Tell me, shall we go to the theatre this evening?"

Maria-Theresa, deeply touched by these words of affection, seized the Princess's hand and kissed it.

"No," she said; "your kind words have done me good. I do not care now to go to the theatre."

"Theresa, my sister, you are a good and noble soul," answered the Princess. "Only let me give you a word of advice."

"Speak; I will always listen to you."

"Believe me, restrain that love of pleasure, those ardent desires. Remember that every action done by us poor Princesses is ever exposed to the ill-intentioned criticisms of the public."

"Have I done anything to provoke those criticisms?"

"No; God forbid that I should even think that. But we live in evil times, sister. A fatal spirit is threatening all thrones. Let us be careful. This is truly the time to say, 'Watch and pray.'"

At that moment the King was announced and entered the room. He seemed pleased to see the Duchesse d'Aosta in the company of her holy sister-in-law.

"Father," said the Princess of Piedmont, "your Majesty has anticipated my desire. I was going to visit you in order to beg of you a favour."

"Do speak: in what could I please you?"

"I should so much like to go to the theatre this evening. Have I your permission?"

"Of course," answered the King, "and I shall be happy to accompany you."

"And you, my sister," said Marie-Clotilde, turning towards the Duchess, "will you not come also? I pray you, do come."

"You are too good!" exclaimed Maria-Theresa, and, before Marie-Clotilde could prevent her, she told the King what had happened.

"Dear daughters," said the King, with genuine emotion, "you are two angels whose virtues will protect my throne."

The beauty of Marie-Clotilde's character and the solidity of her piety seem to us clearly revealed in this touching episode. Truly the instinct of the people of Turin was not at fault when they said: "Let us go and see the Saint pass."

The Saint, as she was called, in spite of the respect and love she inspired, had her crosses. Can sanctity be reached or maintained without them? One of her crosses was the daily conflict between her views of life and the obligations of her exalted position. She had to live and dress and speak and act like a Princess, while deep within her soul remained a constant longing for the religious life.

The daughter of Kings felt an incessant regret that she was not a daughter of St. Teresa, a Carmelite. Her thoughts wandered away from her palace in Turin back to the cloister at St. Denis, where her aunt, Madame Louise, the daughter of Louis XV., had, as she believed, chosen, like Mary, the better part; where she had so often witnessed affecting ceremonies; where in prayer her young heart had made, no doubt, many resolutions of higher perfection, which now, on the steps of a throne, she found so difficult to keep.

Another cross was the anxiety she felt concerning France and the Royal Family there. She laboured under no illusions about the security of their position, and her appreciation of the trend of political events in France shows in her great intelligence and foresight. She lamented the lack of seriousness with which the news from Paris was received at the Court of Turin—the notion that the agitation there was merely brought about by a small body of malcontents whom a little energy would soon reduce to silence. "Do you not see," she often said to the members of her new family, "how the thrones of Europe need support to-day? If God withdraws His hand, they will fall to pieces, and the hour, perhaps, is not far distant when we shall have to

tread upon their dust." Again, she would say: "Corruption has worn out the monarchy, and the irreligion of our men of letters in France has led away her people." Or again: "All that God does is right. If He thus leaves the Princes of this earth in the hands of impious men, it must be because those Princes have transgressed His laws."

Even when the most alarming news of the Reign of Terror reached Turin, her faith still gave her strength to say to the Comtesse d'Artois: "God can manifest His goodness even in the midst of the worst evils."

She was resigned to God's will; but resignation does not imply insensibility. She felt an increasing distress within her as she learnt from the letters of her sister Elizabeth the hopeless situation of those she loved, and her distress was made still more acute by the thought that she could do nothing for them, that she could not even go back and share their fate.

Again, another cross cast a shadow over her otherwise happy married life. Left to herself, her choice would most probably have led her to the cloister of her aunt Madame Louise. But having once entered upon the married state by the wish of

her family, she never for an instant allowed her past preferences to weaken the sense of her present duties. Her affection for her husband was sincere and unfailing, her devotion to her new family unbounded. The wife of a Prince called to ascend a throne, she knew the importance of assuring the succession to the Crown. It was therefore a great sorrow for her to find herself still childless after several years of anxious expectation. The disappointment of the Prince of Piedmont, of the King and Queen, and of their people, distressed her beyond words.

Then that sad question of her habit of body again presented itself in a more acute form. It was hinted that her stoutness indicated a condition possibly connected with her barrenness. This made her intensely miserable, and she told some intimate friends that she would gladly risk her life to give the desired satisfaction to her husband and to the family. She did not give her life, but she underwent positive tortures. The Court physicians began to prescribe for her the most painful remedies known to the medical science of the time. She was made to drink all sorts of nauseous medicines, which made her ill in various ways, but entirely failed in their specific purpose. She was ordered to go and drink

the waters at Aix, at Amphion, and at other places. But all in vain.

One result, however, was attained: Her stoutness disappeared under the action of so many drastic remedies, and she became as thin as she had previously been fat. Madame Lebrun, the artist, who visited Turin about that time, says in her memoirs: "Her leanness struck me particularly, as I had seen her when she was very young, before her marriage, when her stoutness was so pronounced. . . . She had altered beyond recognition."

In 1779, her health having somewhat improved, we learn from one of her letters to the Marquise de Soran that she had at one moment a great hope that the object of her prayers was going to be granted; but this hope was not fulfilled. Thus nearly seven years passed, and the Prince and Princess of Piedmont at last accepted with Christian resignation what they both believed to be God's will.

They even went farther. We know it on the testimony of the Prince himself, for after Marie-Clotilde's death he made the following declaration: "During the last twenty years we have lived together as brother and sister, having resolved to continue thus to the end of our life, although we did

not bind ourselves by a vow. But we have expressly renewed our intention several times."

Taught by their faith that this was a way of higher perfection, those two faithful souls did not hesitate, once they found that their union had not been blessed with the blessing of fruitfulness. They took it that the meaning was that they must seek the sanctification of their union on another path. The Prince was then thirty-two, and Marie-Clotilde about twenty-four.

CHAPTER IV

MARIE-CLOTILDE AT TURIN—*continued.*

BEFORE we continue our narrative of Marie-Clotilde's life at Turin, we must briefly consider the political situation of the Sardinian kingdom, and the position of the Prince of Piedmont at his father's Court. This will enable us to understand more clearly Marie-Clotilde's attitude and conduct, and the difficulties she had to contend with.

Victor-Amadeus, her father-in-law, was forty-seven years old when he came to the throne. A man of amiable and generous character, he was not a man of large ideas; he had good intentions as a ruler, but he lacked foresight. In ordinary times his reign would have been, on the whole, a beneficent and successful one. But he lived in days when new ideas which he could not understand were rapidly spreading over his kingdom. Animated by the military spirit of the Princes of his House, he only dreamt of military glory. Consequently, as soon as

he found himself seated on the throne, he at once set himself to reorganize his army, before he had acquired the experience required for such a task. Immense sums of money were wasted injudiciously; serious discontent was produced in the ranks of his troops by unwise methods of promotion, so that, after thirteen years of useless efforts, Victor-Amadeus found himself at the head of a large but totally inefficient army. He had to begin his work over again.

Meanwhile, events in the neighbour kingdom of France were causing Victor-Amadeus very grave anxiety. At first, under the influence of old, short-sighted counsellors, he had not believed in the possibility of a Revolution in France; he thought he had taken sufficient precautions when he had forbidden the entrance of certain French books into Piedmont, imprisoned or banished a number of people suspected of Liberal tendencies, and hastened the reorganization of the army. But these measures had irritated the population of Turin without increasing in any way his security. Clandestine meetings took place; every evening in the cafés the news from France, which the Sardinian Government endeavoured to suppress, was being discussed with the usual exaggerations in such cases by local

orators in full sympathy with the revolutionary principles imported from Paris. It was becoming evident that, even if no aggression was to be apprehended on the part of France, the Sardinian Government would have to deal with a dangerous political agitation at home. The taking of the Bastille in Paris was calling forth, not in Piedmont alone, but all over Italy, ideas and aspirations long silently cherished by many of her thinkers, but now about to assume a practical shape in the minds of men of action.

At this juncture the position of the Prince of Piedmont was a difficult one. His relations with the King his father had for some time been somewhat strained, and it is not easy to say who was more to blame for that unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Charles-Emmanuel's constitution had always been weak, and had prevented him from sharing the military occupations of his brothers; his mind was keen and observant, his moral character blameless; generally cold and silent, he was rather inclined to make scornful remarks, but his good sense moderated that tendency. There was, however, in him a disposition to melancholy, joined to an extreme nervous sensitiveness, often degenerating into painful convulsive explosions, which became later on very

violent and frequent, especially during the terrible political troubles which soon followed his accession to the throne.

This disposition was for Marie-Clotilde a source of much anxiety and pain, and must have severely tried even her angelic patience. His affection for his wife was very real and strong, his trust in her never wavered; but when those nervous fits came over him he lost all control of himself, and the Princess had continually to intervene between her husband and the King. She constantly endeavoured to appease the King by leading him to think that it was she herself who was to blame. But he soon saw through this, and could not be deceived. Yet he admired the touching devotion of his daughter-in-law, and called her the "angel of peace."

However, this situation rendered the position of Charles-Emmanuel, as heir-apparent, particularly difficult. Called to take his place in the Council of State by the side of his father, he found it often impossible to agree with all the views expressed or the decisions taken. He saw the weak points of the King's Government, he realized the dangers created by the growing Revolution at their door, and yet he could not openly blame the

King's Ministers, with whom the King was in general agreement. Under these circumstances a Crown Prince has no other course open to him but to remain silent, to avoid appearing to form a party around him in opposition to the Sovereign and his advisers, and to select forms of activity which are not open to suspicion.

Too much zeal would be interpreted as a disposition to intrigue, while too much resignation is apt to give the Prince a bad name for apathy and uselessness among the people. Charles-Emmanuel was not always wise in the way in which he expressed his opinions in Council, even when the opinion itself was a wise one; while the King was too ready to take offence at what he conceived to be a mere spirit of opposition on the part of his son.

Thus, one day Victor-Amadeus had sharply reprimanded the Prince because he had expressed a view of the political situation which had greatly displeased him. Charles-Emmanuel remained silent, and began to play with his watch; but some time later, being asked his opinion by the King about an important matter under discussion, he is said to have answered: "I am only concerned about regulating my watch; it now goes very well." Such an attitude was not likely to improve matters, and poor Marie-Clotilde

found it increasingly difficult to maintain peace in the Royal Family.

Yet, Charles-Emmanuel, apart from the painful scenes caused by his nervous temperament, over which he had at times no control, was a deeply religious man; when in a normal state, he was always ready to listen to his wife's wise counsel, and he fully shared her pious practices. They read devotional books together every morning, and the Prince often liked to sing, his wife accompanying him with her guitar. He was also very fond of walking, and Marie-Clotilde was always ready to walk with him, although that form of exercise tired her very much. Their great delight was to get free from the life and etiquette of the Court, and to go and stay during the summer months at Moncalieri or la Veneria.

Marie-Clotilde was a most efficient and attentive nurse, and she had frequent occasions to exercise her nursing capacities, for, as we have said, the Prince had delicate health and suffered from frequent attacks of illness. She would allow no one to take her place at her husband's bedside, by day or night, and, pious as she was, she would at such times forgo all her practices of devotion in order to attend to him. She called that "leaving

God for God." It was one of her favourite sayings.

Meanwhile the political situation in France was getting more and more disquieting. After the taking of the Bastille on the 14th of July, 1789, the popular animosity against the King's brother, the Comte d'Artois, and the Queen, Marie-Antoinette, who were both supposed to encourage Louis XVI. to resist the demands of the nation, grew so fierce that it was considered prudent that the Comte d'Artois should leave the country for a time. As his wife, Maria-Theresa of Savoy, was a daughter of the King of Sardinia, he directed his steps, on leaving France, towards the kingdom of his father-in-law, and arrived there in September, followed soon afterwards by the Comtesse d'Artois and their two sons, the Duc d'Angoulême and the Duc de Berry. The former was then about sixteen, and his brother thirteen, years old.

Victor-Amadeus received his son-in-law and his family with the greatest cordiality, but their arrival made him realize the dangers which threatened his kingdom as he had never done before. Marie-Clotilde's happiness at seeing her brother again was intense, and she nearly fainted for joy at their first interview. But joy soon gave place to sadness, when

QUEEN MARIE-ANTOINETTE AND HER CHILDREN.

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she heard the news which her brother had to give, and which confirmed only too well the letters of Madame Elizabeth to her, and her own apprehensions. A little later arrived also the Prince de Condé, the Duc d'Enghien, his aunt Louise de Condé, and in March, 1791, Mesdames Adélaïde and Victoire, daughters of Louis XV., Marie-Clotilde's aunts. They had met with considerable difficulties on their journey until they reached the frontier of Savoy, owing to the threatening attitude of the population in the provinces through which they had to pass. But King Victor-Amadeus ordered that they should be received within his dominions with all royal honours. The Comte d'Artois went to meet them as far as Novalese, at the foot of Mont Cenis, and the Prince and Princess of Piedmont awaited them at Rivoli. Thus Marie-Clotilde met for the last time some of the members of her family, driven across the Alps by the first fury of the storm in which the others were to perish.

Before they separated, the Prince de Condé on his way to Worms, the Comte d'Artois going to Coblence, and the Princesses Adélaïde and Victoire to Austria, the King gathered them all around his table at a dinner given on the 14th of March, 1791. King Victor-Amadeus wished to have the Duc de

Berry, the youngest of his grandchildren, next to him. The Prince of Piedmont sat between the Comte and Comtesse d'Artois; Marie-Clotilde sat between Madame Adélaïde and Madame Victoire. In spite of the efforts of the guests to be cheerful, they could not hide the feelings of anxiety which oppressed them. The Duc de Génevois, in his journal, notices the circumstance, and says: "They appeared full of sadness, and we were all so embarrassed that I did not know what to say."

From the same journal we hear also of the false hopes, the anxious waiting for news, the perplexity and fear which filled the Royal Family at Turin when they learnt that Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette, and their children, and Madame Elizabeth, had made an attempt to escape out of Paris and to reach the frontier. Gradually, news came that they had been arrested at Varennes; then this was contradicted. Verdun was mentioned instead of Varennes. Later on a messenger arrived bearing the assurance that the French Royal Family was safely out of France. It is only a few days later that the truth at last came to be known at Turin.

We can imagine what the faithful, tender-hearted Marie-Clotilde went through during those terrible days. Yet she could only realize a small portion

of the sufferings of her unfortunate relatives. She could not then know the details of that awful journey back to Paris, after their capture at Varennes, and she did not fully understand the situation created by the attempt to escape from the moral torture and the daily humiliations of her brother's situation in Paris. It had not yet entered the mind of anyone in Turin that his life and that of his wife and his sister could be actually in danger.

Meanwhile, the Comtesse d'Artois received a letter from her sister, the Comtesse de Provence, announcing that she and her husband, the Comte de Provence, had safely reached Brussels. They had left Paris on the same evening that Louis XVI. and Marie-Antoinette made their escape, but their journey had been more prudently arranged; they had started separately, without any of the precautions and elaborate arrangements which only served to defeat the purpose of the King and Queen, and to betray them. Consequently, they reached the frontier with little difficulty.

On the 25th of July it became known that the Comtesse de Provence was coming to Turin. "Piedmont has told me," writes the Duc de Génevois in his journal, "that Madame is coming here, but that the King insists on her coming

alone. . . . Anyhow, one thing is certain—where she is at present, she is starving and without a penny."

The Comtesse de Provence only arrived at Turin at the beginning of 1792. Much as her father desired to see her again, he was anxious to avoid giving any apparent provocation to the French Government, or any pretext for aggression. Hence his desire that his daughter, if she came, should come alone. Already his difficulties were increased by the large number of French *émigrés* which filled Nice, Chambéry, Annecy, and Turin.

At that time we find in Turin the Duc de Laval and his sons, the Marquis de Montesson, the Duc and Duchesse de Polignac, the Comtesse Diane de Polignac, the Vicomtesse de Vaudreuil; later on arrived the Prince de Tarente, the Prince de Rohan-Guemenée, the Marquis de Barentin, d'Escars, de Ferronniére, the Comte and Comtesse de Vintimille, the Comtes de Lévis, de Grammont de Gourville, de Faucigny, the Vicomte de Mirabeau, the Chevalier de la Tremoïlle, Messieurs Walsh de Séran, de Lally-Tolendal, de Montmorency de la Rochelambert, de Suffren, and many more, whose presence in Turin was reported by the Minister of France to his Government.

Those embarrassing guests were placing Victor-

Amadeus in a most uncomfortable position. France watched how he treated them; his own subjects objected to them, and he himself, while anxious to show them due civility, could hardly hide his annoyance. It was certainly justified by the attitude of many of the French refugees, particularly at Chambéry, where they established themselves as in a conquered country, laughing at the old customs of the place, the dresses of the ladies, and the ways of the population, and, moreover, making no secret of their intention to use the hospitality they were receiving in Savoy in order to organize in it a centre of counter-revolution. Exasperated, the inhabitants of Chambéry at last one day attacked the French refugees as they were celebrating the marriage of the old Marquis de Morfontaine with a young widow, Madame de Savigny, and by sheer weight of numbers compelled them to seek refuge in a house, in which they had to remain until the darkness of the night made it possible for them to effect their escape.

This affair made much noise, as may easily be imagined. Victor-Amadeus was loudly declared in Paris to be an enemy of the French Revolution, and his own people openly complained of the toleration shown towards foreigners who mis-

behaved themselves, endangered the peace of the country, and increased the cost of living by their extravagant ways.

On the other hand, while the nobility of Savoy sympathized with the French *émigrés*, the bourgeoisie and the lower classes were much affected by the political agitation on the other side of the frontier. Their dislike of the *émigrés* was largely due, not so much to their behaviour, as to the principles they represented. Many of the Piedmontese expressed the hope that the French would soon bring the "spark of revolt" into their midst, and enable them to have a share in the glorious work of regeneration. Was France going to find allies within his own borders when she determined to invade them? Such was the anxious problem forced upon Victor-Amadeus by the situation.

The problem for Marie-Clotilde took another form: how to reconcile her own French sympathies with her duties as a Princess of Savoy? It was a cruel position. She tried to help as many of the French refugees as she could, a large number of them being absolutely penniless, without compromising the King or attracting the attention of the French Minister, who narrowly watched the attitude of the Court towards the *émigrés*.

She laboured incessantly in that charitable mission, visiting the sick, relieving the poor, working with her own hands to provide garments for the women and children, all the time thinking of those she loved, about whom the most distressing news reached her day by day, yet whom she was powerless to help in any way, except by her silent prayers. In these she was most assiduous, unless charity compelled her to "leave God for God," as she said. Two hours before anyone else, in the palace, she was up and already engaged in her devotions.

One of her women who was deeply attached to her often endeavoured to rise as early as her mistress, in order to be ready in case she should have need of her, and the good woman would say to the Princess: "I really think that at this hour only the angels, Your Royal Highness, and I, are awake!" She did not know that Marie-Clotilde had often been in her oratory for some hours already when she came to offer her services.

It was during those hours of meditation before God that Marie-Clotilde found strength for the painful task laid upon her by the political calamities about to overwhelm her adopted country; then, also, she had those clear views of the position of affairs in France which enabled her to foresee what

people around her at Turin still failed to understand; during those hours, no doubt, she learnt above all the wisdom of that detachment from earthly vanities which her birth, her exalted rank, and the atmosphere of Courts, could not teach her, and she acquired her perfect simplicity and sweetness towards all those, whether rich or poor, who approached her.

Thus once, having heard of an old woman who was said to be deeply versed in spiritual things, she asked the woman to come and see her, conversed with her for a long time, and desired that she should come often to the palace. This was not her way with rich people, for she was most careful of her time and never invited visits of mere ceremony. She came to know that the old woman was very poor, and arranged at once with a good man called Jean-Louis Morandi, who was the usual channel of her charities, that the woman's needs should be liberally supplied. "Above all," the Princess told him, "see that she gets good fresh bread every day, not stale bread, because she has very few teeth." All her charities were characterized by this attention to details and the personal interest she took in each case. She was not satisfied to head subscription lists or to do good by deputy.

We also recognize her good sense and her superior view of religious things in her kind attentions to the Comtesse d'Artois, who had remained at Turin after the departure of her husband. The Comtesse, since the beginning of the troubles in France, had given way to a sombre melancholy, which of late had developed into an alarming morose condition. She would remain for days in her apartments, with all the shutters closed, so as to exclude the light; nothing seemed to rouse her out of her torpor. She constantly repeated that nothing would ever make her return to France, and finally announced her intention of entering a convent. Marie-Clotilde, with her usual delicate tact, succeeded in gaining the affection and trust of the poor Princess, and gradually made her understand that she had duties as a wife and a mother which she was not free to relinquish in order to follow her present inclination, without even the assurance that God called her to such a vocation.

She led the Comtesse d'Artois to realize that her religious aspirations could be satisfied in the world, and in her present position, if she would try to sanctify herself in the duties of her station, instead of dreaming of a life which she could only follow by neglecting those duties.

No one could have spoken on this subject with

more authority than Marie-Clotilde herself, who, with her profound piety and her frequent aspirations after the peace of a cloistered life, nevertheless bravely sought her sanctification where God had placed her, and never thought it a virtue to seek it elsewhere. Had not her Master said of Himself: "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me"?

Marie-Clotilde succeeded in leading the aspirations of her sister-in-law into the right path, and in later years the Comtesse d'Artois always spoke with gratitude of all she owed to her. During the Comtesse's last illness at Gratz in 1805, three years after the death of Marie-Clotilde, she directed that after her own death her heart should be enclosed in an urn and placed in the tomb of her saintly friend. This desire was fulfilled in 1839 by the care of her son, the Duc d'Angoulême.

CHAPTER V

NICE AND SAVOY ARE INVADED BY THE FRENCH—DEATH OF LOUIS XVI., OF QUEEN MARIE-ANTOINETTE, AND MADAME ELIZABETH—MARIE-CLOTILDE'S ATTITUDE AND SENTIMENTS AT THAT PERIOD.

In the spring of 1792 the conflict between France and the Sardinian kingdom could have been averted if the Government in Paris had been animated by the spirit of moderation and conciliation manifested by Victor-Amadeus III. Although strongly opposed to the Revolution, by interest and by principles, nevertheless the King of Sardinia, feeling his own weakness, and not knowing how far he might rely on the dispositions of Prussia and Austria towards France and towards himself, hesitated to join any coalition, still hoping in some way or other to obtain peace.

His son, the Prince of Piedmont, entirely agreed with him—at any rate, on this point—and strongly advised a peace policy. But public opinion in Paris,

excited by exaggerated reports of the intrigues of the French refugees in Savoy and Piedmont, and by a belief that the Sardinian Court was helping them, and was only waiting for an opportunity to join the enemies of France, clamoured for immediate action. The despatch of troops into Savoy by the Sardinian Government, as a measure of precaution, was at once seized upon by France as a pretext for beginning hostilities. General Anselme, who commanded the French army established on the River Var, received on the 28th of September orders from Paris to operate, in conjunction with the fleet of Admiral Truguet, against Nice and Savoy. Surprised and badly led, the Sardinian troops gave way before the invading force, and Nice fell an easy prey to the French.

The fortresses of Montalban and Villefranche capitulated without any resistance, and Savoy, like Nice, was occupied by General Anselme before any real opposition had been offered to his arms. The Piedmontese troops, however, stood on the defensive in the Alps, and the French General hesitated to attack them in the strong positions they occupied in the mountains.

In November, 1792, a decree of the Convention proclaimed the independence of all peoples, and promised the support of France to all nations

struggling to throw off the yoke of monarchy. This formal provocation was at once followed by a coalition of England, Spain, Germany, Holland, Naples, Prussia, and Austria, against France. Admiral Truguet, with some troops placed at his disposal by General Anselme, now attacked the island of Sardinia, which was not supposed to be in a position to offer any serious resistance. But this unjust aggression had the effect of awakening among the Sardinian population the most heroic patriotism. Their resistance was such that Admiral Truguet, after desperate fighting, was compelled to abandon his attempt, with considerable losses in men and ships.

This failure in Sardinia and the occupation of Corsica by England greatly encouraged Victor-Amadeus, who, having no further cause for hesitation, in April, 1793, made a formal treaty with England and Austria against their common enemy. No other policy was now open to him. Yet he entered upon this course with deep anxiety and sadness, placed, as he found himself, between allies upon whom he did not altogether rely, and France, whose revolutionary Government had now shown the world how far it was prepared to go in the assertion of its principles. For, while Victor-

Amadeus was maturing his plans for the defence of his kingdom, the news had reached Turin of the execution of Louis XVI. in Paris, on the 21st of January, 1793.

The journal of the Duc de Génevois tells us how the terrible news fell upon Marie-Clotilde. "We learnt," he says, "from the King that the announcement of her brother's death was being confirmed from all quarters. After Mass we went up to the Princess's apartments. She was in bed, and shed many tears; but she showed a strength of soul beyond anything that can be imagined." She insisted, in spite of her own prostrate condition, on accompanying her husband to the room of the Comtesse d'Artois, who, she thought, had not yet heard the fatal news. But she had already been informed. Marie-Clotilde, concealing her own emotion, spoke to her with great calm, and urged upon her the duty of resignation, saying that God knew how to turn the greatest misfortunes to good issues. That act of charity accomplished, she returned to her own room and gave free course to her sorrow.

Two days later the Minister of the Genoese Republic at Turin wrote in a letter: "The Princess of Piedmont has been compelled by her extreme

affliction to keep to her bed, and she finds her only consolation in her great piety. She submits herself to God's will, and considers her unfortunate brother as a martyr, because of the constancy with which he has opposed the persecution of religion and of the clergy, and the firmness he has shown in his attachment to the Catholic faith."

This idea that her brother had died a martyr gradually became in her a positive conviction, and she looked upon his death as a glorious triumph, for which she made fervent thanksgivings to God.

It was a real happiness for her to hear people speak of Louis XVI. as a martyr. She could conceive no greater honour, and she asked God (as appears from one of her letters to the Abbé Marconi) to count her worthy to give her own life in His service, as her brother had done.

Our readers will no doubt like to see the reproduction given here of the autograph letter written by Marie-Clotilde to the Prince de Condé soon after the execution of Louis XVI.

TRANSLATION.

"MY COUSIN,

"I have received with much feeling the letter you have written to me in the circumstance most

painful to my heart. I did not doubt your own deep affliction, knowing so well your sentiments and your particular devotion to our too unfortunate relatives. He whom we have just lost in so unjust and barbarous a manner is certainly now our protector before God. My only consolation lies in the assurance of his eternal happiness, and the hope that he will obtain from the Divine mercy the end of our misfortunes.

"Accept, I pray you, my thanks for your kind remembrance of me, and the assurance of the sincere and devoted sentiments with which I am,

"Your affectionate Cousin,

"MARIE-CLOTILDE."

She knew that Louis XVI. had openly declared that he forgave his persecutors, and she wished to do the same with entire sincerity. Before long an occasion presented itself for her to test her own feelings in this respect. The French Republic had appointed Ginguené as Ambassador to the Court of Turin. This appointment gave great pain, for at that time it was believed in Turin that Ginguené had voted the death of Louis XVI. As a matter of fact, he could not have done it, since he was not a member of the Convention. But this came to be

A Turin ce 8 Février 1793.

Mon Cousin, J'ai reçu avec bien de la sensibilité, la — lettre que vous m'avez écrite, dans la circonstance la plus douloureuse pour mon cœur, je ne doutais pas de la profonde affliction que vous en ressentiez aussi, connoissant si bien vos sentiments et votre attachement particulier pour nos trop malheureux Parents, celui que nous venons de perdre d'une façon si inique et barbare, et certainement actuellement notre Protecteur auprès de Dieu, mon unique consolation est l'assurance de son bonheur éternel, et l'espérance qu'il nous obtiendra de la Miséricorde Divine, la fin de nos malheurs.

Recevez, je vous prie, mes remerciements du souvenir que vous voulez bien conserver de moi, et les assurances de sentiments sincères et affectueux avec lesquels je suis

Votre affectionnée Cousine
Marie Clotilde

AUTOGRAPH LETTER OF QUEEN MARIE-CLOTILDE TO THE PRINCE DE CONDÉ.

(Reduced one-half.)

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understood only somewhat later. Meanwhile, Marie-Clotilde trembled at the thought that she would have to receive officially such an Ambassador. She prayed much, and she asked the prayers of the Sisters of a monastery which she often visited, to obtain strength for that ordeal.

One of the Sisters has stated that Marie-Clotilde's great anxiety was to forgive the man with all her heart, but at the same time to receive him with a certain cold reserve, very different from her usual cheerful manner, so that he should realize the evil he had done in sending to the scaffold his Sovereign and an innocent man. Yet she was afraid lest there should be the least shade of resentment in her attitude. Saints have such scruples. Hence her desire that the good Sisters should ask God to give her grace and strength to do what she had to do without failing in the duty of forgiveness towards our enemies.

The poor Princess seems to have received the strength she had so earnestly prayed for. Ginguené and his wife had their audience, and we are told that they were both immensely impressed by Marie-Clotilde's dignified yet gracious manner, so different from what they had probably expected, knowing her to be the sister of Louis XVI. Before her they lost

all their assurance, and were seen to tremble while going through the customary forms of presentation. Yet they were not aware of the misunderstanding which so greatly increased Marie-Clotilde's difficulty and merit in receiving them so graciously.

The execution of Queen Marie-Antoinette was hardly a surprise to her. She had long foreseen the course of events in France, but it confirmed her fears concerning Madame Elizabeth, still a prisoner in the Temple. We have seen how great and genuine was the affection which united the two sisters. Time and separation had only increased it; anxiety and suffering had deepened it. That beloved sister beyond the Alps was identified with Marie-Clotilde's dearest memories of her native France, in that Bourbon heart of hers, so tender and pure, so brave and generous—something of the spirit of St. Louis joined to all that was best in the heroic soul of Henri of Navarre.

When the news of Madame Elizabeth's death on the scaffold reached Turin, the Royal Family kept it from her until the following morning. It was thought best to inform her of it at the conclusion of her usual morning devotions. Her husband took upon himself this painful duty. Accompanied by his chaplain, Charles-Emmanuel went to his wife's

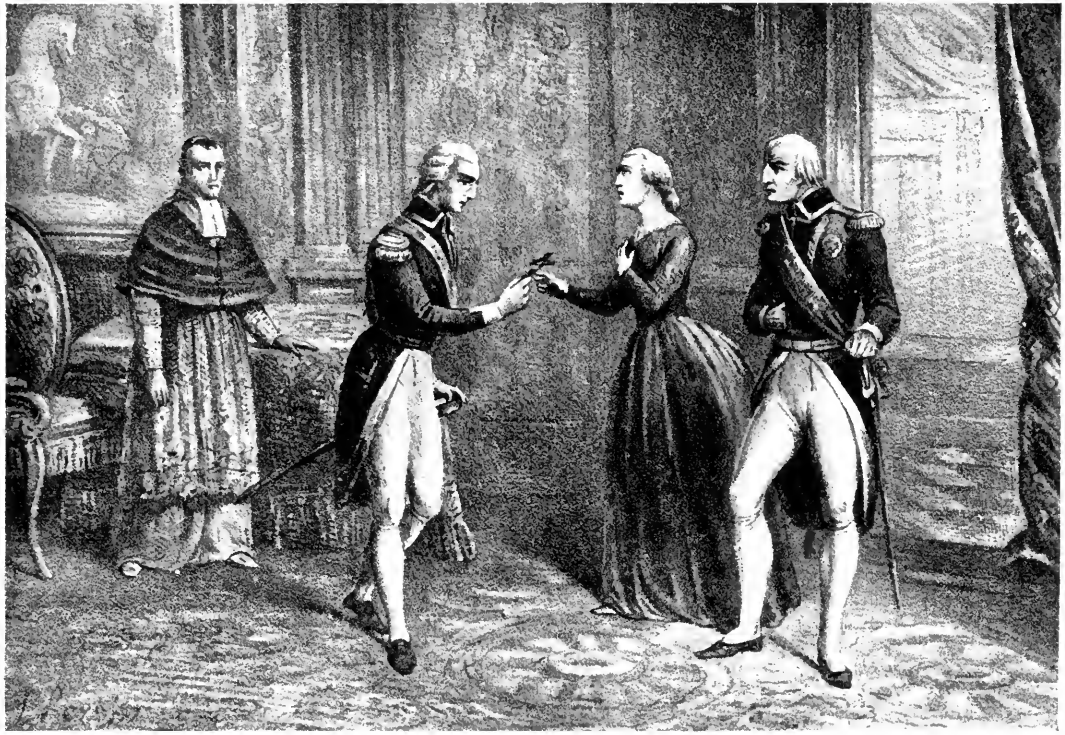
room; holding a crucifix in his hand, and approaching her, in a voice which only too clearly betrayed his emotion, he spoke simply these words: "A great sacrifice must be offered to God." Marie-Clotilde understood at once his meaning, and answered: "The sacrifice is made." This expressed the sublime resignation of her will to the Divine will. But the will was stronger than flesh and blood in her; hardly had she spoken, when she fell fainting on the floor. The physician called to her assistance found her motionless and in a state of rigid immobility, her face red and burning. He thought she was dying, but the administration of a cordial brought her back to consciousness almost at once, and, looking calmly at those around her, she rose without uttering a single word of complaint.

She declined to go to bed, as the physician advised her to do, and when the dinner-hour came she joined the family circle and sat at table as usual, even taking part to some extent in the conversation. She could not, however, altogether disguise the violence she was doing to herself, and all were amazed at her self-control. When Morandi, her man of business, came to take her orders, she said to him: "You will have heard of the death of my sister Elizabeth. She was a holy woman, I assure

you, and people in France knew it. I can only attribute her death to a grace from God, who wished thus to reward her virtues." Then she added simply, "Order my usual mourning things," and dismissed him without any further sign of emotion.

It was much noticed that Marie-Clotilde did not utter a single word of resentment against the men who had done her sister to death. She only spoke of her in order to mention some special trait of her virtuous life. She desired to have a copy of the touching prayer composed by Madame Elizabeth in the midst of her sufferings; she often used it herself, and loved to make it known to others. Here are the original words of Madame Elizabeth's well-known prayer:

"Que m'arrivera-t-il, O mon Dieu! Je l'ignore. Tout ce que je sais, c'est qu'il ne m'arrivera rien que vous ne l'ayez prévu de toute éternité. Cela me suffit, O mon Dieu, pour être tranquille. J'adore vos desseins éternels, je me soumets de tout mon cœur. Je veux tout, j'accepte tout. Je vous fais le sacrifice de tout. J'unis ce sacrifice à celui de votre cher Fils, mon Sauveur, vous demandant par son Cœur Sacré et ses mérites infinis la patience dans nos maux et la parfaite soumission qui vous est due pour tout ce que vous voudrez et permettrez. Amen."



MARIE-CLOTILDE RECEIVES THE NEWS OF HER SISTER'S DEATH.

(From an old Italian print.)

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The death of her beloved sister was a solemn turning-point in Marie-Clotilde's life. Her piety assumed from that day a character of austerity, a depth of spiritual earnestness, an intensity of detachment from earthly things, which, in spite of her efforts, could not be concealed from those about her. She had often wished to give up wearing the rich silk dresses considered necessary for one in her exalted station. She did not see how their use could be logically reconciled with the penitential attitude of mind required of all by the terrible calamities threatening the kingdom at that time. The Cardinal-Archbishop of Turin, consulted by her, was at first inclined to recommend a compromise. She might, he thought, wear black dresses only, but yet of silk. Woollen garments were singular for one in her position, and the ladies of the Court would not be so likely to follow her example if she went so far.

Marie-Clotilde, as many of us, no doubt, have often done, was seeking advice while her mind was already made up. She objected that with silk dresses she must wear her jewels, and she was absolutely determined never to wear them again. She added that she felt inspired to give their people an example of humility suited to the present political

crisis, and that woollen garments would do that much more effectually. The prelate at last gave way, and she readily obtained permission from the King and from the Prince her husband. From that time she only wore blue woollen dresses (except during mourning, when she wore black); she ceased to wear jewels of any kind, or lace of any value; she also had her hair cut very short. On her finger she wore a gold ring, on which were engraved two hearts, and a small cross hung from her neck.

Nor was her desire to imitate her Saviour in His poverty satisfied by those very plainly cut woollen garments. She wore them so long that they had to be repaired again and again, until one day one of her women, who had charge of her wardrobe, said to her: "Truly, your Majesty has vowed to wear only woollen things; but if they have to be repaired much longer, I think they will contain more silk than wool."

With her usual kind manner, she gently smiled, but made no change in her arrangements, when, suddenly, the idea occurred to her that her efforts in the direction of Evangelical poverty were leading her into a kind of injustice. Were not the women attached to her service accustomed to look upon her dresses as their proper perquisite after they had been

worn for some time? Was she not, therefore, depriving them of what they had a right to expect, by having no dresses at all to give them? At last she solved this curious case of conscience by assuring the ladies of her household that she would see that they were not losers by her voluntary poverty.

In one way, at any rate, Marie-Clotilde was able to attain her object, thanks to those blue gowns. For a long time she had tried to get free of the obligation to frequent theatres, but the King and her husband, Charles-Emmanuel, always insisted that she could not neglect her duty of appearing there sometimes. Now was her opportunity. She represented that it would be unseemly for her to show herself in the royal box in a penitential garb, and that she must therefore abstain from going to theatres. The argument was so unexpected, and seemed so plausible, that the King and Charles-Emmanuel considered it unanswerable, and she had her way.

Our will is never so strong as when we have resolved to have no other will but God's; for we are then animated by a deeper conviction that *His* will must be carried out. Thus it is that some of the noblest as well as some of the worst deeds which history has to record have been committed through this form of zeal, so difficult it is to be always

sure that we are not merely investing our own will, or view, or desire, with a Divine sanction. In this case, it is clear that Marie-Clotilde was acting from the purest motives. Yet we may doubt how far she was doing justice to the claims of her position, and how far she was helping to raise the tone of society by absenting herself from amusements which cannot altogether be suppressed. Probably the worldly-wise would at once decide that she was mistaken, but the story of her life may well lead us at least to suspend our judgment.

CHAPTER VI

CONTINUATION OF THE WAR WITH FRANCE—VICTOR-AMADEUS III. DIES—CHARLES-EMMANUEL BECOMES KING OF SARDINIA.

As we have seen in the preceding chapter, King Victor - Amadeus, in presence of the definite aggression of the French Republic, had no other course open to him but to join the coalition, and to resist by all means the invasion of his kingdom. He entrusted the command of his army to the Duc de Chablais, his brother, a Prince possessed of considerable abilities. The army itself, re-organized by Victor-Amadeus, in the light of his previous failure, was now in a much better condition. His sons, the Ducs d'Aosta and de Montferrat, were each given the command of an army corps. General Strasoldo with 5,000 men guarded the valley of Stura, and with him was Prince Charles-Emmanuel of Carignano; while the valleys of Luzerna and San Martino were defended by the brave Waldensian troops under General Miranda.

General Brunet, at the head of 25,000 Republican troops, attacked with energy the Sardinian army; but he failed to appreciate the difficulties of the mountainous country in which he was operating, and suffered a severe defeat, soon followed by a still graver disaster in his hasty efforts to retrieve his position.

The Republican General Kellerman, who was then at Nice, promptly came to survey the whole situation, and, fearing to see his army cut in two by an advance of the Sardinians towards the River Var, he at once altered his line of defence, and effectually fortified the important positions of Broïs, Mantegas, and Tuet. At the same time the Duc de Chablais and the Austrian General Wins, who shared with him the supreme command, were also strengthening themselves by the erection of redoubts connecting together Saorgio, Raüs, and Les Fourches.

The coalition seemed triumphant. The Republicans had met with a severe check in Savoy; in France the west and south were in open revolt; Bordeaux, Marseilles, Lyons, Toulon, had declared themselves on the side of the Monarchy, then represented by the poor little victim in the Temple prison known to history as Louis XVII.

Toulon had actually surrendered to Admiral

Hood, and King Victor-Amadeus sent 3,000 men to defend that port against the armies of the Republic. He was also ready to send troops to Lyons in answer to an urgent appeal from that city; but General Wins vehemently opposed the idea, saying that the King of Sardinia had not sufficient men to send any of them so far.

As a matter of fact, Austria, in pretending to help Sardinia by the despatch of 6,000 poor troops, really meant to secure for herself, and for her ultimate benefit, the supreme direction of the war. It soon became clear that General Wins was hindering rather than favouring the recapture of Nice and Savoy. As Marquis Costa de Beauregard has truly said: "The least success obtained by the King's troops, or any useful or boldly-conceived movement, provoked the unrestrained anger of the Austrian General."

Victor-Amadeus applied to the Emperor for the use of his troops which remained unemployed in Lombardy. Then the views entertained at Vienna became clear: the Austrian Government would help to reconquer Nice, Savoy, and any other parts lost to the French, but, as a compensation, the King of Sardinia must restore to Austria the provinces ceded to his predecessor, Charles-Emmanuel III., by the Empress Maria-Theresa.

Victor-Amadeus was indignant when these proposals reached him. He then understood why the Austrian General was so anxious that he should not succeed by his own efforts. Even at that critical moment he nobly refused to sacrifice the honour and integrity of his kingdom, and rejected the Austrian proposals, with the heroic spirit of his House, choosing to fight alone even against such tremendous odds.

In spite of certain defects of character, it must be recognized that Victor-Amadeus III., in presence of danger, showed himself endowed with true kingly qualities. Here was an old man, standing alone, with a small kingdom invaded partly by the soldiers of the French Revolution and partly by its ideas, and yet preferring to trust to the valour and loyalty of his people rather than purchase the alliance of a powerful neighbour by a disgraceful bargain. It is impossible not to admire his courage and the faithfulness with which he held firmly to what he conceived to be his royal duty.

Meanwhile, Kellerman was working hard to regain the positions compromised by the successful movements of the Duc de Montferrat. The Piedmontese army was forced to give way before the advance of the Republicans; but the Duc de Montferrat distinguished himself by the able and courageous

manner in which he handled his troops, keeping the French at bay during a whole day, and finally saving his baggage and ammunition, and effecting his retreat in good order.

Victor-Amadeus, ever preoccupied by the idea of regaining Nice, which he loved, and whose population remained faithful to him in spite of the French occupation, resolved at last, notwithstanding his advanced age, to place himself at the head of his troops and to deliver Nice. The Prince of Piedmont and the Duc d'Aosta were each given the command of an army corps, and the departure of the King was fixed for the 21st of August.

This resolution of the old King caused an outburst of sincere enthusiasm among his subjects On the day when he was to leave Turin, the streets from early morning became filled with masses of people anxious to look, perhaps for the last time, upon the venerable features of their Sovereign. In the palace, Victor-Amadeus, in full uniform, accompanied by the Prince of Piedmont and the Duc d'Aosta, was making his last preparations before starting for a campaign so full of uncertainty and danger. He realized the grave responsibility involved in his decision, and sadly pondered over the possible consequences of thus leaving his capital

almost without troops, in the hands of its inhabitants, so many of whom he could not trust, owing to the rapid progress of revolutionary ideas among them.

He passed with his sons into the apartments of Marie-Clotilde. She was there, in her usual blue woollen dress, her head covered with a plain cap of white mousseline without any ornaments. The Duchesse d'Aosta was with her. The two Princesses, on seeing the King, fell on their knees, begging his blessing. He endeavoured to encourage them, speaking with a confidence he scarcely felt, of his prompt return at the head of his victorious army. He asked Marie-Clotilde to pray for him. Her answer, full of the hope and strength which her own firm faith inspired, caused a corresponding movement of enthusiastic faith in the King himself. Raising his eyes to heaven, and placing his hand upon the hilt of his sword, he is said to have exclaimed, "Nice or Superga,"* which meant, to reconquer Nice or to die. Then, giving his arm to the Princess of Piedmont, he passed with his sons and the Duchesse d'Aosta into the dining-room,

* The Superga is the royal burial church, a handsome edifice conspicuously situated on a hill to the east of Turin. Begun in 1718, from designs by Juvara, it was completed in 1731.

to partake for the last time of breakfast with his family. An hour later the King was starting for the seat of war, followed by the Dukes of Piedmont and Aosta, and by the flower of that illustrious Piedmontese nobility which has given Italy in the course of centuries so many great soldiers and statesmen. Among his suite were representatives of the Seyssels d'Aix, the Lamarmoras, the Saluzzos, the Balbos, the d'Azeglios, the Cavours, and a host of other famous names. Immense crowds filled the streets and accompanied the King for some distance beyond the gates of the city.

As soon as he reached his headquarters at the Giandola, Victor-Amadeus settled his plan of campaign, disposed his forces, and ordered the attack. At first the Piedmontese, led by the Duc d'Aosta, were successful; but General Wins, obeying secret orders from Vienna, wasted so much time in supporting the Prince with imperial troops that the opportunity was lost, and the French were given time to rally their forces.

The old King of Sardinia supported with difficulty the fatigues of the campaign, rendered still more trying by the intense cold of those mountainous regions; and on the 14th of November, 1793, after two months of an exhausting and discouraging

struggle, Victor-Amadeus was obliged to return to Turin.

Meanwhile the Duc de Chablais, pressed by the impetuous attack of General Massena, rallied his troops near the village of Tenda, endeavouring to defend the important fort of Saorgio, threatened by Massena's army, and to save Piedmont itself from invasion. But the Sardinian army, weakly supported by the Austrian troops, could not long resist the concentrated efforts of the French columns, helped by the sympathy they found in the population. The fort of Saorgio fell, the Col de Tenda was taken, the valley of Aosta, and even Pignerol, were threatened. The inhabitants of Turin, on seeing the Republican forces so near, became panic-stricken; the demagogues, who hitherto propagated their views secretly among the population, took courage and openly denounced the Government; a conspiracy was organized to murder all the members of the Royal Family, but, fortunately, it was discovered in time.

To all this were soon added the horrors of a famine, which affected not only Turin, but the whole of Piedmont. The King gave his plate to be coined into money; he sold almost everything he possessed to buy food for the people. But the

situation was such that even those sacrifices were unavailing. Austria began to fear that she had played her game too well, and might have reason to regret having allowed the French to come so near. She replaced General Wins by General Wallis, who arrived in haste with 12,000 men. But that also was unavailing.

The death of Robespierre modified for a moment this situation, because of the great change it effected in the progress of the Revolution in France, and the year 1795 seemed to bring a decided improvement in the affairs of the Sardinian kingdom. But the campaign, renewed with some success, was destined to end disastrously. The terrible defeat at Loano (November 28) ruined all the hopes of Piedmont, and made Austria realize that the danger had reached her also.

In Turin, the Government of Victor-Amadeus, stunned by the blow, and openly condemned by public opinion, was divided in its counsels. One party advised an alliance with France, in order to save Italy; the other supported the alliance with Austria, even in presence of the situation created by the Battle of Loano. The people loudly clamoured against Austria, attributing the defeat to her treachery. The old King was in an agony of

perplexity, but his repugnance to all that the French Revolution represented in his eyes would not permit him to consider such an alternative.

While he endeavoured to reconstitute his forces, the Directoire in Paris was planning a forward movement in Italy; it formed a fresh army, and appointed the young General Bonaparte as its Commander-in-Chief. The future Emperor was as yet hardly known, except to those who had seen him at work as a young artillery officer. Neither Austria nor Piedmont could realize the fatal significance of his arrival at the seat of war.* But in a very short time Bonaparte's genius had revealed itself by a succession of victories, culminating in the capitulation of Mondovi. Soon after, the French were camping within ten leagues of Turin, and Victor-Amadeus was compelled to ask Bonaparte for a suspension of hostilities.

The result of the negotiations which followed was a disastrous treaty, by which the King of Sardinia

* "L'offensive est déterminée pour l'Italie; le commandant en chef de cette partie n'est pas encore connu. On a parlé de Beurnonville, puis d'un Corse terroriste nommé Bonaparte, le bras droit de Barras et commandant de la force armée dans Paris et les environs . . . un général qui n'a pas trente ans et nulle expérience de la guerre."—Lettres de Mallet du Pan à la Cour de Vienne, 1796.

gave up in perpetuity, in favour of the French Republic, the duchy of Savoy, Nice, Tenda, and Breil; consented to demolish the fortresses of Coni, Ceva, Tortone, Exilles, l'Assiette, Suza, and La Brunette, and promised never to raise any new fortresses on the Alpine frontier; he was also compelled to drive out of his kingdom all the French *émigrés*, a condition which was particularly humiliating to Victor-Amadeus, and wounded his feelings as a man and as a King.

Such a peace sent a thrill of indignation through the heart of the Piedmontese people, and Victor-Amadeus himself, crushed by despair, fell into a state of health which caused the deepest anxiety to all the members of the Royal Family. In public he still showed himself calm and full of dignity; but in private his energy left him, and was replaced by a lethargy out of which it was found increasingly difficult to rouse him. His son, the Prince of Piedmont, alarmed in his delicate conscience by a treaty with France which seemed to him, not only a political disaster, but a moral defection, was sad, cold, and silent.

Marie-Clotilde never left her penitential garments, and spent all her time during the day, and even during the night, in ardent prayers on behalf of the

poor dismembered country of her adoption. When the old King, finally vanquished by his sorrow, came to his last moments, she was assiduously at his bedside, nursing him and consoling all.

At five o'clock in the morning, on the 15th of October, 1796, Victor-Amadeus passed away quietly, with a peaceful expression, almost a smile, upon his face, which struck all present. He died at the age of seventy-one, and had reigned twenty-four years.

There were in him all the virtues of an honest man, but he lacked the qualities required of a King at such a crisis. He was brave, like all the Princes of his family, but he was not in any real sense a military leader ; he had sound principles of statesmanship, but he was not able to adapt them to a new situation created by the invasion of new ideas. He died crushed by sorrow and the sense of hopeless defeat. Must we believe that the peaceful smile which lighted up his countenance at the end was caused by a consoling vision of the astonishing destinies of his House ? " Chi lo sá !"

Meanwhile, Charles-Emmanuel IV. ascended the throne under circumstances so critical that even a much abler man than he was might well have despaired of the situation. With an exhausted

treasury, with an army weakened and disorganized, with a kingdom practically under the heel of a powerful and unscrupulous conqueror, what could he do? To all his difficulties was added the ferment of discontent which the policy of the French Republic industriously fostered among his subjects. He had to meet this by a vigorous repression which only increased the ill-feeling of a portion of the population against his Government. His life and that of the Queen Marie-Clotilde were several times placed in imminent danger by criminal conspiracies and attempts at assassination, which they met, it must be recognized, with tactful precautions and much courage.

Marie-Clotilde, on the death of her father-in-law, showed herself true to the principles which governed her life. Rising from her prayers, she calmly left her oratory, to which she had at once retired when obliged to leave the death-chamber, and on the way to her apartments she met her faithful attendant, Madame Badia; the good lady fell upon her knees, and said: "Let me be the first to do homage to your Majesty."

But the new Queen raised her at once, and said to her: "In changing my position I shall not change my sentiments; as a Christian I am your sister;

something of the fatal destiny of her own race. Yet her strong faith dominated her sorrow, and she could write in the following strain to Father Felix Vecchi: "You are right in calling this kingship a Calvary, for in fact it is that. May we at least make good use of it, so that, having had the honour and glory to carry the Cross with our good Jesus, and following His steps, we may one day be admitted to contemplate the eternal blessedness of Paradise. . . . This is the sole object and desire of my dear companion and of myself."

It was not, however, Marie-Clotilde's way to neglect her duties by taking refuge in her oratory while her help was needed elsewhere. She knew the character of her husband, his state of health, his indecision in presence of difficulties. It was her mission to hide from the public the weakness of his irritable temperament, the painful nervous depression which frequently came over him; and it often required all her tact and patience and her ineffable sweetness to restrain him and prevent strangers from realizing his condition.

Charles-Emmanuel was conscious of his state, and dreaded to deal directly with affairs; he liked them to be first considered and reported to him by Marie-Clotilde. She had to wait for a favourable moment

before mentioning matters likely to trouble and excite him. Hence delays in the despatch of State business, which caused many complaints and criticisms on the part of diplomatists in Turin.

Although the Queen always maintained the greatest reserve in dealing with public affairs, and never took an ostensible part in the government of the kingdom, yet she undoubtedly exercised a very great influence in the State. She quietly expressed her opinion when it was asked, but her manner never had an appearance of authority, and she generally declined to speak until she had consulted the most experienced men about her. Of course, there were many people always ready to make her responsible for any mistakes or supposed mistakes committed by the King's Ministers. She was accused of mixing herself up too much with matters of government. Those critics did not know from how many real mistakes she had safeguarded the country by restraining the impulsive humour of the King, or by enabling him to rouse himself out of his apathy and indecision.

It was also insinuated in public circles that the King and Queen were too much occupied with their devotions, and wasted in them a time which might have been better employed in the service of the

State. Such criticisms were probably inevitable, given the world as it is. Since the day when Judas complained that the money represented by the alabaster vase of precious ointment, which a certain woman broke at the feet of Jesus, might have been better employed, the world has never lacked people who have been inclined to take a similar view of all religious devotion.

That Marie-Clotilde carried her piety to a point of austerity and strictness, which may have proved too great a strain upon her health, is only too probable, judging from ordinary standards of human endurance. But it is quite certain that she never neglected external duties under pretext of being engaged in her devotions. That was the very point on which she liked to mortify herself, and we have seen that "to leave God for God" was her particular idea of practical perfection.

As to the King, whether his devotions or his nervous fits wasted most of his time, it is not easy to say; but there is reason to fear that the necessary care of his health consumed more of his time even than his devotions.

As a matter of fact, Charles-Emmanuel and Marie-Clotilde had a task before them which was, humanly speaking, an impossible one. They did their best

most conscientiously, but not always wisely, because, to be wise, the first condition is to know what one is doing, and most of the time, since their accession to the throne, they could only feel their way, without any clear idea of the political situation. The agents of the French Government treated them outrageously, and raised all sorts of obstacles and troubles around them. In December, 1796, Bonaparte wrote to the Directoire: "I believe that our policy towards the King of Sardinia must consist in keeping up in his State a ferment of discontent among the populations, and above all in making sure of the destruction of fortresses on the side of the Alps." What could a poor King do, with an exhausted treasury, without sufficient troops and without faithful allies, against an enemy animated by that spirit?

Even when Charles-Emmanuel, by a supreme effort, succeeded in repelling the attacks of revolutionary bands secretly supported by the Commander-in-Chief of the French forces in Liguria, this was turned into a grievance by the Directoire, and the King was compelled to give up to the French the very citadel of Turin. Truly he was wearing a crown of thorns.

One of the thorns was, in particular, the French

Ambassador at Turin, that same Ginguené with whom we have already met at the time of his first interview with Marie-Clotilde.

Ginguené was not by any means one of the worst types produced by the French Revolution (see Appendix, p. 245). He had some literary tastes and a certain moderation of character, but he considered it necessary to affect a high revolutionary tone, in keeping with the attitude of the Government of which he was the representative. The result was that his relations with the Court of Turin became simply intolerable. On his arrival he had made a speech in the presence of Charles-Emmanuel, full of the most ridiculous impertinence. The King showed great tact on that painful occasion. He merely spoke of his obligations to the French nation, gracefully alluding to the fact that he owed to her his beloved wife.

Mollified by this speech, Ginguené said: "Sire, the sister of Louis XVI. has left in France a memory of her goodness and virtue which will never be effaced."

In the same conciliatory tone, Charles-Emmanuel went on to ask the French Ambassador about his health, his journey from Paris, his family. He said: "Have you any children?" "I have not that happiness," answered Ginguené. "Neither have I any,"

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continued the King, with a sigh; "but I am consoled by the virtues of my wife."

Charles-Emmanuel may have thought that he had tamed the terrible Ambassador, but, if so, he was deceived. The manners of the *sans-culotte* returned, and so violently, that everybody in Turin believed that he had voted for the death of Louis XVI. Yet we know from his writings that Ginguené has declared the execution of Louis XVI. to have been a political mistake, although he thought it just.

In spite of the way he had spoken of Marie-Clotilde, he again thought it necessary to affect in her presence a tone in keeping with his costume. He would come to her receptions in heavy boots, with a broad tricolour scarf and a great sword noisily trailing on the ground, accompanied by his wife dressed in a *déshabillé* gown such as might have been worn by a low-class woman. Marie-Clotilde, with her usual tact, took no notice of these improprieties; but the feeling at Court and in Turin was such that Ginguené, who was not particularly brave, became persuaded that his precious life was in peril. He believed that before long Turin would see a repetition of the Sicilian Vespers, and he continually informed his Government of the danger of his position.

At last they recalled him, and the following note was written against his name at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: "Ambassador with a fantastic imagination; incapable of giving a moment's peace to the Government to which he was accredited." This note, which so exactly describes him, gives some idea of the situation in which Charles-Emmanuel and Marie-Clotilde found themselves at that period. But they soon had to deal with another difficult question. The emptiness of the Treasury obliged the Sardinian Government to decide, as a last resource, on the confiscation and sale of ecclesiastical property in the kingdom.

The Church possessed immense wealth, and had not hitherto borne to any extent the burden imposed upon the rest of the country by the financial situation. It was therefore inevitable that the question of dealing with Church property should be raised. The ecclesiastical authorities clearly saw that the ruin of the State would ultimately bring about the ruin of religion in Piedmont, and, fully admitting the urgency of the case, they obtained from Pope Pius VI. a brief authorizing the sale of Church property.

This ought to have satisfied the tender consciences of the King and Queen; but the idea of

taking money given by benefactors in the past for the service of God seemed to them something like sacrilege, and they could not bring themselves to assume the responsibility for such a step. To do practically in Piedmont what the Revolution had done in France was not to be thought of, they felt, until every other means of raising money had been tried.

Marie-Clotilde, in her perplexity, consulted, as was her usual practice, the most prudent and enlightened members of the clergy, and particularly Cardinal Gerdil, who happened then to be staying in Turin. After some hesitation and prolonged inquiries, the Cardinal advised the formation of a special committee for the full consideration of that affair. Cardinal Gerdil accepted the presidency of the committee, on which sat the Archbishop of Turin and the Bishops of Novara, Acqui, Biella, and Suza.

Conferences were held between the committee and the Minister of Finance, and finally the committee made their report, stating that, in view of the circumstances of the case, which had led to the Pope being asked for a brief authorizing the sale of Church property, the Government could act with a safe conscience upon the faculty thus granted.

Moreover, to satisfy still further the King and Queen, certain dispositions were suggested which would diminish the loss likely to affect the possessors of Church property. Charles-Emmanuel and Marie-Clotilde, although somewhat encouraged by this decision of the committee, resolved to apply themselves directly to the Sovereign Pontiff before acting upon it. The answer came from Rome entirely approving the decision. They had therefore to yield to the necessity, but with the sense that they had done all they could to safeguard their responsibility, and had brought the Church herself to advise the step which they were compelled to take. We may perhaps think that the good Queen and her husband were rather too scrupulous in this affair. Yet, given the religious motives which influenced them, it seems difficult not to honour them for the delicacy of conscience which they showed in dealing with such a question.

Meanwhile, the relations between the Sardinian Government and the French military authorities installed in the citadel of Turin grew every day more strained. General Collin, who filled the position of Governor of the citadel, instead of restraining the insolence of his officers and men, rather took pleasure in urging them on to further

excesses. The people of Turin were indignant, for they felt the insults levelled against their Sovereign as being also meant for themselves. The Piedmontese Minister Priocca wrote to the French Ambassador, warning him that, if those provocations continued, he could not be answerable for the consequences. "I accept all responsibility," said Ginguené, in his grand manner.

Soon after the French officers organized a masquerade, in which the Court, the magistracy, the Church, and the most respected institutions, were turned into ridicule. They rode through the streets of Turin in open carriages, preceded by a body of cavalry, the soldiers forcing their way through the crowd by striking them with the flat of their swords. The Piedmontese are generally patient and good-natured, but they are quick to resent an insult; this fresh provocation exasperated them beyond measure, and very soon there was fighting and bloodshed in the streets. The French General Ménard, with laudable energy, rushed forward and compelled his men to go back to the citadel, while the Marquis de St. André, the Piedmontese Governor of the town, endeavoured to pacify the population.

It was impossible for the French Governmen to approve of such doings. General Collin was

replaced by General Ménard, and Ginguené was recalled in the way already described. But his successor, d'Eymard, proved as incapable as himself, and did nothing to place the relations between the Piedmontese and the French upon a more satisfactory footing. General Joubert, the Commander-in-Chief of the army of occupation, made no secret of his opinion that the shadow of authority still left to the King ought to be done away with. He replaced the reasonable General Ménard by General Grouchy, who shared his own views; and when the Russian General Souvarow began to cause serious apprehension to the French by his rapid movements and his temporary success, General Joubert, to make it impossible for Charles-Emmanuel to co-operate with the enemies of the Republic, sent troops during the night of the 6th of December, 1798, to seize Novara, Vercelli, Suza, Coni, Alessandria, and Chiva, thus depriving the King of his last resources.

Meanwhile, Charles-Emmanuel was openly accused of carrying on secret negotiations with the enemy, and of being unfaithful to his engagements towards France. No accusation was ever less founded, for the poor King realized his utter powerlessness, and knew only too well that his interest lay in avoiding

any action calculated to increase the ill-will of the French Government. But all his precautions in this respect were in vain. His fate was decided, and nothing could avert it.

Three days after the *coup de main* organized by Joubert, the French Ambassador d'Eymard, with the Generals Grouchy and Clausel, presented himself at the palace, and required Charles-Emmanuel to sign the act by which he renounced his throne. By that document he gave up to the French Republic all the territories still remaining to him in Italy, the island of Sardinia alone being left to him as a last place of refuge.

During this terrible ordeal Charles-Emmanuel displayed much dignity, in spite of the emotion which shook his whole being, and soon reduced him to a state of utter physical and mental prostration; but before he had had time to recover, the order came for him and his family to leave Turin without a moment's delay. This brutal proceeding on the part of the French authorities was not, however, as cruel as it seemed to be. In fact, it was intended as a means of avoiding something worse.

The original intention of some of the revolutionary leaders in Paris had been to have the King and his family brought over to France as prisoners, to be

exhibited there as a glorious triumph for the Republican arms. Count Balbo, the Sardinian Ambassador, anxious to spare his Sovereign this last outrage, went to see Talleyrand, who was then Minister of Foreign Affairs. He found him much opposed to the idea of bringing the King to Paris. Talleyrand had an instinctive repugnance to measures which were at once odious and useless. He therefore willingly arranged with Count Balbo that orders should be sent for the immediate departure of the King and the Royal Family from Turin, so as to defeat the plan proposed by some other members of the Government.

This is the generally accepted view of what took place. It is not, however, impossible that the rumour about taking the King and his family to Paris may have been industriously circulated by Talleyrand himself, in order to prevent any resistance or delay on the part of the King when the order reached him to leave Turin. This might account for the absence of any serious effort to bring back the King to Turin, when an order from Paris to detain him was received, as it is said, by General Joubert. It seems that Talleyrand had sent a secret message to the Minister Priocca, warning him of the intentions of the Directoire,

and advising him to use his influence to persuade the King that it was his interest to start without the least delay. With Talleyrand, one is never sure of knowing the whole truth about anything in which he was concerned.

Anyhow, this device (if there were such a device) was successful. Hardly had Charles-Emmanuel left his capital, when orders arrived from Paris to detain him until further instructions had been received. It would have been easy to have had him brought back to Turin, but the authorities had no orders for that. They were surprised by so sudden a change in their instructions; they feared to assume responsibility in what might perhaps be a mistaken interpretation of their duty, and meanwhile the King and Queen continued their journey.

CHAPTER VIII

KING CHARLES-EMMANUEL AND MARIE-CLOTILDE LEAVE TURIN —INCIDENTS OF THEIR JOURNEY AS FAR AS PARMA.

BEFORE proceeding with the narrative of the King and Queen's journey after their hurried departure from Turin, we must give a few more details of the tragic circumstances which followed the French Ambassador's intimation to Charles-Emmanuel of the will of his Government.

The King was in a state of prostration following upon a violent convulsive fit, which raised the anxious fears of his family assembled around him. Unable as he was to give any orders or to attend to any preparations for his journey, the whole care fell upon Marie-Clotilde. She at once showed incredible activity and energy, arranging everything, thinking of everybody but herself, selecting the objects most necessary for the journey, and designating the few persons who were to accompany the Sovereigns. She was to take with her a single

woman. Instead of choosing among the ladies of the Court the one who could be most useful, she selected Clara Stuper, a daughter of Charles-Emmanuel's nurse. She was a beautiful young girl, but affected with deafness. Having lost her father, there was reason to fear that the poor girl might be exposed to great dangers if she remained alone, without protection, in a town entirely in the hands of foreign soldiers, and her very beauty might render her position more perilous. Marie-Clotilde therefore, without any thought for her own needs or comfort, decided to take Clara Stuper with her. She was sorry to be unable to take also her faithful Madame Badia; she told her that as soon as she was sufficiently settled somewhere she would send for her.

Then the news came that the French authorities were determined to keep the Duc d'Aosta a prisoner in Turin. His wife in her distress implored Marie-Clotilde to save him. She went to General Clausel and besought him on her knees to revoke this cruel order. The French General was so touched by the ineffable dignity of the Queen, even in such an act of humiliation, that he consented to let the Duc d'Aosta go free. Charles-Emmanuel, in return for this act of clemency, presented General

Clausel with the famous picture of "The Dropsical Woman," by Gerard Dow, which is now one of the treasures of the Louvre in Paris.

But some other victim was required, and the faithful Minister Priocca was ordered to remain in the citadel. He endured there a long and painful captivity; and when he was at last liberated, he nobly declined the proposals made to him by Napoleon, and retired to Pisa, where he died in great poverty.

Such characters raise our estimate of mankind, but the members of the Court and all the servants in the palace did not give such an example of fidelity. Some maintained a respectful silence; others manifested complete indifference. Among the ungrateful ones were seen some who had received from the King and Queen the most marked kindness in former years. Many openly complained that they were losing their position, as if they were doing so by the fault of the Royal Family; while, among the number of those chosen to follow the Sovereigns in their exile, not a few found plausible pretexts for avoiding that duty. As Charles-Emmanuel, accompanied by the Queen and all the Princes, was going for the last time to perform his devotions in the Chapel Royal, passing along the galleries of the

palace, he noticed with sorrow that a number of the servants had already replaced the blue cockade of Savoy by the tricolour cockade of the French Republic. The King silently passed on, oppressed by the sight of such indecent haste. Every dispossessed ruler must be prepared for this worship of the rising sun.

While preparations were being made for the journey, the attention of the King and Queen was drawn to the fact that it would be quite easy to take away the Crown jewels; the French Commissioners appeared to have forgotten them. But Marie-Clotilde feared that the country might suffer when the disappearance of the jewels came to be discovered, and, with her usual indifference to such things, she ordered that those articles of value were alone to be taken away which were strictly personal property. Even then many objects were left behind which she would have wished to retain for the comfort of the King; but having to attend to so many things, she could not always see how far her orders had been carried out.

The Minister of Finance brought to her a considerable sum of money which remained in his hands. She at first refused it, and only consented to let that money be taken when her spiritual

adviser assured her that she could do so with a safe conscience.

At last the hour came which had been fixed for the departure. It was about ten o'clock; the night was dark and very cold. The royal exiles slowly came downstairs accompanied by the household, and walked across the gardens, already white with snow, to their carriage. They found waiting there an escort of thirty Piedmontese soldiers and thirty French dragoons, under the command of a French Commissioner who was to accompany them to the frontier.

In the streets, large crowds of people, many carrying torches, were waiting to get a last glimpse of their unfortunate Sovereign. The conduct of the French had caused a strong reaction in the feelings of the population, and the Piedmontese felt that with their King their own national independence was departing. They surrounded his carriage and forced it to stop. Charles-Emmanuel, surprised by this incident, looked out of the window, and at the sight of his pale, haggard face, a loud cry followed by a prolonged acclamation greeted him. It was the last farewell of his people. With deep emotion he bowed his head and wept. "Madam," he said to Marie-Clotilde, "the remembrance of this hour will soften the bitterness of my exile."

The journey was resumed. It was exceedingly trying. The roads were in a very bad state; heavy snow was falling, and the darkness was such that several times the escort lost the way. The cold was intense, and the Queen, already exhausted by the hurried preparations for their departure, felt that her strength was failing, in spite of her courageous efforts to appear calm and well, for the sake of the King.

On the following morning they arrived at Crescentino. The Comte de Gregori gave them the hospitality of his house, but it was hardly large enough for so many people. The Queen arranged to give a bed in her own room to Mademoiselle Stuper, the young deaf girl who accompanied her; but no bedstead could be found, and in the end she took a mattress out of her own bed for the girl to sleep upon.

The next stage was Casale. But before reaching that place they had to cross the River Pô. It then turned out that the permission for them to cross the river had not been received from Turin. They had to remain shivering on the bank for more than an hour, while the difficulty was being dealt with by the French Commissioner and a boat was procured.

During this portion of the journey the Royal

Family was entirely at the mercy of that official. He determined the itinerary, the hours of departure, the order of the march, without any regard for their wishes or their convenience. He frequently changed his mind, saying that he had received new instructions or was obliged to wait for them. It may be that it was so. But, anyhow, the constant uncertainty in which the royal exiles were kept must have been very trying for them. It irritated the King and aggravated his nervous condition; yet no good could have come from an open conflict with the French Commissioner, and therefore Marie-Clotilde had to soothe the poor King's temper, and to communicate to him some of her own ineffable patience and resignation. It was no easy task.

At Casale, they arrived just at the time when a tree of liberty was being planted on one of the squares of the town. An immense crowd watched this characteristic Republican ceremony. Intense excitement was caused by the sight of the royal carriages at such a moment, and they were greeted with loud insults, many of the people manifesting their enthusiasm for the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity, by spitting at the carriages as they passed. At last they reached a house in safety, but it was thought better to proceed without much

delay, although snow was falling very heavily, rendering the roads almost impassable.

In the evening they arrived at Alessandria. There the presence of a body of French troops, and the consequent excitement of the population, made matters even worse than at Casale. They found lodgings in a house whose owners were well disposed towards the Royal Family, but nothing was ready for their reception The rooms were so cold that water froze in them; there were no beds, and in the street crowds were passing and repassing, uttering threatening cries or singing revolutionary songs.

Suddenly the report of a gun was heard in one of the rooms, causing great fright among the ladies, who, not unreasonably, thought that they were being attacked by the populace. The occurrence, however, was purely accidental.

The French Commissioner soon ordered the journey to be resumed, and on the 13th of December they reached Voghera, after a most fatiguing drive on roads made every day more difficult by the increasing snowfall. There the curiosity of the inhabitants proved almost as troublesome as the political enthusiasm of the people of Alessandria. The house in which the King and Queen were to

lodge became so filled with men and women that it was a long time before they were able to enter their rooms and take some rest. Marie-Clotilde threw herself on her bed exhausted and shivering with cold. But it was soon discovered that the shivering was due to an intense fever, accompanied by an eruption on the skin, the nature of which was not understood. She also had a violent cough. Yet all the time crowds rushed into the room in order to get a sight of her, so that she was unable to obtain even a moment of rest. In spite of her dangerous condition, the order came to start again. She tried to obey, but her strength was exhausted, and she fell fainting on the bed. Two days passed, days of agony in a miserable room chilled by icy draughts. The curtains of the bed were so torn that it was useless to try and draw them.

At last, on the 16th, in the morning, feeling a little better, the courageous woman declared herself ready to start again, and went to a chapel near by to make her devotions. The chapel was intensely cold; her cutaneous eruption was thereby driven inwards, and from that day the cough never completely left her. The hardships of the journey which followed finally broke up her constitution, and she

then contracted the illness which was to end her life in less than four years.

When they arrived at Stradella, they were given a room opening upon the staircase, and whose windows were, most of them, without a pane of glass. The poor Queen could not stand, and was in a fainting condition, her teeth chattering violently. The King looked everywhere for a cup of hot coffee to try and comfort her a little, but even that could not be found. At last, an unknown person who had heard that the Queen, the sister of Louis XVI., was in need of a warm drink, brought her a cup of chocolate, respectfully begging her to accept it. She took the cup, lifting her head and thanking the unknown benefactor with a grateful smile. The King took this Good Samaritan's hand and shook it warmly; the man knelt down, then rose and disappeared. Nobody was able to find out who he was.

Again, on the following day, this veritable Way of the Cross had to be resumed. Still the snow continued to fall, driven by a bitter wind, which obliged the Queen to wrap part of her garments around her head, so strong and cold was the draught inside the carriage.

Near Piacenza the august travellers stopped at

the Monastery of St. Lazarus, where they were received with great kindness, and given comforts which they had not met with since the day of their departure from Turin. Marie-Clotilde had to remain in bed until the evening, when she rose for a short time to attend a service in the monastery chapel.

At last, on the 19th of December, the Royal Family arrived at Parma, and took up their quarters in the Benedictine Monastery of St. John. They remained there three weeks, wishing to celebrate in that religious retreat the festival of Christmas; besides, the condition of Marie-Clotilde was such that the physicians insisted on the absolute necessity of complete rest. But, with a man like the King, always suffering more or less from one of those obscure states which we call "nervous," since our ignorance must always have at least the satisfaction of a name, the Queen's rest was seldom more than relative rest. She would not leave the King alone, and there were so few people who could take her place near him.

Fortunately for her, about a week after their arrival at Parma, the King's Grand Equerry, Raymond de St.-Martin d'Aglié, generally called the Bailli of St. Germain, accompanied by Chevalier

de la Marmora, rejoined the royal party. The Bailli, a man of the highest character, in whose family existed a traditional devotion to the House of Savoy, had been attached to the person of the King when he was only seven years old. The sight of his old intimate friend was a great joy and consolation for Charles-Emmanuel, and Marie-Clotilde could safely leave him with the Bailli. She had thus a little time to herself, which she employed, as far as her health would permit, in visiting churches —and particularly religious houses—in order to have interviews with some of the nuns who had a deserved reputation for eminent sanctity.

This was one of her peculiarities. Devout Catholics are recommended to read the lives of the Saints. This, of course, she always did, but she much preferred to have spiritual conversations with living saints. She wanted to get at the secret of their sanctity, to see it freed from those artificial embellishments or unreliable traditions too often found even in the most honestly written lives of saints. Diogenes went about with his lantern seeking men;* Marie-Clotilde went about with her tender faithful, devoted heart, seeking saints, seeking com-

* Λύχνον μεθ' ἡμέραν ἅψας περιήει λέγων "ἄνθρωπον ζητῶ."—DIOG. LAERT., vi. 2.

munion with souls like her own. It was her great joy and comfort, and whether at Parma, at Florence, at Rome, or Naples, we shall always find her similarly occupied.

But she was not long permitted to indulge in this innocent satisfaction at Parma. On the evening before Christmas the French Commissioner mentioned to the Duchesse d'Aosta (who, with her husband, had rejoined the King and Queen at Parma) that judgment was going to be pronounced against Charles-Emmanuel in Paris. This caused great emotion and fear in the family. Was the King going to be called before the same judges who had condemned Louis XVI.? Had the Commissioner merely invented this story, or had he really received some information from France? It seems probable that the matter was not without some foundation, for the French Government was then considering what should be ultimately done with the King. But to make such an announcement on the very eve of Christmas and in such terms was truly cruel on the part of the Commissioner.

A few days later another order came from him. The presence of the Bailli of St. Germain was disagreeable to the representative of the French

Republic; he did not wish to have his actions watched by that able and faithful servant of the King. He therefore intimated to him that he was a prisoner of war, liable to deportation, and he assigned to him a place of residence, with the order to repair to that place forthwith. The same order was given at the same time to several other members of the little Court, including Count Polonghera.

This blow affected the King's health very seriously, and for several days Marie-Clotilde had a most anxious time in nursing the royal patient in a violent attack of his usual convulsions. The following quotation from Charles-Emmanuel's own narrative will give some idea of the state into which he fell when those convulsive fits came upon him. He says: "Only a few months before the Queen's death I learnt this circumstance, to my great confusion. Having noticed one day that she had not the proper use of one of her fingers, I asked her what had happened to her. She then confessed quite simply that on one occasion, five or six years before, when I was seized with violent convulsions, I had got hold of her finger, and, without realizing what I was doing, I had dislocated it."

Six months later, when the French lost temporarily

possession of the North of Italy, the Bailli of St. Germain was able to return to the King, but at the time it looked as if their separation was to be a permanent one. Marie-Clotilde, in spite of what she felt and suffered, was invariably polite, and even obliging, to the French official. She seems to have believed that his severities were really caused by orders from his Government; in a few cases she obtained from him a certain mitigation of the harsh orders he had given. Her tact and gentleness and patience, her perfect manners, full of dignity without the least pride, made an impression upon him, for he was once heard to say, as he left the Queen after an interview: "It is clear that those people are truly Christian philosophers!" Marie-Clotilde was not a philosopher, but she certainly was a Christian in the best sense, for to her ardent faith, to her unwavering hope, was ever added the charity which is "the greatest of these."

CHAPTER IX

THE JOURNEY OF THE KING AND QUEEN FROM PARMA TO FLORENCE—THEY EMBARK FOR SARDINIA—THEIR ARRIVAL AT CAGLIARI.

On the 11th of January, 1799, the royal exiles left Parma on their way to Florence. They reached Modena in the evening, and alighted on the market-place. After some time they were informed that there were no available lodgings in the town. They could do nothing for themselves, and remained there standing in the cold evening air, surrounded by people whom curiosity had attracted to the spot, until at last they were taken to an inn; then they were led to the Bishop's residence. He was most kind and polite, but he had no room for them in the episcopal palace, already filled with people (probably officers billeted on him) whom he could not turn out. It was getting very late when the Marquis Camposi finally offered his own house. The accommodation was insufficient; the temperature in the rooms was several degrees below freezing-point; the whole

house was full of smoke, probably due to an unsuccessful attempt to heat the place a little. They could get no sleep. It was almost a comfort to start again in the morning for Bologna, where they remained two days under somewhat better conditions.

Leaving Bologna on the 15th, they met with terrible snowstorms and very bad roads, on which progress was so slow that they only reached Lojano at an advanced hour of the night. They sought refuge in a Franciscan monastery. The monks did all they could for them, but the only rooms they could offer had been occupied until the morning of that day by soldiers, who had left them in a state which we must not attempt to describe.

Before daylight our travellers were already on the road again, but they had not gone many miles, when their adventures took a more serious turn. First, their carriage upset in the snow, and they succeeded, with no small difficulty, in getting out of it. Rather than wait until the carriage was raised again, they elected to walk. After some time they came to a small cottage by the way, and asked the peasant who lived there for permission to rest a little. He assented, and gave them some water to drink. The conveyance meanwhile arrived, and they got into it; but the road was now much worse, and as they

drove along a high and precipitous bank, one of the wheels just went over the edge, and the carriage remained, as it were, hanging over the precipice, held on to the road, apparently, by the snow in which the other wheels were imbedded. It took some time before they were rescued from their perilous position.

Recalling this incident, Charles-Emmanuel has said: "At the sight of the precipice my wife did not show the slightest emotion or fear, and it was only when the danger was over that she admitted she had been aware of it."

At last, on the 17th of January, they arrived at Florence, where the Grand-Duke Ferdinand III., deeply touched by their misfortunes, received them with much kindness. He placed at their disposal Poggio Imperiale, the beautiful country-house of the Medicis, and for the first time since they left Turin they were able to rest in comfort and with a certain sense of freedom and security. Marie-Clotilde's health much improved in a short time under these better conditions, and she at once desired to see all the places and things of religious interest in Florence.

Not far from Poggio Imperiale, in the Carthusian monastery of Val d' Ema, Pope Pius VI., another exile, was then residing, sent adrift by the storm

of Revolution. He was eighty-two years old and very feeble, but he heard with pleasure that the King and Queen of Sardinia had come to visit him. Leaning upon two prelates of his household, he rose to meet them at the door of his room.

"Holy Father," said Marie-Clotilde, "I find in your presence a consolation for all my misfortunes."

"We are beginning somewhat to resemble our Divine Model," answered the aged Pontiff, with a smile; and he added, after a remark made by Charles-Emmanuel about their present position: "Let us raise our eyes towards heaven. There we may look for crowns which men will not be able to take from us." Then, inviting them both to sit down, he conversed with them for about a quarter of an hour. Marie-Clotilde often spoke of this interview, which meant so much to her, with such feeling that people, we are told, were affected to tears while listening to her.

On the following day the King and Queen visited the church where the body of St. Mary-Magdalen of Pazzi is preserved.* Marie-Clotilde was not

* St. Mary-Magdalen of Pazzi belonged to one of the most illustrious families of Florence, allied to the Medicis. Her mother was a Blondelmonti. She was born in 1566, and died on the 25th of May, 1607. She was canonized in 1669.

likely to omit this pious pilgrimage to the shrine of the holy Carmelite nun who, on account of her mystical experiences, is considered second only to her spiritual mother, St. Teresa. Ever since the time, before her marriage, when she went to St. Denis to see Madame Louise, Marie-Clotilde had conceived a special affection for the Carmelite Order. She showed it by the solicitude and zeal with which she received in Turin some of the Carmelite Sisters of St. Denis, and helped them to find a temporary home when they arrived from France, in spite of the political situation which made the reception of French *émigrés* in Piedmont so difficult.

Before leaving the church, Marie-Clotilde desired, as a great favour, to be allowed to place a precious jewel on the body of St. Mary-Magdalen. This jewel was one of those which for some years she had ceased to wear, when she assumed her austere woollen dress.

But while the good Queen was thus finding some rest and consolation, new anxieties were about to assail her. It was becoming evident that Charles-Emmanuel was not really safe in Florence; political events showed that at any moment his enemies might easily seize him, and the only prudent course

appeared, to all about the King, to lie in seeking a prompt refuge in Sardinia. But poor Charles-Emmanuel felt so ill, and so dreaded another long journey, especially by sea, that it was found very difficult to persuade him to move away from Florence. Marie-Clotilde tried to make him see the situation as it was, but all in vain; she, who never contradicted him, had at last to speak firmly, and to insist upon his ordering the departure without delay. The King, surprised by her attitude and awed by her energy, at last gave way, and the departure from Florence was fixed for the 11th of February, 1799.

At Leghorn, inevitable difficulties kept them on shore until the 24th of February, when another sorrow came to sadden the heart of the Queen. Her confessor, the Abbé Tempia, the Countess of Carrù, one of her ladies to whom she was most attached, and several other members of their suite, found it impossible to accompany the Sovereigns to Sardinia. It seems that the French Government had decreed some severe laws against any Piedmontese attempting to enter the island of Sardinia. They were to be considered as *émigrés*. That, at any rate, may have been one of the reasons which led those persons to remain behind. With her

usual resignation, Marie-Clotilde said nothing, but when the King arrived on the seashore, and was about to embark, he, too, refused to go farther, and it took the Queen a long time to persuade him to go on board. At last she got him there with the few people who remained with them; then, turning towards Mademoiselle Stuper, her deaf maid, she kissed her tenderly, and said: "My dear Clara, you see how things go in this world; of all the people we had with us, only we two remain! but, at any rate, only death shall part us." And she added the words which she often repeated in difficulties: "Where God is, all is; all is wanting where He is not."

The vessel which was to take the royal exiles to Cagliari started in spite of a high wind and a heavy swell, which soon made all the passengers miserably sea-sick. During the eight days of the voyage the weather never improved, and there was not anyone who was well enough to render the Queen the least service. Strangely enough, considering her state of health, she alone of all the party was free from sea-sickness; she it was who helped the rest; she would insist upon holding the basin for poor Clara Stuper, who was dreadfully ill; she prayed and read and went on with her needlework just as usual,

without ever wasting a moment. In the evening she would lead the public prayers, and made the sailors join in the responses. The first evening, however, they were interrupted by an alarming incident. A pirate ship bore upon them and suddenly opened fire, sending two shells, which fortunately fell short of the mark. Marie-Clotilde, with the singular energy which seemed always to come to her in emergencies, encouraged the men, consoled the women, assured them that all would be well, and succeeded in preventing a panic. For some unknown reason, the pirate ship did not pursue the attack, but disappeared in the darkness.

On the sixth day of the voyage, Marie-Clotilde felt herself seized with a high fever, but she had the strength of mind to say nothing, lest the King's condition should be made still worse by anxiety on her account; moreover, they were approaching the island, and in a few more hours they hoped to enter the port of Cagliari. This they did on Sunday, the 3rd of March, to the great joy of the inhabitants of the whole island, who had never yet seen their Sovereigns. A solemn *Te Deum* was sung in the cathedral to celebrate their arrival, after which the King and Queen held a reception at the palace, and met there the Sardinian nobility. The enthusiasm

of the people was most touching, and made Charles-Emmanuel and Marie-Clotilde forget for a moment their recent sufferings and the anxieties of their situation.

But when all was over, and they were left alone, they noticed the sad aspect of their residence. It was a sort of fortress, surrounded by gloomy towers, a prison rather than a palace; the vast rooms for the most part were without any furniture, and on the walls hung old ragged tapestries. This was all that remained to the Head of the House of Savoy, one of the noblest and oldest dynasties of Europe!

The contrast between so much past greatness and so much present misfortune affected Marie-Clotilde more painfully than any of the discomforts they had had to endure since their departure from Turin. She could not hide from Charles-Emmanuel the sadness which possessed her, and for a brief moment altered the usual serenity of her countenance. Then, suddenly gathering up her courage, she exclaimed: "O God, I seem to be dissatisfied with what Thou givest me, as if all that I have was not from Thee. Oh, yes, yes, I am happy—I am happy." In an instant her face shone with a strange unearthly brightness, and she said to the King: "See what

a vile creature I am; God wills this, and yet my will rebels against it." From that hour she never at any time showed the least sense of regret or annoyance during the whole time of their stay at Cagliari.

It is almost a comfort, an encouragement, to see so pure and mortified a soul surprised, just for one instant, by a human sense of sadness under such circumstances. We are assured by this that her piety was no mere habit, and her usual resignation and patience no mere insensibility. She was what she was by the strength of a disciplined will, by the generous surrender of herself to the highest ideal she could conceive; and this very moment of weakness, so promptly turned into an act of thanksgiving, must have been precious in the sight of Him who "knoweth our frame" and reads the hearts of His children. "His true servant," says St. Bernard, in one of his sermons, "bears his cross patiently, carries it willingly, embraces it ardently."* We can see more clearly by this incident, on her arrival at Cagliari, how Marie-Clotilde had learned the difficult lesson enshrined in those few words.

But on the very first night which the Royal Family spent in the palace, Marie-Clotilde was called upon to show not only resignation but also fortitude; for,

* "Sustinet patienter; portat libenter; amplectitur ardenter."

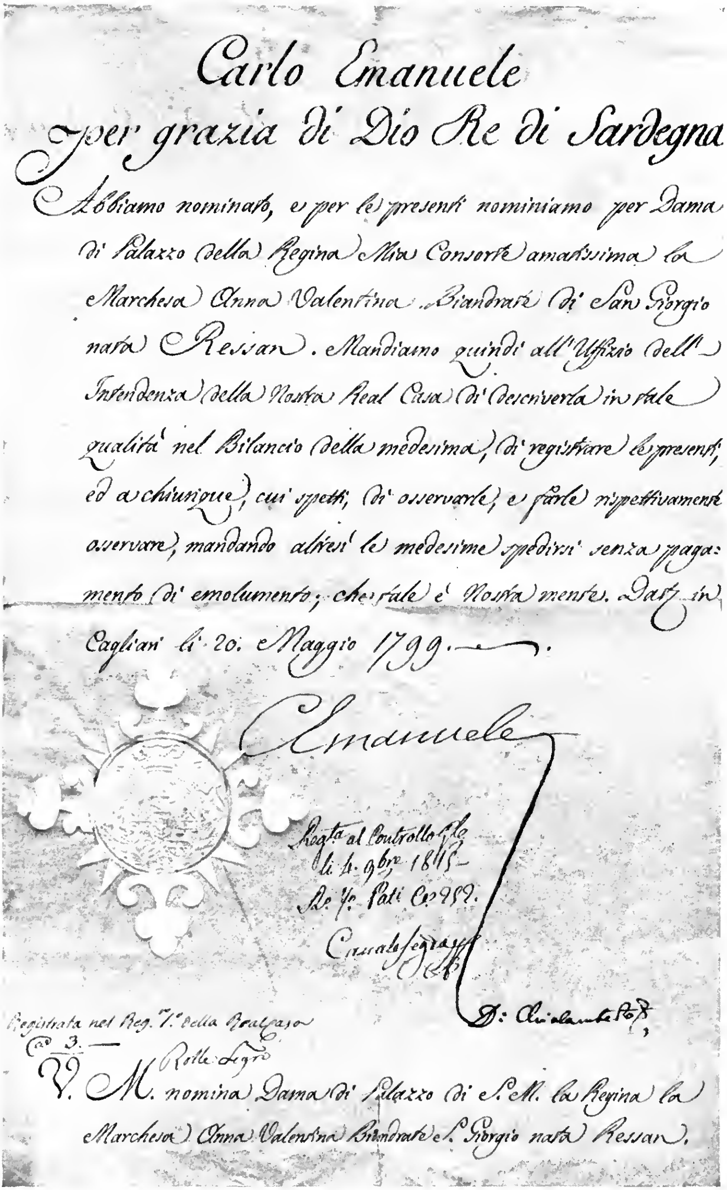
as they were preparing to retire to rest after all the fatigues and emotions of the day, they were disturbed by cries of "Fire! fire!" uttered by servants running hurriedly to and fro. The old palace was indeed on fire, and the King, anxious for the safety of his wife, wished her to get out of the building and take refuge in the gardens. But Marie-Clotilde bravely remained with the Royal Family, and, making her way through unfamiliar corridors, at once saw what ought to be done, and gave orders which, after some time, resulted in the fire being extinguished. Then exhausted by this effort, and by the fever which was still upon her, she went to bed and fell into a deep sleep.

CHAPTER X

SARDINIA AT THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—CHARLES-EMMANUEL AND MARIE-CLOTILDE AFTER A STAY OF SIX MONTHS IN THE ISLAND RETURN TO ITALY—THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN PIEDMONT.

THE Princes of the House of Savoy only came into possession of the island of Sardinia in 1720, when King Victor-Amadeus II. received it in exchange for Sicily, which he was unable to retain. This King had never set foot on Sardinian soil, and Charles-Emmanuel was the first of his successors to become personally acquainted with the island from which he derived his title of King. The Sardinians received him, as we have seen, with much enthusiasm, for their island, in becoming united to the possessions of the House of Savoy, had gained much thereby.

In former times, under the Genoese, under the Pisans, the natives had suffered from internal troubles and constant wars; for one moment, under Eleonora of Arborea, acting as Regent on behalf of


Carlo Emanuele
per grazia di Dio Re di Sardegna

Abbiamo nominato, e per le presenti nominiamo per Dama di Palazzo della Regina Mia Consorte amatissima la Marchesa Anna Valentina Biandrate di San Giorgio nata Ressan. Mandiamo quindi all'Uffizio dell'Intendenza della Nostra Real Casa di descriverla in tale qualità nel Bilancio della medesima, di registrare le presenti, ed a chiunque, cui spetti, di osservarle, e farle rispettivamente osservare, mandando altresì le medesime spedirsi senza pagamento di emolumento, che tale è Nostra mente. Dat. in Cagliari li 20. Maggio 1799.

Emanuele

Reg.ta al Controllo G.le
li 4. 9bre 1815

Registrata nel Reg. 1.° della Real Casa
C.° 3. —

Rolle Segr.°

V. M. nomina Dama di Palazzo di S. M. la Regina la Marchesa Anna Valentina Biandrate S. Giorgio nata Ressan.

DOCUMENT SIGNED BY CHARLES-EMMANUEL IV.

(Reproduced from the original in the possession of the author.)

To face p. 131.

her son, Sardinia had shown what it might have been under better laws and better government; but the death of Eleonora from the plague in 1403 left the island at the mercy of the Spanish Kings, after the union of the crowns of Spain and Aragon. It remained Spanish till the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, when it was ceded to the House of Austria.

The Spanish rule did not improve the national character; agriculture in a country so fertile, once a granary of Rome, was neglected; the malaria consequently increased; poverty and the sense of injustice had their usual effects upon a people lively in their disposition, fond of music and poetry, remarkably hospitable and strong in their family attachments, but prompt to resent injuries and to take the law into their own hands. As in Corsica, the practice of vendetta, now, happily, becoming every day more rare, was terribly common a century and a half ago, and Spain had done little or nothing, either by religious or administrative means, to exercise a truly civilizing influence.

The Sovereigns of the House of Savoy had not done much yet, but, at any rate, some of the worst abuses of Spanish rule had ceased to exist, more encouragement had been given to agriculture and industry, and the weight of tyrannical oppression had

been lifted. The Sardinians had therefore every reason to hope that the actual presence of the King in their island would stimulate his solicitude and improve their prospects. A circumstance occurred on the arrival of the King which seemed in their eyes to be a Providential indication of the blessings his presence was going to bring. In that year the island had suffered, even more than usual, from a prolonged drought, which had parched up the ground and caused serious fears of a famine; but just as the King landed abundant rains fell, which brought back fertility and hope.

One of the first steps taken by Charles-Emmanuel was one which would probably have been dictated to him by his own feelings and by the sense of what was due to the outraged dignity of his House; but it may be doubted whether, left to himself, he would have ventured upon it. Count Chalembert, who had followed the Royal Family to Sardinia, had during their stay in Florence obtained the King's entire confidence, and had become his principal Minister. Acting in union with Chevalier Gaetano Balbo, brother of the Sardinian Minister in Paris, Count Chalembert advised Charles-Emmanuel to issue a formal protest against the renunciation of his rights extorted from him by force and violence.

To issue such a protest, given the régime which then directed the destinies of France, meant a declaration of war. But, strongly encouraged by his Minister, and no doubt supported in the step he was taking by Marie-Clotilde herself, he signed the document without hesitation. It ran thus :

" I strongly protest against the violence done to me in order to obtain my renunciation of my Continental States ; I affirm on my royal word that I have faithfully fulfilled my engagements towards the French Republic.

" I declare that any accusation of my having held secret relations with the enemies of France is false. Being the victim of an unforeseen aggression, I have only consented to the hard conditions imposed on me by force, in order to save my faithful subjects from graver calamities.

" I denounce to all the Courts of Europe the unjust conduct of the French Generals and agents, and I ask to be replaced upon the throne of my ancestors."

After the utterance of this protest all French residents had to leave Sardinia. Its ports were opened to English ships, and the assistance afforded by the fleets of England and Russia sufficiently protected the island from the enterprises of the French.

In the island itself there was indeed a party favourable to the principles of the Revolution, but the sight of foreign war-vessels helped to keep order.

The Duc d'Aosta was appointed Governor of Cagliari and Gallura; the Duc de Montferrat, Governor of Sassari and Logadoro; later on the Duc de Génevois succeeded the Duc d'Aosta, and the Comte de Maurienne replaced the Duc de Montferrat.

As we have seen, Count Chalembert was in the position of Prime Minister. The Sardinians, in their enthusiasm for the King and their sympathy with his misfortunes, generously relaxed the law which reserved exclusively to the inhabitants of the island the right to public offices, in order that the King might appoint some of the faithful men who had followed him in his exile.

On his part, Charles-Emmanuel published a general amnesty in favour of prisoners, within just limits; he reduced the excessive privileges of the nobility and the clergy, and made the Custom dues applicable to those classes as well as to the rest of the people. He reformed the laws of criminal procedure, whose slowness often defeated the ends of justice, and showed some firmness in dealing with the barbarous custom of vendetta. All those

reforms were good as far as they went, but they fell short of what the Sardinian people desired.

The King was in a difficult position. He would have required time to study the needs of his kingdom, and he was expected to do everything at once. Moreover, the representatives of the clergy and the nobility were constantly urging him to repress the Liberal tendencies at work among certain sections of the population, and his experience in Piedmont was only too likely to incline him to listen to their warnings. The little he did under those circumstances shows that on the whole he was not wrongly advised. His intentions were certainly good.

We have no means at this period to ascertain to what extent the counsels of Marie-Clotilde influenced his political actions. She probably had little to do with the measures to which we have alluded. Her chief care was to watch over the King's health, and to prevent the painful recurrence of the attacks to which he was always liable, under any kind of excitement. We see her wisely managing her household, and finding places for the devoted men and women who, at that time, rejoined the Royal Family at Cagliari, and came to form again something of a Court around the King and Queen. One of her consolations was the arrival of her dear

Madame Badia, whom she had been compelled to leave behind in Turin. She was also able to exchange the gloomy Castle of Cagliari for a beautiful residence placed at the disposal of the King by the Marquis de Villahermosa. This change was much needed, for Marie-Clotilde suffered greatly from the intense heat of the climate at that time of the year, especially with the heavy woollen dress which she insisted on wearing.

But the comparative peace of those days was soon disturbed by two painful losses within the Royal Family.

The Duc de Montferrat, the King's brother, died of a fever contracted during a journey on horseback, undertaken in order to meet his sister, the Duchesse de Chablais, who was going away to rejoin her husband in Italy. He had travelled all night, regardless of the peculiar risks of the Sardinian climate. The Comte de Maurienne succeeded him as Governor of Sassari. There is a letter of Marie-Clotilde addressed to him, in which she alludes in terms of deepest feeling to the death of the Duc de Montferrat.

The other sad event was the death of the little Prince Charles-Emmanuel, the son of the Duc and

Duchesse d'Aosta, on whom rested the hopes of the elder branch of the House of Savoy. He was a lovely boy, the idol of his mother, who, indeed, was passionately fond of all her children. From the first, in spite of the encouraging view taken by the physician, she had a presentiment of the danger. A mother's heart is not easily deceived. Within a few hours her presentiment had been realized, and the child lay dead in her arms. The King and Marie-Clotilde, summoned in great haste, arrived just as the Prince was expiring.

Meanwhile, grave political events were taking place in Italy. The situation there had greatly altered. Bonaparte was in Egypt. The Czar, Paul I., had made up his mind to crush the French Revolution, and he set to work to accomplish this object with more energy than had so far been displayed by any European Sovereign. His General, Souvarow, came, at the head of a large army, to assist Austria. The French General, Scherer, was defeated at Legnano, Rocco, and Verona; Moreau was beaten by Souvarow himself at Cassano; Joubert was killed at the Battle of Novi; and in a short time it seemed as if the French Republic was going to be driven altogether out of Italy.

Lombardy and Piedmont fell into the hands of

the Austro-Russian forces. Mondovi and Ceva were taken; the Pass of Tenda was closed to the retreating French army. Everywhere the Piedmontese acclaimed Charles-Emmanuel, rendered popular by his sufferings, his exile, and the disappointment caused by the harsh and unwise rule of the French Generals.

England and Russia, Souvarow particularly, were favourable to the return of the King of Sardinia, but the occupation of Turin by the allied forces revealed the differences which existed between the aims of the Russian Emperor and those of the Austrian Government. The latter, faithful to its system of domination in Italy, aimed at keeping its hold on Piedmont. For reasons of his own, the Czar would not tolerate such a policy. Acting on his instructions, Souvarow hastened therefore to advise the Comte de St. André to take possession of Turin in the name of the King of Sardinia, and sent his Aide-de-Camp to Cagliari to announce to King Charles-Emmanuel the triumph of his arms, and to invite him, in the name of the Czar, to return to his Continental States.

The reception of such news produced a magical transformation in the health and humour of Charles-Emmanuel. He already saw himself restored to the

throne of his fathers, and he, who six months before had shown so much repugnance to a sea-voyage, was now anxious to sail for Leghorn without the least delay. Having entrusted the government of Sardinia to the Duc de Génevois, with the title of Viceroy, Charles-Emmanuel, with the Queen, the Duc d'Aosta and his family, started for Leghorn, where they arrived on the 22nd of September, on the feast of St. Maurice, one of the patron saints of Savoy.

Although the passage was effected much more rapidly this time, the sea was rough enough, and the royal passengers suffered a great deal, Marie-Clotilde in particular, whose health had been seriously weakened by the climate of Sardinia.

They crossed in an English boat, and there was a number of English officers on board. One of them had with him a fine and valuable picture of the Blessed Virgin, which he had brought back from America. Seeing the interest which the Queen took in the picture, and the tender devotion she manifested in admiring it, that officer ventured to offer it to her, and Marie-Clotilde, touched by his kindness, accepted it. It was the first time that she had had an opportunity of meeting any English officers, and she was glad to be able to express her gratitude for the services rendered

to the King by the British navy in Sardinian waters.

At Leghorn Charles-Emmanuel and his wife heard disappointing news. The political situation was not as good as they had expected when they left Cagliari. They found that the French had re-entered the Valley of Aosta as far as Airasca; on the other hand, the Austrians had defeated them near Mondovi and compelled them to retire on Saluzzo. But the most serious news was the departure of General Souvarow from Italy, taking most of his troops with him to Switzerland.

They could not understand that. The fact was that Souvarow, to his great regret, had been ordered from St. Petersburg to go north to support the army of General Korsakoff, whom General Masséna was threatening. The dashing French hero fell upon Korsakoff at Zurich, and inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Russian arms. When Souvarow learnt this, there was nothing left for him to do but to make his retreat as well as he could under difficult circumstances. He conducted the retreat most brilliantly, and managed to bring his army safely out of danger.

But this situation seriously compromised the prospects of the King of Sardinia. All his hopes

had been centred on Russia, and now the departure of Souvarow left Piedmont in the hands of Austria, whose policy was, as we have seen, as selfish and as perfidious as ever.

We have a distinct allusion to this in a letter of Marie-Clotilde to the Duc de Génevois, written on the 3rd of November. She says, in reference to the success of the Austrian army: "Political affairs are still bad. The Austrian Generals in Piedmont will not recognize the authority of the King nor of his Ministers, particularly at this moment, for the reorganization of the army. They themselves desire it, but it will never be accomplished so long as soldiers are not assured that they will be serving their King. My dear husband is now sending a messenger to Vienna, for we are persuaded that the orders emanating from that Court are not what they appear to be. The surest thing about all this is that our return [to Piedmont] is not rendered more easy, and we both much regret having left Sardinia, and, above all, being thus separated from you, my dear brother."

In another letter, entrusted to the care of the eminent writer, Joseph de Maistre (who was going to Sardinia as Regent of the Royal Chancery), and written about the same time, she repeated

the same complaint: "The Austrians are successful against the French, but our own prospects of a prompt return to Piedmont are worse, nevertheless, instead of better." However, the selfish and dishonourable policy of Austria was soon to receive its condign punishment, as Joseph de Maistre had foreseen.

Bonaparte had suddenly returned from Egypt. The *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire had placed in his hands the destinies of France and of Europe, and he at once turned his eyes towards Italy, the theatre of his first military achievements. He conceived the bold plan which in an incredibly short time resulted in the famous day of Marengo, and on that day placed Italy at the mercy of France.

The Austrian Commander Melas retired hastily to Alessandria, and that very night signed the convention by which he undertook to evacuate Piedmont, Liguria, the duchy of Parma, and Milan, while the Treaty of Lunéville set the River Adige as the limit of Austrian influence in Italy.

These rapid events put an end to Charles-Emmanuel's hopes of a restoration. When the Czar Paul died—assassinated on the 13th of March, 1800—his successor, Alexander I., in treating with France, stipulated, indeed, that the interests of the

King of Sardinia should be amicably considered; but, in the negotiations which followed, it became evident that Bonaparte would not under any consideration give up Piedmont, while Charles-Emmanuel would accept no arrangement which was not to replace him upon the throne of his ancestors. At the time, his tenacity must have appeared to many inopportune and unwise, yet it was this fidelity to a principle which ultimately restored Piedmont to his family, and thus prepared the way for its larger destinies.

But we are anticipating the facts of history, and must again take up the thread of our narrative.

CHAPTER XI

THE KING AND QUEEN ONCE MORE AT FLORENCE—POLITICAL EVENTS COMPEL THEM TO LEAVE TUSCANY—STAY AT FOLIGNO —FIRST VISIT TO ROME.

THE King and Queen and their suite had landed at Leghorn on the 22nd of September. On the 30th they arrived at Florence, and again took up their residence at Poggio Imperiale. There the exiled Sovereigns followed day by day the progress of the political events to which we have alluded briefly in the preceding chapter. It was not always easy to understand the news they received, and to realize the significance of the reported movements of the French, Russian, and Austrian armies. Contradictory messages now raised, now depressed, the hopes of Charles-Emmanuel and his little Court, and we know how trying such a situation is even to the strong-minded; so we can imagine how it affected the poor, weak King's nerves, and consequently must have affected also his devoted wife.

After the success of the Russo-Austrian arms, a Council of Regency had been established in Piedmont to govern the country in the name of the King; it was also intended that the Council should regularly correspond with him, but this was not so easily done. The communications were slow, sometimes uncertain and irregular, and matters of great moment had to be dealt with without delay. It is difficult, therefore, to say how far the King and the Council of Regency were in accord, and shared an equal responsibility in all cases.

As might have been expected, the Council did not attempt to understand the new situation created by the stirring events of the last few years. Their only idea was to replace everything as it had been before the forced abdication of the King.

Restorations are usually conducted on these lines, because it is according to human nature that it should be so: it seems easier; it satisfies the views and feelings of those whose convictions and interests have been previously disturbed; it saves the very serious labour of elaborating new conceptions of government, and also, it must be recognized that it is often the only thing that can be done at the moment. Even when a man of real ability and clear insight, such as Louis XVIII., sees the

necessity of adapting his traditional views to new conditions, he is hampered, hindered, handicapped, by his followers, generally *plus royalistes que le roi;* and the history of the French Restoration, from 1814 to the death of Louis XVIII., is mainly an account of the more or less open conflict between him and those who had, as that witty monarch himself said, learnt nothing and forgotten nothing.

Of course, with a man like Charles-Emmanuel there was no such conflict, and we have no reason to suppose that the measures adopted by the Council of Regency had not his entire approval. Nothing was done to satisfy the aspirations of populations deeply affected by the principles of the French Revolution; laws which embodied the social inequalities of the past were simply re-enacted, and the popularity of Charles-Emmanuel, at first so great and so genuine, soon gave place to murmurs of disappointment. The people had desired his return; now they feared it, lest it should only strengthen the kind of government inaugurated under his name.

Meanwhile, Charles-Emmanuel, whose intentions were certainly excellent, and his love for his people most real and sincere, kept up communications with Turin as well as he could, and received with much

interest and uniform kindness any of his subjects who happened to pass through Florence.

Among them came the poet Vittorio Alfieri, who then resided in Florence, fixed in that city by his attachment to the Countess of Albany, the widow of the Young Pretender, Charles Edward.* The author of "La Tirannide," though an enemy of Kings, in his own impetuous, inconsistent way, was at the same time a thorough aristocrat in feeling, and a decided foe to the principles and to the leaders of the French Revolution. In fact, he had rejected with contempt the advances which, at one moment, had been made to him, in order to induce him to give his support to the revolutionary movement in Piedmont.

When he heard that the King of Sardinia had arrived in Florence, a victim of that Revolution which had made him an exile, and had robbed

* Louisa Maria Caroline, daughter of Prince Gustavus Adolphus of Stolberg-Gedern, married to Charles-Edward, grandson of James II. of England, in 1772. As is well known, the marriage was unhappy. After the death of her husband in 1788, she came to reside in Florence, where she continued to be known as Countess of Albany, and was a liberal patroness of art and literature. Alfieri died in her house in 1803; she had a monument erected to his memory by Canova, in the Church of Santa Croce, where she also is buried beside Alfieri.

his country of its independence in the sacred name of Liberty, the poet, forgetting his own poem on Tyranny, came to see Charles-Emmanuel. Offering him his hand, the King, with a benevolent smile, said to him, "You see the tyrant," and Alfieri, without speaking, bent low and kissed his Sovereign's hand. He had been, in theory at least, an adversary of the royal power; now he would be the courtier of the royal misfortune. He came often after that first interview, and his ardent, interesting, patriotic conversation was always a source of great pleasure to the King in his solitude. If Alfieri tried to convert him to new ideas, he probably failed. Charles-Emmanuel's views were certainly narrow in some respects, but he knew no mental vacillation where the rights of his House and the principles of his political creed were concerned.

Marie-Clotilde, as usual, spent her free time in visiting churches, in seeking occasions to satisfy her love of the poor and her desire to serve them, when she could, with her own hands. She was also engaged in her usual search after holy persons. One of her first visits was to the Carmelite convent of St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi. She spent whole days there, joining in the religious exercises of the community, sharing their humble fare in the refectory, but

always declining to have any special attention paid to her on account of her rank. Charles-Emmanuel stated after her death that he believed she would have desired to consecrate herself to God in that religious house, if she had been a widow, so highly did she esteem the spirit which reigned among those daughters of St. Teresa.

The other convents of Florence, however, were not neglected by her, but the winter in that year (1800) was extremely severe in Italy, and particularly in Florence. She suffered so much from the intense cold that the doctors had to insist upon her taking some care of herself, and forbade her attendance at long services in cold churches. This deprived her of some consolation, but it did not affect her spiritual life, which in no way depended upon external conditions.

Marie-Clotilde's habitual sense of the presence of God was such that she never required those material helps, however much her simple faith might make her delight in them where they could be had. She was in this truly like her ancestor, St. Louis, who, when he was told that a wonderful miracle was taking place in a church, and was urged to go and see it, refused to go, saying that he had no need of such a sight in order to believe in what God had

revealed to men in the Gospels. "Let those go, he said, who do not believe."* Marie-Clotilde had the same kind of faith. When we see her going to Arezzo, to Monte Varchi, to Perugia, to Assisi, to Montefalco, and other places of pilgrimage, we see her enjoying herself in her own pious way; but her personal religion did not consist in such things. She, who never spent a day without reading some portion of the golden book of Thomas à Kempis, was well aware that—

> "Some carry their devotion only in their books,
> Some in their pictures,
> Some in outward shapes and signs;
> Some have Me on the lip,
> But little in the heart.
> Others there are who, with enlightened understanding and affections purged,
> Pant ever for the Eternal,
> Listening unwillingly to earthly things,
> And with sorrow serving Nature's needs.
> These feel the meaning of the Spirit of Truth that speaks in them."†

Early in the month of June, Charles-Emmanuel and Marie-Clotilde thought of going to Pisa to take the waters there, when suddenly came the astonishing news of Bonaparte's passage of the Alps, and of

* Joinville's "History of St. Louis."

† "Imitation of Christ," iii. 4.

the expectation of a great battle at any moment. A general panic seized the Italian people, especially in Tuscany, and it was at once felt that the King of Sardinia's position at Florence might become very unsafe in the event of a serious defeat of the Austrians.

On the 10th of June the King and Queen left Florence, and, travelling all night, arrived at Arezzo on the following day. There they rested a little, awaiting news. It was not long in coming. The great battle, Marengo,* had been fought, and Bonaparte's victory was complete. All hope was now over. There could no longer be any question of returning to Florence. They must, on the contrary, travel South to avoid the danger of a sudden advance of the French.

In the state of panic which prevailed after Marengo, the mobility of the enemy, great as it was when Bonaparte was leading, was of course exaggerated. The exact positions of the French troops were not known, and instant flight was felt to be the only safe thing. Leaving Arezzo on June 21, Charles-Emmanuel and Marie-Clotilde arrived at Foligno two days later. They had at last reached a place where they could stop with

* June 12.

some security and rest from the fatigue of the journey, aggravated as it was by the anxieties and fears of the last twelve days.

Foligno was a place of interest to Marie-Clotilde, for at least as early as the year 1795, and probably before that date, she had been in correspondence with the Abbess of the Franciscan Monastery of S. Lucia at Foligno. We do not exactly know the reason or origin of these relations, but we may perhaps surmise that they were brought about by the fact that a nun with a reputation of exceptional sanctity resided in that monastery. She was a poor lay-sister called Sister Marie-Christine, humble by birth, more humble still in spirit. She was almost blind, and for years had not been able to leave her bed, so great and painful were her infirmities.

This was one of those holy souls whom Marie-Clotilde was ever trying to discover. She, no doubt, had heard of the saintly invalid, and she had at once tried to gain information about her, and to learn something of the ways along which she was being led by the Spirit of God. Anyhow, Marie-Clotilde knew of the Monastery of S. Lucia, and was in correspondence with its Abbess, Sister Maria-Luisa Cantagalli. When Marie-Clotilde saw that their flight would bring them to Foligno, she at once despatched

two persons of her suite to announce her coming to the Abbess, and to request her to find for the King, herself and their attendants some suitable lodgings in the town.

The good Abbess hastened to make inquiries, and after some delay she succeeded in finding what was required in the Palazzo Vitelleschi, situated in the Via San Domenico.

The lady of the house, Marchesa Palmira Giberti, wife of the Chevalier Trajan Vitelleschi, became a great friend of Marie-Clotilde during the ten days which the Queen spent under her roof, and later on she visited her in Rome and at Frascati. After the Queen's death, the Marchesa was called as a witness by the ecclesiastical authorities, when Marie-Clotilde's beatification was being considered, and she spoke most highly of her supereminent virtue, and of the detachment from all earthly honours and interests, which she invariably manifested, except where the welfare of the King's subjects was concerned.

Marie-Clotilde's first visit, on her arrival at Foligno, was, naturally, to the Monastery of S. Lucia. She spent over three hours there, making the acquaintance of all the members of the com munity, and having a long spiritual conversation with the invalid lay-Sister, Maria-Christina Belci

In the afternoon she called again, bringing the King with her. We are told* that from that time the community of S. Lucia began to have regular daily prayers for the Sovereigns of the House of Savoy, and that, in spite of the political changes which have since taken place in Italy, those prayers have always been continued without interruption. Such an attitude on the part of the good Sisters is certainly in accordance with the spirit of their great father, St. Francis of Assisi.

The King and Queen were most agreeably surprised to find at Foligno Cardinal Costa, the Archbishop of Turin. He had come to receive the new Pope, Pius VII., who was expected to arrive at Foligno from Ancona. The sight of one who recalled by his office the memory of his beloved Turin was to Charles-Emmanuel a great event and a great joy, soon followed by the bitter thought that he probably might not live to see Turin again. But Cardinal Costa spoke of the fidelity of the Piedmontese people to their Sovereign, of their silent anger against the invaders of their country, and of other political circumstances calculated to raise a feel-

* "Lettere di Ven. Maria-Clotilda alle monache Cappucine di S. Lucia de Foligno," published by Don M. F. Pulignani, Foligno, 1887.

ing of hope in the heart of the exiled King; above all, the Cardinal entertained him with a full account of the elevation of Pius VII. to the pontifical chair, and that was a subject of supreme interest for the King and for Marie-Clotilde. We must in a few words recall the facts of the new Pope's election at Venice before we describe his arrival at Foligno.

On the 29th of August, 1799, Pius VI. had died at Valence, in France. Although more than eighty-four years of age at the time of his death, it may well be believed, as many of his co-religionists believed and said, that he had succumbed, not so much to old age, as to the harsh treatment of the Republican Government.

Soon after the visit paid by Charles-Emmanuel and Marie-Clotilde to the aged Pontiff at Florence, mentioned in a previous chapter, it had been proposed that Pius VI. should join the King and Queen of Sardinia, and take up his residence in that island, and for a time the Directoire had appeared to favour such a solution of an embarrassing question. But suddenly the French Ambassador raised objections, on the plea that the Pope should not be permitted to reside in the dominions of the King of Sardinia. He must be allowed to live only where the Republic could have entire control of his actions.

Very soon afterwards, on the 1st of April, 1799, by order of the Directoire, Pius VI. was taken away to Valence, on French territory, and obliged to remain there. As we have said, death brought him deliverance a few months later.

In December, the Sacred College of Cardinals was able to meet in Venice, and on the 14th of March, 1800, Cardinal Chiaramonti was elected Pope, and assumed the name of Pius VII. After two months of delay, caused by the exigencies of Austrian politics, the new Pontiff was at last permitted to make his way to Rome, and arrived by sea at Pesaro, whence he travelled to Ancona and Foligno. He was there just in time to keep the feast of St. Peter on the 29th of June.

At the request of the Queen of Sardinia, Pius VII. gave the solemn pontifical blessing to the assembled crowds on the square in front of the cathedral. The ceremony lacked the pomp and circumstance which it presented at Rome when the Pope pronounced the Benediction "Urbi et orbi" from the balcony of St. Peter's. Yet it was essentially the same great act, and, after all the recent political vicissitudes, it was considered a cause for much satisfaction and thankfulness by the good Catholics of Foligno.

Pius VII. saw much of Charles-Emmanuel and Marie-Clotilde during his short stay at Foligno. He paid them an official visit at the Palazzo Vitelleschi, and the fact of this visit is recalled there by the following inscription :

EXEUNTIS . SÆCULI . P.C.N. XVIII .
IV . ANTE . KAL . QUINCT .
LÆTISSIMAM . DIEM .
QUA .
PIVS . VII . PONT . MAX .
CAROLUM . IV . SARD . ET . HIERO . REGEM .
CUM . MARIA-CLOTILDA . BORBON . CONJUGE .
ET . MARIA-FELICITATE . REGIA . AMITA .
. SALUTATURUS .
AVITAS . VITELLESCHIORUM . ÆDES
REGIIS . HOSPITIBUS . ILLUSTRATAS
. INGREDIENDO .
NOVO . ET . INCOMPARABILI . HONORE . AUXIT
TRAIANUS . MARCH . VITELLESCHIUS . EQ . HIEROSOL .
FILIORUM . NEPOTUMQUE . MEMORIÆ
MONUMENTO . COMMENDANDAM .
CURAVIT.

Another similar inscription, commemorating the visit of the King and Queen, and the residence of Pius VII. at Foligno, may also be seen at the episcopal palace.

Before we follow Marie-Clotilde on her way to Rome, we must say something of the letters addressed by her to the Abbess of the Monastery

of S. Lucia, which were published by Don Michel Pulignani in 1887. Of these letters,* twenty-three remain. Four of them passed into the hands of a Father Bonaventura, who published them at Palermo; several are in the possession of the Marchese Vitelleschi; the others are carefully preserved by the community of S. Lucia. These letters are all written in Italian. The style, although very clear and always intelligible, is obviously the style of one writing in a foreign language. Marie-Clotilde is not the only one who found it easier to speak Italian than to write it perfectly.

Two days after the departure of Pius VII., Charles-Emmanuel and Marie-Clotilde started for Rome, which they so much desired to see, and to which the Pontiff had invited them. The journey passed off without any incidents, except at Terni, where a quarrel arose between some of the members of their suite. The Queen, with her usual tact, re-established peace, and managed to keep her sensitive husband in ignorance of that unpleasant circumstance.

* These letters are quite distinct from those published by Comte de Reiset (Paris: Firmin Didot), which were discovered in the archives of the Court of Turin.

At last they reached Rome. They could now for a moment forget the past, and enjoy the great sights, the devotional opportunities, and the undefinable charm of the Eternal City. This visit was to be one of the few brief consolations in the life of Marie-Clotilde, since the day when she had left Versailles and France for ever.

CHAPTER XII

MARIE-CLOTILDE IN ROME—HER STAY AT FRASCATI—THE KING AND QUEEN SEEK REFUGE IN NAPLES.

A FIRST visit to Rome is always an event in one's life, even if one can only lay claim to a moderate degree of culture; to the ripe scholar, the real artist, or the learned antiquarian, it becomes a supreme event. Athens makes perhaps, in some respects, even a stronger appeal to the feelings of antiquarians, scholars, and artists. Rome has many noble ruins, but nothing like the Parthenon. Still, the resources for study are much greater in Rome. The accumulated artistic treasures in museums, churches, and palaces, are incomparably more numerous, and each period of history, at any rate as regards our Western world, is represented with almost unparalleled fulness, and in many cases in an unique manner.

To the student of Christian antiquities, Rome is, of course, an inexhaustible field for research; to those concerned, not merely with the study of

comparative religion, but with religion itself, Rome cannot fail to be profoundly interesting, whatever may be the point of view from which we approach the subject. There, if anywhere, "Il s'agit de tout comprendre non de tout admirer," although perhaps another philosophical axiom, "Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner," even more truly represents the conclusion of those who have laboured in that field in a higher spirit.

But Marie-Clotilde, on her first visit to Rome, did not enter its walls as a scholar, an antiquarian, an artist, or a student of comparative religion. She entered Rome with her warm heart full of holy enthusiasm, of spiritual exultation and unwavering faith. Religion free from all selfish aims, all unworthy greed, all political intrigues, was what she lived for, and she entered the Eternal City fully persuaded that it was the sacred home of what religion meant for her. During her stay in Rome, she visited most of the sights which were then usually shown to travellers, and we shall see from her letters that she took a real interest in what she saw; but "where our treasure is, there must our heart be also," and it is clear that her heart was in Christian and Catholic Rome more than in anything else.

Her first visit was to St. Peter's. It was just the day when the Church celebrates the octave of the Apostle's feast. She descended to the "grotte nuove," and made her devotions in the subterranean chapel of the Confessio, the shrine of SS. Peter and Paul; then she proceeded to visit the other basilicas, ending a long day with the ascent of the Scala Santa on her knees, according to pious custom. This seemed to tire her very much, for the King noticed that she was bathed in perspiration at the time.

On the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel (July 16) Charles-Emmanuel and Marie-Clotilde went to Frascati to enjoy a cooler and purer air, and to rest a little; for in Rome they could not resist the temptation of going about to see things, and, moreover, it was difficult to obtain real privacy where so many people wished to be presented, or to be received by them.

But their desire to miss none of the great Church festivals must have seriously interfered with their rest at Frascati. They were back in Rome early in August for a great feast at Santa Maria Maggiore. In spite of an attack of fever, Marie-Clotilde was again in Rome for the feast of the Assumption on the 15th of August, and on the

29th of August she was there again for the anniversary service in memory of Pius VI., returning to Frascati that same evening, for the King and Queen were to dine with Prince and Princess Colonna.

That Princess Colonna (*née* Princess Catherine of Savoy-Carignano) was the youngest sister of the unfortunate Princess de Lamballe, so cruelly done to death in Paris during the September massacres. She had married Prince Colonna, Constable of the Kingdom of Naples. They had placed the Palazzo Colonna at the disposal of Charles-Emmanuel and Marie-Clotilde during their stay in Rome, but the King and Queen made Frascati their principal residence. They enjoyed there a greater freedom, and on the whole their health was better there than in Rome, especially during the summer months.

Their suite grumbled somewhat. They found Frascati too damp, and complained of tertian fever; but the Queen told them that it was their own fault; they were not careful enough at sunset. She was more careful herself, but nevertheless she too caught the fever. She paid little attention to it, and went on with her occupations just as usual. By the end of September she must have been pretty well again, for she says in one of her letters to the Duc

d'Aosta: "We take advantage of the summer to enjoy long walks, like those which I used to take with your dear wife at Moncalieri. This remembrance makes me think our walks still more lovely, but to-day we shall probably do nothing; for we are having just now our second thunderstorm since this morning, and the hail has broken a few panes of glass in our windows."

In another letter, addressed to Comte de Maurienne (October 31), Marie-Clotilde gives a lively description of their life at Frascati. Among other things, she says: "Our walks are regular journeys. The other day we climbed about as high as the Chapel of the Magdalen at Moncalieri, in order to see the ruins of Tusculum and of the Villa of Cicero. One can still see a sort of gallery and several rooms. . . . The guide who was taking us round very gravely stated that in one of those rooms Cicero gave audiences; that he worked in another. As a matter of fact, there is not much left of those old places, but nevertheless we have enjoyed our expedition very much, either because of the glory of having seen the Villa of Cicero, or because our trip was enlivened by so much gaiety. . We walked, in three instalments, four hours and a quarter. The last hundred steps to reach the

grottoes were not without merit, for we had to climb like goats among the thorns. Hence I was very glad to have, besides the arm of the Marquis de Saint-Thomas, also the arm of Capra, the postilion, who fortunately was there when I found myself in a very serious difficulty. Madame de Ternengo (Lady-in-Waiting) managed all right by the help of Lupi's arm. As you may well imagine, my aunt (Princess Felicità) was not with us. I really thought that poor Sorjo would die of it, but he was more cheerful and active than all the rest. I was going to forget a remarkable incident: We came upon three brigands armed from head to foot, but when they saw our large party of fifteen persons they were terribly frightened. Du Noyer asked them if they were not vineyard watchers, and they felt so reassured by such a question that they saluted us in the most graceful manner without uttering a word."

There is a childlike simplicity, a capacity for innocent enjoyment, a freshness and gaiety, in those letters which we do not generally associate, it may be from prejudice, with stern asceticism and claustral habits.

Meanwhile political news pursued the poor exiles, and disturbed the peace of their retreat at Frascati.

On the 15th of October came the news that the French armies were rapidly moving towards Central Italy, and that they might almost at once enter the Pontifical States. The Pope began to fear for his own safety, and it was proposed that he should seek refuge in Sardinia.

This proposal did not altogether meet the views of Charles-Emmanuel. Should the Pope insist on going to Sardinia, he must, of course, go there himself in order to receive the Sovereign Pontiff. But the King had reason to believe that his island kingdom was by no means a safe place for him, under the circumstances created by the victories of Bonaparte; he had little confidence in the present dispositions of the population of Sardinia, and he apprehended at any moment a French invasion of the island. He was therefore disinclined to risk going there, and his idea was, to retire to Sicily. But to Sicily the Pope would not go. In fact, great efforts were made in some quarters to prevent Pius VII. from leaving Rome.

We can easily imagine the uncertainties, the panics, the plans altered from day to day, almost from hour to hour, the hopes and fears, the succession of news true and false, which embittered the life of our poor exiles at that time. On the 7th of

November, Marie-Clotilde wrote to the Comte de Maurienne: "We have not budged from this place [Rome] because the French have not yet crossed the frontier of Tuscany; otherwise we should have quickly departed." It is hardly possible to conceive a more painful and humiliating situation.

One difficulty, however, was soon removed from their path. The Pope would have no need to seek a refuge in Sardinia; Bonaparte, far from wishing to trouble him, was, on the contrary, preparing to initiate negotiations with him, with a view to arranging a Concordat between France and the Holy See. The King and Queen were therefore free to consider their own case exclusively; Sardinia was out of the question; Sicily was very far. They decided to go to Naples, which they reached on the 25th of November, 1800.

On the way, Marie-Clotilde suffered much from the severe weather, and contracted a fever which compelled her, on their arrival, to keep her bed for several days. The political news in Naples seemed better; it was reported that the French troops had been ordered to remain outside the Pontifical States. The King and Queen began to feel that they had run away from Rome with unnecessary haste. For some unknown reason (perhaps because

they had not renewed their offer to receive Pius VII. in Sardinia), they seem to have felt some scruples on the subject; at least, this can be inferred from a letter of Marie-Clotilde to a Franciscan Father, one of her spiritual directors, in which she mentions such a feeling, adding, however, that when they left Rome their motives for doing so were only too well justified. It may be that the King was afraid to have shown himself too apprehensive on the occasion.

From the Queen's letters to Princess Colonna, we see that she and the King thought already of returning to Rome for the Christmas festivities, but a circumstance made that impossible. The Duchesse d'Aosta, who was also at Naples, was expecting to be confined almost at once, and Marie-Clotilde was anxious to assist her, as she had always done in past years when they lived in Turin. The Queen had just received Holy Communion in the Church of S. Catarina a Chiaia, when a carriage came to fetch her, with an urgent message from the Duchesse. Leaving "God for God," according to her rule, she rushed to her sister-in-law's bedside, and never left her until all was safely over.

It was now too late to get to Rome for Christmas that year. She wrote to Princess Colonna: "We cannot think of returning to Rome now, and I trust

that our Lord will grant me some day that consolation . . . but, somehow, consolations are not meant for me." And in another letter to the same Princess: "Have pity, and do not speak to me of Rome, of the missions there—nay, do not speak of yourself; for all this causes me regrets that I cannot any more endure. I only think of Rome, of the churches in Rome, and of that charming and edifying home where dwells my dear 'Connétable.'" Later on she wrote that the most unpleasant weather in Rome would be more agreeable to her than the mild climate of Naples.

As regards Naples itself, she disliked the noise of its streets and the ways of its people. "I am pleased with the churches," she would say, "but I cannot hide my regrets at seeing them only frequented by the lower classes." Writing to the Duc de Génevois, she says again: "You are quite right, my dear brother, in believing that Naples is not to my taste. . . . The position is superb, I may say unique, with the most beautiful sky, a rich soil, and, at this time, a delicious climate . . . but when all this is said, there is nothing very beautiful in the town itself; it is all grey, like Cagliari, to which, I assure you, it bears a great resemblance."

This appreciation of Naples by Marie-Clotilde is interesting, because it is so naturally expressed, and we feel it corresponds exactly to her own instinctive view of things. It cannot be said that she was either blind or insensible to natural beauty, but the word "beauty" had come to mean for her something beyond

> . . . "the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky."

No doubt, like St. Francis of Assisi, she had a tender reverence for Nature, because of her religious conviction that all living things are creatures of God; but as a true mystic, as an unconscious Platonist, we might say, she discerned in her vision of Beauty, not so much the passing shows of the world of sense, as the eternal Idea in which the Beautiful is one with the Good and the True. And the idea was more to her than its expression in the things that are seen, because of a consciousness

> . . . "habitually infused
> Through every image and through every thought,
> And all affections by communion raised
> From earth to heaven, from human to divine." *

Something similar must be the experience of all who really "see into the life of things," and are not

* Wordsworth, "Prelude," xiv. 112.

satisfied with the mere enjoyment of what appears reflected on their surface. Beauty without Truth is no real Beauty; true Beauty divorced from Goodness is unthinkable. Hence beautiful Naples, with the worldly lives of her upper classes, and the ignorance and superstition of her people, ceased to appear beautiful to Marie-Clotilde, except in a superficial sense which her mind and heart were ever transcending.

Besides, when we are distracted by painful thoughts and continual anxieties, it is not easy for us to preserve an æsthetic mood, even in Naples. On the 10th of January the little daughter of the Duchesse d'Aosta died before she had even been named. "She has thought well, and with much reason, to go to Paradise," said Marie-Clotilde—a phrase which betrays at once the sadness of her daily life and the bent of her religious faith.

Writing about the same time to a venerable ecclesiastic who possessed her confidence,* she asks his prayers: "We want them very much indeed; for not only things are taking a turn for the worse, but they are getting more and more mixed up and confused, especially as regards our more personal and intimate interests. You know what I mean. That is the

* Father de Vineanello.

worst; for if it were only a question of suffering, I would willingly submit to that: but not to know what to do for the best! . . . to find oneself constantly opposed! . . . to see new obstacles arising when one had just discovered the way to act!"

And to the Duc de Génevois she says in the same strain: "Our affairs go from bad to worse, and become every day more embarrassing and thorny; and with all that, as usual, discord and differences of opinion and intention come to increase our general miseries."

Then Princess Felicità had a severe illness which threatened to put an end to the plans the King and Queen were making for a journey to Rome, and almost at the same time came the death of their old friend and adviser, the Bailli of St. Germain. His loss was a great blow, to the King especially, who for more than forty years had been accustomed to lean upon his devotion and experience, and who was, by character, so much in need of such support. That good and faithful servant died not so much from a definite illness as from old age. He had been attached to the person of Charles-Emmanuel when the Prince was only seven years old, and since then he had never left him, except during the short time between the departure of the

Royal Family from Turin and their arrival at Parma, where the Bailli, kept at first as a prisoner of war by the French, was soon liberated, and at once rejoined his King.

The good Bailli was not sincerely regretted by Charles-Emmanuel alone. He had won the deep affection and respect of Marie-Clotilde herself; and this means much for his character, for it is not uncommon, at Court or elsewhere, to find that men in similar positions either excite jealousy or give offence by their efforts to maintain their influence. But he seems to have always helped rather than hindered the cordial union which existed between the King and Queen, and Marie-Clotilde was too observant not to realize how healthy was the influence exercised by him over her husband. In one of her letters she calls the good man's death "an irreparable loss," and she adds: "The Lord wishes us to be deprived of every human consolation. His most holy will be done!"

She asked her confessor and others to pray for the late Bailli; she had many Masses said for the repose of his soul, and she seems to have been scarcely consoled by a revelation said to have been vouchsafed to a pious person, from which it appeared that the soul of the Bailli of St. Germain was in

Purgatory. "This ought to give me great joy," she writes to the Abbé Marconi; "but you see how imperfect is my spirit of resignation. I cannot find peace when I think of the dear man suffering in Purgatory." And she goes on begging further spiritual help for him. If the value of human prayers is measured by the simple faith and the loving earnestness with which they are offered, there is every reason to believe that the good Bailli was not long detained on his way to Paradise.

Marie-Clotilde's charity was soon to have its reward. Princess Felicità was now pronounced to be out of danger, and the King and Queen were therefore able to satisfy their longing to pay another visit to the Eternal City. On the 23rd of March they left Naples; the feast of the Annunciation was kept at Terracina; another devotional duty detained them for a short time at Velletri, and at last they found themselves in Rome again, in time for the religious ceremonies and services of Holy Week.

CHAPTER XIII

SECOND STAY IN ROME—DEATH OF PRINCESS FELICITÀ—MARIE-CLOTILDE AS A NURSE—THE KING AND QUEEN GO TO CASERTA.

THE King and Queen had accepted the hospitality offered to them by Princess Colonna. To live under her roof was a great joy for Marie-Clotilde, for she was deeply attached to the Princess, in whose house she found every means of satisfying her own pious aspirations. In the chapel of the Colonna Palace, spiritual exercises were being given during the Holy Week by Father Vincent Strambi, a Passionist, who afterwards became Bishop of Maurata.

The whole day at that time seems to have been spent by the King, the Queen, and the Princess, in attending services, listening to sermons, and visiting churches, and one wonders how so frail a constitution as that of Marie-Clotilde could stand such a strain and exhibit so much activity. On Holy

Thursday, for instance, we find her assisting at the morning offices at St. Peter's; after dinner at the Corsini Palace, she visits on foot the seven patriarchal churches; then she returns to the Vatican for another service; and in the evening she is in the Church of the Holy Apostles, listening to a sermon on the Passion. On Good Friday she attends the solemn office at St. Peter's; she follows the devotional exercises of the Three Hours at Sta Maria del Carmine, and is just in time to get to St. John Lateran to see an ordination service, to assist at the evening offices, and to witness the baptism of a Turk.

Of course she was very tired and feverish, but nevertheless she missed none of the great ceremonies on Easter Sunday, and her time was no less laboriously employed during the whole of Easter Week.

Whence came so much strength and energy in that weak frame? From the will, we must perhaps say; our psychological knowledge can hardly suggest any other answer; yet who can tell how much is meant by such an answer?

The same difficulty confronts us in the case of many well-known saints, who have shown such astonishing activity with a body weakened by prolonged ascetic practices and by chronic diseases. We think of St. Francis of Assisi, of St. Catharine

of Siena, of St. Teresa, of St. John of the Cross, and so many others who, although always in a most wretched state of health, were able to do so much in days when the ways of life were considerably harder than in our own. They seem to have been conscious that their strength was not their own, but was given to them in some mysterious way for a purpose, when it was needed. We can no more explain such phenomena than we can rationally account for the dæmon of Socrates. We can only see that Marie-Clotilde belonged to that class of chosen souls in whom a pure, spiritual, intense faith sustained by love can communicate to the whole physical frame, at least occasionally, a surprising power and vitality.

This is psychologically interesting and important, for that power, that strength, were not merely shown by Marie-Clotilde when she was attracted to ceremonies or services at which we might conceive her to have been supported by the natural taste she had for them. The same remarkable strength is exhibited by her, not for a few hours, but for days, and even nights, at the bedside of the sick and dying, under circumstances which we know, perhaps by personal experience, to be particularly trying and exhausting even for persons in fair health.

Thus, soon after Marie-Clotilde's arrival in Rome,

the King's aunt, Princess Felicità, rejoined them there, but her health, seriously shaken by her grave illness in Naples, soon gave way again, owing, perhaps, to the change of climate, and it became evident that her life this time was in danger. Marie-Clotilde at once constituted herself her nurse, scarcely ever leaving her bedside, although this was rendered particularly trying by the repugnant nature of the disease. Marie-Clotilde undertook the most painful and repulsive offices in connection with the nursing of the dying Princess, and during the thirty long hours of her last agony she never left her side.

The parish priest, summoned to attend the Princess, endeavoured to suggest to her pious thoughts, and recited the usual prayers; but Marie-Clotilde, watching by the bed, saw clearly that the patient had lost consciousness, and could not hear what the priest said. She did not, however, tell him so, but let him speak, as we are told, thinking to herself that, if the good man's words were useless for the Princess, she at least might profit by them. This detail deserves to be mentioned, as it is so characteristic of Marie-Clotilde.

This was hardly over, when Madame Badia, who had recently suffered from two paralytic strokes,

became very ill, and the King had to intervene to prevent Marie-Clotilde from passing the nights as well as the days with her. While she was nursing Madame Badia, an interesting and characteristic incident took place in the patient's bedroom. The surgeon in charge of the case having to change some bandages, looked round for assistance, and seeing by the bed a woman of modest appearance, he took her for one of the attendants, and asked her to help him. He demanded some pieces of linen, and ordered her to hold a candle; the woman meekly obeyed his directions without a word.

When all was done, she went out of the room, and the surgeon, following her, noticed with surprise the marks of respect which the servants at the door were showing towards his improvised assistant. "Who is she?" said the surgeon to Mademoiselle Stuper, who was in attendance on Marie-Clotilde. But Dr. Pentenè, who had heard the question, said to him: "It is the Queen." At these words, Marie-Clotilde, who had heard them, turned round and made a most gracious salutation to the surgeon, and again before entering her apartments she bowed to him, so as to make him realize that she was not offended by his mistake.

Next morning, when the surgeon came to visit his patient, the Queen was there, and he at once fell on his knees and begged her forgiveness for his mistake of the preceding day. But she would not suffer him to continue, and said to him: "You did quite rightly; always do likewise." Ever after, the surgeon (Enrico was his name) could not mention this story without emotion, and he would exclaim: "Imagine the sister of a King, the wife of a King, with such humility! Truly she is a saint." If he believed in the laws of heredity, he might have added, "and a daughter of St. Louis," and that might have been to him some explanation of the character he so much admired.

Without going so far back as St. Louis, we cannot fail to recognize a family trait in the kindness and generosity of Marie-Clotilde towards all those who were attached in any degree to her person. Her brother Louis XVI., in the Temple prison, only a few hours before his execution, was full of consideration and thought for his faithful *valet de chambre*. Among the most charming letters of her sister Madame Elizabeth are those addressed to some of the ladies in her service, and we know with what care she looked after the humblest people about her at Montreuil, her house near Versailles.

In the same way we see Marie-Clotilde always attentive, obliging, and considerate, towards all, whether Ladies-in-Waiting, Women of the Bed-chamber, coachmen, or girls employed in the kitchen. In a sense, it is true that such was very much the attitude of all good people before the French Revolution. There was a feeling of family life which extended to all the members of the household ; masters realized that good servants had a claim to something more than their wages, and servants felt themselves to be more than mere servants in the house of their lords. Hence a familiarity existed which did not exclude respect, in those days, between masters and servants.

All the memoirs of that epoch bear witness to that state of things, and those of us who are no longer young can perhaps remember the last signs of that spirit which still lingered in the homes of their childhood. To-day the clannish feeling of kinship has been replaced by definite claims of legal rights corresponding to certain duties. The master must abstain from a show of sympathy which might possibly be misunderstood, and the servant would repudiate any view of personal devotion which might be construed into servility. In countries like America, for instance, this tendency has ripened

into a system which is no doubt prophetic of the future in old Europe. Unfortunately, this is not the only change which time has brought about in the conception of the family.

The following letter of Marie-Clotilde to Madame Badia will show clearly how free she was from any preoccupation of rank or etiquette in dealing with people for whom she had real esteem. Madame Badia was only the wife of a Turin lawyer, but Marie-Clotilde knew the sincerity of her devotion to herself, and that was enough. She wrote thus from Caserta (May 26, 1801):

"My Dearest,

"I will not remain longer without paying you a visit—at least in writing, since I am deprived of the pleasure of seeing you. You may imagine what sorrow it was to me to leave Rome, all the more because I had not the courage to go to my dear 'Connétable' [Princess Colonna], whom I love and esteem so much, in order to bid her good-bye. I was so glad to hear, through the Marquise de Saint-Georges, that your health continues to improve. Nurse yourself as well as you can, and, above all, be very obedient to the orders of the good doctor Bonelli, whom I pray you to salute for me, as well

as the two Zandeler, the surgeon, and especially our good *curé*. Tell him that I was so sorry to have to go away without seeing him and thanking him for all the charity he has shown towards my aunt and towards ourselves. Commend me to his prayers. Our physician [Dr. Pentenè] salutes you. He does not write in the fear of tiring you too much with so many letters. The King sends you many messages, and I kiss you tenderly, assuring you of my very sincere affection," etc.

From this letter we gather that the King and Queen had left Rome. Their departure was sudden. On the 18th of May (1801), after dinner, a letter came from the Duc d'Aosta, together with very pressing advice from Naples, sent by a Russian General, recommending their immediate departure from Rome for Naples, in order to insure the safety of the King. What the danger was does not appear clearly, but the royal exiles must have thought that it was real, for Marie-Clotilde, in a letter to the Duc de Génevois, says: "It was indeed the providence of God which sent us warning through the Russian General, and which suggested to the King, not only to start at once, but to hide our departure from Rome under the pretext of an expedition to

Frascati, for otherwise we should have met with obstacles."

Anyhow, they had to go, and on the 19th of May, at nine o'clock in the morning, they started for Caserta, the King and Queen of Naples having placed their magnificent palace there at their disposal. Marie-Clotilde found herself at Caserta in the same apartments which, only two years before, had been occupied by her aunts Madame Adélaïde and Madame Victoire. Those two Princesses, like herself, had been driven from Rome in 1796 by the progress of the Revolution, and they had found a refuge in the Palace of Caserta until the beginning of the year 1799, when the kingdom of Naples began, in its turn, to feel the effect of revolutionary ideas. After many distressing adventures they reached Trieste, where Madame Victoire died on the 8th of June, 1799, and Madame Adélaïde on the 18th of February of the following year.

Thus painful associations came to increase Marie-Clotilde's regrets at having to leave Rome. King Charles-Emmanuel himself wished, if possible, to be in Naples, where news could be more promptly received. But there seems to have been considerable difficulty in finding a suitable house for them

in the town. At last one was found, and they were able to leave Caserta.

While in Naples, the news reached them of the conclusion of the Concordat between France and the Holy See. They could not have realized at the time the unexpected advantages which the Church was to reap from an act forced upon the Pontiff by the irresistible will of Bonaparte, but they realized only too well that the situation thus created meant their final exile from Turin. Nothing now remained to them beyond the sovereignty of Sardinia, and we have seen in preceding chapters how very unsatisfactory the situation was even there.

Still, in that year (1801) the King and Marie-Clotilde were cheered by the news that, while the wheat harvest threatened to be very bad in Italy, it promised to be unusually abundant in Sardinia. Marie-Clotilde wrote to the Duc de Génevois to inform him of the King's intentions in respect to the harvest. The needs of the island were to be, first of all, carefully provided for, and a reserve made for the following year. Then the Pope's request that a proportion of the harvest should be allotted for the needs of Rome was to be attended to. Finally, the similar request made by the King of Naples on behalf of his kingdom was to be

considered. Moreover, Charles-Emmanuel desired that a reserve of wheat should be sent to Malta, to be kept there for his own personal needs.

The Duc de Génevois, better informed of the situation on the spot, was made rather uneasy by so many demands, and his difficulties were soon increased by the discovery that the harvest was not by any means as abundant as public rumour had led them all to expect. It became evident that the promises made to Rome and Naples could hardly be kept. The Pope still pressed for some wheat, and the King and Queen wished to satisfy him, even if they could not also satisfy the King of Naples. But the Duc de Génevois must have defended very strongly the prior claims of Sardinia, for Marie-Clotilde wrote to him on the 12th of November: "We have been much afflicted by the bad news of the harvest, which had been announced as likely to prove so excellent. It is in view of that expectation that the King had made promises (to Rome and Naples), but it was far from his intention that those promises should be made to the prejudice of his subjects' food. . . . It is only when that is assured that he desires that you should favour, if possible, the claims of the Pope, and afterwards those of the Crown Prince of Naples."

Marie-Clotilde was naturally anxious to show some return to Pius VII. for his kindness to them in Rome, but she, like Charles-Emmanuel, was determined that nothing should be done which might prove detrimental to the people committed to their care.

CHAPTER XIV

MARIE-CLOTILDE AND POLITICS—DIFFICULTIES WITH THE VICEROY OF SARDINIA—HER OWN LIFE AT NAPLES.

MARIE-CLOTILDE was a saint, for she lived and acted fully and constantly according to the supreme religious ideal that was in her. We may discuss the validity of some aspects of that ideal, but we cannot doubt the sincerity of her faith and the power of that faith over her soul. The secret of her spiritual strength lay in the complete harmony between her view of a perfect life and the obedience of her will to that view, realized as the will of God.

There was no suspicion of conventionality about her religious convictions and attitude. Her life, indeed, has that something in it which has made the "Imitation" of Thomas à Kempis an acceptable book of devotional reading to men and women of the most opposite creeds; it recalls to our minds the striking prayer at the close of the "Phædrus" of Plato, in which Socrates is represented as saying:

"Give me beauty in the inward soul, and grant that what we have outwardly may be in concord with that which is within. May the outward and the inward man be at one!" In words of her own she had often prayed such a prayer, and she had been heard of Him who is that Beauty of the inward soul for which His saints hunger and thirst.

We said that there was no religious conventionality about her. This explains the ease with which she could pass from the deep peace of her hours of prayer to the many duties and interests of her daily life. Even politics, distasteful as they must have been to her, enter largely into her correspondence. One can see that she did not deal with such a subject merely because, as a loving wife, she had to help the King, who was so often unfit for work and unable to attend to any business. She follows the political events from day to day with evident interest; she is keen about news; she has her own view of things; she knows that to affect detachment in respect to matters so deeply related to the welfare of Church and State would not be what her ideal of perfection requires of her.

Thus, in her letters to the Duc de Génevois, in 1801, we find Marie-Clotilde much preoccupied by the political changes brought about in Italy by

the activity of Bonaparte. The French armies had occupied the duchy of Parma; Tuscany had been taken from its Grand-Duke, and Prince Louis de Bourbon had been installed in his place, with the title of King of Etruria. She refers to him in a letter dated the 3rd of August, 1801 :

"The King of Etruria, having cut a most humiliating figure in Paris, where he has not even been recognized as a King, has arrived in Turin in order to be there on the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille; but as at that moment the French soldiers were killing their own officers because they wanted their pay, the King of Etruria has had no more desire to see the feast, and he complains that the members of the Piedmontese nobility have not been to call upon him. On his arrival at Parma, he requested his father, at the suggestion of Bonaparte, to arrange some festivities in his honour. General Murat has asked that a deputation from Florence should come to meet its new Sovereign, and one of those selected for this duty is our own Chevalier Venturi. All Tuscany is in a state of consternation, and the Senate has declined to swear allegiance to the new King, saying that they cannot be made free of their oath to the Grand-Duke except by an order from himself.

"At this moment it is said that Bonaparte will give back Tuscany to the Grand-Duke, and I believe it; it would be in order to prevent the Emperor [of Austria] from allying himself to Russia. In that case, the King of Etruria would come to reign in Naples in virtue of a certain Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. If this comes to pass, we shall certainly not remain here."

Again, in October, she wrote: "You will have heard that the King and Queen of Etruria have arrived, and are now installed at Florence. They are so little masters of themselves that, when walking in the Boboli Gardens, they are always accompanied by two dragoons; the gardens are always closed to the public, and when they go to the Cassine, they have fifteen dragoons following them. The King wanted to forbid gambling, but the French General informed him that that was impossible; everything else is about the same. Otherwise the new Sovereigns behave very well; they show much affability, and great interest in religion. Still, it is better to be compelled by poverty to beg one's bread than to exercise a pretended sovereignty in such a condition of slavery."*

* Louis of Parma died in the following year, and his widow, Marie-Louise-Joséphine of Spain, after four years of nominal

Then Marie-Clotilde writes to the Duc de Génevois about matters which affected them still more closely. In March, 1801, the Czar, Paul I., had been assassinated. The event appeared most serious to Charles-Emmanuel, for the Czar had worked very earnestly for the King's restoration, and his death left the exiled Sovereign without his support in the negotiations for peace which were being initiated at that moment.

It is true that shortly before his death Paul I. had changed his attitude, and inclined to a policy of conciliation towards Bonaparte. But most probably Charles-Emmanuel and his Ministers were unaware of this, and still believed that Russia was their chief support. The following passage in a letter of Marie-Clotilde would seem to imply that conclusion: "There is no certain news, but there is plenty of news. The Marquis de Saint-Marsan (representative of the King of Sardinia in Paris) has gone to Frankfort from Paris, because Bonaparte absolutely required that he should treat alone and directly with him. Now, the King [Charles-Emmanuel] has instructed him to remain always under the wing of the Russian Minister, as

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regency for her son, shared the fate of the other Spanish Bourbons.

the Czar is good enough to watch over our affairs with a very constant interest. But Bonaparte, annoyed by the firmness of the King, and because he could not succeed in what he wanted, has so worked that Saint-Marsan has been obliged to leave Paris."

This free, pleasant, almost chatty correspondence of Marie-Clotilde with her brother-in-law, the Duc de Génevois, was not to continue without an unpleasant interruption, caused by a circumstance which gave her and the King great pain and anxiety. We have already noticed a certain amount of friction in connection with the wheat harvest in Sardinia in 1801. Such friction is inevitable when any constituted authority insists on entering into every detail of government in a distant country committed to the care of a Viceroy or Supreme Governor. In spite of the excellent and affectionate relations existing between the King and his brother, it was not likely that, given the slow and difficult means of communication between Italy and Sardinia, the King and those about him would be able always to form a correct judgment of all circumstances.

The Duc de Génevois, better situated and better informed, was bound to disagree from time to time

with the instructions he received from Charles-Emmanuel. A serious difference of opinion on various political questions, which arose between the Duc de Génevois and the Comte de Chalembert, who was understood to enjoy the confidence of the King, brought matters suddenly to a crisis. The Duc, it appears, actually tendered his resignation to the King, and declared his intention to give up the government of the island. From every point of view such a step would have been a calamity, both for the King, who had no one equally qualified to appoint to the post, and for Sardinia itself, where the Duc de Génevois was deservedly popular with all classes.

As usual, Marie-Clotilde had to come forward as a messenger of peace, to repair mistakes which she had been unable to prevent, or to guard, at any rate, against further misunderstandings.

"My dearest Brother," she wrote at once to the Duc de Génevois,—"I have received almost at the same time two of your dear letters, one dated the 26th of September, the other without date, but very probably written early in October. I cannot express to you, dear and very dear brother, how much they have filled me with sorrow, when I read the account

of all your troubles, and especially the fatal resolution which those troubles have led you to take—a resolution all the more painful for the King, since his chief desire has always been to please you. If some things have disagreeably affected you, this can only have been caused by a misunderstanding or some involuntary mistake. . . . You will see by the King's letter that he has given orders that everything is to go to you. . . . You see, my good brother, that I cannot possibly fulfil the mission which you wished to entrust to me; it is certain that it would give the King the greatest possible sorrow, and also it would cause absolute consternation in the kingdom [of Sardinia], where all are so deeply and so justly devoted to you. Moreover, dear brother, at this moment things are all in the air. For instance, the Congress of Amiens, according to all appearances, is going to settle our fate. Will it be good or bad? I know not; but it seems to me that such a determination [to give up the government of Sardinia], taken just before the Congress, might later on be regretted by yourself. Dear brother, forgive the frankness with which I speak to you; you know me enough to be assured that my sole aim and intention is your good and that of the King, and that in all

this I am only guided by my profound attachment to you."

The Duc de Génevois yielded to the tactful and affectionate representations of his sister-in-law, and consented to retain his post, as appears from the following passage in another letter of Marie-Clotilde's :

"We have been very long without any news of you, and this has afflicted us more than I can say, dear brother, for you cannot know how much attached to you we both are ; and, as regards myself particularly, I thank you with my whole heart for the pleasure you have given the King in yielding to his affectionate desire that you should continue in Sardinia, where your presence is so necessary to that poor dear kingdom."

While all these troubles and anxieties cast their shadows over the life of the good Queen during her stay at Naples, she still went on with her usual devotions and works of charity. Moreover, the sick members of her household whom she had left behind in Rome gradually rejoined her ; first came the Marquise de Saint-Georges, then Ignatius Lupi (her old servant), lastly Madame Badia. In this lady's own account of the Queen's solicitude towards

her, we read how everything had been done, regardless of cost, to render the journey from Rome to Naples easy and comfortable to her. At Naples she was allowed to go into the Queen's private oratory (a very great favour), and that even when the Queen herself was there at her own devotions, which was a still greater favour; for Marie-Clotilde, we know, did not pray to be seen of men, and greatly disliked any singularity, so that, to be truly free in prayer, she sought solitude. That she could only secure by rising in the night, when she knew everybody was asleep.

After a time, it appeared that Madame Badia s health was not really satisfactory; so the Queen arranged for her to go and try the baths at Ischia, and paid all expenses, which were somewhat considerable. The baths failed, and other expensive remedies had to be tried, with varying success. The true word about all this was uttered by a poor lay-Sister of the Minimes Convent at Rome, who had watched the Queen attending the sick, and seen how all their needs were fully attended to at her own expense. "She would not spend so much upon herself if she were sick," said the nun.

Naples was just the place for Marie-Clotilde to indulge in her favourite search after remarkable

types of spirituality. She had not been long there before she found out a small convent of Franciscan Sisters, called "Capucinelle," where, under the direction of a holy man, Don Vincenzo de Majo, great religious regularity was said to be observed.

The convent was poor, it was not fashionable; it therefore attracted her special interest, and she paid frequent visits to it. But her great discovery was that of a forlorn, infirm creature called Sister Magdalen; her disease, her diseases, rather, were of the most inveterate and repellent nature, and such that people could hardly be found to attend to her and to keep her clean. She had been confined to her bed for the last fifty years. It is said that the poor woman had once been under the spiritual direction of St. Alphonsus Liguori, and had reached, by the path of suffering, to a high state of perfection.

Marie-Clotilde, anxious to learn from all, especially from such cases, at once devoted herself to the service of Sister Magdalen. She visited her constantly, undertook the almost impossible task of cleaning her body, destroying the vermin with which her sores were covered, and stooping in her charity to the lowest offices, supported, no doubt, by the words

of the Master: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these My brethren, even these least, ye did it unto Me."

Had Marie-Clotilde anything to learn from that poor suffering creature, in a spiritual sense? Could the latter have taught her anything she had not already learnt through her own sad experience of life, not the less painful because it was learnt under the shadow of a throne? At any rate, she may have learnt what so many of us have still to learn: that we are not sure of what we mean until we have dared *to do*, instead of merely praying vaguely that God's will may be done—until we have translated our religious aspirations into acts.

CHAPTER XV

DOMESTIC DISSENSIONS—THE CASE OF DR. PENTENÈ—POSITION OF MARIE-CLOTILDE.

We have arrived at a period in the life of Marie-Clotilde in which, to the many troubles and anxieties caused by political events, came to be added what to her must have been even more immediately painful. Domestic dissensions had not been unknown in the little Court of the exiled Sovereigns ever since the time of their departure from Turin, but the tact of the Queen and the good-nature of the King had so far been able to moderate the outward manifestation of ill-feeling around them.

In all Courts, great or small, there are jealousies, disappointed ambitions, uncharitable criticisms, and plots by which malcontents seek to reach their ends. Gradually a party had been formed in opposition to the entourage known to be most sincerely devoted to the Sovereigns, and finally that party had concentrated its enmity upon a single person,

who enjoyed in an eminent degree the confidence of the King, and, to a certain extent, of Marie-Clotilde also—namely, the doctor Pentenè, their own physician. When they had been compelled to leave Turin in 1798, in the hurried manner which has been described in an early chapter, not one among the physicians-in-ordinary of the Court had been able or willing to accompany the Sovereigns in their exile. Something had to be done at once. The Bailli of St. Germain asked a young army surgeon, named Felix Pentenè, whom he happened to know, whether he would accompany the Royal Family as far as Parma. Once there, he thought, some other solution of the difficulty might be found.

Pentenè accepted the proposal without hesitation, and he gave so much satisfaction to the King during the painful journey, that, at Parma, there was no longer any idea of replacing him. He therefore continued to act as the King's personal medical attendant, and gradually obtained his entire confidence. His influence grew apace, and in course of time he became a favourite whose advice was by no means limited to questions of health.

Pentenè married Charlotte Badaglio, the daughter of the King's old *valet de chambre*, and this union

strengthened his position very considerably. The King, as we know, was weak of character; his physical condition required constant attention, and no doubt Pentenè saw in this his opportunity of securing the confidence of the royal patient for his own advantage, and made the most of it. Marie-Clotilde, it is clear, was not influenced to the same degree. But her one thought was the welfare of her husband, and Pentenè appeared to be indispensable to him.

Moreover, she was always inclined to take a charitable view of everybody; she was fond of Dr. Pentenè's wife, and had consented to be godmother to her little girl. Nevertheless, it is known from the King himself, from Madame Badia, and others, that she tried in a quiet way to confine Dr. Pentenè's influence to strictly medical matters; this must be true, for after her death his influence became almost unlimited. He managed, through the King's kindness, no doubt, to obtain the title of Count Palatine, and altogether behaved in such a way that even those members of the little Court who had openly accused Marie-Clotilde of too much weakness in supporting Pentenè, came to recognize that, far from being deserving of blame, she had, on the contrary, been the first to suffer from a situation which she could not modify.

But, during the time of the Royal Family's residence at Naples, with which we are now concerned, the party of opposition took a very different view of her attitude. They accused her of a share of responsibility in all the bad things with which their hatred and jealousy charged the doctor. For instance, when Princess Felicità died, the members of her household had been admitted into that of the King and Queen; but many of them thought that they had not been given the privileges and advantages to which they considered themselves entitled. They at once assumed that it was Dr. Pentenè's fault, and that the Queen had unjustly listened to him.

Then the time came when the state of the royal finances rendered certain economies absolutely imperative; this could not be done without considerable reductions in the emoluments of many of those followers who were maintained by the King about his person, not because they were required, but because it was morally impossible to dismiss altogether people who had shared his exile and his misfortunes. Again Pentenè was accused of partiality, and the Queen of weakness, for allowing the King to listen to him.

It is possible that some measures may have been

adopted which bore an appearance of injustice. Pentenè may certainly have favoured some whom he considered friendly to himself more than others whom he knew to be his enemies. There is nothing to lead us to imagine that Pentenè stood superior to those feelings which the world indulgently describes as "human nature." Of course he professed great piety, and this would predispose the Queen in his favour; but the opposition party asserted that he was nothing but a religious hypocrite. They also called him a traitor to the royal cause; but she did not believe that.

Here, then, we have a situation certainly not without example in the life of Courts, but it was made more serious and painful by the difficulties of exile. Men who might have been expected to support the King and Queen with sincere zeal did not hesitate to side with the enemies of their physician. The Bailli of St. Germain himself was said to have felt keenly the manner in which Dr. Pentenè had gradually come between him and the King. The Abbé Botta seemed to incline towards the opposition party; the Abbé Traves, the King's representative in Rome, did the same; the Comte de Chalembert, who was partly responsible for the grave crisis in Sardinia, mentioned in the last chapter, declared almost

openly that the Sovereigns ought to be less absorbed in devotion, and more occupied with politics. Among the ladies, Countess Tornenga, and even Mademoiselle Stuper, in spite of all she owed to the Queen, sided with the opposition.

There were, however, others who were inclined to defend Pentenè, or at least to remain neutral in the quarrel—Madame Badia, for instance. But, in her case, her attitude was entirely governed by her devotion to the Queen. Some of the spiritua advisers of Marie-Clotilde, such as the Abbé Tempia and the Abbé Marconi, seem certainly to have taken a better view of Pentenè's conduct. When his enemies went so far as to accuse him of murder, her advisers may well have felt that it was not safe to believe such charges without full evidence.

Marie-Clotilde took active steps to investigate the facts in connection with that terrible accusation, and she remained persuaded that it was entirely devoid of foundation. She then thought it her duty to defend the accused, and she sometimes did so with a zeal which did honour to her sense of justice, but which may have been very differently interpreted by the opposition party.

And yet, in a letter to a nun (Sister Agnes of the Incarnation), after speaking of her anxiety to

protect Pentenè, who, she affirms, was persecuted by jealous and wicked people, she ends by saying: "May they not go so far as to ruin that poor man, for I dread as much the vivacity, even the violence, of his character, as I dread the wickedness of the others."

It seems difficult to resist the conclusion that Marie-Clotilde was divided between her desire not to differ from her husband, not to act or even think uncharitably, not to yield to malicious intrigues, and her own instinct that there was something about the man which she would have wished to be different. But her religious sense of the duty of charity was such that she could not bear even to formulate to herself what she felt.

Yet, perhaps to please the King, she went so far as to write to the Duc de Génevois that a brother of Madame Arnaud-Manfredi, a great enemy of Pentenè, was a Jacobin who had followed the French army into Italy, and warned him to be careful, as she had heard that that man had been recommended to him. At the same time she warmly commended to the Prince another soldier, a brother of Dr. Pentenè, and begged that he might be given a commission as Lieutenant in the Sardinian army, adding: "I am greatly interested in this, because

the more his brother is calumniated, the more am I obliged to support him, as I have certain proof of his devotion to the royal cause, and of his fidelity and attachment to the King."

As a net result of all this, the vague insinuations against Marie-Clotilde gradually assumed a more painful shape. Some of those people who considered themselves unfairly treated by Pentenè ended by saying that the Queen was not so holy a person as she was reported to be. Benedict Rull, who from the post of Intendant had been reduced, for reasons of economy, to that of Maître d'Hôtel, actually told Countess Tornenga, when Marie-Clotilde died, that now they could rejoice, because they at last were free from the domination of certain people. And another member of the household, Joseph Berra, dared to tell Madame Badia that the Queen had done well to die; for had she lived much longer, her reputation of sanctity would have vanished altogether.

When the examination began before the Roman Ecclesiastical Commission appointed to deal with the question of her beatification, Benedict Rull said openly that they had better not call him as a witness, as he might have much to say against her sanctity, particularly in connection

with her bad temper. He was alluding to the following circumstance: When Princess Felicità was seriously ill at Naples in March, 1801, she had asked that the physician of the Duc d'Aosta might be called in consultation with Dr. Pentenè, who was attending her. It would seem that, in connection with this, remarks not altogether complimentary on Dr. Pentenè's talents as a medical man had been made, and that later on, while a very large fee had been sent to the Duc d'Aosta's physician, only a very moderate one had been given to Dr. Pentenè. Benedict Rull, who was entrusted with these payments, had shown the accounts to Marie-Clotilde, who, in an angry tone, it was said, had remarked that Pentenè, as a physician, deserved more confidence than the other man, who was more particularly known as a surgeon. Such was the manifestation of animosity which Rull considered as likely to compromise her cause before the Roman Congregation.

More serious was a remark of the Abbé Botta, who, while fully persuaded of the high sanctity of the Queen, had nevertheless said that he doubted whether the process of her beatification could be carried to a successful issue. But when examined before the Congregation, he clearly stated that his

meaning was that her attitude had been due to the peculiar mentality of her husband, and her fear to provoke his irritability by contradicting him. He entered into details about this question, on which he had such special information, having been their spiritual adviser, and he ended with these words: "I judge that what has been for the Queen a greater source of merit, and an occasion for the highest virtue, is precisely the thing which in certain people has affected the opinion they had of her. . . . But at the same time, considering the appearance of things, I have thought that it might be difficult to justify the Queen sufficiently in respect to the defects imputed to her, for the reasons which I have given. Hence my belief that it might be rather difficult to guide the cause [of her beatification] to a successful issue."

It is always difficult to pronounce judgment on the intimate feelings of a soul. All that might be said in this case is, either that she was as much deceived as the King seems to have been about the merits of Dr. Pentenè, or else that she acted as if she was deceived, partly out of charity and partly out of consideration for the feelings of the King. In either case, one does not see how she could be seriously blamed. That she may have felt some

annoyance, or even ill-humour, when she was obliged to deal with such a matter, whatever her views may have been, is very probable. We seldom like to be brought face to face with painful or perplexing questions, and it would only show that her perfection was not that of a statue, but that of a living woman.

While we are engaged upon this unpleasant subject, we may perhaps refer to one or two other points relative to her sanctity which were discussed during the process of her beatification.

For instance, when the usual gentleness of her behaviour with people of all conditions was being discussed, the fact was mentioned that, on a particular occasion, one of the men in her service, a certain Rachetti, had died of grief in consequence of a severe reprimand inflicted on him by Marie-Clotilde. It turned out, however, that the man's death was due to a very different cause, and that, moreover, he had fully deserved the reproaches in question.

Marie-Clotilde was also reported to have once spoken to her father-in-law, King Victor-Amadeus, in a way which had deeply pained him. But on inquiry it appeared that she had merely communicated to the King an opinion expressed by her husband, Charles-Emmanuel, on a matter of great political importance, at the time when the kingdom

was threatened by the revolutionary movement in France. Given the character of Marie-Clotilde, we may well assume that she would not have spoken had she not felt that so grave a situation imperiously required it.

Again, in the course of the same ecclesiastical trial it was said that once, in conversation with Comte de Chalembert, the Queen had spoken of one of the ladies of the Court as a "pettegola."* Was this consistent with the reputation of sanctity she had enjoyed in her lifetime? The judges, having satisfied themselves that the epithet had been applied on that occasion to one who had richly deserved it by her conduct, decided that the case did not affect unfavourably the reputation of Marie-Clotilde. We can safely accept their verdict, while perhaps wondering that nothing worse could be brought forward against that holy woman by the people who so sadly embittered, by their jealousy and malice, her last days on this earth.

* A silly or foolish woman.

CHAPTER XVI

ILLNESS AND DEATH OF MARIE-CLOTILDE.

On more than one occasion we have had to notice the courage, and also, we might almost say, the contempt, with which the good Queen dealt with her bodily weakness under all circumstances. Her health had never been robust, and the severe asceticism to which she was led by her religious earnestness had weakened it further still. She would not pay attention to those warnings which Nature, through discomfort and pain, is giving us when external circumstances or internal organic disorders threaten us with untoward consequences. She had never completely recovered from the grave illness brought about by the hardships of the journey at the time of the Royal Family's departure from Turin.

Then, her neglect of herself was largely due to her anxiety to spare her husband any trouble or apprehension. She knew how nervous and sensitive he was,

and she therefore hid from him, as much as possible, her own sufferings. Later on this became more and more difficult. The King gently reproached her for thus neglecting her health, and she promised to pay more attention to it in future. Unfortunately, this came too late. Already her usual ailments had been complicated by repeated attacks of gout; but this had never stopped her long vigils, her prolonged visits to churches and sick persons, and her devotions far into the night, when she knew that everybody was asleep in the house.

The first really serious warning of approaching danger came to her on the 25th of February, 1802. She had gone to Holy Communion in the Church of Santa Catarina a Chiaia, belonging to a religious community for which, during her residence at Naples, she had formed a very particular affection. Then, after visiting several churches in the neighbourhood, she had made a long stay in the chapel of the Congregation of the Oratory, where special devotions were being held. She returned home somewhat late, and apparently very happy with her day, so entirely given to religious exercises. But on the following morning it was noticed that she looked very tired. Still, Marie-Clotilde and the King went on a sort of pilgrimage to Pozzuoli, to visit

some famous relics there in the Cathedral; but she had to admit, on their return, that she felt quite exhausted. On Sunday the weakness continued, and it was remarked that she sat instead of kneeling after her Communion, a thing she never did.

On Monday she went about as usual, although with obvious effort. She insisted on going to the Monastery of the Theatines, founded by a saintly woman, Ursula Benincasa, for whom she had a very special veneration. To get there Marie-Clotilde had to walk up a steep road, and this proved too much for her. Yet, nothing daunted, she went on the same afternoon to the Gesù Nuovo with her husband. No doubt she committed that imprudence from fear of disquieting the King, who would have suspected something wrong with her health if she had not accompanied him. But as soon as she arrived home she sent for her confessor, Father Mariano Postiglioni, and admitted to him that she was quite exhausted; however, she would not go to bed, for the sake of the King, and begged Father Postiglioni to pray that she might hold out until ten o'clock, her usual hour for retiring.

In this she was successful, but during the night her breathing became so difficult that the King, who

slept in the same room, could not help noticing it. He rose at once and sent for Dr. Pentenè, who at first could not find any very definite symptoms besides some fever, a violent headache, and general prostration.

Of course she was kept in bed, and from that moment never left it. Thus two days passed, with no change in her condition except a great increase of her headache. She could get no rest, and it seemed to her as if a crown of thorns was being violently forced down upon her head. To a devout mind like hers, such a symptom could not fail to suggest a sacred parallel which made her almost love the pain itself. She mentioned it to the doctor with a kind of smile which he noticed. Even then, suffering as she did, her thought was of her husband. While he was called away from her room by some business, she hastened to have his bed removed to another room next to hers, so that he might sleep more quietly. In this, however, she failed, for Charles-Emmanuel, in his anxiety, rose continually in the course of the night to see how she was and whether she needed anything.

Another of her preoccupations was the fear of giving trouble to the people about her, or of showing signs of impatience when they served her.

She continually asked their forgiveness for any trouble she might give them. Then long periods of delirium set in, during which she fancied, among other things, that the Royal Family was being driven from Naples. She implored that she might be left behind, so as not to impede their flight; then consciousness would return, and she would say in a piteous tone: "Forgive me—do not mind what I say. It is my head."

Once, Father Postiglioni was with her, and she made a sign that she wished her head to be raised upon the pillow. But instantly the thought occurred to her that to seek such relief was not in the proper spirit, and she told the Father, who afterwards mentioned her words: "I am glad that you are here, and have seen how little I love to suffer. My Saviour died upon a wooden cross, and had no rest for His Divine head, and I cannot bear even a slight discomfort; I must seek for relief at once! See my imperfection, and learn by experience what I am worth."

Such words make us realize how effectually pride, sensuousness, and self-will, had been vanquished in that soul, if they ever had any serious foothold in it.

Meanwhile, Marie-Clotilde was getting obviously weaker, and she prepared for death with the assist-

ance of Father Postiglioni. Her one thought was to get the King to be resigned to her death. She sent her confessor to him to ask if he would not make in his heart the sacrifice of her life to God, although there was every reason to believe that she was not going to be taken from him. But Charles-Emmanuel, in spite of his weak character and poor physical condition, was not blind to this last solicitude of his wife. Indeed, one of the best things to be said about him is that her extreme, almost exaggerated, care of him had not succeeded in making him selfish, as such care often does in men of his type.

"Go to my wife, I pray you," he said; "and if she has finished her confession, tell her from me that my sacrifice is made concerning her, and that I am resigned and at peace." Father Postiglioni showed some hesitation to convey that message to the Queen. He perhaps feared that she might misunderstand it, but Charles-Emmanuel added: "I know what my wife is; go, and you will see the effect of my words upon her."

The result was as the King had anticipated. Hardly had the priest delivered his message that Marie-Clotilde's face became radiant with happiness. "Now I am in peace," she said; "now I can die happy." Then, with singular energy, striking her

hands and raising her eyes, she exclaimed: "To heaven! to heaven! What peace and happiness! I have now only to think of Paradise."

Her chief earthly anxiety had been removed. She could not bear to die with the thought that her husband might not be entirely resigned to the will of God in her regard. Now she could sing her *Nunc Dimittis*. From that moment she spoke of her death as a near and joyful event, to the surprise of all, for they had no idea of anything so sudden.

Dr. Pentenè, who seems to have had until that moment no definite idea of the nature of the case, came at last to the conclusion that it might be a case of typhoid fever. Dr. Cotugno, a celebrated Neapolitan physician, was called in consultation, but did not express, apparently, a very positive opinion. Other medical men of repute were also called, without further result.

The case was obscure, and the physicians probably manifested a desire for more information upon its earlier stages. Then Marie-Clotilde, in presence of them all and of the members of her household, made this declaration: "I acknowledge myself guilty of having during the first four days hidden from my husband and from my physician the principal symptoms of my illness, hoping

that, as so often before, all would turn out well; but now, being anxious to show perfect obedience, I will state all I have suffered during the first days of this illness." Then, with a clearness of mind which astonished all present, she began to relate her symptoms, particularly the terrible headache, which she described to be as if nails were being driven all round into her head. Dr. Cotugno remarked that she calmly spoke as if she had been describing the case of another person. He was evidently much impressed with the gravity of the situation now that he was able to understand it better, and he advised her confessor to make arrangements for her reception of the last sacraments of the Church.

The day passed quietly, her only thought being to prepare herself duly for those sacraments. She hardly spoke of anything else, and the scene was so affecting that sometimes the King, unable to contain his tears, was obliged to leave her room for a moment.

On the following morning, kneeling by her bedside, Charles-Emmanuel received with her the Holy Communion, and said the prayers of thanksgiving with her also. She could hardly speak, but with clasped hands and uplifted eyes she was evidently joining in the prayers, with an expression of profound peace upon her face.

As it was Sunday, the King, no doubt at her earnest desire, left her and went to church. She also told one of her old servants, Domenico Dragonero, that he might go to Mass, adding with great feeling: "Go; I shall not call you any more." And, indeed, he was never to hear her voice again.

On his return, the King immediately went up to Marie-Clotilde's room to see how she was. She gave him an affectionate sign of recognition, but was apparently unable to speak. With great anxiety, Charles-Emmanuel fetched some medicine, which had probably been prescribed by the doctors, and it had the effect of restoring the use of her voice for a moment. She took his hand in hers, and distinctly said to him: "You have called me 'Mamma.' Yes, I will always be that for you; and where I go, I desire that you may also come and be with me."

These seem to have been her last words, for afterwards she only answered questions by faint signs. The King, believing her a little stronger, went to get some food; but before he had finished his meal, the nurse, noticing a considerable change on the patient's face, went to fetch him. On entering the room, he saw that she was indeed much worse, for she could not articulate a word in answer to his questions.

In great haste Dr. Cotugno was sent for, and he

advised the King to have the sacrament of Extreme Unction administered to Marie-Clotilde if she wished it. On this she gave evident signs of her desire to receive the last rite of the Church, and Father Tempia was at once called in. But the poor man was in such a state of emotion and grief that he felt too unnerved to render that last office, and Father Mariano Postiglioni had to be requested to take his place.

While Extreme Unction was being administered, Marie-Clotilde, although unable to speak, showed by the motion of her lips that she was following clearly and intelligently every word of the service, especially at the end, when the prayers for the commendation of the departing soul were being said. She remained calm and peaceful for a few moments; then, closing her eyes and crossing her hands upon her breast, she inclined her head to one side, as if she would go to sleep. Those present thought that her agony was about to begin. But she had no agony. At the moment when she seemed to be going to sleep, she had passed away, apparently free from any pain, and in perfect peace. What had so often been denied her in life was granted to her at the last hour; she had found the rest which "remaineth" for the people of God.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BURIAL OF THE LATE QUEEN—CHARLES-EMMANUEL'S ABDICATION AND DEATH.

KING CHARLES-EMMANUEL was not actually present when his wife died; he had gone to his room after the administration of Extreme Unction. When he returned, Dr. Cotugno said to him: "Your Majesty must not enter now, but you have the consolation to know that you have a protectress in heaven."

With more energy and presence of mind than might, perhaps, have been expected of the poor King in the state of prostration caused by his saintly wife's death, he at once gave directions according to the wishes expressed to him by her during her last illness. Following a custom of the House of Savoy, he ordered that the body should be left untouched on the bed during that day, until the next morning. He also settled that there was to be neither post-mortem examination nor embalming, and that no such military honours as are usual in the case of Sovereigns were to be rendered at the funeral.

The first order was in conformity with a desire of Marie-Clotilde, who had particularly requested that no one, except two women whom she named, should be allowed to touch her body after her death. The second order was in full accordance with her spirit of simplicity and humility. "My wife has lived like a Religious," said Charles-Emmanuel; "like a Religious let her be buried." Thus, instead of her body being clothed in royal robes, she was dressed for burial in those simple woollen garments which, during her life, she had preferred to wear.

While Mademoiselle Stuper and a widow named Teresa Ratti were engaged upon those last offices, a singular thing occurred, about which both ladies testified on oath before the Congregation entrusted with the process of the Queen's beatification.

Marie-Clotilde wore two rings—her wedding ring, and another which she had always used from the day when she became Queen. Teresa Ratti was told to remove those rings, but the fingers of the deceased had become so hard and distorted that she was unable to remove the rings, in spite of all her efforts. At last, not knowing what to do, a strange idea occurred to her. Looking at the body, she said with reverence, but also with intense earnestness: "Marie-Clotilde, during your life you were always so obedient; now,

even after your death, be obedient still, so that I may remove these rings." Hardly had she finished speaking, when, as she stated, the fingers became straight and flexible, so that the rings came off quite easily. Mademoiselle Stuper, who was present, confirmed this statement. This is but the first of the many wonderful things said to have taken place after Marie-Clotilde's death, and brought forward for her beatification.

Her simple room had been transformed into a chapel by the erection of a plain altar, at which many Masses were said during the three days which followed, and the public was admitted to see the dead Queen. An immense crowd passed through the room from morning till night, and there was considerable difficulty in regulating the movements of those masses of people, attracted by their belief in the sanctity of Marie-Clotilde, whose beautiful life and abundant charities had created a deep impression in Naples.

The usual thirst for relics grew stronger and stronger every hour. One of the Queen's gowns was torn to pieces, and people struggled to obtain even the smallest bit of it. Religious communities asked, as a great favour, to be given some object which had belonged to her and one convent in

particular was considered highly fortunate in having obtained a whole sleeve from one of her dresses.

At last, on the fourth day, the burial took place. By the special desire of Marie-Clotilde, her body was to find its resting-place in the Church of Santa Catarina a Chiaia, a small and quiet church in which, during her stay at Naples, she had spent many hours in prayer. She loved such plain, unimportant churches, and she had also conceived special affection and respect for the Sisters of Santa Catarina. The funeral procession was striking in its simplicity—just a carriage bearing the coffin, followed by the members of the royal household. But the immense crowds which filled the streets, and for a time entirely stopped all traffic, gave to the occasion the character of a national mourning.

There were no soldiers, as Charles-Emmanuel, in conformity with his wife's wishes, had prescribed. Of course, the Neapolitan Government was anxious to do honour to the deceased Queen, in spite of the King's orders, but the Ministers hardly dared to act without ascertaining the views of the representative of France in Naples. Alquier, who occupied that position, was therefore consulted, and, to the surprise of many people, far from objecting to an act of public homage by the Government,

he openly declared that "that woman was deserving of every respect for the noble firmness with which she had borne her misfortunes." Alquier, it must be remembered, had voted the death of her brother, Louis XVI., as a Member of the Convention in 1793. It is true that he had voted for the King's death *avec sursis*, hoping, perhaps, that a delay might afford some means of avoiding the dreadful tragedy.

Still, his decision was somewhat unexpected, and produced a great impression in his favour among all classes of the Neapolitan people. Alquier may have foreseen that, for he was not without some merit as a diplomatist; but it is also probable that he was correctly interpreting the intentions of Bonaparte. Alquier, like so many of his former Republican colleagues, had altered his views and his attitude since the days of the Terror, in conformity with the policy of social reconstruction dictated by the new ruler of France. However, Charles-Emmanuel, faithful to the wishes of his wife, and not forgetful of what he owed to himself, refused with dignity the politic concession of Bonaparte's representative, and thus no military escort followed the remains of the sister of Louis XVI. to their final resting-place.

With difficulty the funeral procession made its

way through the surging crowds, and at last reached the church.

There, in a chapel dedicated to the "Mother of the Good Shepherd," the coffin was deposited, and in due course a simple monument was erected over Marie-Clotilde's tomb, which bears this inscription:

D. O. M.
MARIA CLOTILDA ADELAIDA XAVIERA BORBONIA
Sardiniæ regina
Cujus sanctissima pietas
Ingenii dexteritas consilii probitas
Morum suavitas
Ultra votum steterunt
Aliorum amantior quam sui
Emensis utriusque fortunæ spatiis
Adveniente fato
Inimitabili animi robore
Obviam processit.
Regno Italisque oris
Christianarum virtutum specimen
Extera etiam admiratione præbens
Præpropero morbo rapta
Suis omnibus examinatis
Æternum victura placidissime obiit
Neapoli nonis Martii anno CIↃDCCCII
Ætatis suæ XLII mensibus V diebus XII.

REX KAROLUS EMANUEL IV.
Piissimus conjux
Luctu concisus
Dimidio sui curarum levamine orbatus
Ad uxorias cineres hic quiescentes
M. P.

(*Translation.*)

MARIE-CLOTILDE-ADÉLAÏDE-XAVIÈRE OF BOURBON,
Queen of Sardinia.

Her eminent piety, her quick intelligence, the wisdom of her counsels, the suavity of her character, surpassed all that could be desired; she loved others more than herself. After she had been exposed to all the vicissitudes of human destiny, seeing death approach, she exhibited an inimitable strength of soul. To her kingdom and to all Italy she gave the example of Christian virtues in a degree worthy of all admiration. Taken from her sorrowful family by a rapid illness, she died peacefully, to live eternally, at Naples, on March 7, 1802, aged forty-two years, five months, and twelve days.

KING CHARLES-EMMANUEL IV.,
her most devoted husband,
Prostrated by sorrow,
Deprived of her who shared with him and alleviated all his cares,
To the ashes of his spouse resting here
has raised this monument.

Before that tomb the poor, broken, disconsolate husband of Marie-Clotilde was constantly seen in prayer as long as he remained in Naples. He came, at least on one occasion, accompanied by the Queen of Naples, Marie-Caroline, a sister of the unfortunate Queen Marie-Antoinette.

At first he had been persuaded to retire to Caserta, and he went there, accompanied by Dr. Pentenè, Father Tempia, and some members of his household; but in the course of the month of April he

came back to Naples, to be nearer to the tomb of his saintly consort. We cannot give all the touching letters which he wrote at that period, but some extracts from one or two of those written to his brothers will convey some idea of his sorrow and of his admiration for the character of Marie-Clotilde.

He wrote on the 19th of March to the Duc de Génevois:

"My dear Brother,

"It has pleased the Sovereign Master, who is ever just and loving, however severe He may sometimes appear to be, to require of me the treasure He had only lent to me. Yes, dear brother, I have lost on March 7 the dearest thing I had in this world, within a few days, of typhoid fever. She died as she had lived. I had the consolation of assisting her to the end. I wiped her hands and feet, and kissed them, after she had received Extreme Unction. She died, like our Lord, bowing down her head, without any agony, leaving me such examples, and also such grief, as shall last as long as my own life. This letter will serve for our brother and all our friends. Good-bye, dear brother. May the God of all mercy send you as much happiness as I have sorrow! Pray for me.

"C. Emmanuel, widower."

On the 3rd of April he wrote from Caserta to the Comte de Maurienne :

"I have received, dear brother, your two letters —one, that is, for my adorable wife, who is no more —and I must now answer you as well as I can, plunged as I am at present into affliction and difficulties of all sorts. I am delighted to hear that your health is re-established. Take great care of yourself, for it is a terrible thing to lose those who are dear to us. My sorrow, which has been all the time concentrated within me, is as on the first day—there is no mitigation of it. The only thing which moderates it is the thought that she will now be safe beyond the reach of future misfortunes. God be praised in all things!"

Such were the feelings of Charles-Emmanuel; such was his sense of loss, and that sense was reflected in a state of helplessness, of mental incapacity, of physical debility, which seemed to indicate that the separation he so keenly felt would not last very long. Very soon his health became seriously affected; his sight failed him, until he became almost blind; those nervous attacks which had been so often a cause of trouble and anxiety to Marie-Clotilde became more frequent and more intense.

At last, worn down by his infirmities and by his sense of impotence to deal with the duties of his

position, the poor King resolved to abdicate. This grave determination was not reached, as we may imagine, without much hesitation, and also without much opposition on the part of many around him, whose position would become considerably diminished by his abdication. We are told that his spiritual directors, in particular, were much opposed to his abdication, and, of course, they could not have been influenced by such motives. But, on the other hand, we do not know whether certain persons may not have been able indirectly to influence his spiritual directors.

In spite of all opposition, the King felt every day more strongly urged to take the step. At last, in his perplexity, he turned to his usual remedy: he visited the tomb of his wife, and he afterwards told Sister Agnes, one of her intimate friends, how he was relieved of his perplexity by that visit. He prayed earnestly that Marie-Clotilde would obtain for him the needed light, and that, if it was God's will, the views of his spiritual counsellors might be altered. Having thus prayed, he went home, and when, soon afterwards, he had an interview with his advisers, he found that their minds on the subject of his abdication had undergone a complete change. Something must certainly have happened, for he

who had such difficulty at all times in coming to a decision, at once, without any further hesitation, proceeded to accomplish his great act of renunciation. It took place on the 4th of July, 1802. His brother, the Duc d'Aosta, assumed the crown as Victor-Emmanuel I.

Then, in October, the Comte de Maurienne died, adding another cause of sincere sorrow to the overflowing cup of sadness; the Duc de Génevois, himself most deeply affected by that unexpected loss, came over from Sardinia to see Charles-Emmanuel. This meeting took place in Rome, where the King had settled; for now that he had abdicated, he was able to satisfy his desire to reside in the Eternal City, without raising any opposition on the part of the French Government. At last, on the 6th of October, 1819, Charles-Emmanuel died, and was buried in the Jesuit church on the Quirinal. Thus ended a long pilgrimage and a painful exile. But he counted himself happy that he had been privileged to suffer by the side of a saint.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE "VENERABLE" MARIE-CLOTILDE.

CHARLES-EMMANUEL was so convinced of the eminent sanctity of his wife that he considered it his duty to make every effort in order to obtain the official recognition by the Church of Marie-Clotilde's place among the canonized saints. Already in July, 1803, he had obtained a decision authorizing the usual inquiries to that effect. Witnesses were heard before the Commission appointed for the purpose, and among them appeared Father Tempia, Father Botta, Father Postiglioni, Madame Badia, Dr. Pentenè and his father-in-law, Badoglio, and many others, and later on the King himself. A special dispensation was granted, shortening the long delays usually prescribed in such matters by the Roman Church; and at last, on a report presented to the Congregation of Rites by Cardinal Mattei, on the 9th of April, 1808, a solemn decree was issued which conferred upon Marie-Clotilde the title of "Venerable."

After that time, other witnesses were examined at Rome and at Turin, and the cause of Marie-Clotilde's beatification proceeded in the usual way until the year 1845, when, owing possibly to political circumstances, the matter came to a standstill, although the secretary of the Congregation of Rites did not hesitate to say that the cause of the Queen of Sardinia was one of the most beautiful before the Roman Court at that period.

Any delays are no doubt disappointing for those who feel convinced of the claims of Marie-Clotilde's life to a full recognition of its eminent sanctity, but they may find consolation in the thought that such delays do not necessarily imply disbelief in the validity of those claims. Joan of Arc has had to wait several centuries for a similar recognition. Anyhow, the title of "Venerable," which the formal introduction of the cause conferred upon Marie-Clotilde, is already a sufficient proof that the Church of which she was so faithful a member had gladly recognized the beauty of her character and the supreme degree of her virtues.

We cannot enter into the long details of the official examination of her cause, but it is interesting to notice the special characteristics of the miracles attributed to "the venerable servant of God" in the

course of that examination. Practically all those miracles have reference to the healing of diseases and the relief of bodily suffering. Sick people who had known the Queen, and others who had only heard of her, but had conceived a strong confidence in the power of her intercession with God, invoked her assistance in their extremity, and were, it is said, sometimes immediately, sometimes gradually, delivered of their infirmities. In a few cases the saint appeared to them, as she is reported to have done in the case of Carlotta Badoglio, the wife of Dr. Pentenè, whom Marie-Clotilde had known from her childhood, and in whom she had always taken an affectionate interest.

Being in great danger from a fever which all remedies seemed unable to cure, Madame Pentenè, one night, feeling herself much worse, took a belt which had belonged to her late mistress, and tied it round her head. Soon afterwards she fell into a deep and refreshing sleep, in which she thought she saw Marie-Clotilde standing beside her, and assuring her that she would recover. Madame Pentenè slept on heavily for many hours, and when at last she woke up she found herself quite well, and from that moment, as she testified, she continued to enjoy excellent health.

There is also the case of a nun of the Convent of Santa Chiara at Assisi, Sister Maria-Nazarena Alessi, who in 1795 had been operated upon for a cancerous tumour in the breast. After a time, another operation became necessary, but the Sister could not make up her mind to it, although she was told that any delay might seriously endanger her life. It then happened, in August, 1806, that a Franciscan Father, named Luigi Pistelli, came to Assisi, and while visiting the Convent of Santa Chiara (where Marie-Clotilde was well known, having been there herself during her stay at Assisi), the Father told the Sisters of the great reputation of sanctity in which the Queen had died, and of the numerous cures mentioned as having taken place by her intercession.

In consequence of this Sister Maria-Nazarena conceived the idea that she, too, might obtain relief in the same way, and she began to pray accordingly. One night, being perfectly awake and conscious, she was thinking that if her prayers remained unanswered she would cease to believe in the sanctity of the Queen of Sardinia, when suddenly Marie-Clotilde stood by her, with a bright and cheerful countenance, and as distinctly as if she had been a living person. Then the Sister heard her saying, "Nazarena, trust, and fear not." The same thing occurred to her

three times in succession, always during the night, and it was noticed that her tumour was gradually disappearing; within about a month she was entirely cured. This was confirmed before the Commission by the Sister herself and by other witnesses.

Since the Church does not expect the faithful to accept unhesitatingly such miraculous reports, our readers must form their own judgment concerning them. Whether the evidence afforded by the documents contained in four folio volumes published for the use of the Congregation of Rites would satisfy the exacting demands of the Society for Psychical Research, we must not presume to say. But it is, at any rate, remarkable that so many facts of that nature, asserted by numerous persons in various places during a period extending from 1804 to 1845, could have been recorded.

The common character of those facts is no less remarkable. They are all, or nearly all, about relief afforded to suffering persons. Now we remember how devoted to the service of the sick Marie-Clotilde was at all times during her life. She was continually doing the work of a nurse in her family, and to visit the sick was one of her most constant occupations. Was she, then, still doing after her death that which she had so loved to do in life? We can but put

such questions, and wonder what the answer should be.

Such is, briefly told, the story of Marie-Clotilde's life. One could not write a large book about it except by introducing facts and descriptions more or less indirectly connected with the subject. As it is, we fear that we may have sometimes tired our readers by insisting on matters of little importance, or by dwelling too frequently on certain points in her character; these, however, had to be emphasized even at the risk of tiresome repetition, for the beauty and power of her life do not consist so much in the things she did as in the manner and spirit in which she did them; and it is this very repetition in the manifestation of her spiritual gifts which enables us to realize and appreciate her surpassing constancy and patience in all circumstances and in the midst of all trials.

This sister of Louis XVI. and of Madame Elizabeth is not sufficiently known. Her life presents to us an aspect of the Bourbon character which has repeatedly manifested itself, in the history of that family—at least, since the days of St. Louis. Unfortunately, such hereditary manifestations must always be exceptional, and the world is not greatly

MADAME ELIZABETH.

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interested in them. Historical memoirs and works of fiction deal abundantly with the *affaires de cœur* of Henry IV., the doings of Louis XIV. at Versailles, the scandals of the Court of Louis XV.; there is a whole literature on Louis XVI. and Marie-Antoinette; but such a life as that of Marie-Clotilde does not present the same opportunities for exciting narratives and prurient suggestions.

Yet, surely, if we study in a scientific spirit the history of the Bourbons, we require the description of such characters as that of Madame Elizabeth de France and of her sister, the Queen of Sardinia, in order to obtain a complete picture, and to be thus enabled to form a more correct judgment. At any rate, we cannot leave Marie-Clotilde out in any adequate account of the French Revolution, since by its deeds in Piedmont it has included her among its victims.

The graves of her near relatives, disseminated as they are over Europe, tell us plainly enough of the intensity of the storm by which her own frail boat was tossed ashore. Louis XVI.'s remains were transferred from the cemetery of the Madeleine in Paris to the crypt of St. Denis. In the same crypt lies another brother of Marie-Clotilde, Louis XVIII. Her third brother, Charles X., is

buried under the altar of the Franciscan church at Goritz in Austria, together with her niece, "the orphan of the Temple." Her aunts, Mesdames Adélaïde and Victoire, died at Trieste. As to her sister, Madame Elizabeth, her remains were deposited in the cemetery of the Madeleine after her execution, and are believed to be there now—that is, in the grounds surrounding the present "Chapelle Expiatoire," where the cemetery of the Madeleine was situated—but they have never been discovered. Marie-Clotilde, as we have seen, found her resting-place in the small church of Santa Caterina a Chiaia in Naples, far away from the crypt of St. Denis, where, as a Princess of France, she had a right to a tomb, and from the lofty Superga, near Turin, where, by her marriage, she had also a right to rest. But long before the day of her funeral her choice had been made. Having learnt to despise all tokens of earthly greatness, she had chosen for herself a place of burial more in keeping with the humility and detachment of her life.

Whatever our creed may be, whatever may be our politics, that life has valuable lessons for us all. It shows us how unjust, often how criminal, is that fostering of class hatred for political purposes which has always been a favourite weapon of the dema-

gogue, but which, in these days of social unrest, threatens to destroy the healthy development of the national life even in countries made great by freedom. What justice could there be in estimating Marie-Clotilde's character by the fact of her birth, or in judging of her relations with the poor, the suffering, and the evil-minded, merely in the light of her exalted station? Speaking generally, what justice can there be in teaching uneducated people to see enemies in all those whom pre-existing social conditions have placed where they did not place themselves? Surely in Marie-Clotilde we have another evidence of the truth that, while heredity may help us to explain certain facts, it can never with justice be invoked as a sufficient reason for forecasting adversely the moral and social worth of any given individual.

Again, Marie-Clotilde's life reminds us that our attitude towards any religious creed should not be allowed to create in us a prejudice against its professors. People, good in themselves, often prove to be better than their creed. In any case, we must judge of them by what they are, not by what we think that, given their creed, they ought to be.

Above all, we learn from her beautiful simplicity, from her touching humility, from her trust in the

power of goodness to overcome evil, the lesson we all need to learn, and without which our efforts to improve ourselves or to serve others must prove unavailing. Such a life as hers, to all outward appearance a useless, wasted life, spent in struggling against an irresistible current in the pursuit of unpractical aims, animated by what many will deem to have been, at best, a sincere but false ideal—such a life was nevertheless worthy, and even great, if we estimate its value, not by any immediate results, but by the spirit which inspired it.

APPENDIX

In speaking of Ginguené, the French Ambassador at the Sardinian Court (in Chapters V. and VII.), we feel that we have not done full justice to the character of the man. We had to refer to him very briefly, in order not to interrupt the course of the narrative, and we may thus have left the reader under an impression which would not be altogether right and fair. That Ginguené played his part at Turin in a way calculated to give offence and pain to the Royal Family is unfortunately true; that he was not much of a diplomatist is certain; but this should not make us forget that in other spheres of activity he manifested considerable merit, and that there are other aspects of Ginguené's character which should not be ignored.

We shall not refer to the early period of Ginguené's life, when, no doubt with generous intentions, but hastily-formed opinions, and under influences which to a man of his temperament were irresistible, he threw himself into the Revolutionary movement. At one moment his life was in great danger. Released

from his prison by the 9th Thermidor, we have seen him an ambassador at Turin. But soon affairs in France are transformed by the action of Napoleon Bonaparte. His country is no longer the home of freedom; it has found a master, and that master cannot forgive Ginguené the reserved and dignified attitude which he takes before him. So many of his former Republican colleagues have bent the knee before the tyrant that Ginguené's attitude is all the more remarkable and all the more remarked. When Fouché asked the Emperor for a pension for Ginguené, Napoleon answered that, as that man "had worked for all former Governments, he had better work now for his own, and then he would see what he could do."

These words, reported to Ginguené, stung him to the quick. He says in his "Journal" (recently published by Dr. Paul Hazard): "As a matter of fact, I have never worked for any Government. I have filled posts by the help of which I could have made a fortune, but I feel no regret at having failed to do so. . . . I have served my country, and perhaps the cause of freedom, by my writings; there was nothing there for any Government. The Emperor is free to grant or to deny me what he likes. But let him offer me a place which I can honestly accept, and I will do *under* his Government, but not *for* his Government, what I have done *under*, not *for*, any other."

In thus speaking Ginguené was certainly sincere, and his attitude has shown that he meant what he said. Lady Morgan,* who visited him in his retirement, was much impressed by the dignity and serenity of his character in the isolation caused by his political antagonism to the rule of Napoleon.

As a literary man, Ginguené does not certainly occupy the first place; but his work was conscientiously done, and his "History of Italian Literature" represents immense labour on a subject which, at the time, was hardly known at all in France. He was a most diligent student, a man of many interests. As a member of the Institut de France he wrote many reports on many subjects, and always exhibited in all he did the most painstaking industry.†

As a man, Ginguené presents to us a good example of the psychology of the end of the eighteenth century. Like Voltaire, d'Alembert, or Diderot, he is thirsting for all knowledge; his spirit is that of the Encyclopédie. Then we see in him the influence of Rousseau, shown in his love of Nature.

* Lady Morgan, "La France" (Paris and London, 1817, 2 vols., tome ii.).

† On his work at the Institut we have: Notice on Ginguené, by Amaury Duval, in tome xiv. of the "Histoire Littéraire de la France"; "Notice Historique sur la Vie et les Ouvrages de M. Ginguené," par M. Dacier (Paris, 1824); "Rapports sur les Travaux de la Classe d'Histoire et de Littérature Ancienne," par M. Ginguené (Paris, 1807-08).

He delights in roaming through the Forest of Montmorency, as once Rousseau had done, to sit under the oaks where he sat, to visit the house where he lived. He has many friends in that district so dear to him: Grétry, the musician; Cabanis, the man of science; Madame de Condorcet, Madame Helvetius, and others who share his political views and his philosophical ideals.

In the midst of his manifold literary occupations he finds time for an innocent recreation: he writes fables, at first almost in secret, but gradually he allows his friends to see some of them; and encouraged by their indulgence, he gives them to the public.* Some of these compositions are full of spirit and thought, some are rather long and laboured; but all make one feel that the writer is animated by a constant conviction that man is here below to realize himself by doing good, and that he realizes himself only in proportion as he endeavours to do good.

The following lines from his fable "La Fortune et le Poète" may be of interest, and clearly reveal the man:

"Un soir, j'étais presque endormi;
J'entendis frapper à ma porte.
Ouvrez me dit-on, notre ami,
C'est la fortune et son escorte.

* "Fables Nouvelles, par M. P. L. Ginguené, Membre de l'Institut de France" (Paris, 1810, in 12mo.).

— Moi, votre ami ! non, s'il vous plait ;
Meilleur gîte je vous souhaite.
Allez loger chez l'intérêt :
Que feriez-vous chez un poète ?
— Donne au moins l'hospitalité,
A trois de mes sœurs ; l'Opulence,
La Grandeur, et la Dignité.
— Je ne le puis en conscience ;
Je la donne à la Pauvreté.
— Mais la Gloire, la Renommée . . .
— Pour elles ma porte est fermée.
— Elles iront chez tes rivaux.
— Soit : ils auront de la fumée,
Et je garderai mon repos."

Ginguené was also something of a musician. He had written the music for a great many songs by Dorat, and his friends wondered sometimes whether he might not have been more successful had he chosen a musical rather than a literary career.

Music and poetry had their place in the happy home of Ginguené and his wife, the faithful Nancy, whom he loved so well. His love for his wife is one of the most pleasing traits in his character.* Unfortunately, as he told King Charles-Emmanuel at

* We may here give the epitaph which Ginguené composed for his own tomb :

" Celui dont la cendre est ici,
Ne sut, dans le cours de sa vie,
Qu' aimer ses amis, sa patrie,
Les arts, l'étude, et sa Nancy."

Turin, their union had not been blessed with children. So one day they resolved to adopt a little English orphan boy named James Parry. That child was idolized by them, and each year his birthday was celebrated after dinner by some verses of Ginguené, which drew tears from all around the table. Some of these verses, such as the following, for instance, are still worth quoting :

> "Pour être homme, sois toujours libre ;
> Sois toujours bon pour être heureux."

But this notice is already too long for an appendix, and we must end. Our chief object was to correct any false impression which our too brief remarks might have produced in the mind of our readers, about a man whose character, in spite of some weak points, deserves our respect, even if we cannot altogether sympathize with his principles or his ideals.

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THE END

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