

The Memoirs of Louis XV/XVI, V6

Madame du Hausset, unknown English Girl and the Princess Lamballe

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Madame du Hausset, unknown English Girl and the Princess Lamballe

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SECTION IV.

"The dismissal of M. Necker irritated the people beyond description. They looked upon themselves as insulted in their favourite. Mob succeeded mob, each more mischievous and daring than the former. The Duc d'Orleans continued busy in his work of secret destruction. In one of the popular risings, a sabre struck his bust, and its head fell, severed from its body. Many of the rioters (for the ignorant are always superstitious) shrunk back at this omen of evil to their idol. His real friends endeavoured to deduce a salutary warning to him from the circumstance. I was by when the Duc de Penthièvre told him, in the presence of his daughter, that he might look upon this accident as prophetic of the fate of his own head, as well as the ruin of his family, if he persisted. He made no answer, but left the room.

"On the 14th of July, and two or three days preceding, the commotions took a definite object. The destruction of the Bastille was the point proposed, and it was achieved. Arms were obtained from the old pensioners at the Hotel des Invalides. Fifty thousand livres were distributed among the chiefs of those who influenced the Invalides to give up the arms.

"The massacre of the Marquis de Launay, commandant of the place, and of M. de Flesselles, and the fall of the citadel itself, were the consequence.

"Her Majesty was greatly affected when she heard of the murder of these officers and the taking of the Bastille. She frequently told me that the horrid circumstance originated in a diabolical Court intrigue, but never explained the particulars of the intrigue. She declared that both the officers and the citadel might have been saved had not the King's orders for the march of the troops from Versailles, and the environs of Paris, been disobeyed. She blamed the precipitation of De Launay in ordering up the drawbridge and directing the few troops on it to fire upon the people. 'There,' she added, 'the Marquis committed himself; as, in case of not succeeding, he could have no retreat, which every commander should take care to secure, before he allows the commencement of a general attack.

[Certainly, the French Revolution may date its epoch as far back as the taking of the Bastille; from that moment the troubles progressively continued, till the final extirpation of its

illustrious victims. I was just returning from a mission to England when the storms began to threaten not only the most violent effects to France itself, but to all the land which was not divided from it by the watery element. The spirit of liberty, as the vine, which produces the most luxurious fruit, when abused becomes the most pernicious poison, was stalking abroad and revelling in blood and massacre. I myself was a witness to the enthusiastic national ball given on the ruins of the Bastille, while it was still stained and reeking with the hot blood of its late keeper, whose head I saw carried in triumph. Such was the effect on me that the Princesse de Lamballe asked me if I had known the Marquis de Launay. I answered in the negative; but told her from the knowledge I had of the English Revolution, I was fearful of a result similar to what followed the fall of the heads of Buckingham and Stafford. The Princess mentioning my observation to the Duc de Penthièvre, they both burst into tears.]

The death of the Dauphin, the horrible Revolution of the 14th of July, the troubles about Necker, the insults and threats offered to the Comte d'Artois and herself,—overwhelmed the Queen with the most poignant grief.]

"She was most desirous of some understanding being established between the government and the representatives of the people, which she urged upon the King the expediency of personally attempting.

"The King, therefore, at her reiterated remonstrances and requests, presented himself, on the following day, with his brothers, to the National Assembly, to assure them of his firm determination to support the measures of the deputies, in everything conducive to the general good of his subjects. As a proof of his intentions, he said he had commanded the troops to leave Paris and Versailles.

"The King left the Assembly, as he had gone thither, on foot, amid the vociferations of 'Vive le roi!' and it was only through the enthusiasm of the deputies, who thus hailed His Majesty, and followed him in crowds to the palace, that the Comte d'Artois escaped the fury of an outrageous mob.

"The people filled every avenue of the palace, which vibrated with cries for the King, the Queen, and the Dauphin to show themselves at the balcony.

"Send for the Duchesse de Polignac to bring the royal children,' cried I to Her Majesty.

"Not for the world!' exclaimed the Queen. 'She will be assassinated, and my children too, if she make her appearance before this infuriate mob. Let Madame and the Dauphin be brought unaccompanied.'

"The Queen, on this occasion, imitated her Imperial mother, Maria Theresa. She took the Dauphin in her arms, and Madame by her side, as that Empress had done when she presented herself to the Hungarian magnates; but the reception here was very different. It was not 'moriamur pro nostra regina'. Not that they were ill received; but the furious party of the Duc d'Orleans often interrupted the cries of 'Vive le roi! Vive la reine!' etc., with those of 'Vive la nation! Vive d'Orleans!' and many severe remarks on the family of the De Polignacs, which proved that the Queen's caution on this occasion was exceedingly well-judged.

"Not to wound the feelings of the Duchesse de Polignac, I kept myself at a distance behind the Queen; but I was loudly called for by the mobility, and, 'malgre moi', was obliged, at the King and Queen's request, to come forward.

"As I approached the balcony, I perceived one of the well-known agents of the Duc d'Orleans, whom I had noticed some time before in the throng, menacing me, the moment I made my appearance, with his upreared hand in fury. I was greatly terrified, but suppressed my agitation, and saluted the populace; but, fearful of exhibiting my weakness in sight of the wretch who had alarmed me, withdrew instantly, and had no sooner re-entered than I sunk motionless in the arms of one of the attendants. Luckily, this did not take place till I left the balcony. Had it been otherwise, the triumph to my declared enemies would have been too great.

"Recovering, I found myself surrounded by the Royal Family, who were all kindness and concern for my situation; but I could not subdue my tremor and affright. The horrid image of that monster seemed, still to threaten me.

"'Come, come!' said the King, 'be not alarmed, I shall order a council of all the Ministers and deputies to-morrow, who will soon put an end to these riots!'

"We were ere long joined by the Prince de Conde, the Duc de Bourbon, and others, who implored the King not to part with the army, but to place himself, with all the Princes of the blood, at its head, as the only means to restore tranquillity to the country, and secure his own safety.

"The Queen was decidedly of the same opinion; and added, that, if the army were to depart, the King and his family ought to go with it; but the King, on the contrary, said he would not decide upon any measures whatever till he had heard the opinion of the Council.

"The Queen, notwithstanding the King's indecision, was occupied, during the rest of the day and the whole of the night, in preparing for her intended; journey, as she hoped to persuade the King to follow the advice of the Princes, and not wait the result of the next day's deliberation. Nay, so desirous was she of this, that she threw herself on her knees to the King, imploring him to leave Versailles and head the army, and offering to accompany him herself, on horseback, in uniform; but it was like speaking to a corpse he never answered.

"The Duchesse de Polignac came to Her Majesty in a state of the greatest agitation, in consequence of M. de Chinon having just apprised her that a most malicious report had been secretly spread among the deputies at Versailles that they were all to be blown up at their next meeting.

"The Queen was as much surprised as the Duchess, and scarcely less agitated. These wretched friends could only, in silence, compare notes of their mutual cruel misfortunes. Both for a time remained speechless at this new calamity. Surely this was not wanting to be added to those by which the Queen was already so bitterly oppressed.

"I was sent for by Her Majesty. Count Fersen accompanied me. He had just communicated to me what the Duchess had already repeated from M. Chinon to the Queen.

"The rumour had been set afloat merely as a new pretext for the continuation of the riots.

"The communication of the report, so likely to produce a disastrous effect, took place while the King was with his Ministers deliberating whether he should go to Paris, or save himself and family by joining the army.

"His Majesty was called from the council to the Queen's apartment, and was there made acquainted with the circumstance which had so awakened the terror of the royal party. He calmly replied, 'It is some days since this invention has been spread among the deputies; I was aware of it from the first; but from its being utterly impossible to be listened to for a moment by any one, I did not wish to afflict you by the mention of an impotent fabrication, which I myself treated with the contempt it justly merited. Nevertheless, I did not forget, yesterday, in the presence of both my brothers, who accompanied me to the National Assembly, there to exculpate myself from an imputation at which my nature revolts; and, from the manner in which it was received, I flatter myself that

every honest Frenchman was fully satisfied that my religion will ever be an insurmountable barrier against my harbouring sentiments allied in the slightest degree to such actions.

"The King embraced the Queen, begged she would tranquilise herself, calmed the fears of the two ladies, thanked the gentlemen for the interest they took in his favour, and returned to the council, who, in his absence, had determined on his going to the Hotel de Ville at Paris, suggesting at the same time the names of several persons likely to be well received, if His Majesty thought proper to allow their accompanying him.

"During this interval, the Queen, still flattering herself that she should pursue her wished-for journey, ordered the carriages to be prepared and sent off to Rambouillet, where she said she should sleep; but this Her Majesty only stated for the purpose of distracting the attention of her pages and others about her from her real purpose. As it was well known that M. de St. Priest had pointed out Rambouillet as a fit asylum for the mob, she fancied that an understanding on the part of her suite that they were to halt there, and prepare for her reception, would protect her project of proceeding much farther.

"When the council had broken up and the King returned, he said to the Queen, 'It is decided.'

"'To go, I hope?' said Her Majesty.

"'No'—(though in appearance calm, the words remained on the lips of the King, and he stood for some moments incapable of utterance; but, recovering, added)—'To Paris!'

"The Queen, at the word Paris, became frantic. She flung herself wildly into the arms of her friends.

"'Nous sommes perdus! nous sommes perdus !' cried she, in a passion of tears. But her dread was not for herself. She felt only for the danger to which the King was now going to expose himself; and she flew to him, and hung on his neck.

"'And what,' exclaimed she, 'is to become of all our faithful friends and attendants!'

"'I advise them all,' answered His Majesty, 'to make the best of their way out of France; and that as soon as possible.'

"By this time, the apartments of the Queen were filled with the attendants and the royal children, anxiously expecting every moment to receive the Queen's command to proceed on their journey, but they were all ordered to retire to whence they came.

"The scene was that of a real tragedy. Nothing broke the silence but groans of the deepest affliction. Our consternation at the counter order cast all into a state of stupefied insensibility.

"The Queen was the only one whose fortitude bore her up proudly under this weight of misfortunes. Recovering from the frenzy of the first impression, she adjured her friends, by the love and obedience they had ever shown her and the King, to prepare immediately to fulfil his mandate and make themselves ready for the cruel separation!

"The Duchesse de Polignac and myself were, for some hours, in a state of agony and delirium.

"When the Queen saw the body-guards drawn up to accompany the King's departure, she ran to the window, threw apart the sash, and was going to speak to them, to recommend the King to their care; but the Count Fersen prevented it.

"For God's sake, Madame,"—exclaimed he, 'do not commit yourself to the suspicion of having any doubts of the people!'

"When the King entered to take leave of her, and of all his most faithful attendants, he could only articulate, 'Adieu!' But when the Queen saw him accompanied by the Comte d'Estaing and others, whom, from their new principles, she knew to be popular favourites, she had command enough of herself not to shed a tear in their presence.

"No sooner, however, had the King left the room than it was as much as the Count Fersen, Princesse Elizabeth, and all of us could do to recover her from the most violent convulsions. At last, coming to herself, she retired with the Princess, the Duchess, and myself to await the King's return; at the same time requesting the Count Fersen to follow His Majesty to the Hotel de Ville. Again and again she implored the Count, as she went, in case the King should be detained, to interest himself with all the foreign Ministers to interpose for his liberation.

"Versailles, when the King was gone, seemed like a city deserted in consequence of the plague. The palace was completely abandoned. All the attendants were dispersed. No one was seen in the streets. Terror prevailed. It was universally believed that the King would be detained in Paris. The high road from Versailles to Paris was crowded with all ranks of people, as if to catch a last look of their Sovereign.

"The Count Fersen set off instantly, pursuant to the Queen's desire. He saw all that passed, and on his return related to me the history of that horrid day.

"He arrived at Paris just in time to see His Majesty take the national cockade from M. Bailly and place it in his hat. He, felt the Hotel de Ville shake with the long—continued cries of 'Vive le roi!' in consequence, which so affected the King that, for some moments, he was unable to express himself. "I myself,' added the Count, I was so moved at the effect on His Majesty, in being thus warmly received by his Parisian subjects, which portrayed the paternal emotions of his long—lacerated heart, that every other feeling was paralysed for a moment, in exultation at the apparent unanimity between the Sovereign and his people. But it did not,' continued the Ambassador, 'paralyse the artful tongue of Bailly, the Mayor of Paris. I could have kicked the fellow for his malignant impudence; for, even in the cunning compliment he framed, he studied to humble the afflicted Monarch by telling the people it was to them he owed the sovereign authority.

"'But,' pursued the Count, 'considering the situation of Louis XVI. and that of his family, agonised as they must have been during his absence, from the Queen's impression that the Parisians would never again allow him to see Versailles, how great was our rapture when we saw him safely replaced in his carriage, and returning to those who were still lamenting him as lost!

"'When I left Her Majesty in the morning, she was nearly in a state of mental aberration. When I saw her again in the evening, the King by her side, surrounded by her family, the Princesse Elizabeth, and yourself, madame' said the kind Count, 'she appeared to me like a person risen from the dead and restored to life. Her excess of joy at the first moment was beyond description!'

"Count Fersen might well say the first moment, for the pleasure of the Queen was of short duration. Her heart was doomed to bleed afresh, when the thrill of delight, at what she considered the escape of her husband, was past, for she had already seen her chosen friend, the Duchesse de Polignac, for the last time.

"Her Majesty was but just recovered from the effects of the morning's agitation, when the Duchess, the Duke, his sister, and all his family set off. It was impossible for her to take leave of her friend. The hour was late—about midnight. At the same time departed the Comte d'Artois and his family, the Prince de Conde and his, the Prince of Hesse d'Armstadt, and all those who were likely to be suspected by the people.

"Her Majesty desired the Count Fersen to see the Duchess in her name. When the King heard the request, he exclaimed:

"What a cruel state for Sovereigns, my dear Count! To be compelled to separate ourselves from our most faithful attendants, and not be allowed, for fear of compromising others or our own lives, to take a last farewell!"

"Ah!" said the Queen, "I fear so too. I fear it is a last farewell to all our friends!"

"The Count saw the Duchess a few moments before she left Versailles. Pisani, the Venetian Ambassador, and Count Fersen, helped her on the coachbox, where she rode disguised.

"What must have been most poignantly mortifying to the fallen favourite was, that, in the course of her journey, she met with her greatest enemy, Necker) who was returning, triumphant, to Paris, called by the voice of that very nation by whom she and her family were now forced from its territory,—Necker, who himself conceived that she, who now went by him into exile, while he himself returned to the greatest of victories, had thwarted all his former plans of operation, and, from her influence over the Queen, had caused his dismissal and temporary banishment.

"For my own part, I cannot but consider this sudden desertion of France by those nearest the throne as ill-judged. Had all the Royal Family, remained, is it likely that the King and Queen would have been watched with such despotic vigilance? Would not confidence have created confidence, and the breach have been less wide between the King and his people?"

"When the father and his family will now be thoroughly reconciled, Heaven alone can tell!"

SECTION V.

"Barnave often lamented his having been betrayed, by a love of notoriety, into many schemes, of which his impetuosity blinded him to the consequences. With tears in his eyes, he implored me to impress the Queen's mind with the sad truths he inculcated. He said his motives had been uniformly the same, however he might have erred in carrying them into action; but now he relied on my friendship for my royal mistress to give efficacy to his earnest desire to atone for those faults, of which he had become convinced by dear-bought experience. He gave me a list of names for Her Majesty, in which were specified all the Jacobins who had emissaries throughout France, for the purpose of creating on the same day, and at the same hour, an alarm of something like the 'Vesparo Siciliano' (a general insurrection to murder all the nobility and burn their palaces, which, in fact, took place in many parts of France), the object of which was to give the Assembly, by whom all the regular troops were disbanded, a pretext for arming the people as a national guard, thus creating a perpetual national faction.

"The hordes of every faubourg now paraded in this new democratic livery. Even some of them, who were in the actual service of the Court, made no scruple of decorating themselves thus, in the very face of their Sovereign. The King complained, but the answer made to him was that the nation commanded.

"The very first time Their Majesties went to the royal chapel, after the embodying of the troops with the national guards, all the persons belonging to it were accoutred in the national uniform. The Queen was highly incensed, and deeply affected at this insult offered to the King's authority by the persons employed in the sacred occupations of the Church. 'Such persons,' said Her Majesty, 'would, I had hoped, have been the last to interfere with politics.' She was about to order all those who preferred their uniforms to their employments to be discharged from the King's service; but my advice, coupled with that of Barnave, dissuaded her from executing so dangerous a threat. On being assured that those, perhaps, who might be selected to replace the offenders might refuse the service, if not allowed the same ridiculous prerogatives, and thus expose Their Royal Majesties to double mortification, the Queen seemed satisfied, and no more was said upon the subject, except to an Italian soprano, to

whom the King signified his displeasure at his singing a 'salva regina' in the dress of a grenadier of the new faction.

The singer took the hint and never again intruded his uniform into the chapel.

"Necker, notwithstanding the enthusiasm his return produced upon the people, felt mortified in having lost the confidence of the King. He came to me, exclaiming that, unless Their Majesties distinguished him by some mark of their royal favour, his influence must be lost with the National Assembly. He perceived, he said, that the councils of the King were more governed by the advice of the Queen's favourite, the Abbe Vermond, than by his (Necker's). He begged I would assure Her Majesty that Vermond was quite as obnoxious to the people as the Duchesse de Polignac had ever been; for it was generally known that Her Majesty was completely guided by him, and, therefore, for her own safety and the tranquillity of national affairs, he humbly suggested the prudence of sending him from the Court, at least for a time.

"I was petrified at hearing a Minister dare presume thus to dictate the line of conduct which the Queen of France, his Sovereign, should pursue with respect to her most private servants. Such was my indignation at this cruel wish to dismiss every object of her choice, especially one from whom, owing to long habits of intimacy since her childhood, a separation would be rendered, by her present situation, peculiarly cruel, that nothing but the circumstances in which the Court then stood could have given me patience to listen to him.

"I made no answer. Upon my silence, Necker subjoined, 'You must perceive, Princess, that I am actuated for the general good of the nation.'

"'And I hope, monsieur, for the prerogatives of the monarchy also,' replied I.

"'Certainly,' said Necker. 'But if Their Majesties continue to be guided by others, and will not follow my advice, I cannot answer for the consequences.'

"I assured the Minister that I would be the faithful bearer of his commission, however unpleasant.

"Knowing the character of the Queen, in not much relishing being dictated to with respect to her conduct in relation to the persons of her household, especially the Abbe Vermond, and aware, at the same time, of her dislike to Necker, who thus undertook to be her director, I felt rather awkward in being the medium of the Minister's suggestions. But what was my surprise, on finding her prepared, and totally indifferent as to the privation.

"'I foresaw,' replied Her Majesty, 'that Vermond would become odious to the present order of things, merely because he had been a faithful servant, and long attached to my interest; but you may tell M. Necker that the Abbe leaves Versailles this very night, by my express order, for Vienna.'

"If the proposal of Necker astonished me, the Queen's reception of it astonished me still more. What a lesson is this for royal favourites! The man who had been her tutor, and who, almost from her childhood, never left her, the constant confidant for fifteen or sixteen years, was now sent off without a seeming regret.

"I doubt not, however, that the Queen had some very powerful secret motive for the sudden change in her conduct towards the Abbe, for she was ever just in all her concerns, even to her avowed enemies; but I was happy that she seemed to express no particular regret at the Minister's suggested policy. I presume, from the result, that I myself had overrated the influence of the Abbe over the mind of his royal pupil; that he had by no means the sway imputed to him; and that Marie Antoinette merely considered him as the necessary instrument of her private correspondence, which he had wholly managed.

[The truth is, Her Majesty had already taken leave of the Abbe, in the presence of the King, unknown to the Princess; or, more

properly, the Abbe had taken an affectionate leave of them.]

"But a circumstance presently occurred which aroused Her Majesty from this calmness and indifference. The King came in to inform her that La Fayette, during the night, had caused the guards to desert from the palace of Versailles.

"The effect on her of this intelligence was like the lightning which precedes a loud clap of thunder.

Everything that followed was perfectly in character, and shook every nerve of the royal authority.

"Thus,' exclaimed Marie Antoinette, 'thus, Sire, have you humiliated yourself, in condescending to go to Paris, without having accomplished the object. You have not regained the confidence of your subjects. Oh, how bitterly do I deplore the loss of that confidence! It exists no longer. Alas! when will it be restored!'

"The French guards, indeed, had been in open insurrection through the months of June and July, and all that could be done was to preserve one single company of grenadiers, by means of their commander, the Baron de Leval, faithful to their colours. This company had now been influenced by General La Fayette to desert and join their companions, who had enrolled themselves in the Paris national guard.

"Messieurs de Bouille and de Luxembourg being interrogated by the Queen respecting the spirit of the troops under their immediate command, M. de Bouille answered, Madame, I should be very sorry to be compelled to undertake any internal operation with men who have been seduced from their allegiance, and are daily paid by a faction which aims at the overthrow of its legitimate Sovereign. I would not answer for a man that has been in the neighbourhood of the seditious national troops, or that has read the inflammatory discussions of the National Assembly. If Your Majesty and the King wish well to the nation—I am sorry to say it—its happiness depends on your quitting immediately the scenes of riot and placing yourselves in a situation to treat with the National Assembly on equal terms, whereby the King may be unbiassed and unfettered by a compulsive, overbearing mob; and this can only be achieved by your flying to a place of safety. That you may find such a place, I will answer with my life!'

"Yes,' said M. de Luxembourg, 'I think we may both safely answer that, in such a case, you will find a few Frenchmen ready to risk a little to save all!' And both concurred that there was no hope of salvation for the King or country but through the resolution they advised.

"This,' said the Queen, 'will be a very difficult task. His Majesty, I fear, will never consent to leave France.'

"Then, Madame,' replied they, 'we can only regret that we have nothing to offer but our own perseverance in the love and service of our King and his oppressed family, to whom we deplore we can now be useful only with our feeble wishes.'

"Well, gentlemen,' answered Her Majesty, 'you must not despair of better prospects. I will take an early opportunity of communicating your loyal sentiments to the King, and will hear his opinion on the subject before I give you a definite answer. I thank you, in the name of His Majesty, as well as on my own account, for your good intentions towards us.'

"Scarcely had these gentlemen left the palace, when a report prevailed that the King, his family, and Ministers, were about to withdraw to some fortified situation. It was also industriously rumoured that, as soon as they were in safety, the National Assembly would be forcibly dismissed, as the Parliament had been by Louis XIV. The reports gained universal belief when it became known that the King had ordered the Flanders regiment to Versailles.

"The National Assembly now daily watched the royal power more and more assiduously. New sacrifices of the prerogatives of the nobles were incessantly proposed by them to the King.

When His Majesty told the Queen that he had been advised by Necker to sanction the abolition of the privileged nobility, and that all distinctions, except the order of the Holy Ghost to himself and the Dauphin, were also annihilated by the Assembly, even to the order of Maria Theresa, which she could no longer wear, 'These, Sire,' answered she, in extreme anguish, 'are trifles, so far as they regard myself. I do not think I have twice worn the order of Maria Theresa since my arrival in this once happy country. I need it not. The immortal memory of her who gave me being is engraven on my heart; that I shall wear forever, none can wrest it from me. But what grieves me to the soul is your having sanctioned these decrees of the National Assembly upon the mere 'ipse dixit' of M. Necker.'

"I have only, given my sanction to such as I thought most necessary to tranquilise the minds of those who doubted my sincerity; but I have withheld it from others, which, for the good of my, people, require maturer consideration. On these, in a full Council, and in your presence, I shall again deliberate.'

"Oh, said the Queen, with tears in her eyes, could but the people hear you, and know, once for all, how to appreciate the goodness of your heart, as I do now, they would cast themselves at your feet, and supplicate your forgiveness for having shown such ingratitude to your paternal interest for their welfare!'

"But this unfortunate refusal to sanction all the decrees sent by the National Assembly, though it proceeded from the best motives, produced the worst effects. Duport, De Lameth, and Barnave well knew the troubles such a course must create. Of this they forewarned His Majesty, before any measure was laid before him for approval. They cautioned him not to trifle with the deputies. They assured him that half measures would only rouse suspicion. They enforced the necessity of uniform assentation, in order to lull the Mirabeau party, who were canvassing for a majority to set up D'ORLEANS, to whose interest Mirabeau and his myrmidons were then devoted. The scheme of Duport, De Lameth, and Barnave was to thwart and weaken the Mirabeau and Orleans faction, by gradually persuading them, in consequence of the King's compliance with whatever the Assembly exacted, that they could do no better than to let him into a share of the executive power; for now nothing was left to His Majesty but responsibility, while the privileges of grace and justice had become merely nominal, with the one dangerous exception of the veto, to which he could never have recourse without imminent peril to his cause and to himself.

"Unfortunately for His Majesty's interest, he was too scrupulous to act, even through momentary policy, distinctly against his conscience. When he gave way, it was with reluctance, and often with an avowal, more or less express, that he only complied with necessity against conviction. His very sincerity made him appear the reverse. His adherents consequently dwindled, while the Orleans faction became immeasurably augmented.

"In the midst of these perplexities, an Austrian courier was stopped with despatches from Prince Kaunitz. These, though unsought for on the part of Her Majesty, though they contained a friendly advice to her to submit to the circumstances of the times, and though, luckily, they were couched in terms favourable to the Constitution, showed the mob that there was a correspondence with Vienna, carried on by the Queen, and neither Austria nor the Queen were deemed the friends either of the people or of the Constitution. To have received the letters was enough for the faction.

"Affairs were now ripening gradually into something like a crisis, when the Flanders regiment arrived. The note of preparation had been sounded. 'Let us go to Versailles, and bring the King away from his evil counsellors,' was already in the mouths of the Parisians.

"In the meantime, Dumourier, who had been leagued with the Orleans faction, became disgusted with it. He knew the deep schemes of treason which were in train against the Royal Family, and, in disguise, sought the Queen at

Versailles, and had an interview with Her Majesty in my presence. He assured her that an abominable insurrection was ripe for explosion among the mobs of the faubourgs; gave her the names of the leaders, who had received money to promote its organisation; and warned her that the massacre of the Royal Family was the object of the manoeuvre, for the purpose of declaring the Duke of Orleans the constitutional King; that he was to be proclaimed by Mirabeau, who had already received a considerable sum in advance, for distribution among the populace, to ensure their support; and that Mirabeau, in return for his co-operation, was to be created a Duke, with the office of Prime Minister and Secretary of State, and to have the framing of the Constitution, which was to be modelled from that of Great Britain. It was farther concerted that D'ORLEANS was to show himself in the midst of the confusion, and the crown to be conferred upon him by public acclamation.

"On his knees Dumourier implored Her Majesty to regard his voluntary discovery of this infamous and diabolical plot as a proof of his sincere repentance. He declared he came disinterestedly to offer himself as a sacrifice to save her, the King, and her family from the horrors then threatening their lives, from the violence of an outrageous mob of regicides; he called God to witness that he was actuated by no other wish than to atone for his error, and die in their defence; he looked for no reward beyond the King's forgiveness of his having joined the Orleans faction; he never had any view in joining that faction but that of aiding the Duke, for the good of his country, in the reform of ministerial abuses, and strengthening the royal authority by the salutary laws of the National Assembly; but he no sooner discovered that impure schemes of personal aggrandisement gave the real impulse to these pretended reformers than he forsook their unholy course. He supplicated Her Majesty to lose no time, but to allow him to save her from the destruction to which she would inevitably be exposed; that he was ready to throw himself at the King's feet, to implore his forgiveness also, and to assure him of his profound penitence, and his determination to renounce forever the factious Orleans party.

"As Her Majesty would not see any of those who offered themselves, except in my presence, I availed myself, in this instance, of the opportunity it gave me by enforcing the arguments of Dumourier. But all I could say, all the earnest representations to be deduced from this critical crisis, could not prevail with her, even so far as to persuade her to temporise with Dumourier, as she had done with many others on similar occasions. She was deaf and inexorable. She treated all he had said as the effusion of an overheated imagination, and told him she had no faith in traitors. Dumourier remained upon his knees while she was replying, as if stupefied; but at the word traitor he started and roused himself; and then, in a state almost of madness, seized the Queen's dress, exclaiming, 'Allow yourself to be persuaded before it is too late! Let not your misguided prejudice against me hurry you to your own and your children's destruction; let it not get the better, Madame, of your good sense and reason; the fatal moment is near; it is at hand!' Upon this, turning, he addressed himself to me.

"'Oh, Princess,' he cried, 'be her guardian angel, as you have hitherto been her only friend, and use your never-failing influence. I take God once more to witness, that I am sincere in all I have said; that all I have disclosed is true. This will be the last time I shall have it in my power to be of any essential service to you, Madame, and my Sovereign. The National Assembly will put it out of my power for the future, without becoming a traitor to my country.'

"'Rise, monsieur,' said the Queen, 'and serve your country better than you have served your King!'

"'Madame, I obey.'

"When he was about to leave the room, I again, with tears, besought Her Majesty not to let him depart thus, but to give him some hope, that, after reflection, she might perhaps endeavour to soothe the King's anger. But in vain. He withdrew very much affected. I even ventured, after his departure, to intercede for his recall.

"'He has pledged himself,' said I, 'to save you, Madame !'

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"My dear Princess,' replied the Queen, 'the goodness of your own heart will not allow you to have sinister ideas of others. This man is like all of the same stamp. They are all traitors; and will only hurry us the sooner, if we suffer ourselves to be deceived by them, to an ignominious death! I seek no safety for myself.'

"But he offered to serve the King also, Madame.'

"I am not,' answered Her Majesty, 'Henrietta of France. I will never stoop to ask a pension of the murderers of my husband; nor will I leave the King, my son, or my adopted country, or even meanly owe my existence to wretches who have destroyed the dignity of the Crown and trampled under foot the most ancient monarchy in Europe! Under its ruins they will bury their King and myself. To owe our safety to them would be more hateful than any death they can prepare for us'

"While the Queen was in this state of agitation, a note was presented to me with a list of the names of the officers of the Flanders regiment, requesting the honour of an audience of the Queen.

"The very idea of seeing the Flanders officers flushed Her Majesty's countenance with an ecstasy of joy. She said she would retire to compose herself, and receive them in two hours.

"The Queen saw the officers in her private cabinet, and in my presence. They were presented to her by me. They told Her Majesty that, though they had changed their paymaster, they had not changed their allegiance to their Sovereign or herself, but were ready to defend both with their lives. They placed one hand on the hilt of their swords, and, solemnly lifting the other up to Heaven, swore that the weapons should never be wielded but for the defence of the King and Queen, against all foes, whether foreign or domestic.

"This unexpected loyalty burst on us like the beautiful rainbow, after a tempest, by the dawn of which we are taught to believe the world is saved from a second deluge.

"The countenance of Her Majesty brightened over the gloom which had oppressed her, like the heavenly sun dispersing threatening clouds, and making the heart of the poor mariner bound with joy. Her eyes spoke her secret rapture. It was evident she felt even unusual dignity in the presence of these noble-hearted warriors, when comparing them with him whom she had just dismissed. She graciously condescended to speak to every one of them, and one and all were enchanted with her affability.

"She said she was no longer the Queen who could compensate loyalty and valour; but the brave soldier found his reward in the fidelity of his service, which formed the glory of his immortality. She assured them she had ever been attached to the army, and would make it her study to recommend every individual, meriting attention, to the King.

"Loud bursts of repeated acclamations and shouts of 'Vive la reine!' instantly followed her remarks. She thanked the officers most graciously; and, fearing to commit herself, by saying more, took her leave, attended by me; but immediately sent me back, to thank them again in her name.

"They departed, shouting as they went, 'Vive la reine! Vive la Princesse! Vive le roi, le Dauphin, et toute la famille royale!'

"When the National Assembly saw the officers going to and coming from the King's palace with such demonstrations of enthusiasm, they took alarm, and the regicide faction hastened on the crisis for which it had been longing. It was by no means unusual for the chiefs of regiments, destined to form part of the garrison of a royal residence, to be received by the Sovereign on their arrival, and certainly only natural that they should be so; but in times of excitement trifling events have powerful effects.

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"But if the National Assembly began to tremble for their own safety, and had already taken secret measures to secure it, by conspiring to put an instantaneous end to the King's power, against which they had so long been plotting, when the Flanders regiment arrived, it may be readily conceived what must have been their emotions on the fraternisation of this regiment with the body-guard, and on the scene to which the dinner, given to the former troops by the latter, so unpremeditatedly led.

"On the day of this fatal dinner I remarked to the Queen, 'What a beautiful sight it must be to behold, in these troublesome times, the happy union of such a meeting!'

"'It must indeed!' replied the King; 'and the pleasure I feel in knowing it would be redoubled had I the privilege of entertaining the Flanders regiment, as the body-guards are doing.'

"'Heaven forbid!' cried Her Majesty; 'Heaven forbid that you should think of such a thing! The Assembly would never forgive us!'

"After we had dined, the Queen sent to the Marquise de Tourzel for the Dauphin. When he came, the Queen told him about her having seen the brave officers on their arrival; and how gaily those good officers had left the palace, declaring they would die rather than suffer any harm to come to him, or his papa and mamma; and that at that very time they were all dining at the theatre.

"'Dining in the theatre, mamma?' said the young, Prince. 'I never heard of people dining in a theatre!'

"'No, my dear child,' replied Her Majesty, 'it is not generally allowed; but they are doing so, because the body-guards are giving a dinner to this good Flanders regiment; and the Flanders regiment are so brave that the guards chose the finest place they could think of to entertain them in, to show how much they like them; that is the reason why they are dining in the gay, painted theatre.'

"'Oh, mamma!' exclaimed the Dauphin, whom the Queen adored, 'Oh, papa!' cried he, looking at the King, 'how I should like to see them!'

"'Let us go and satisfy the child!' said the King, instantly starting up from his seat.

"The Queen took the Dauphin by the hand, and they proceeded to the theatre. It was all done in a moment. There was no premeditation on the part of the King or Queen; no invitation on the part of the officers. Had I been asked, I should certainly have followed the Queen; but just as the King rose, I left the room. The Prince being eager to see the festival, they set off immediately, and when I returned to the apartment they were gone. Not being very well, I remained where I was; but most of the household had already followed Their Majesties.

"On the Royal Family making their appearance, they were received with the most unequivocal shouts of general enthusiasm by the troops. Intoxicated with the pleasure of seeing Their Majesties among them, and overheated with the juice of the grape, they gave themselves up to every excess of joy, which the circumstances and the situation of Their Majesties were so well calculated to inspire. 'Oh! Richard! oh, mon roi!' was sung, as well as many other loyal songs. The healths of the King, Queen, and Dauphin were drunk, till the regiments were really inebriated with the mingled influence of wine and shouting vivas!

"When the royal party retired, they were followed by all the military to the very palace doors, where they sung, danced, embraced each other, and gave way to all the frantic demonstrations of devotedness to the royal cause which the excitement of the scene and the table could produce. Throngs, of course, collected to get near the Royal Family. Many persons in the rush were trampled on, and one or two men, it was said, crushed to death. The Dauphin and King were delighted; but the Queen, in giving the Princesse Elizabeth and myself an account of the festival, foresaw the fatal result which would ensue; and deeply deplored the marked enthusiasm with which they

had been greeted and followed by the military.

"There was one more military spectacle, a public breakfast which took place on the second of October. Though none of the Royal Family appeared at it, it was no less injurious to their interests than the former. The enemies of the Crown spread reports all over Paris, that the King and Queen had manoeuvred to pervert the minds of the troops so far as to make them declare against the measures of the National Assembly. It is not likely that the Assembly, or politics, were even spoken of at the breakfast; but the report did as much mischief as the reality would have done. This was quite sufficient to encourage the D'ORLEANS and Mirabeau faction in the Assembly to the immediate execution of their long—meditated scheme, of overthrowing the monarchy.

"On the very day following, Duport, De Lameth, and Barnave sent their confidential agent to apprise the Queen that certain deputies had already fully matured a plot to remove the King, nay, to confine Her Majesty from him in a distant part of France, that her influence over his mind might no farther thwart their premeditated establishment of a Constitution.

"But others of this body, and the more powerful and subtle portion, had a deeper object, so depraved, that, even when forewarned, the Queen could not deem it possible; but of which she was soon convinced by their infernal acts.

"The riotous faction, for the purpose of accelerating this denouement, had contrived, by buying up all the corn and sending it out of the country, to reduce the populace to famine, and then to make it appear that the King and Queen had been the monopolisers, and the extravagance of Marie Antoinette and her largesses to Austria and her favourites, the cause. The plot was so deeply laid that the wretches who, undertook to effect the diabolical scheme were metamorphosed in the Queen's livery, so that all the odium might fall on her unfortunate Majesty. At the head of the commission of monopolisers was Luckner, who had taken a violent dislike to the Queen, in consequence of his having been refused some preferment, which he attributed to her influence. Mirabeau, who was still in the background, and longing to take a more prominent part, helped it on as much as possible. Pinet, who had been a confidential agent of the Duc d'Orleans, himself told the Duc de Penthièvre that D'ORLEANS had monopolised all the corn. This communication, and the activity of the Count Fersen, saved France, and Paris in particular, from perishing for the want of bread. Even at the moment of the abominable masquerade, in which Her Majesty's agents were made to appear the enemies who were starving the French people, out of revenge for the checks imposed by them on the royal authority, it was well known to all the Court that both Her Majesty and the King were grieved to the soul at their piteous want, and distributed immense sums for the relief of the poor sufferers, as did the Duc de Penthièvre, the Duchesse d'Orleans, the Prince de Conde, the Duc and Duchesse de Bourbon, and others; but these acts were done privately, while he who had created the necessity took to himself the exclusive credit of the relief, and employed thousands daily to propagate reports of his generosity. Mirabeau, then the factotum agent of the operations of the Palais Royal and its demagogues, greatly added to the support of this impression. Indeed, till undeceived afterwards, he believed it to be really the Duc d'Orleans who had succoured the people.

"I dispensed two hundred and twenty thousand livres merely to discover the names of the agents who had been employed to carry on this nefarious plot to exasperate the people against the throne by starvation imputed to the Sovereign. Though money achieved the discovery in time to clear the characters of my royal mistress and the King, the detection only followed the mischief of the crime. But even the rage thus wickedly excited was not enough to carry through the plot. In the faubourgs of Paris, where the women became furies, two hundred thousand livres were distributed ere the horror could be completely exposed.

"But it is time for me to enter upon the scenes to which all the intrigues I have detailed were intended to lead—the removal of the Royal Family from Versailles.

"My heart sickens when I retrace these moments of anguish. The point to which they are to conduct us yet remains one of the mysteries of fate."

SECTION VI.

"Her Majesty had been so thoroughly lulled into security by the enthusiasm of the regiments at Versailles that she treated all the reports from Paris with contempt. Nothing was apprehended from that quarter, and no preparations were consequently made for resistance or protection. She was at Little Trianon when the news of the approach of the desolating torrent arrived. The King was hunting. I presented to her the commandant of the troops at Versailles, who assured Her Majesty that a murderous faction, too powerful, perhaps, for resistance, was marching principally against her royal person, with La Fayette at their head, and implored her to put herself and valuables in immediate safety; particularly all her correspondence with the Princes, emigrants, and foreign Courts, if she had no means of destroying them.

"Though the Queen was somewhat awakened to the truth by this earnest appeal, yet she still considered the extent of the danger as exaggerated, and looked upon the representation as partaking, in a considerable degree, of the nature of all reports in times of popular commotion.

"Presently, however, a more startling omen appeared, in a much milder but ambiguous communication from General La Fayette. He stated that he was on his march from Paris with the national guard, and part of the people, coming to make remonstrances; but he begged Her Majesty to rest assured that no disorder would take place, and that he himself would vouch that there should be none.

"The King was instantly sent for to the heights of Meudon, while the Queen set off from Little Trianon, with me, for Versailles.

"The first movements were commenced by a few women, or men in women's clothes, at the palace gates of Versailles. The guards refused them entrance, from an order they had received to that effect from La Fayette. The consternation produced by their resentment was a mere prelude to the horrid tragedy that succeeded.

"The information now pouring in from different quarters increased Her Majesty's alarm every moment. The order of La Fayette, not to let the women be admitted, convinced her that there was something in agitation, which his unexplained letter made her sensible was more to be feared than if he had signified the real situation and danger to which she was exposed.

"A messenger was forthwith despatched for M. La Fayette, and another, by order of the Queen, for M. de St. Priest, to prepare a retreat for the Royal Family, as the Parisian mob's advance could no longer be doubted. Everything necessary was accordingly got ready.

"La Fayette now arrived at Versailles in obedience to the message, and, in the presence of all the Court and Ministers, assured the King that he could answer for the Paris army, at the head of which he intended to march, to prevent disorders; and advised the admission of the women into the palace, who, he said, had nothing to propose but a simple memorial relative to the scarcity of bread.

"The Queen said to him, 'Remember, monsieur, you have pledged your honour for the King's safety.'

"'And I hope, Madame, to be able to redeem it.'

"He then left Versailles to return to his post with the army.

"A limited number of the women were at length admitted; and so completely did they seem satisfied with the reception they met with from the King, as, in all appearance, to have quieted their riotous companions. The language of menace and remonstrance had changed into shouts of 'Vive le roi!' The apprehensions of Their Majesties were subdued; and the whole system of operation, which had been previously adopted for the Royal Family's quitting Versailles, was, in consequence, unfortunately changed.

"But the troops, that had been hitherto under arms for the preservation of order, in going back to their hotel, were assailed and fired at by the mob.

"The return of the body-guards, thus insulted in going to and coming from the palace, caused the Queen and the Court to resume the resolution of instantly retiring from Versailles; but it was now too late. They were stopped by the municipality and the mob of the city, who were animated to excess against the Queen by one of the bass singers of the French opera. —[La Haise]

"Every hope of tranquillity was now shaken by the hideous howlings which arose from all quarters. Intended flight had become impracticable. Atrocious expressions were levelled against the Queen, too shocking for repetition. I shudder when I reflect to what a degree of outrage the 'poissardes' of Paris were excited, to express their abominable designs on the life of that most adored of Sovereigns.

"Early in the evening Her Majesty came to my apartment, in company with one of her female attendants. She was greatly agitated. She brought all her jewels and a considerable quantity of papers, which she had begun to collect together immediately on her arrival from Trianon, as the commandant had recommended.

[Neither Her Majesty nor the Princess ever returned to Versailles after the sixth of that fatal October! Part of the papers, brought by the Queen to the apartment of the Princess, were tacked by me on two of my petticoats; the under one three fold, one on the other, and outside; and the upper one, three or four fold double on the inside; and thus I left the room with this paper undergarment, which put me to no inconvenience. Returning to the Princess, I was ordered to go to Lisle, there take the papers from their hiding-place, and deliver them, with others, to the same person who received the box, of which mention will be found in another part of this work. I was not to take any letters, and was to come back immediately.

As I was leaving the apartment Her Majesty said something to Her Highness which I did not hear. The Princess turned round very quickly, and kissing me on the forehead, said in Italian, "My dear little Englishwoman, for Heaven's sake be careful of yourself, for I should never forgive myself if any misfortune were to befall you."

"Nor I," said Her Majesty.]

"Notwithstanding the fatigue and agitation which the Queen must have suffered during the day, and the continued threats, horrible howlings, and discharge of firearms during the night, she had courage enough to visit the bedchambers of her children and then to retire to rest in her own.

"But her rest was soon fearfully interrupted. Horrid cries at her chamber door of 'Save the Queen! Save the Queen! or she will be assassinated!' aroused her. The faithful guardian who gave the alarm was never heard more. He was murdered in her defence! Her Majesty herself only escaped the poignards of immediate death by flying to the King's apartment, almost in the same state as she lay in bed, not having had time to screen herself with any covering but what was casually thrown over her by the women who assisted her in her flight; while one well acquainted with the palace is said to have been seen busily engaged in encouraging the regicides who thus sought

her for midnight murder. The faithful guards who defended the entrance to the room of the intended victim of these desperadoes took shelter in the room itself upon her leaving it, and were alike threatened with instant death by the grenadier assassins for having defeated them in their fiend-like purpose; they were, however, saved by the generous interposition and courage of two gentlemen, who, offering themselves as victims in their place, thus brought about a temporary accommodation between the regular troops and the national guard.

"All this time General La Fayette never once appeared. It is presumed that he himself had been deceived as to the horrid designs of the mob, and did not choose to show himself, finding it impossible to check the impetuosity of the horde he had himself brought to action, in concurring to countenance their first movements from Paris. Posterity will decide how far he was justified in pledging himself for the safety of the Royal Family, while he was heading a riotous mob, whose atrocities were guaranteed from punishment or check by the sanction of his presence and the faith reposed in his assurance. Was he ignorant, or did he only pretend to be so, of the incalculable mischief inevitable from giving power and a reliance on impunity to such an unreasoning mass? By any military operation, as commander-in-chief, he might have turned the tide. And why did he not avail himself of that authority with which he had been invested by the National Assembly, as the delegates of the nation, for the general safety and guardianship of the people? for the people, of whom he was the avowed protector, were themselves in peril: it was only the humanity (or rather, in such a crisis, the imbecility) of Louis XVI. that prevented them from being fired on; and they would inevitably have been sacrificed, and that through the want of policy in their leader, had not this mistaken mercy of the King prevented his guards from offering resistance to the murderers of his brave defenders!

"The cry of 'Queen! Queen!' now resounded from the lips of the cannibals stained with the blood of her faithful guards. She appeared, shielded by filial affection, between her two innocent children, the threatened orphans! But the sight of so much innocence and heroic courage paralysed the hands uplifted for their massacre!

"A tiger voice cried out, 'No children!' The infants were hurried away from the maternal side, only to witness the author of their being offering up herself, eagerly and instantly, to the sacrifice, an ardent and delighted victim to the hoped-for preservation of those, perhaps, orphans, dearer to her far than life! Her resignation and firm step in facing the savage cry that was thundering against her, disarmed the ferocious beasts that were hungering and roaring for their prey!

"Mirabeau, whose immense head and gross figure could not be mistaken, is said to have been the first among the mob to have sonorously chanted, 'To Paris!' His myrmidons echoed and re-echoed the cry upon the signal. He then hastened to the Assembly to contravene any measures the King might ask in opposition. The riots increasing, the Queen said to His Majesty:

"'Oh, Sire! why am I not animated with the courage of Maria Theresa? Let me go with my children to the National Assembly, as she did to the Hungarian Senate, with my Imperial brother, Joseph, in her arms and Leopold in her womb, when Charles the Seventh of Bavaria had deprived her of all her German dominions, and she had already written to the Duchesse de Lorraine to prepare her an asylum, not knowing where she should be delivered of the precious charge she was then bearing; but I, like the mother of the Gracchi, like Cornelia, more esteemed for my birth than for my marriage, am the wife of the King of France, and I see we shall be murdered in our beds for the want of our own exertions!'

"The King remained as if paralysed and stupefied, and made no answer. The Princesse Elizabeth then threw herself at the Queen's feet, imploring her to consent to go to Paris.

"'To Paris!' exclaimed Her Majesty.

"'Yes, Madame,' said the King. 'I will put an end to these horrors; and tell the people so.'

"On this, without waiting for the Queen's answer, he opened the balcony, and told the populace he was ready to depart with his family.

"This sudden change caused a change equally sudden in the rabble mob. All shouted, 'Vive le roi! Vive la nation!'

"Re-entering the room from the window, the King said, 'It is done. This affair will soon be terminated.'

"'And with it,' said the Queen, 'the monarchy!'

"'Better that, Madame, than running the risk, as I did some hours since, of seeing you and my children sacrificed!'

"'That, Sire, will be the consequence of our not having left Versailles. Whatever you determine, it is my duty to obey. As to myself, I am resigned to my fate.' On this she burst into a flood of tears. 'I only feel for your humiliated state, and for the safety of our children.'

"The Royal Family departed without having consulted any of the Ministers, military or civil, or the National Assembly, by whom they were followed.

"Scarcely had they arrived at Paris when the Queen recollected that she had taken with her no change of dress, either for herself or her children, and they were obliged to ask permission of the National Assembly to allow them to send for their different wardrobes.

"What a situation for an absolute King and Queen, which, but a few hours previous, they had been!

"I now took up my residence with Their Majesties at the Tuileries,—that odious Tuileries, which I can not name but with horror, where the malignant spirit of rebellion has, perhaps, dragged us to an untimely death!

"Monsieur and Madame had another residence. Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, and La Fayette became the royal jailers.

"The Princesse Elizabeth and myself could not but deeply deplore, when we saw the predictions of Dumourier so dreadfully confirmed by the result, that Her Majesty should have so slighted his timely information, and scorned his penitence. But delicacy bade us lament in silence; and, while we grieved over her present sufferings, we could not but mourn the loss of a barrier against future aggression, in the rejection of this general's proffered services.

"It will be remembered, that Dumourier in his disclosure declared that the object of this commotion was to place the Duc d'Orleans upon the throne, and that Mirabeau, who was a prime mover, was to share in the profits of the usurpation.

[But the heart of the traitor Duke failed him at the important crisis. Though he was said to have been recognised through a vulgar disguise, stimulating the assassins to the attempted murder of Her Majesty, yet, when the moment to show himself had arrived, he was nowhere to be found. The most propitious moment for the execution of the foul crime was lost, and with it the confidence of his party. Mirabeau was disgusted. So far from wishing longer to offer him the crown, he struck it forever from his head, and turned against him. He openly protested he would no longer set up traitors who were cowards.]

"Soon after this event, Her Majesty, in tears, came to tell me that the King, having had positive proof of the agency of the Duc d'Orleans in the riots of Versailles, had commenced some proceedings, which had given the

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Duke the alarm, and exiled him to Villers–Cotterets. The Queen added that the King's only object had been to assure the general tranquillity, and especially her own security, against whose life the conspiracy seemed most distinctly levelled.

"Oh, Princess!" continued Her Majesty, in a flood of tears, 'the King's love for me, and his wish to restore order to his people, have been our ruin! He should have struck off the head of D'ORLEANS, or overlooked his crime! Why did he not consult me before he took a step so important? I have lost a friend also in his wife! For, however criminal he may be, she loves him.'

"I assured Her Majesty that I could not think the Duchesse d'Orleans would be so inconsiderate as to withdraw her affection on that account.

"She certainly will,' replied Marie Antoinette. 'She is the affectionate mother of his children, and cannot but hate those who have been the cause of his exile. I know it will be laid to my charge, and added to the hatred the husband has so long borne me; I shall now become the object of the wife's resentment'

"In the midst of one of the paroxysms of Her Majesty's agonising agitation after leaving Versailles, for the past, the present, and the future state of the Royal Family, when the Princesse Elizabeth and myself were in vain endeavouring to calm her, a deputation was announced from the National Assembly and the City of Paris, requesting the honour of the appearance of the King and herself at the theatre.

"Is it possible, my dear Princess,' cried she, on the announcement, 'that I can enjoy any public amusement while I am still chilled with horror at the blood these people have spilled, the blood of the faithful defenders of our lives? I can forgive them, but I cannot so easily forget it.'

"Count Fersen and the Austrian Ambassador now entered, both anxious to know Her Majesty's intentions with regard to visiting the theatre, in order to make a party to ensure her a good reception; but all their persuasions were unavailing. She thanked the deputation for their friendship; but at the same time told them that her mind was still too much agitated from recent scenes to receive any pleasure but in the domestic cares of her family, and that, for a time, she must decline every other amusement.

"At this moment the Spanish and English Ambassadors came to pay their respects to Her Majesty on the same subject as the others. As they entered, Count Fersen observed to the Queen, looking around:

"Courage, Madame! We are as many nations as persons in this room– English, German, Spanish, Italian, Swedish, and French; and all equally ready to form a rampart around you against aggression. All these nations will, I believe, admit that the French (bowing to the Princesse Elizabeth) are the most volatile of the six; and Your Majesty may rely on it that they will love you, now that you are more closely among them, more tenderly than ever.'

"Let me live to be convinced of that, monsieur, and my happiness will be concentrated in its demonstration.'

"Indeed, gentlemen,' said the Princesse Elizabeth, the Queen has yet had but little reason to love the French.'

"Where is our Ambassador,' said I, 'and the Neapolitan?'

"I have had the pleasure of seeing them early this morning,' replied the Queen; 'but I told them, also, that indisposition prevented my going into public. They will be at our card–party in your apartment this evening, where I hope to see these gentlemen. The only parties,' continued Her Majesty, addressing herself to the Princesse Elizabeth and the Ambassadors, 'the only parties I shall visit in future will be those of the Princesse de Lamballe, my superintendent; as, in so doing, I shall have no occasion to go out of the palace, which, from what has

happened, seems to me the only prudent course.'

"Come, come, Madame,' exclaimed the Ambassadors; I do not give way to gloomy ideas. All will yet be well.'

"I hope so,' answered Her Majesty; 'but till that hope is realized, the wounds I have suffered will make existence a burden to me!'

"The Duchesse de Luynes, like many others, had been a zealous partisan of the new order of things, and had expressed herself with great indiscretion in the presence of the Queen. But the Duchess was brought to her senses when she saw herself, and all the mad, democratical nobility, under the overpowering weight of Jacobinism, deprived of every privileged prerogative and levelled and stripped of hereditary distinction.

"She came to me one day, weeping, to beg I would make use of my good offices in her favour with the Queen, whom she was grieved that she had so grossly offended by an unguarded speech.

"On my knees,' continued the Duchess, I am I ready to supplicate the pardon of Her Majesty. I cannot live without her forgiveness. One of my servants has opened my eyes, by telling me that the Revolution can make a Duchess a beggar, but cannot make a beggar a Duchess.'

"Unfortunately,' said I, 'if some of these faithful servants had been listened to, they would still be such, and not now our masters; but I can assure you, Duchess, that the Queen has long since forgiven you. See! Her Majesty comes to tell you so herself.'

"The Duchess fell upon her knees. The Queen, with her usual goodness of heart, clasped her in her arms, and, with tears in her eyes, said:

"We have all of us need of forgiveness. Our errors and misfortunes are general. Think no more of the past; but let us unite in not sinning for the future:

"Heaven knows how many sins I have to atone for,' replied the Duchess, 'from the follies of youth; but now, at an age of discretion and in adversity, oh, how bitterly do I reproach myself for my past levities! But,' continued she, 'has Your Majesty really forgiven me?'

"As I hope to be forgiven!' exclaimed Marie Antoinette. 'No penitent in the sight of God is more acceptable than the one who makes a voluntary sacrifice by confessing error. Forget and forgive is the language of our Blessed Redeemer. I have adopted it in regard to my enemies, and surely my friends have a right to claim it. Come, Duchess, I will conduct you to the King and Elizabeth, who will rejoice in the recovery of one of our lost sheep; for we sorely feel the diminution of the flock that once surrounded us!'

"At this token of kindness, the Duchess was so much overcome that she fell at the Queen's feet motionless, and it was some time before she recovered.

"From the moment of Her Majesty's arrival at Paris from Versailles, she solely occupied herself with the education of her children,—excepting when she resorted to my parties, the only ones, as she had at first determined, which she ever honoured with her attendance. , In order to discover, as far as possible, the sentiments of certain persons, I gave almost general invitations, whereby, from her amiable manners and gracious condescension, she became very popular. By these means I hoped to replace Her Majesty in the good estimation of her numerous visitors; but, notwithstanding every exertion, she could not succeed in dispelling the gloom with which the Revolution had overcast all her former gaiety. Though treated with ceremonious respect, she missed the cordiality to which she had been so long accustomed, and which she so much prized. From the great emigration of the higher classes of the nobility, the societies themselves were no longer what they had been. Madame Necker

and Madame de Stael were pretty regular visitors. But the most agreeable company had lost its zest for Marie Antoinette; and she was really become afraid of large assemblies, and scarcely ever saw a group of persons collected together without fearing some plot against the King.

"Indeed, it is a peculiarity which has from the first marked, and still continues to distinguish, the whole conduct and distrust of my royal mistress, that it never operates to create any fears for herself, but invariably refers to the safety of His Majesty.

"I had enlarged my circle and made my parties extensive, solely to relieve the oppressed spirits of the Queen; but the very circumstance which induced me to make them so general soon rendered them intolerable to her; for the conversations at last became solely confined to the topics of the Revolution, a subject frequently the more distressing from the presence of the sons of the Duc d'Orleans. Though I loved my sister-in-law and my nephews, I could not see them without fear, nor could my royal mistress be at ease with them, or in the midst of such distressing indications as perpetually intruded upon her, even beneath my roof, of the spirit which animated the great body of the people for the propagation of anti-monarchical principles.

"My parties were, consequently, broken up; and the Queen ceased to be seen in society. Then commenced the unconquerable power over her of those forebodings which have clung to her with such pertinacity ever since.

"I observed that Her Majesty would often indulge in the most melancholy predictions long before the fatal discussion took place in the Assembly respecting the King's abdication. The daily insolence with which she saw His Majesty's authority deprived forever of the power of accomplishing what he had most at heart for the good of his people gave her more anguish than the outrages so frequently heaped upon herself; but her misery was wrought up to a pitch altogether unutterable, whenever she saw those around her suffer for their attachment to her in her misfortunes.

"The Princesse Elizabeth has been from the beginning an unwavering comforter. She still flatters Marie Antoinette that Heaven will spare her for better times to reward our fidelity and her own agonies. The pious consolations of Her Highness have never failed to make the most serious impression on our wretched situation. Indeed, each of us strives to pour the balm of comfort into the wounded hearts of the others, while not one of us, in reality, dares to flatter herself with what we all so ardently wish for in regard to our fellow-sufferers. Delusions, even sustained by facts, have long since been exhausted. Our only hope on this side of the grave is in our all-merciful Redeemer!"

SECTION VII.

Editors Commentary:

The reader will not, I trust, be dissatisfied at reposing for a moment from the sad story of the Princesse de Lamballe to hear some ridiculous circumstances which occurred to me individually; and which, though they form no part of the history, are sufficiently illustrative of the temper of the times.

I had been sent to England to put some letters into the postoffice for the Prince de Conde, and had just returned. The fashion then in England was a black dress, Spanish hat, and yellow satin lining, with three ostrich feathers forming the Prince of Wales's crest, and bearing his inscription, 'Ich dien,' ("I serve.") I also brought with me a white satin cloak, trimmed with white fur. This crest and motto date as far back, I believe, as the time of Edward, the Black Prince.

In this dress, I went to the French opera. Scarcely was I seated in the bog, when I heard shouts of, "En bas les couleurs de d'empereur! En bas!"

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I was very busy talking to a person in the box, and, having been accustomed to hear and see partial riots in the pit, I paid no attention; never dreaming that my poor hat and feathers, and cloak, were the cause of the commotion, till an officer in the national guard very politely knocked at the door of the box, and told me I must either take them off or leave the theatre.

There is nothing I more dislike than the being thought particular, or disposed to attract attention by dress. The moment, therefore, I found myself thus unintentionally the object of a whole theatre's disturbance, in the first impulse of indignation, I impetuously caught off the cloak and hat, and flung them into the pit, at the very faces of the rioters.

The theatre instantly rang with applause. The obnoxious articles were carefully folded up and taken to the officer of the guard, who, when I left the box, at the end of the opera, brought them to me and offered to assist me in putting them on; but I refused them with true cavalier-like loftiness, and entered my carriage without either hat or cloak.

There were many of the audience collected round the carriage at the time, who, witnessing my rejection of the insulted colours, again loudly cheered me; but insisted on the officer's placing the hat and cloak in the carriage, which drove off amidst the most violent acclamations.

Another day, as I was going to walk in the Tuileries (which I generally did after riding on horseback), the guards crossed their bayonets at the gate and forbade my entering. I asked them why. They told me no one was allowed to walk there without the national ribbon.

Now, I always had one of these national ribbons about me, from the time they were first worn; but I kept it in the inside of my riding-habit; and on that day, in particular, my supply was unusually ample, for I had on a new riding-habit, the petticoat of which was so very long and heavy that I bought a large quantity to tie round my waist, and fasten up the dress, to prevent it from falling about my feet.

However, I was determined to plague the guards for their impudence. My English beau, who was as pale as death, and knew I had the ribbon, kept pinching my arm, and whispering, "Show it, show it; zounds, madame, show it! We shall be sent to prison! show it! show it!" But I took care to keep my interrupters in parley till a sufficient mob was collected, and then I produced my colours.

The soldiers were consequently most gloriously hissed, and would have been maltreated by the mob, and sent to the guard-house by their officer, but for my intercession; on which I was again applauded all through the gardens as *La Brave Anglaise*. But my beau declared he would never go out with me again: unless I wore the ribbon on the outside of my hat, which I never did and never would do.

At that time the Queen used to occupy herself much in fancy needle-works. Knowing, from arrangements, that I was every day in a certain part of the Tuileries, Her Majesty, when she heard the shout of *La Brave Anglaise!* immediately called the *Princesse de Lamballe* to know if she had sent me on any message. Being answered in the negative, one of the pages was despatched to ascertain the meaning of the cry. The Royal Family lived in so continual a state of alarm that it was apprehended I had got into some scrape; but I had left the Tuileries before the messenger arrived, and was already with the *Princesse de Lamballe*, relating the circumstances. The Princess told Her Majesty, who graciously observed, "I am very happy that she got off so well; but caution her to be more prudent for the future. A cause, however bad, is rather aided than weakened by unreasonable displays of contempt for it. These unnecessary excitements of the popular jealousy do us no good."

I was, of course, severely reprimanded by the Princess for my frolic, though she enjoyed it of all things, and afterwards laughed most heartily.

The Princess told me, a few days after these circumstances of the national ribbon and the Austrian colours had taken place at the theatre, that some one belonging to the private correspondence at the palace had been at the French opera on the night the disturbance took place there, and, without knowing the person to whom it related, had told the whole story to the King.

The Queen and the Princesses Elizabeth and de Lamballe being present, laughed very heartily. The two latter knew it already from myself, the fountain head, but the Princesse Elizabeth said:

"Poor lady! what a fright she must have been in, to have had her things taken away from her at the theatre"

"No fright at all," said the King; "for a young woman who could act thus firmly under such an insolent outrage will always triumph over cowards, unmanly enough to abuse their advantages by insulting her. She was not a Frenchwoman, I'll answer for it."

"Oh, no, Sire. She is an Englishwoman," said the Princesse de Lamballe.

"I am glad of it," exclaimed the King; "for when she returns to England this will be a good personal specimen for the information of some of her countrymen, who have rejoiced at what they call the regeneration of the French nation; a nation once considered the most polished in Europe, but now become the most uncivil, and I wish I may never have occasion to add, the most barbarous! An insult offered, wantonly, to either sex, at any time, is the result of insubordination; but when offered to a woman, it is a direct violation of civilised hospitality, and an abuse of power which never before tarnished that government now so much the topic of abuse by the enemies of order and legitimate authority. The French Princes, it is true, have been absolute; still I never governed despotically, but always by the advice of my counsellors and Cabinet Ministers. If they have erred, my conscience is void of reproach. I wish the National Assembly may govern for the future with equal prudence, equity, and justice; but they have given a poor earnest in pulling down one fabric before they have laid the solid foundation of another. I am very happy that their agents, who, though they call themselves the guardians of public order have hitherto destroyed its course, have, in the courage of this English lady, met with some resistance to their insolence, in foolishly occupying themselves with petty matters, while those of vital import are totally neglected."

It is almost superfluous to mention that, at the epoch of which I am speaking in the Revolution, the Royal Family were in so much distrust of every one about them, and very necessarily and justly so, that none were ever confided in for affairs, however trifling, without first having their fidelity repeatedly put to the test. I was myself under this probation long before I knew that such had ever been imposed.

With the private correspondence I had already been for some time entrusted; and it was only previous to employing me on secret missions of any consequence that I was subject to the severer scrutiny. Even before I was sent abroad, great art was necessary to elude the vigilance of prying eyes in the royal circle; and, in order to render my activity available to important purposes, my connection with the Court was long kept secret. Many stratagems were devised to mislead the Arguses of the police. To this end, after the disorders of the Revolution began, I never entered the palaces but on an understood signal, for which I have been often obliged to attend many hours in the gardens of Versailles, as I had subsequently done in that of the Tuileries.

To pass the time unnoticed, I used generally to take a book, and seat myself, occupied in reading, sometimes in one spot, sometimes in another; but with my man and maid servant always within call, though never where they could be seen.

On one of these occasions, a person, though not totally masked yet sufficiently disguised to prevent my recognising his features, came behind my seat, and said he wished to speak to me. I turned round and asked his business.

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"That's coming to the point!" he answered. "Walk a little way with me, and I will tell you."

Not to excite suspicion, I walked into a more retired part of the garden, after a secret signal to my man servant, who followed me unperceived by the stranger.

"I am commissioned," said my mysterious companion, "to make you a very handsome present, if you will tell me what you are waiting for."

I laughed, and was turning from him, saying, "Is this all your business?"

"No," he replied.

"Then keep it to yourself. I am not waiting here for any one or anything; but am merely occupied in reading and killing time to the best advantage."

"Are you a poetess?"

"No."

"And scarcely a woman; for your answers are very short."

"Very likely."

"But I have something of importance to communicate——"

"That is impossible."

"But listen to me——"

"You are mistaken in your person."

"But surely you will not be so unreasonable as not to hear what I have to say?"

"I am a stranger in this country, and can have nothing of importance with one I do not know."

"You have quarrelled with your lover and are in an ill-humour."

"Perhaps so. Well! come! I believe you have guessed the cause."

"Ah! it is the fate of us all to get into scrapes! But you will soon make it up; and now let me entreat your attention to what I have to offer."

I became impatient, and called my servant.

"Madame," resumed the stranger, "I am a gentleman, and mean no harm. But I assure you, you stand in your own light. I know more about you than you think I do."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, madame, you are waiting here for an august personage."

At this last sentence, my lips laughed, while my heart trembled.

"I wish to caution you," continued he, "how you embark in plans of this sort."

"Monsieur, I repeat, you have taken me for some other person. I will no longer listen to one who is either a maniac or an officious intruder."

Upon this, the stranger bowed and left me; but I could perceive that he was not displeased with my answers, though I was not a little agitated, and longed to see Her Highness to relate to her this curious adventure.

In a few hours I did so. The Princess was perfectly satisfied with my manner of proceeding, only she thought it singular, she said, that the stranger should suspect I was there in attendance for some person of rank; and she repeated, three or four times, "I am heartily glad that you did not commit yourself by any decided answer. What sort of a man was he?"

"Very much of the gentleman; above the middle stature; and, from what I could see of his countenance, rather handsome than otherwise."

"Was he a Frenchman?"

"No. I think he spoke good French and English, with an Irish accent."

"Then I know who it is," exclaimed she. "It is Dillon: I know it from some doubts which arose between Her Majesty, Dillon, and myself, respecting sending you upon a confidential mission. Oh, come hither! come hither!" continued Her Highness, overwhelming me with kisses. "How glad, how very glad I am, that the Queen will be convinced I was not deceived in what I told Her Majesty respecting you. Take no notice of what I am telling you; but he was sent from the Queen, to tempt you into some imprudence, or to be convinced, by your not falling into the snare, that she might rely on your fidelity."

"What! doubt my fidelity?" said I.

"Oh, my dear, you must excuse Her Majesty. We live in critical times. You will be the more rewarded, and much more esteemed, for this proof of your firmness. Do you think you should know him, if you were to see him again?"

"Certainly, I should, if he were in the same disguise.

"That, I fear, will be rather difficult to accomplish. However, you shall go in your carriage and wait at the door of his sister, the Marquise of Desmond; where I will send for him to come to me at four o'clock to-morrow. In this way, you will have an opportunity of seeing him on horseback, as he always pays his morning visits riding."

I would willingly have taken a sleeping draught, and never did I wait more anxiously than for the hour of four.

I left the Princess, and, in crossing from the Carrousel to go to the Place Vendome, it rained very fast, and there glanced by me, on horseback, the same military cloak in which the stranger had been wrapped. My carriage was driving so fast that I still remained in doubt as to the wearer's person.

Next day, however, as appointed, I repaired to the place of rendezvous; and I could almost have sworn, from the height of the person who alighted from his horse, that he was my mysterious questioner.

Still, I was not thoroughly certain. I watched the Princess coming out, and followed her carriage to the Champs Elysees and told her what I thought.

"Well," replied she, "we must think no more about it; nor must it ever be mentioned to him, should you by any chance meet him."

I said I should certainly obey Her Highness.

A guilty conscience needs no accuser. A few days after I was riding on horseback in the Bois de Boulogne, when Lord Edward Fitzgerald came up to speak to me. Dillon was passing at the time, and, seeing Lord Edward, stopped, took off his hat, and observed, "A very pleasant day for riding, madame!" Then, looking me full in the face, he added, "I beg your pardon, madame, I mistook you for another lady with whom Lord Edward is often in company."

I said there was no offence; but the moment I heard him speak I was no longer in doubt of his being the identical person.

When I had learnt the ciphering and deciphering, and was to be sent to Italy, the Queen acknowledged to the Princesse de Lamballe that she was fully persuaded I might be trusted, as she had good reason to know that my fidelity was not to be doubted or shaken.

Dear, hapless Princess! She said to me, in one of her confidential conversations on these matters, "The Queen has been so cruelly deceived and so much watched that she almost fears her own shadow; but it gives me great pleasure that Her Majesty had been herself confirmed by one of her own emissaries in what I never for a moment doubted.

"But do not fancy," continued the Princess, laughing, "that you have had only this spy to encounter. Many others have watched your motions and your conversations, and all concur in saying you are the devil, and they could make nothing of you. But that, 'mia cara piccola diavolina', is just what we want!"

SECTION VIII.

Editor in continuation.

I am compelled, with reluctance, to continue personally upon the stage, and must do so for the three ensuing chapters, in order to put my readers in possession of circumstances explanatory of the next portion of the Journal of the Princesse de Lamballe.

Even the particulars I am about to mention can give but a very faint idea of the state of alarm in which the Royal Family lived, and the perpetual watchfulness and strange and involved expedients that were found necessary for their protection. Their most trifling communications were scrutinized with so much jealousy that when any of importance were to be made it required a dexterity almost miraculous to screen them from the ever-watchful eye of espionage.

I was often made instrumental in evading the curiosity of others, without ever receiving any clue to the gratification of my own, even had I been troubled with such impertinence. The anecdote I am about to mention will show how cautious a game it was thought necessary to play; and the result of my half-information will evince that over-caution may produce evils almost equal to total carelessness.

Some time previous to the flight of the Royal Family from Paris, the Princesse de Lamballe told me she wanted

some repairs made to the locks of certain dressing and writing-desks; but she would prefer having them done at my apartments, and by a locksmith who lived at a distance from the palace.

When the boxes were repaired, I was sent with one of them to Lisle, where another person took charge of it for the Archduchess at Brussels.

There was something which strongly marked the kind-heartedness of the Princesse de Lamballe in a part of this transaction. I had left Paris without a passport, and Her Highness, fearing it might expose me to inconvenience, sent an express after me. The express arrived three hours before I did, and the person to whom I have alluded came out of Brussels in his carriage to meet me and receive the box. At the same time, he gave me a sealed letter, without any address. I asked him from whom he received it, and to whom it was to be delivered. He said he was only instructed to deliver it to the lady with the box, and he showed me the Queen's cipher. I took the letter, and, after partaking of some refreshments, returned with it, according to my orders.

On my arrival at Paris, the Princesse de Lamballe told me her motive for sending the express, who, she said, informed her, on his return, that I had a letter for the Queen. I said it was more than I knew. "Oh, I suppose that is because the letter bears no address," replied she; "but you were shown the cipher, and that is all which is necessary."

She did not take the letter, and I could not help remarking how far, in this instance, the rigour of etiquette was kept up, even between these close friends. The Princess, not having herself received the letter, could not take it from my hands to deliver without Her Majesty's express command. This being obtained, she asked me for it, and gave it to Her Majesty. The circumstance convinced me that the Princess exercised much less influence over the Queen, and was much more directed by Her Majesty's authority, than has been imagined.

Two or three days after my arrival at Paris, my servant lost the key of my writing-desk, and, to remedy the evil, he brought me the same locksmith I had employed on the repairs just mentioned. As it was necessary I should be present to remove my papers when the lock was taken off, of course I saw the man. While I was busy clearing the desk, with an air of great familiarity he said, "I have had jobs to do here before now, my girl, as your sweetheart there well knows."

I humoured his mistake in taking me for my own maid and my servant's sweetheart, and I pertly answered, "Very likely."

"Oh, yes, I have," said he; "it was I who repaired the Queen's boxes in this very room."

Knowing I had never received anything of the sort from Her Majesty, and utterly unaware that the boxes the Princess sent to my apartments had been the Queen's, I was greatly surprised. Seeing my confusion, he said, "I know the boxes as well as I know myself. I am the King's locksmith, my dear, and I and the King worked together many years. Why, I know every creek and corner of the palace, aye, and I know everything that's going on in them, too—queer doings! Lord, my pretty damsel, I made a secret place in the palace to hide the King's papers, where the devil himself would never find them out, if I or the King didn't tell!"

Though I wished him at the devil every moment he detained me from disclosing his information at the palace, yet I played off the soubrette upon him till he became so interested I thought he never would have gone. At last, however, he took his departure, and the moment he disappeared, out of the house I flew.

The agitation and surprise of the Princess at what I related were extreme. "Wait," cried she; "I must go and inform the Queen instantly." In going out of the room, "Great God, what a discovery!" exclaimed Her Highness.

It was not long before she returned. Luckily, I was dressed for dinner. She took me by the hand and, unable to speak, led me to the private closet of the Queen.

Her Majesty graciously condescended to thank me for the letter I had taken charge of. She told me that for the future all letters to her would be without any superscription; and desired me, if any should be given to me by persons I had not before seen, and the cipher were shown at the same time, to receive and deliver them myself into her hands, as the production of the cipher would be a sufficient pledge of their authenticity.

Being desired to repeat the conversation with Gamin, "There, Princess!" exclaimed Her Majesty, "Am I not the crow of evil forebodings? I trust the King will never again be credulous enough to employ this man. I have long had an extreme aversion to His Majesty's familiarity with him; but he shall hear his impudence himself from your own lips, my good little Englishwoman; and then he will not think it is prepossession or prejudice."

A few evenings elapsed, and I thought no more of the subject, till one night I was ordered to the palace by the Princess, which never happened but on very particular occasions, as she was fearful of exciting suspicion by any appearance of close intimacy with one so much about Paris upon the secret embassies of the Court.

When I entered the apartment, the King, the Queen, and the Princesse Elizabeth were, as if by accident, in an adjoining room; but, from what followed, I am certain they all came purposely to hear my deposition. I was presently commanded to present myself to the august party.

The King was in deep conversation with the Princesse Elizabeth. I must confess I felt rather embarrassed. I could not form an idea why I was thus honoured. The Princesse de Lamballe graciously took me by the hand.

"Now tell His Majesty, yourself, what Gamin said to you."

I began to revive, perceiving now wherefore I was summoned. I accordingly related, in the presence of the royal guests assembled, as I had done before Her Majesty and the Princesse de Lamballe, the scene as it occurred.

When I came to that part where he said, "where the devil himself could never find them out," His Majesty approached from the balcony, at which he had been talking with the Princesse Elizabeth, and said, "Well! he is very right—but neither he nor the devil shall find them out, for they shall be removed this very night."

[Which was done; and these are, therefore, no doubt, the papers and portfolio of which Madame Campan speaks, vol. ii., p. 142, as having been entrusted to her care after being taken from their hiding-place by the King himself.]

The King, the Queen, and the Princesse Elizabeth most graciously said, "Nous sommes bien obligis, ma petite anglaise!" and Her Majesty added, "Now, my dear, tell me all the rest about this man, whom I have long suspected for his wickedness."

I said he had been guilty of no hostile indications, and that the chief fault I had to find with him was his exceeding familiarity in mentioning himself before the King, saying, "I and the King."

"Go on," said Her Majesty; "give us the whole as it occurred, and let us form our own conclusions."

"Yes," cried the Princess, "parlate sciolto."—"Si Si," rejoined the Queen, "parlate tutto—yes, yes, speak out and tell us all."

I then related the remainder of the conversation, which very much alarmed the royal party, and it was agreed that, to avoid suspicion, I should next day send for the locksmith and desire him, as an excuse, to look at the locks of

my trunks and travelling carriage, and set off in his presence to take up my pretended mistress on the road to Calais, that he might not suspect I had any connection with any one about the Court. I was strictly enjoined by Her Majesty to tell him that the man servant had had the boxes from some one to get them repaired, without either my knowledge or that of my mistress, and, by her pretended orders, to give him a discharge upon the spot for having dared to use her apartments as a workshop for the business of other people.

"Now," said the Princesse de Lamballe, "now play the comic part you acted between your servant and Gamin:" which I did, as well as I could recollect it, and the royal audience were so much amused, that I had the honour to remain in the room and see them play at cards. At length, however, there came three gentle taps at the outer door. "Ora a tempo perche vene andata," exclaimed Her Highness at the sound, having ordered a person to call with this signal to see me out of the palace to the Rue Nicaise, where my carriage was in waiting to conduct me home.

It is not possible for me to describe the gracious condescension of the Queen and the Princesse Elizabeth, in expressing their sentiments for the accidental discovery I had made. Amid their assurances of tender interest and concern, they both reproved me mildly for my imprudence in having, when I went to Brussels, hurried from Paris without my passport. They gave me prudential cautions with regard to my future conduct and residence at Paris; and it was principally owing to the united persuasions and remonstrances of these three angels in human form that I took six or seven different lodgings, where the Princesse de Lamballe used to meet me by turns; because had I gone often to the palace, as many others did, or waited for Her Highness regularly in any one spot, I should, infallibly, have been discovered.

"Gracious God!" exclaimed Her Majesty in the course of this conversation, "am I born to be the misfortune of every one who shows an interest in serving me? Tell my sister, when you return to Brussels again—and do not forget to say I desired you to tell her—our cruel situation! She does not believe that we are surrounded by enemies, even in our most private seclusions! in our prison! that we are even thrown exclusively upon foreigners in our most confidential affairs; that in France there is scarcely an individual to whom we can look! They betray us for their own safety, which is endangered by any exertions in our favour. Tell her this," repeated the Queen three or four times.

The next day I punctually obeyed my orders. Gamin was sent for to look at the locks, and received six francs for his opinion. The man servant was reproved by me on behalf of my supposed mistress, and, in the presence of Gamin, discharged for having brought suspicious things into the house.

The man being tutored in his part, begged Gamin to plead for my intercession with our mistress. I remained inexorable, as he knew I should. While Gamin was still by I discharged the bill at the house, got into my carriage, and took the road towards Calais.

At Saint Denis, however, I feigned to be taken ill, and in two days returned to Paris.

Even this simple act required management. I contrived it in the following manner. I walked out on the high road leading to the capital for the purpose of meeting my servant at a place which had been fixed for the meeting before I left Paris. I found him on horseback at his post, with a carriage prepared for my return. As soon as I was out of sight he made the best of his way forward, went to the inn with a note from me, and returned with my carriage and baggage I had to lodgings at Passy.

The joy of the Princess on seeing me safe again brought tears into her eyes; and, when I related the scene I played off before Gamin against my servant, she laughed most heavily. "But surely," said she, "you have not really discharged the poor man?"—"Oh, no," replied I; "he acted his part so well before the locksmith, that I should be very sorry to lose such an apt scholar."

"You must perform this 'buffa scena'," observed Her Highness, "to the Queen. She has been very anxious to know the result; but her spirits are so depressed that I fear she will not come to my party this evening. However, if she do not, I will see her to-morrow, and you shall make her laugh. It would be a charity, for she has not done so from the heart for many a day!"

SECTION IX.

Editor in continuation:

Every one who has read at all is familiar with the immortal panegyric of the great Edmund Burke upon Marie Antoinette. It is known that this illustrious man was not mean enough to flatter; yet his eloquent praises of her as a Princess, a woman, and a beauty, inspiring something beyond what any other woman could excite, have been called flattery by those who never knew her; those who did, must feel them to be, if possible, even below the truth. But the admiration of Mr. Burke was set down even to a baser motive, and, like everything else, converted into a source of slander for political purposes, long before that worthy palladium of British liberty had even thought of interesting himself for the welfare of France, which his prophetic eye saw plainly was the common cause of all Europe.

But, keenly as that great statesman looked into futurity, little did he think, when he visited the Queen in all her splendour at Trianon, and spoke so warmly of the cordial reception he had met with at Versailles from the Duc and Duchesse de Polignac, that he should have so soon to deplore their tragic fate!

Could his suggestions to Her Majesty, when he was in France, have been put in force, there is scarcely a doubt that the Revolution might have been averted, or crushed. But he did not limit his friendship to personal advice. It is not generally known that the Queen carried on, through the medium of the Princesse de Lamballe, a very extensive correspondence with Mr. Burke. He recommended wise and vast plans; and these, if possible, would have been adopted. The substance of some of the leading ones I can recall from the journal of Her Highness and letters which I have myself frequently deciphered. I shall endeavour, succinctly, to detail such of them as I remember.

Mr. Burke recommended the suppression of all superfluous religious institutions, which had not public seminaries to support. Their lands, he advised, should be divided, without regard to any distinction but that of merit, among such members of the army and other useful classes of society, as, after having served the specified time, should have risen, through their good conduct, to either civil or military preferment. By calculations upon the landed interest, it appeared that every individual under the operation of this bounty would, in the course of twenty years, possess a yearly income of from five to seven hundred francs.

Another of the schemes suggested by Mr. Burke was to purge the kingdom of all the troops which had been corrupted from their allegiance by the intrigues growing out of the first meeting of the Notables. He proposed that they should sail at the same time, or nearly so, to be colonized in the different French islands and Madagascar; and, in their place, a new national guard created, who should be bound to the interest of the legitimate Government by receiving the waste crown lands to be shared among them, from the common soldier to its generals and Field-marschals. Thus would the whole mass of rebellious blood have been reformed. To ensure an effectual change, Mr. Burke advised the enrolment, in rotation, of sixty thousand Irish troops, twenty thousand always to remain in France, and forty thousand in reversion for the same service. The lynx-eyed statesman saw clearly, from the murders of the Marquis de Launay and M. Flesselles, and from the destruction of the Bastille, and of the ramparts of Paris, that party had not armed itself against Louis, but against the throne. It was therefore necessary to produce a permanent revolution in the army.

[Mr. Burke was too great a statesman not to be the friend of his country's interest. He also saw that, from the destruction of the

monarchy in France, England had more to fear than to gain. He well knew that the French Revolution was not, like that of the Americans, founded on grievances and urged in support of a great and disinterested principle. He was aware that so restless a people, when they had overthrown the monarchy, would not limit the overthrow to their own country. After Mr. Burke's death, Mr. Fox was applied to, and was decidedly of the same opinion. Mr. Sheridan was interrogated, and, at the request of the Princesse de Lamballe, he presented, for the Queen's inspection, plans nearly equal to those of the above two great statesmen; and what is most singular and scarcely credible is that one and all of the opposition party in England strenuously exerted themselves for the upholding of the monarchy in France. Many circumstances which came to my knowledge before and after the death of Louis XVI. prove that Mr. Pitt himself was averse to the republican principles being organized so near a constitutional monarchy as France was to Great Britain. Though the conduct of the Duc d'Orleans was generally reprobated, I firmly believe that if he had possessed sufficient courage to have usurped the crown and re-established the monarchy, he would have been treated with in preference to the republicans. I am the more confirmed in this opinion by a conversation between the Princesse de Lamballe and Mirabeau, in which he said a republic in France would never thrive.]

There was another suggestion to secure troops around the throne of a more loyal temper. It was planned to incorporate all the French soldiers, who had not voluntarily deserted the royal standard, with two-thirds of Swiss, German, and Low Country forces, among whom were to be divided, after ten years' service, certain portions of the crown lands, which were to be held by presenting every year a flag of acknowledgment to the King and Queen; with the preference of serving in the civil or military departments, according to the merit or capacity of the respective individuals. Messieurs de Broglie, de Bouille, de Luxembourg, and others, were to have been commanders. But this plan, like many others, was foiled in its birth, and, it is said, through the intrigues of Mirabeau.

However, all concurred in the necessity of ridding France, upon the most plausible pretences, of the fomenters of its ruin. Now arose a fresh difficulty. Transports were wanted, and in considerable numbers.

A navy agent in England was applied to for the supply of these transports. So great was the number required, and so peculiar the circumstances, that the agent declined interfering without the sanction of his Government.

A new dilemma succeeded. Might not the King of England place improper constructions on this extensive shipment of troops from the different ports of France for her West India possessions? Might it not be fancied that it involved secret designs on the British settlements in that quarter?

All these circumstances required that some communication should be opened with the Court of St. James; and the critical posture of affairs exacted that such communication should be less diplomatic than confidential.

It will be recollected that, at the very commencement of the reign of Louis XVI., there were troubles in Brittany, which the severe governorship of the Duc d'Aiguillon augmented. The Bretons took privileges with them, when they became blended with the kingdom of France, by the marriage of Anne of Brittany with Charles VIII., beyond those of any other of its provinces. These privileges they seemed rather disposed to extend than relinquish, and were by no means reserved in the expression of their resolution. It was considered expedient to place a firm, but

conciliatory, Governor over them, and the Duc de Penthièvre was appointed to this difficult trust. The Duke was accompanied to his vice-royalty by his daughter-in-law, the Princesse de Lamballe, who, by her extremely judicious management of the female part of the province, did more for the restoration of order than could have been achieved by armies. The remembrance of this circumstance induced the Queen to regard Her Highness as a fit person to send secretly to England at this very important crisis; and the purpose was greatly encouraged by a wish to remove her from a scene of such daily increasing peril.

For privacy, it was deemed expedient that Her Highness should withdraw to Aumale, under the plea of ill-health, and thence proceed to England; and it was also by way of Aumale that she as secretly returned, after the fatal disaster of the stoppage, to discourage the impression of her ever having been out of France.

The mission was even unknown to the French Minister at the Court of St. James.

The Princess was ordered by Her Majesty to cultivate the acquaintance of the late Duchess of Gordon, who was supposed to possess more influence than any woman in England—in order to learn the sentiments of Mr. Pitt relative to the revolutionary troubles. The Duchess, however, was too much of an Englishwoman, and Mr. Pitt too much interested in the ruin of France, to give her the least clue to the truth.

In order to fathom the sentiments of the opposition party, the Princess cultivated the society also of the late Duchess of Devonshire, but with as little success. The opposition party foresaw too much risk in bringing anything before the house to alarm the prejudices of the nation.

The French Ambassador, too, jealous of the unexplained purpose of the Princess, did all he could to render her expedition fruitless.

Nevertheless, though disappointed in some of her main objects with regard to influence and information, she became so great a favourite at the British Court that she obtained full permission of the King and Queen of England to signify to her royal mistress and friend that the specific request she came to make would be complied with.

[The Princess visited Bath, Windsor, Brighton, and many other parts of England, and associated with all parties. She managed her conduct so judiciously that the real object of her visit was never suspected. In all these excursions I had the honour to attend her confidentially. I was the only person entrusted with papers from Her Highness to Her Majesty. I had many things to copy, of which the originals went to France. Twice during the term of Her Highness's residence in England I was sent by Her Majesty with papers communicating the result of the secret mission to the Queen of Naples. On the second of these two trips, being obliged to travel night and day, I could only keep my eyes open by means of the strongest coffee. When I reached my destination I was immediately compelled to decipher the despatches with the Queen of Naples in the office of the Secretary of State. That done, General Acton ordered some one, I know not whom, to conduct me, I know not where, but it was to a place where, after a sound sleep of twenty-four hours, I awoke thoroughly refreshed, and without a vestige of fatigue either of mind or body. On waking, lest anything should transpire, I was desired to quit Naples instantly, without seeing the British Minister. To make assurance doubly sure, General Acton sent a person from his office to accompany me out of the city on horseback; and, to screen me from the attack of robbers, this person went on

with me as far as the Roman frontier.]

In the meantime, however, the troubles in France were so rapidly increasing from hour to hour, that it became impossible for the Government to carry any of their plans into effect. This particular one, on the very eve of its accomplishment, was marred, as it was imagined, by the secret intervention of the friends of Mirabeau. The Government became more and more infirm and wavering in its purposes; the Princess was left without instructions, and under such circumstances as to expose her to the supposition of having trifled with the good-will of Their Majesties of England.

In this dilemma I was sent off from England to the Queen of France. I left Her Highness at Bath, but when I returned she had quitted Bath for Brighton. I am unacquainted with the nature of all the papers she received, but I well remember the agony they seemed to inflict on her. She sent off a packet by express that very night to Windsor.

The Princess immediately began the preparations for her return. Her own journal is explicit on this point of her history, and therefore I shall leave her to speak for herself. I must not, however, omit to mention the remark she made to me upon the subject of her reception in Great Britain. With these, let me dismiss the present chapter.

"The general cordiality with which I have been received in your country," said Her Highness, "has made a lasting impression upon my heart. In particular, never shall I forget the kindness of the Queen of England, the Duchess of Devonshire, and her truly virtuous mother, Lady Spencer. It gave me a cruel pang to be obliged to undervalue the obligations with which they overwhelmed me by leaving England as I did, without giving them an opportunity of carrying their good intentions, which, I had myself solicited, into effect. But we cannot command fate. Now that the King has determined to accept the Constitution (and you know my sentiments upon the article respecting ecclesiastics), I conceive it my duty to follow Their Majesties' example in submitting to the laws of the nation. Be assured, 'Inglesina', it will be my ambition to bring about one of the happiest ages of French history. I shall endeavour to create that confidence so necessary for the restoration to their native land of the Princes of the blood, and all the emigrants who abandoned the King, their families, and their country, while doubtful whether His Majesty would or would not concede this new charter; but now that the doubt exists no longer, I trust we shall all meet again, the happier for the privation to which we have been doomed from absence. As the limitation of the monarchy removes every kind of responsibility from the monarch, the Queen will again taste the blissful sweets she once enjoyed during the reign of Louis XV. in the domestic tranquillity of her home at Trianon. Often has she wept those times in which she will again rejoice. Oh, how I long for their return! I fly to greet the coming period of future happiness to us all!"

POSTSCRIPT:

Although I am not making myself the historian of France, yet it may not be amiss to mention that it was during this absence of Her Highness that Necker finally retired from power and from France.

The return of this Minister had been very much against the consent of Her Majesty and the King. They both feared what actually happened soon afterwards. They foresaw that he would be swept away by the current of popularity from his deference to the royal authority. It was to preserve the favour of the mob that he allowed them to commit the shocking murders of M. de Foulon (who had succeeded him on his first dismissal as Minister of Louis XVI.) and of Berthier, his son-in-law. The union of Necker with D'ORLEANS, on this occasion, added to the cold indifference with which Barnave in one of his speeches expressed himself concerning the shedding of human blood, certainly animated the factious assassins to methodical murder, and frustrated all the efforts of La Fayette to save these victims from the enraged populace, to whom both unfortunately fell a sacrifice.

Necker, like La Fayette, when too late, felt the absurdity of relying upon the idolatry of the populace. The one fancied he could command the Parisian 'poissardes' as easily as his own battalions; and the other persuaded

himself that the mob, which had been hired to carry about his bust, would as readily promulgate his theories.

But he forgot that the people in their greatest independence are only the puppets of demagogues; and he lost himself by not gaining over that class which, of all others, possesses most power over the million, I mean the men of the bar, who, arguing more logically than the rest of the world, felt that from the new Constitution the long robe was playing a losing game, and therefore discouraged a system which offered nothing to their personal ambition or private emolument. Lawyers, like priests, are never over-ripe for any changes or innovations, except such as tend to their personal interest. The more perplexed the state of public and private affairs, the better for them. Therefore, in revolutions, as a body, they remain neuter, unless it is made for their benefit to act. Individually, they are a set of necessary evils; and, for the sake of the bar, the bench, and the gibbet, require to be humoured. But any legislator who attempts to render laws clear, concise, and explanatory, and to divest them of the quibbles whereby these expounders—or confounders—of codes fatten on the credulity of States and the miseries of unfortunate millions, will necessarily encounter opposition, direct or indirect, in every measure at all likely to reduce the influence of this most abominable horde of human depredators. It was Necker's error to have gone so directly to the point with the lawyers that they at once saw his scope; and thus he himself defeated his hopes of their support, the want of which utterly baffled all his speculations.

[The great Frederick of Prussia, on being told of the numbers of lawyers there were in England, said he wished he had them in his country. "Why?" some one enquired. "To do the greatest benefit in my power to society."—"How so?"—"Why to hang one-half as an example to the other!"]

When Necker undertook to re-establish the finances, and to reform generally the abuses in the Government, he was the most popular Minister (Lord Chatham, when the great Pitt, excepted) in Europe. Yet his errors were innumerable, though possessing such sound knowledge and judgment, such a superabundance of political contrivance, diplomatic coolness, and mathematical calculation, the result of deep thought aided by great practical experience.

But how futile he made all these appear when he declared the national bankruptcy. Could anything be more absurd than the assumption, by the individual, of a personal instead of a national guarantee of part of a national debt?—an undertaking too hazardous and by far too ambiguous, even for a monarch who is not backed by his kingdom—flow doubly frantic, then, for a subject! Necker imagined that the above declaration and his own Quixotic generosity would have opened the coffers of the great body of rich proprietors, and brought them forward to aid the national crisis. But he was mistaken. The nation then had no interest in his financial system. The effect it produced was the very reverse of what was expected. Every proprietor began to fear the ambition of the Minister, who undertook impossibilities. The being bound for the debts of an individual, and justifying bail in a court of law in commercial matters, affords no criterion for judging of, or regulating, the pecuniary difficulties of a nation. Necker's conduct in this case was, in my humble opinion, as impolitic as that of a man who, after telling his friends that he is ruined past redemption, asks for a loan of money. The conclusion is, if he obtains the loan, that "the fool and his money are soon parted."

It was during the same interval of Her Highness's stay in England, that the discontent ran so high between the people and the clergy.

I have frequently heard the Princesse de Lamballe ascribe the King's not sanctioning the decrees against the clergy to the influence of his aunt, the Carmelite nun, Madame Louise. During the life of her father, Louis XV., she nearly engrossed all the Church benefices by her intrigues. She had her regular conclaves of all orders of the Church. From the Bishop to the sexton, all depended on her for preferment; and, till the Revolution, she maintained equal power over the mind of Louis XVI. upon similar matters. The Queen would often express her disapprobation; but the King was so scrupulous, whenever the discussion fell on the topic of religion, that she made it a point not to contrast her opinion with his, from a conviction that she was unequal to cope with him on

that head, upon which he was generally very animated.

It is perfectly certain that the French clergy, by refusing to contribute to the exigencies of the State, created some of the primary horrors of the Revolution. They enjoyed one-third the national revenues, yet they were the first to withhold their assistance from the national wants. I have heard the Princesse de Lamballe say, "The Princesse Elizabeth and myself used our utmost exertion to induce some of the higher orders of the clergy to set the example and obtain for themselves the credit of offering up a part of the revenues, the whole of which we knew must be forfeited if they continued obstinate; but it was impossible to move them."

The characters of some of the leading dignitaries of the time sufficiently explain their selfish and pernicious conduct; when churchmen trifle with the altar, be their motives what they may, they destroy the faith they possess, and give examples to the flock entrusted to their care, of which no foresight can measure the baleful consequences. Who that is false to his God can be expected to remain faithful to his Sovereign? When a man, as a Catholic Bishop, marries, and, under the mask of patriotism, becomes the declared tool of all work to every faction, and is the weathercock, shifting to any quarter according to the wind,—such a man can be of no real service to any party: and yet has a man of this kind been by turns the primum mobile of them all, even to the present times, and was one of those great Church fomenters of the troubles of which we speak, who disgraced the virtuous reign of Louis XVI.

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Amidst the perplexities of the Royal Family it was perfectly unavoidable that repeated proposals should have been made at various times for them to escape these dangers by flight. The Queen had been frequently and most earnestly entreated to withdraw alone; and the King, the Princesse Elizabeth, the Princesse de Lamballe, the royal children, with their little hands uplifted, and all those attached to Marie Antoinette, after the horrid business at Versailles, united to supplicate her to quit France and shelter herself from the peril hanging over her existence. Often and often have I heard the Princesse de Lamballe repeat the words in which Her Majesty uniformly rejected the proposition. "I have no wish," cried the Queen, "for myself. My life or death must be encircled by the arms of my husband and my family. With them, and with them only, will I live or die."

It would have been impossible to have persuaded her to leave France without her children. If any woman on earth could have been justified in so doing, it would have been Marie Antoinette. But she was above such unnatural selfishness, though she had so many examples to encourage her; for, even amongst the members of her own family, self-preservation had been considered paramount to every other consideration.

I have heard the Princess say that Pope Pius VI. was the only one of all the Sovereigns who offered the slightest condolence or assistance to Louis XVI. and his family. "The Pope's letter," added she, "when shown to me by the Queen, drew tears from my eyes. It really was in a style of such Christian tenderness and princely feeling as could only be dictated by a pious and illuminated head of the Christian Church. He implored not only all the family of Louis XVI., but even extended his entreaties to me [the Princesse de Lamballe] to leave Paris, and save themselves, by taking refuge in his dominions, from the horrors which so cruelly overwhelmed them. The King's aunts were the only ones who profited by the invitation. Madame Elizabeth was to have been of the party, but could not be persuaded to leave the King and Queen."

As the clouds grew more threatening, it is scarcely to be credited how many persons interested themselves for the same purpose, and what numberless schemes were devised to break the fetters which had been imposed on the Royal Family, by their jailers, the Assembly.

A party, unknown to the King and Queen, was even forming under the direction of the Princesse Elizabeth; but as soon as Their Majesties were apprised of it, it was given up as dangerous to the interests of the Royal Family, because it thwarted the plans of the Marquis de Bouille. Indeed, Her Majesty could never be brought to determine

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on any plan for her own or the King's safety until their royal aunts, the Princesses Victoria and Adelaide, had left Paris.

The first attempt to fly was made early in the year 1791, at St. Cloud, where the horses had been in preparation nearly a fortnight; but the scheme was abandoned in consequence of having been entrusted to too many persons. This the Queen acknowledged. She had it often in her power to escape alone with her son, but would not consent.

The second attempt was made in the spring of the same year at Paris. The guards shut the gates of the Tuileries, and would not allow the King's carriage to pass. Even though a large sum of money had been expended to form a party to overpower the mutineers, the treacherous mercenaries did not appear. The expedition was, of course, obliged to be relinquished.

Many of the royal household were very ill-treated, and some lives unfortunately lost.

At last, the deplorable journey did take place. The intention had been communicated by Her Majesty to the Princesse de Lamballe before she went abroad, and it was agreed that, whenever it was carried into effect, the Queen should write to Her Highness from Montmedi, where the two friends were once more to have been reunited.

Soon after the departure of the Princess, the arrangements for the fatal journey to Varennes were commenced, but with blamable and fatal carelessness.

Mirabeau was the first person who advised the King to withdraw; but he recommended that it should be alone, or, at most, with the Dauphin only. He was of opinion that the overthrow of the Constitution could not be achieved while the Royal Family remained in Paris. His first idea was that the King should go to the sea-coast, where he would have it in his power instantly to escape to England, if the Assembly, through his (Mirabeau's) means, did not comply with the royal propositions. Though many of the King's advisers were for a distinct and open rejection of the Constitution, it was the decided impression of Mirabeau that he ought to stoop to conquer, and temporize by an instantaneous acceptance, through which he might gain time to put himself in an attitude to make such terms as would at once neutralize the act and the faction by which it was forced upon him. Others imagined that His Majesty was too conscientious to avail himself of any such subterfuge, and that, having once given his sanction, he would adhere to it rigidly. This third party of the royal counsellors were therefore for a cautious consideration of the document, clause by clause, dreading the consequences of an 'ex abrupto' signature in binding the Sovereign, not only against his policy, but his will.

In the midst of all these distracting doubts, however, the departure was resolved upon. Mirabeau had many interviews with the Count Fersen upon the subject. It was his great object to prevent the flight from being encumbered. But the King would not be persuaded to separate himself from the Queen and the rest of the family, and entrusted the project to too many advisers. Had he been guided by Fersen only, he would have succeeded.

The natural consequence of a secret being in so many hands was felt in the result. Those whom it was most important to keep in ignorance were the first on the alert. The weakness of the Queen in insisting upon taking a remarkable dressing-case with her, and, to get it away unobserved, ordering a facsimile to be made under the pretext of intending it as a present to her sister at Brussels, awakened the suspicion of a favourite, but false female attendant, then intriguing with the aide-de-camp of La Fayette. The rest is easily to be conceived. The Assembly were apprised of all the preparations for the departure a week or more before it occurred. La Fayette, himself, it is believed, knew and encouraged it, that he might have the glory of stopping the fugitive himself; but he was overruled by the Assembly.

When the secretary of the Austrian Ambassador came publicly, by arrangement, to ask permission of the Queen to take the model of the dressing-case in question, the very woman to whom I have alluded was in attendance at Her

Majesty's toilet. The paramour of the woman was with her, watching the motions of the Royal Family on the night they passed from their own apartments to those of the Duc de Villequier in order to get into the carriage; and by this paramour was La Fayette instantly informed of the departure. The traitress discovered that Her Majesty was on the eve of setting off by seeing her diamonds packed up. All these things were fully known to the Assembly, of which the Queen herself was afterwards apprised by the Mayor of Paris.

In the suite of the Count Fersen

[Alvise de Pisani, the last venetian Ambassador to the King, who was my husband's particular friend, and with whom I was myself long acquainted, and have been ever since to this day, as well as with all his noble family, during my many years' residence at Venice, told me this circumstance while walking with him at his country-seat at Stra, which was subsequently taken from him by Napoleon, and made the Imperial palace of the viceroy, and is now that of the German reigning Prince.]

there was a young Swede who had an intrigue purposely with one of the Queen's women, from whom he obtained many important disclosures relative to the times. The Swede mentioned this to his patron, who advised Her Majesty to discharge a certain number of these women, among whom was the one who afterwards proved her betrayer. It was suggested to dismiss a number at once, that the guilty person might not suspect the exclusion to be levelled against her in particular. Had the Queen allowed herself to be directed in this affair by Fersen, the chain of communication would have been broken, and the Royal Family would not have been stopped at Varennes, but have got clear out of France, many hours before they could have been perceived by the Assembly; but Her Majesty never could believe that she had anything to fear from the quarter against which she was warned.

It is not generally known that a very considerable sum had been given to the head recruiting sergeant, Mirabeau, to enlist such of the constituents as could be won with gold to be ready with a majority in favour of the royal fugitives. But the death of Mirabeau, previous to this event, leaves it doubtful how far he distributed the bribes conscientiously; indeed, it is rather to be questioned whether he did not retain the money, or much of it, in his own hands, since the strongly hoped for and dearly paid majority never gave proof of existence, either before or after the journey to Varennes. Immense bribes were also given to the Mayor of Paris, which proved equally ineffective.

Had Mirabeau lived till the affair of Varennes, it is not impossible that his genius might have given a different complexion to the result. He had already treated with the Queen and the Princess for a reconciliation; and in the apartments of Her Highness had frequent evening, and early morning, audiences of the Queen.

It is pretty certain, however, that the recantation of Mirabeau, from avowed democracy to aristocracy and royalty, through the medium of enriching himself by a 'salva regina', made his friends prepare for him that just retribution, which ended in a 'de profundis'. At a period when all his vices were called to aid one virtuous action, his thread of vicious life was shortened, and he; no doubt, became the victim of his insatiable avarice. That he was poisoned is not to be disproved; though it was thought necessary to keep it from the knowledge of the people.

I have often heard Her Highness say, "When I reflect on the precautions which were taken to keep the interviews with Mirabeau profoundly secret that he never conversed but with the King, the Queen, and myself—his untimely death must be attributed to his own indiscreet enthusiasm, in having confidentially entrusted the success with which he flattered himself, from the ascendancy he had gained over the Court, to some one who betrayed him. His death, so very unexpectedly, and at that crisis, made a deep impression on the mind of the Queen. She really believed him capable of redressing the monarchy, and he certainly was the only one of the turncoat constitutionalists in whom she placed any confidence. Would to Heaven that she had had more in Barnave, and that she had listened to Dumourier! These I would have trusted more, far more readily than the mercenary

Mirabeau!"

I now return, once more, to the journal of the Princess.

SECTION XI.

"In the midst of the perplexing debates upon the course most advisable with regard to the Constitution after the unfortunate return from Varennes, I sent off my little English amanuensis to Paris to bring me, through the means of another trusty person I had placed about the Queen, the earliest information concerning the situation of affairs. On her return she brought me a ring, which Her Majesty had graciously, condescended to send me, set with her own hair, which had whitened like that of a person of eighty, from the anguish the Varennes affair had wrought upon her mind; and bearing the inscription, 'Bleached by sorrow.' This ring was accompanied by the following letter:

"MY DEAREST FRIEND,—

"The King has made up his mind to the acceptance of the Constitution, and it will ere long be proclaimed publicly. A few days ago I was secretly waited upon and closeted in your apartment with many of our faithful friends,—in particular, Alexandre de Lameth, Duport, Barnave, Montmorin, Bertrand de Moleville, et cetera. The two latter opposed the King's Council, the Ministers, and the numerous other advisers of an immediate and unscrutinizing acceptance. They were a small minority, and could not prevail with me to exercise my influence with His Majesty in support of their opinion, when all the rest seemed so confident that a contrary course must re-establish the tranquillity of the nation and our own happiness, weaken the party of the Jacobins against us, and greatly increase that of the nation in our favor.

"Your absence obliged me to call Elizabeth to my aid in managing the coming and going of the deputies to and from the Pavilion of Flora, unperceived by the spies of our enemies. She executed her charge so adroitly, that the visitors were not seen by any of the household. Poor Elizabeth! little did I look for such circumspection in one so unacquainted with the intrigues of Court, or the dangers surrounding us, which they would now fain persuade us no longer exist. God grant it may be so! and that I may once more freely embrace and open my heart to the only friend I have nearest to it. But though this is my most ardent wish, yet, my dear, dearest Lamballe, I leave it to yourself to act as your feelings dictate. Many about us profess to see the future as clear as the sun at noon-day. But, I confess, my vision is still dim. I cannot look into events with the security of others—who confound logic with their wishes. The King, Elizabeth, and all of us, are anxious for your return. But it would grieve us sorely for you to come back to such scenes as you have already witnessed. Judge and act from your own impressions. If we do not see you, send me the result of your interview at the precipice.—[The name the Queen gave to Mr. Pitt]—'Vostra cara picciolca Inglesina' will deliver you many letters. After looking over the envelopes, you will either send her with them as soon as possible or forward them as addressed, as you may think most advisable at the time you receive them.

"Ever, ever, and forever,

"Your affectionate,
"MARIE ANTOINETTE!

"There was another hurried and abrupt note from Her Majesty among these papers, obviously written later than the first. It lamented the cruel privations to which she was doomed at the Tuileries, in consequence of the impeded flight, and declared that what the Royal Family were forced to suffer, from being totally deprived of every individual of their former friends and attendants to condole with, excepting the equally oppressed and unhappy Princesse Elizabeth, was utterly insupportable.

"On the receipt of these much esteemed epistles, I returned, as my duty directed, to the best of Queens, and most sincere of friends. My arrival at Paris, though so much wished for, was totally unexpected.

"At our first meeting, the Queen was so agitated that she was utterly at a loss to explain the satisfaction she felt in beholding me once more near her royal person. Seeing the ring on my finger, which she had done me the honour of sending me, she pointed to her hair, once so beautiful, but now, like that of an old woman, not only gray, but deprived of all its softness, quite stiff and dried up.

"Madame Elizabeth, the King, and the rest of our little circle, lavished on me the most endearing caresses. The dear Dauphin said to me, 'You will not go away again, I hope, Princess? Oh, mamma has cried so since you left us!'

"I had wept enough before, but this dear little angel brought tears into the eyes of us all."

"When I mentioned to Her Majesty the affectionate sympathy expressed by the King and Queen of England in her sufferings, and their regret at the state of public affairs in France, 'It is most noble and praiseworthy in them to feel thus,' exclaimed Marie Antoinette; 'and the more so considering the illiberal part imputed to us against those Sovereigns in the rebellion of their ultramarine subjects, to which, Heaven knows, I never gave my approbation. Had I done so, how poignant would be my remorse at the retribution of our own sufferings, and the pity of those I had so injured! No. I was, perhaps, the only silent individual amongst millions of infatuated enthusiasts at General La Fayette's return to Paris, nor did I sanction any of the fetes given to Dr. Franklin, or the American Ambassadors at the time. I could not conceive it prudent for the Queen of an absolute monarchy to countenance any of their newfangled philosophical experiments with my presence. Now, I feel the reward in my own conscience. I exult in my freedom from a self-reproach, which would have been altogether insupportable under the kindness of which you speak.'

"As soon as I was settled in my apartment, which was on the same floor with that of the Queen, she condescended to relate to me every particular of her unfortunate journey. I saw the pain it gave her to retrace the scenes, and begged her to desist till time should have, in some degree, assuaged the poignancy of her feelings. 'That,' cried she, embracing me, I can never be! Never, never will that horrid circumstance of my life lose its vividness in my recollection. What agony, to have seen those faithful servants tied before us on the carriage, like common criminals! All, all may be attributed to the King's goodness of heart, which produces want of courage, nay, even timidity, in the most trying scenes. As poor King Charles the First, when he was betrayed in the Isle of Wight, would have saved himself, and perhaps thousands, had he permitted the sacrifice of one traitor, so might Louis XVI. have averted calamities so fearful that I dare not name, though I distinctly foresee them, had he exerted his authority where he only called up his compassion.'

"For Heaven's sake,' replied I, 'do not torment yourself by these cruel recollections!'

"These are gone by,' continued Her Majesty, and greater still than even these. How can I describe my grief at what I endured in the Assembly, from the studied humiliation to which the King and the royal authority were there reduced in the face of the national representatives! from seeing the King on his return choked with anguish

at the mortifications to which I was doomed to behold the majesty of a French Sovereign humbled! These events bespeak clouds, which, like the horrid waterspout at sea, nothing can dispel but cannon! The dignity of the Crown, the sovereignty itself, is threatened; and this I shall write this very night to the Emperor. I see no hope of internal tranquillity without the powerful aid of foreign force.

[The only difference of any moment which ever existed between the Queen and the Princesse de Lamballe as to their sentiments on the Revolution was on this subject. Her Highness wished Marie Antoinette to rely on the many persons who had offered and promised to serve the cause of the monarchy with their internal resources, and not depend on the Princes and foreign armies. This salutary advice she never could enforce on the Queen's mind, though she had to that effect been importuned by upwards of two hundred persons, all zealous to show their penitence for former errors by their present devotedness.

"Whenever," observed Her Highness, "we came to that point, the Queen (upon seriously reflecting that these persons had been active instruments in promoting the first changes in the monarchy, for which she never forgave them from her heart) would hesitate and doubt; and never could I bring Her Majesty definitely to believe the profferers to be sincere. Hence, they were trifled with, till one by one she either lost them, or saw them sacrificed to an attachment, which her own distrust and indecision rendered fruitless."]

The King has allowed himself to be too much led to attempt to recover his power through any sort of mediation. Still, the very idea of owing our liberty to any foreign army distracts me for the consequences.'

"My reinstatement in my apartments at the Pavilion of Flora seemed not only to give universal satisfaction to every individual of the Royal Family, but it was hailed with much enthusiasm by many deputies of the constituent Assembly. I was honoured with the respective visits of all who were in any degree well disposed to the royal cause.

"One day, when Barnave and others were present with the Queen, 'Now,' exclaimed one of the deputies, 'now that this good Princess is returned to her adopted country, the active zeal of Her Highness, coupled with Your Majesty's powerful influence over the mind of the King for the welfare of his subjects, will give fresh vigour to the full execution of the Constitution.'

"My visitors were earnest in their invitations for me to go to the Assembly to hear an interesting discussion, which was to be brought forward upon the King's spontaneous acceptance of the Constitution.

"I went; and amidst the plaudits for the good King's condescension, how was my heart lacerated to hear Robespierre denounce three of the most distinguished of the members, who had requested my attendance, as traitors to their country!

"This was the first and only Assembly discussion I ever attended; and how dearly did I pay for my curiosity! I was accompanied by my 'cara Inglesina', who, always on the alert, exclaimed, 'Let me entreat Your Highness not to remain any longer in this place. You are too deeply moved to dissemble.'

"I took her judicious advice, and the moment I could leave the Assembly unperceived, I hastened back to the Queen to beg her, for God's sake, to be upon her guard; for, from what I had just heard at the Assembly, I feared the Jacobins had discovered her plans with Barnave, De Lameth, Duport, and others of the royal party. Her

countenance, for some minutes, seemed to be the only sensitive part of her. It was perpetually shifting from a high florid colour to the paleness of death. When her first emotions gave way to nature, she threw herself into my arms, and, for some time, her feelings were so overcome by the dangers which threatened these worthy men, that she could only in the bitterness of her anguish exclaim, 'Oh! this is all on my account!' And I think she was almost as much alarmed for the safety of these faithful men, as she had been for that of the King on the 17th of July, when the Jacobins in the Champ de Mars called out to have the King brought to trial—a day of which the horrors were never effaced from her memory!

"The King and Princesse Elizabeth fortunately came in at the moment; but even our united efforts were unavailable. The grief of Her Majesty at feeling herself the cause of the misfortunes of these faithful adherents, now devoted victims of their earnestness in foiling the machinations against the liberty and life of the King and herself, made her nearly frantic. She too well knew that to be accused was to incur instant death. That she retained her senses under the convulsion of her feelings can only be ascribed to that wonderful strength of mind, which triumphed over every bodily weakness, and still sustains her under every emergency.

"The King and the Princesse Elizabeth, by whom Barnave had been much esteemed ever since the journey from Varennes, were both inconsolable. I really believe the Queen entirely owed her instantaneous recovery from that deadly lethargic state, in which she had been thrown by her grief for the destined sacrifice, to the exuberant goodness of the King's heart, who instantly resolved to compromise his own existence, to save those who had forfeited theirs for him and his family.

"Seeing the emotion of the Queen, 'I will go myself to the Assembly,' said Louis XVI., 'and declare their innocence.'

"The Queen sprang forward, as if on the wings of an angel, and grasping the King in her arms, cried, 'Will you hasten their deaths by confirming the impression of your keeping up an understanding with them? Gracious Heaven! Oh, that I could recall the acts of attachment they have shown us, since to these they are now falling victims! I would save them,' continued Her Majesty, 'with my own blood; but, Sire, it is useless. We should only expose ourselves to the vindictive spirit of the Jacobins without aiding the cause of our devoted friends.'

'Who,' asked she, 'I was the guilty wretch that accused our unfortunate Barnave?'

"Robespierre.'

"Robespierre!" echoed Her Majesty. 'Oh, God! then he is numbered with the dead! This fellow is too fond of blood to be tempted with money. But you, Sire, must not interfere!'

"Notwithstanding these doubts, however, I undertook, at the King's and Queen's most earnest desire, to get some one to feel the pulse of Robespierre, for the salvation of these our only palladium to the constitutional monarchy. To the first application, though made through the medium of one of his earliest college intimates, Carrier, the wretch was utterly deaf and insensible. Of this failure I hastened to apprise Her Majesty. 'Was any, sum,' asked she, 'named as a compensation for suspending this trial?'—'None,' replied I. 'I had no commands to that effect.'—'Then let the attempt be renewed, and back it with the argument of a cheque for a hundred thousand livres on M. Laborde. He has saved my life and the King's, and, as far as is in my power, I am determined to save his. Barnave has exposed his life more than any of our unfortunate friends, and if we can but succeed in saving him, he will speedily be enabled to save his colleagues. Should the sum I name be insufficient, my jewels shall be disposed of to make up a larger one. Fly to your agent, dear Princess! Lose not a moment to intercede in behalf of these our only true friends!'

"I did so, and was fortunate enough to gain over to my personal entreaties one who had the courage to propose the business; and a hundred and fifty thousand livres procured them a suspension of accusation. All, however, are still

watched with such severity of scrutiny that I tremble, even now, for the result.

[And with reason; for all, eventually, were sacrificed upon the scaffold. Carrier was the factotum in all the cool, deliberate, sanguinary operations of Robespierre; when he saw the cheque, he said to the Princesse de Lamballe: "Madame, though your personal charms and mental virtues had completely influenced all the authority I could exercise in favour of your protege, without this interesting argument I should not have had courage to have renewed the business with the principal agent of life and death."

"It was in the midst of such apprehensions, which struck terror into the hearts of the King and Queen, that the Tuileries resounded with cries of multitudes hired to renew those shouts of 'Vive le roi! vive la famille royale!' which were once spontaneous.

"In one of the moments of our deepest affliction, multitudes were thronging the gardens and enjoying the celebration of the acceptance of the Constitution. What a contrast to the feelings of the unhappy inmates of the palace! We may well say, that many an aching heart rides in a carriage, while the pedestrian is happy!

"The fetes on this occasion were very brilliant. The King, the Queen, and the Royal Family were invited to take part in this first national festival. They did so, by appearing in their carriage through the streets of Paris, and the Champs Elysees, escorted only by the Parisian guard, there being no other at the time. The mob was so great that the royal carriage could only keep pace with the foot-passengers.

"Their Majesties were in general well received. The only exceptions were a few of the Jacobin members of the Assembly, who, even on this occasion, sought every means to afflict the hearts, and shock the ears, of Their Majesties, by causing republican principles to be vociferated at the very doors of their carriage.

"The good sense of the King and Queen prevented them from taking any notice of these insults while in public; but no sooner had they returned to the castle, than the Queen gave way to her grief at the premeditated humiliation she was continually witnessing to the majesty of the constitutional monarchy,—an insult less to the King himself than to the nation, which had acknowledged him their Sovereign.

"When the royal party entered the apartment, they found M. de Montmorin with me, who had come to talk over these matters, secure that at such a moment we should not be surprised.

"On hearing the Queen's observation, M. de Montmorin made no secret of the necessity there was of Their Majesties dissembling their feelings; the avowal of which, he said, would only tend to forward the triumph of Jacobinism, 'which,' added he, 'I am sorry to see predominates in the Assembly, and keeps in subordination all the public and private clubs.'

"'What!' exclaimed the Princesse Elizabeth, can that be possible, after the King has accepted the Constitution?'

"'Yes,' said the Queen; these people, my dear Elizabeth, wish for a Constitution which sanctions the overthrow of him by whom it has been granted.'

"'In this,' observed M. de Montmorin, 'as on some other points, I perfectly agree with Your Majesty and the King, notwithstanding I have been opposed by the whole Council and many other honest constituent members, as well as the Cabinet of Vienna. And it is still, as it has ever been, my firm opinion, that the King ought, previous to the acceptance of the Constitution, to have been allowed, for the security of its future organization, to have examined it maturely; which, not having been the case, I foresee the dangerous situation in which His Majesty stands, and I foresee, too, the non-promulgation of this charter. Malouet, who is an honest man, is of my opinion. Duport, De

Lameth, Barnave, and even La Fayette are intimidated at the prevailing spirit of the Jacobins. They were all with the best intentions for Your Majesty's present safety, for the acceptance in toto, but without reflecting on the consequences which must follow should the nation be deceived. But I, who am, and ever shall be, attached to royalty, regret the step, though I am clear in my impression as to the only course which ought to succeed it. The throne can now only be made secure by the most unequivocal frankness of proceeding on the part of the Crown. It is not enough to have conceded, it is necessary also to show that the concession has some more solid origin than mere expediency. It should be made with a good grace. Every motive of prudence, as well as of necessity, requires that the monarch himself, and all those most interested for his safety, should, neither in looks, manners, or conversation, seem as if they felt a regret for what has been lost, but rather appear satisfied with what has been bestowed.'

"In that case,' said the Queen, 'we should lose all the support of the royalists.'

"Every royalist, Madame,' replied he, 'who, at this critical crisis, does not avow the sentiments of a constitutionalist, is a nail in the King's untimely coffin.'

"Gracious God !' cried the Queen; 'that would destroy the only hope which still flatters our drooping existence. Symptoms of moderation, or any conciliatory measures we might be inclined to show, of our free will, to the constitutionalists, would be immediately considered as a desertion of our supporters, and treachery to ourselves, by the royalists.'

"It would be placed entirely out of my power, Madame,' replied M. de Montmorin, 'to make my attachment to the persons of Your Majesties available for the maintenance of your rights, did I permit the factious, overbearing party which prevails to see into my real zeal for the restoration of the royal authority, so necessary for their own future honour, security, and happiness. Could they see this, I should be accused as a national traitor, or even worse, and sent out of the world by a sudden death of ignominy, merely to glut their hatred of monarchy; and it is therefore I dissemble.'

"I perfectly agree with you,' answered the Queen. That cruel moment when I witnessed the humiliating state to which royalty had been reduced by the constituents, when they placed the President of their Assembly upon a level with the King; gave a plebeian, exercising his functions pro tempore, prerogatives in the face of the nation to trample down hereditary monarchy and legislative authority—that cruel moment discovered the fatal truth. In the anguish of my heart, I told His Majesty that he had outlived his kingly authority: Here she burst into tears, hiding her face in her handkerchief.

"With the mildness of a saint, the angelic Princesse Elizabeth exclaimed, turning to the King, 'Say something to the Queen, to calm her anguish!'

"It will be of no avail,' said the King; 'her grief adds to my affliction. I have been the innocent cause of her participating in this total ruin, and as it is only her fortitude which has hitherto supported me, with the same philosophical and religious resignation we must await what fate destines!'

"Yes,' observed M. de Montmorin; 'but Providence has also given us the rational faculty of opposing imminent danger, and by activity and exertion obviating its consequences.'

"In what manner, sir?' cried the Queen; 'tell me how this is to be effected, and, with the King's sanction, I am ready to do anything to avert the storm, which so loudly threatens the august head of the French nation.'

"Vienna, Madame,' replied he; 'Vienna! Your Majesty's presence at Vienna would do more for the King's safety, and the nation's future tranquillity, than the most powerful army.'

"We have long since suggested," said the Princesse Elizabeth, 'that Her Majesty should fly from France and take refuge——'

"Pardon me, Princess," interrupted M. de Montmorin, 'it is not for refuge solely I would have Her Majesty go thither. It is to give efficacy to the love she bears the King and his family, in being there the powerful advocate to check the fallacious march of a foreign army to invade us for the subjection of the French nation. All these external attempts will prove abortive, and only tend to exasperate the French to crime and madness. Here I coincide with my coadjutors, Barnave, Duport, De Lameth, etc. The principle on which the re-establishment of the order and tranquillity of France depends, can be effected only by the non-interference of foreign powers. Let them leave the rational resources of our own internal force to re-establish our real interests, which every honest Frenchman will strive to secure, if not thwarted by the threats and menaces of those who have no right to interfere. Besides, Madame, they are too far from us to afford immediate relief from the present dangers internally surrounding us. These are the points of fearful import. It is not the threats and menaces of a foreign army which can subdue a nation's internal factions. These only rouse them to prolong disorders. National commotions can be quelled only by national spirit, whose fury, once exhausted on those who have aroused it, leave it free to look within, and work a reform upon itself.'

"M. de Montmorin, after many other prudent exhortations and remarks, and some advice with regard to the King and Queen's household, took his leave. He was no sooner gone than it was decided by the King that Marie Antoinette, accompanied by myself and some other ladies, and the gentlemen of the bedchamber, couriers, etc., should set out forthwith for Vienna.

[The Princease de Lamballe sent me directions that very evening, some time after midnight, to be at our place of rendezvous early in the morning. I was overjoyed at the style of the note. It was the least mysterious I had ever received from Her Highness. I inferred that some fortunate event had occurred, with which, knowing how deeply I was interested in the fate of her on whom my own so much depended, she was, eager to make me acquainted.

But what was my surprise, on entering the church fixed on for the meeting, to see the Queen's unknown confessor beckoning me to come to him. I approached. He bade me wait till after Mass, when he had something to communicate from the Princess.

This confessor officiated in the place of the one whom Mirabeau had seduced to take the constitutional oath. The Queen and Princess confessed to him in the private apartment of Her Highness on the ground floor; though it was never known where, or to whom they confessed, after the treachery of the royal confessor. This faithful and worthy successor was only known as "the known." I never heard who he was, or what was his name.

The Mass being over, I followed him into the sacristy. He told me that the Princess, by Her Majesty's command, wished me to set off immediately for Strasburg, and there await the arrival of Her Highness, to be in readiness to follow her and Her Majesty for the copying of the cipher, as they were going to Vienna.

When everything, however, had been settled for their departure, which it was agreed was to take place from the house of Count Fersen, the resolution was suddenly changed; but I was desired to hold myself in readiness for another journey.

"To say why this purpose was abandoned is unnecessary. The same fatality, which renders every project unattainable, threw insuperable impediments, in the way of this."

SECTION XII.

"The news of the death of the Emperor Leopold, in the midst of the other distresses of Her Majesty, afflicted her very deeply; the more so because she had every reason to think he fell a victim to the active part he took in her favour. Externally, this monarch certainly demonstrated no very great inclination to become a member of the coalition of Pilnitz. He judged, very justly, that his brother Joseph had not only defeated his own purposes by too openly and violently asserting the cause of their unfortunate sister, but had destroyed himself, and, therefore, selected what he deemed the safer and surer course of secret support. But all his caution proved abortive. The Assembly knew his manoeuvres as well as he himself did. He died an untimely death; and the Queen was assured, from undoubted authority, that both Joseph and Leopold were poisoned in their medicines.

"During my short absence in England, the King's household had undergone a complete change. When the emigration first commenced, a revolution in the officers of the Court took place, but it was of a nature different from this last; and, by destroying itself, left the field open to those who now made the palace so intolerable. The first change to which I refer arose as follows:

"The greater part of the high offices being vacated by the secession of the most distinguished nobility, many places fell to persons who had all their lives occupied very subordinate situations. These, to retain their offices, were indiscreet enough publicly to declare their dissent from all the measures of the Assembly; an absurdity, which, at the commencement, was encouraged by the Court, till the extreme danger of encouraging it was discovered too late; and when once the error had been tolerated, and rewarded, it was found impossible to check it, and stop these fatal tongues. The Queen, who disliked the character of capriciousness, for a long time allowed the injury to go on, by continuing about her those who inflicted it. The error, which arose from delicacy, was imputed to a very different and less honourable feeling, till the clamour became so great, that she was obliged to yield to it, and dismiss those who had acted with so much indiscretion.

"The King and Queen did not dare now to express themselves on the subject of the substitutes who were to succeed. Consequently they became surrounded by persons placed by the Assembly as spies. The most conspicuous situations were filled by the meanest persons—not, as in the former case, by such as had risen, though by accident, still regularly to their places—but by myrmidons of the prevailing power, to whom Their Majesties were compelled to submit, because their rulers willed it. All orders of nobility were abolished. All the Court ladies, not attached to the King and Queen personally, abandoned the Court. No one would be seen at the Queen's card-parties, once so crowded, and so much sought after. We were entirely reduced to the family circle. The King, when weary of playing with the Princesse Elizabeth and the Queen, would retire to his apartments without uttering a word, not from sullenness, but overcome by silent grief.

"The Queen was occupied continually by the extensive correspondence she had to carry on with the foreign Sovereigns, the Princes, and the different parties. Her Majesty once gave me nearly thirty letters she had written in the course of two days, which were forwarded by my cara Inglesina—cara indeed! for she was of the greatest service.

"Her Majesty slept very little. But her courage never slackened; and neither her health, nor her general amiableness, was in the least affected. Though few persons could be more sensible than herself to poignant mortification at seeing her former splendour hourly decrease, yet she never once complained. She was, in this respect, a real stoic.

"The palace was now become, what it still remains, like a police office. It was filled with spies and runners. Every member of the Assembly, by some means or other, had his respective emissary. All the antechambers were peopled by inveterate Jacobins, by those whose greatest pleasure was to insult the ears and minds of all whom they considered above themselves in birth, or rank, or virtue. So completely were the decencies of life abolished, that common respect was withheld even from the Royal Family.

SECTION IX.

"I was determined to persevere in my usual line of conduct, of which the King and Queen very much approved. Without setting up for a person of importance, I saw all who wished for public or private audiences of Their Majesties. I carried on no intrigues, and only discharged the humble duties of my situation to the best of my ability for the general good, and to secure, as far as possible, the comfort of Their Majesties, who really were to be pitied, utterly friendless and forsaken as they were.

"M. Laporte, the head of the King's private police, came to me one day in great consternation. He had discovered that schemes were on foot to poison all the Royal Family, and that, in a private committee of the Assembly, considerable pensions had been offered for the perpetration of the crime. Its facility was increased, as far as regarded the Queen, by the habit to which Her Majesty had accustomed herself of always keeping powdered sugar at hand, which, without referring to her attendants, she would herself mix with water and drink as a beverage whenever she was thirsty.

"I entreated M. Laporte not to disclose the conspiracy to the Queen till I had myself had an opportunity of apprising her of his praiseworthy zeal. He agreed, on condition that precautions should be immediately adopted with respect to the persons who attended the kitchen. This, I assured him, should be done on the instant.

"At the period I mention, all sorts of etiquette had been abolished. The custom which prevented my appearing before the Queen, except at stated hours, had long since been discontinued; and, as all the other individuals who came before or after the hours of service were eyed with distrust, and I remained the only one whose access to Their Majesties was free and unsuspected, though it was very early when M. Laporte called, I thought it my duty to hasten immediately to my royal mistress.

"I found her in bed. 'Has Your Majesty breakfasted?' said I.

"'No,' replied she; 'will you breakfast with me?'

"'Most certainly,' said I, 'if Your Majesty will insure me against being poisoned.'

"At the word poison Her Majesty started up and looked at me very earnestly, and with a considerable degree of alarm.

"'I am only joking,' continued I; 'I will breakfast with Your Majesty if you will give me tea.'

"Tea was presently brought. 'In this,' said I, 'there is no danger.'

"'What do you mean?' asked Her Majesty.

"'I am ordered,' replied I, taking up a lump of sugar, 'not to drink chocolate, or coffee, or anything with powdered sugar. These are times when caution alone can prevent our being sent out of the world with all our sins upon our heads.'

"'I am very glad to hear you say so; for you have reason to be particular, after what you once so cruelly suffered from poison. But what has brought that again into your mind just now?'

"'Well, then, since Your Majesty approves of my circumspection, allow me to say I think it advisable that we should, at a moment like this especially, abstain from all sorts of food by which our existence may be endangered. For my own part, I mean to give up all made dishes, and confine myself to the simplest diet.'

"'Come, come, Princess,' interrupted Her Majesty; 'there is more in this than you wish me to understand. Fear not. I am prepared for anything that may be perpetrated against my own life, but let me preserve from peril my King,

my husband, and my children!

"My feelings prevented me from continuing to dissemble. I candidly repeated all I had heard from M. Laporte.

"Her Majesty instantly rang for one of her confidential women. 'Go to the King,' said Her Majesty to the attendant, 'and if you find him alone, beg him to come to me at once; but, if there are any of the guards or other persons within hearing, merely say that the Princesse de Lamballe is with me and is desirous of the loan of a newspaper.'

"The King's guard, and indeed most of those about him, were no better than spies, and this caution in the Queen was necessary to prevent any jealousy from being excited by the sudden message.

"When the messenger left us by ourselves, I observed to Her Majesty that it would be imprudent to give the least publicity to the circumstance, for were it really mere suspicion in the head of the police, its disclosure might only put this scheme into some miscreant's head, and tempt him to realize it. The Queen said I was perfectly right, and it should be kept secret.

"Our ambassadress was fortunate enough to reach the King's apartment unobserved, and to find him unattended, so he received the message forthwith. On leaving the apartment, however, she was noticed and watched. She immediately went out of the Tuileries as if sent to make purchases, and some time afterwards returned with some trifling articles in her hand.

[This incident will give the reader an idea of the cruel situation in which the first Sovereigns of Europe then stood; and how much they appreciated the few subjects who devoted themselves to thwart and mitigate the tyranny practised by the Assembly over these illustrious victims. I can speak from my own experience on these matters. From the time I last accompanied the Princesse de Lamballe to Paris till I left it in 1792, what between milliners, dressmakers, flower girls, fancy toy sellers, perfumers, hawkers of jewellery, purse and gaiter makers, etc., I had myself assumed twenty different characters, besides that of a drummer boy, sometimes blackening my face to enter the palace unnoticed, and often holding conversations analogous to the sentiments of the wretches who were piercing my heart with the remarks circumstances compelled me to encourage. Indeed, I can safely say I was known, in some shape or other, to almost everybody, but to no one in my real character, except the Princess by whom I was so graciously employed.]

"The moment the King appeared, 'Sire,' exclaimed Her Majesty, 'the Assembly, tired of endeavouring to wear us to death by slow torment, have devised an expedient to relieve their own anxiety and prevent us from putting them to further inconvenience.'

"'What do you mean?' said the King. I repeated my conversation with M. Laporte. 'Bah! bah!' resumed His Majesty, 'They never will attempt it. They have fixed on other methods of getting rid of us. They have not policy enough to allow our deaths to be ascribed to accident. They are too much initiated in great crimes already.'

"'But,' asked the Queen, 'do you not think it highly necessary to make use of every precaution, when we are morally sure of the probability of such a plot?'

"Most certainly! otherwise we should be, in the eyes of God, almost guilty of suicide. But how prevent it? surrounded as we are by persons who, being seduced to believe that we are plotting against them, feel justified in the commission of any crime under the false idea of self-defence!"

"We may prevent it," replied Her Majesty, "by abstaining from everything in our diet wherein poison can be introduced; and that we can manage without making any stir by the least change either in the kitchen arrangements or in our own, except, indeed, this one. Luckily, as we are restricted in our attendants, we have a fair excuse for dumb waiters, whereby it will be perfectly easy to choose or discard without exciting suspicion."

"This, consequently, was the course agreed upon; and every possible means, direct and indirect, was put into action to secure the future safety of the Royal Family and prevent the accomplishment of the threat of poison."

[On my seeing the Princess next morning, Her Highness condescended to inform me of the danger to which herself and the Royal Family were exposed. She requested I would send my man servant to the persons who served me, to fill a moderate-sized hamper with wine, salt, chocolate, biscuits, and liquors, and take it to her apartment, at the Pavilion of Flora, to be used as occasion required. All the fresh bread and butter which was necessary I got made for nearly a fortnight by persons whom I knew at a distance from the palace, whither I always conveyed it myself.