



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 06932322 2



1. Francis - 1792-1794



Gruet

BY THE SAME AUTHOR AND TRANSLATOR.

Crown 8vo. linen, gilt top, with a frontispiece, 6s.

LOVE AND LOVERS OF THE PAST.

'M. Gaulot's analysis of the souls and passions of the eighteenth century throws a fresh blaze of light upon the intricate workings of the destiny of France and on many historical characters and incidents we misunderstand. He makes free use of documents and letters throughout, but mosaiced with such skill that one is beguiled into the feeling that one is reading a novel rather than a record. . . . It is one of the most interesting of recent historical books.'—*QUEEN*.

'An extraordinary collection of interesting personal episodes.'—*DAILY NEWS*.

'To all students of French history this volume has a capital value, and the literary skill and vividness which mark the portraiture ought to make it popular with the general reader.'—*YORKSHIRE POST*.

'The sketches are well written and interesting, and most of them have the further merit of dealing with incidents but little known to the generality of readers. . . . Taking it as a whole, the book is one which bears evidence of wide and patient research, and is one which cannot fail to be enjoyed by readers who find pleasure in wandering at times through the tangled and half-hidden by-paths of history rather than in travelling along its broad and well-trodden highway.'—*GLASGOW HERALD*.

'A collection of lively and entertaining historical papers which originally appeared in the "Revue Hebdomadaire," and fully deserve republication in a collected form. The author has diversified the products of his minings in the National Record Office with characteristic Gallic vivacity, which the translator has successfully retained. . . . These eighteenth-century heroes and heroines have provided M. Gaulot with some excellently picturesque biographical material, both those whose names are tolerably familiar to the ordinary reader, and others whom the author possibly introduces to a considerable circle for the first time.'—*ST. JAMES'S GAZETTE*.

'A collection of historical studies . . . which have been translated for the benefit of English readers by Mr. F. Charles Laroche, who has a graceful English style, and in whose hands they would seem to have lost little, if any, of their original brightness, even, it may be added, of a certain native Gallic flavour. . . . M. Gaulot writes in the spirit of the historian and with the easy touch of the writer of romance.'—*SCOTSMAN*.

'The book is essentially French in tone, and is written with a Frenchman's brilliance and bitterness. No fault can be found with the work of translation, which has admirably done by Mr. F. Charles Laroche. . . . It contains some things not generally known.'—*LADIES' FIELD*.

'A valuable contribution to the inner history of the French Revolution. . . . Written with the freedom of lovers little dreaming of a prying twentieth century thumbing the faded leaves, my Baronite finds in them the special charm of the immortal work of Pepys. . . . Asmodeus-like, M. Gaulot conducts the reader over Paris under Bourbon rule and revolutionary terror. Unroofing the houses, he shows us how people lived and loved and died in those good old times.'—*PUNCH*.

'M. Gaulot has made curious researches to obtain the matter for these interesting sidelights on history.'—*VANITY FAIR*.

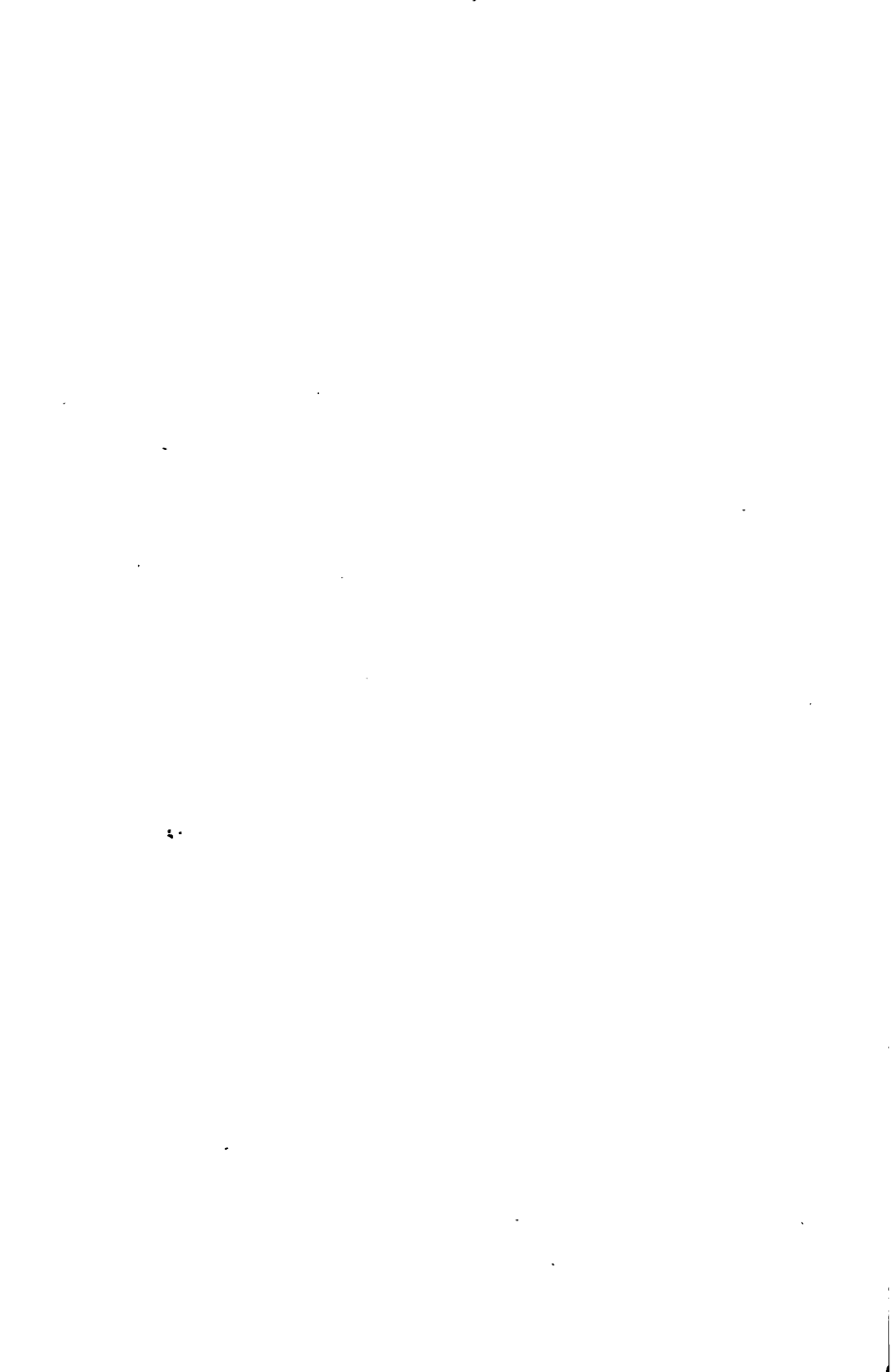
'The stories have undoubted interest historically.'—*SHEFFIELD TELEGRAPH*.

'A series of historical studies showing what love and passion were in that charming though terrible eighteenth century. . . . An admirable—indeed, a fascinating—bit of work, going into details with true French audacity and elegance.'—*TO-DAY*.

'There are many interesting historical facts mixed up with these chiefly sad love stories. The work of translation has been capably carried out by Dr. Charles Laroche.'—*LIVERPOOL POST*.

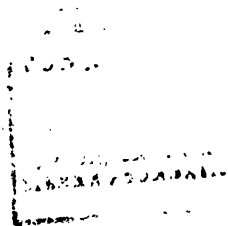
'Besides being eminently readable, this volume of M. Gaulot's has a distinct historical value.'—*GLOBE*.

London: CHATTO & WINDUS, 111 St. Martin's Lane, W.C.



**A CONSPIRACY
UNDER THE TERROR**

PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO. LTD., NEW-STREET SQUARE
LONDON



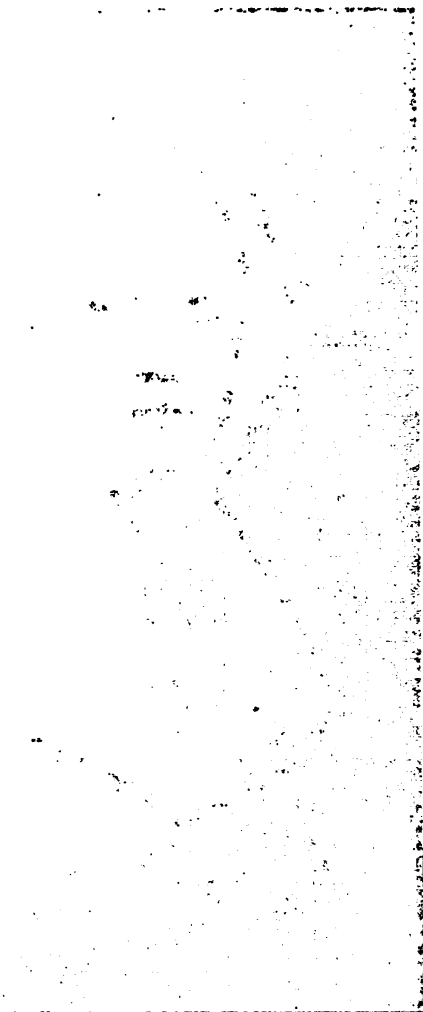


MARIE-ANTOINETTE, FROM THE PORTRAIT BY PRIEUR
(Musée Carnavalet)



1911
CHALD M. B. S. S.
1911

1911



18 FROM THE PORTRAIT BY PRIEUR
(M. de Carnavalet)

Not a
11

A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

MARIE ANTOINETTE—TOULAN—JARJAYES

BY
PAUL GAULOT

TRANSLATED BY CHARLES LAROCHE, M.A.



WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND FACSIMILES

LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS
PHILADELPHIA : J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

1904

0

E. F.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
576559 A
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1932 L

MAY 1932
DUE
1932

PREFACE

IT might have been expected that, after the 21st of January, the King's death would have fully satisfied the revolutionary passions which the Convention had so willingly obeyed, and that the prisoners who were still at the Temple—the Queen, Madame Elisabeth, and the royal children—would no longer have had to fear for their lives. Such vain hopes, however, were not lasting, and it soon became plain to all who were interested in the fortunes of the Royal Family that its members, and especially Marie Antoinette, would soon be in danger of death. Far from being appeased by misfortune, the hatred which had so long been felt against Marie Antoinette, who was called *l'Autrichienne* ('the Austrian'), had grown more violent and more bitter against her since the war had become almost general, and had united Prussia, Austria, England, Spain, Holland, and Sardinia in their struggle against France, or rather against the French Revolution.

Events were fast succeeding one another, and the situation was now assuming a very gloomy aspect.

The Girondins, who were in power, and who composed the Cabinet at the time of the execution of Louis XVI., did not seem capable of resisting the storm, and it was easy to foresee a time when this party would be powerless in the struggle against the revolutionary agitation; for it was composed of men relatively moderate, but wanting the energy needful in the awful events which were then taking place. Everything went to show that the populace would soon be triumphant.

Justly frightened at such a prospect, a few wise and thoughtful men met together and formed the bold but perilous plan of snatching from their jailers the Temple prisoners—two women and two children, for these jailers were now ready to become their executioners.

Three different attempts were made to save the Royal Family. Ranking first in date was the attempt made by Toulan and the Chevalier de Jarjayes. The second was planned by Michonis and Cortey at the instigation of the Baron de Batz, that extraordinary conspirator whose existence has remained in many points, in spite of all investigations, mysterious and obscure. The third, which was barely outlined, seems to have been limited to a visit which the Chevalier de Rougeville, introduced by Michonis, paid to the Queen in her cell at the Conciergerie.

‘A Conspiracy under the Terror’ relates the first of those three attempts.

It may interest the reader to know how I came to write this narrative.

One day, some fifteen years ago, I was shown a few autograph notes from Marie Antoinette and an autograph letter from the Comte de Provence. They belonged and still belong to a lady¹ who received them from a descendant by marriage of the Chevalier de Jarjayes, to whom they were addressed. Their authenticity, therefore, cannot be suspected.

The letter was then partly unpublished, and the notes had never been printed. These were invaluable documents ; for not only have Marie Antoinette's autographs dating from her captivity always been few in number, but, several of them having been destroyed, they have now become very rare.

Written on small pieces of coarse paper, yellow with age, the characters were not in the least faded, and reproduced with perfect clearness the unfortunate Queen's well-known handwriting. One of them is in mysterious language, and consequently rather difficult to interpret. The others contained allusions to various people whose names are not mentioned, and to facts which are not defined ; they thus call for attention and excite curiosity.

It was while trying to solve these historical problems that the main facts in this volume came almost of their own accord to my notice. A very learned monograph, written by M. Léon

¹ A relative of the author.

Lecestre and published in the 'Revue des Questions Historiques' for April 1886, served me as a guide ; and thus it was that I wrote 'A Conspiracy under the Terror.'

I did not limit myself to the single narrative of the plan of escape formed by Toulan and the Chevalier de Jarjayes—Toulan is too interesting a character to be dismissed so abruptly ; and, as I found in a *dossier* of the Revolutionary Tribunal a whole series of documents, notes, and letters concerning him, I followed this heroic Gascon on to the end of his adventurous life.

Beyond the pleasure the reader may derive from a closer acquaintanceship with Toulan, he will be able more closely to associate himself with the society to which this man belonged ; whilst the life of Toulan is a good example of the manners of the half lower-class, half middle-class people during the revolutionary tempest.

Need I say that I have endeavoured to judge men and events impartially, and that my sole ambition has been to approve myself a truthful historian ? As I said in an earlier Preface, 'I have tried to form an opinion by the aid of documents, and have not sought for documents in order to uphold an opinion.'

PAUL GAULOT.

CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| PREFACE | PAGE v |
|-------------------|-----------|

PART I.

THE STAY AT THE TEMPLE.

AUGUST 13, 1792—JANUARY 21, 1793.

CHAPTER I.

| | |
|--|---|
| The Return to Paris after the October Days—The Royal Family Prisoners in the Tuileries—The Flight to Varennes—The Agony of the Monarchy—Insults to the Royal Family—August 10—Les Feuillants | 3 |
|--|---|

CHAPTER II.

| | |
|--|----|
| The Temple—The Main Tower—Feelings of the Royal Family at the Beginning of their Captivity—Temporarily Settled in the Small Tower—Life at the Temple—The Kitchens—Municipal Officers | 13 |
|--|----|

CHAPTER III.

| | |
|--|----|
| The Royalists in Paris—Unknown Attempt to Deliver the Royal Family—January 21, 1793—The Baron de Batz—The Attempt of the Porte Saint-Denis | 23 |
|--|----|

x. A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

PART II.

THE CONSPIRACY.

CHAPTER I.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| The Royalists are Discouraged after January 21—The Chevalier de Jarjayes—General de Bourcet—M. de Jarjayes' Marriage—The First Ladies in Waiting to the Queen—Importance of this Office—Missions given to the Chevalier—The Comte d'Artois in Turin—Relations between the Court and Barnave—Secret Correspondence—Note in Disguised Language—Roxane and Lucius—The Eve of August 10—The Stenographer's Lodge—M. de Jarjayes' Despair—He is on the Point of leaving Paris—February 2, 1793—The Queen's Envoy—Toulan | 31 |

CHAPTER II.

| | |
|---|----|
| June 30, 1789—The Café de Foy—At the Palais Royal—The Gardes Françaises at the Abbaye—Popular Agitation—The Prison Doors are Forced—The Night at the Variety Theatre—Appeal to the Assemblée Constituante—Delegation of Sixteen Members to the King—The King's Answer—The Prisoners are set Free—Toulan, his Origin and Marriage—He comes to Paris—District President of the Federation of 1790—A Rioter on August 10—Member of the Society of the 10th of August Men—Member of the Commune—He is on Guard at the Temple on September 19, 1792—His Devotion to the Prisoners—His Revolutionary Attitude and Language—Minor Services he Renders—His Fears for the Queen after January 21—He makes a Plan to Save her—The Queen's Acceptance—Toulan's Mission to Jarjayes | 45 |
|---|----|

CONTENTS

xi

CHAPTER III.

PAGE

| | |
|--|----|
| Conversation between Toulan and De Jarjays—The Latter wishes to see the Queen—Difficulties of such an Enterprise—The Couple Tison—Precautions taken by the Commune regarding them—Second Interview—Second Note from the Queen—Toulan finds a Means—The Chevalier Disguises himself—He enters the Temple—He sees the Queen—Description of Marie Antoinette's Room—The Chevalier's Emotion—Fears of the Queen—Third Note—Jarjays' Answer—Fourth Note | 61 |
|--|----|

CHAPTER IV.

| | |
|---|----|
| Frequent Interviews between Toulan and Jarjays, Toulan, and the Queen—The Prisoners refuse to be separated—Vigilance of the Commissioners at the Temple—Organisation of the Guards' Service—The Two Commissioners—Necessity of finding Accomplices—A Difficult Choice—The Queen decides | 71 |
|---|----|

CHAPTER V.

| | |
|---|----|
| Jacques François Lepître—His Disposition—Representative of the Paris Commune—Member of the Provisional Commune—On Duty at the Temple for the First Time—His Secret Royalism—He Discloses his Personality to the King and Queen—His Connection with Toulan—He offers a Song to Louis XVII.—He is appointed President of the Passport Committee | 75 |
|---|----|

CHAPTER VI.

| | |
|---|----|
| Lepître's Imagination at Work—Reflections—The Queen insists—He must be put in the Secret at any Cost—Money Sacrifice—Appeal to M. de la Borde—Jarjays refuses this New Aid—Too many Accomplices—Fifth Note—Jarjays and Lepître—Agreement—Sixth and Seventh Letters—The Gold Box | 80 |
|---|----|

xii A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

CHAPTER VII.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| Plan of Escape—Meeting at Lepître's House—Toulan brings his Friend Ricard—Parts are Distributed—Precautions taken at the Temple against Indiscretions—The Queen and Madame Elisabeth to Disguise themselves—Clothes are Brought to the Temple by the Commissioners—Toulan's Hat—Three-coloured Scarves—Marie Thérèse's Disguise—The Lamplighter and his Children—Difficulty to bring out Louis XVII.—A New Accomplice | 85 |

CHAPTER VIII.

| | |
|---|----|
| August 13 at the Temple Gate—Ruse employed by Turgu to follow the Royal Family—Services rendered—Secret Correspondence—Easy Communications with the People outside—The young King—He is to be Carried off in a Basket | 92 |
|---|----|

CHAPTER IX.

| | |
|---|----|
| Tison and his Wife had to be Baffled in their Watch—Spanish Tobacco—A Narcotic—Leaving the Temple—The Queen and Lepître—Madame Royale and Ricard—The young King and Turgu—Madame Elisabeth and Toulan—Rue de la Corderie—The Three Cabs—Flight towards Havre—Amabert—Chances of Success | 98 |
|---|----|

CHAPTER X.

| | |
|---|-----|
| Lepître's Tergiversations—His Fears—The Pretexts he gives for Delaying the Execution of the Plan—No Time to be Lost—The Queen Endeavours to overcome his Faint-heartedness—March 1, 1793—'Filial Piety'—Hair from the Queen, the Little King, and Marie Thérèse—'Poco ama ch 'il morir teme'—'Tutto per loro'—Cap knitted by Madame Elisabeth—Outside Complications | 108 |
|---|-----|

CONTENTS

xiii

CHAPTER XI.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| The New Plan of Toulan and Jarjayes—The Queen alone can Escape—She Consents to it on Madame Elisabeth's earnest Entreaties—The young King's Sleep—She Refuses—Letter to Jarjayes | 117 |

PART III.

THE RING AND SEAL OF LOUIS XVI.

CHAPTER I.

| | |
|--|-----|
| The Ring and Seal of the King— <i>Procès-verbal</i> of the Commune—Sequestration of Cléry—Audacious Abduction accomplished by Toulan | 125 |
|--|-----|

CHAPTER II.

| | |
|---|-----|
| The Queen sends the Articles to Jarjayes through Toulan—Letter sent with Them—The Chevalier's Double Mission—At Brussels—A Friend of the Queen, le Comte Jean Axel de Fersen—His Journey to Paris in February 1792—At Hamm—The King's Brother—Old Souvenirs—Prejudice and Fears—The Emperor Francis II.—The Queen's Debts—Septeuil, Ex-Treasurer of the Civil List—Letters from Marie Antoinette, Madame Elisabeth, and the Royal Children to le Comte de Provence and le Comte d'Artois—Last Letter from Marie Antoinette to M. de Jarjayes—'Good-bye' | 131 |
|---|-----|

CHAPTER III.

| | |
|--|-----|
| M. de Jarjayes' Departure—M. de Joly—Madame de Jarjayes remains in Paris—Dangers which she runs—M. de Jarjayes at Turin—The Court of Sardinia—The Emigrants' Talk about the Chevalier—Le Comte de Provence's Message—Surprise of this Prince—Letter of Thanks—The Queen is not informed of the Success of the Mission—Madame Royale's Narrative—Cléry at Blankenberg | 145 |
|--|-----|

xiv A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

PART IV.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY.

CHAPTER I.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| Suspicious — Arthur's First Denunciation — Lepître's and Toulan's Justification — They are removed from Duty at the Temple — The Tisons give Information — Search at the Prisoners' — Toulan's Hat — Madness of the Woman Tison | 157 |

CHAPTER II.

| | |
|--|-----|
| Toulan in the Precincts of the Temple — Signals agreed upon — Correspondence through Turgy's Intervention — Note from Madame Elisabeth — 'Produce' — Political Agitation — The Committee of Twelve — Opposition of the Commune — Petition against the Girondins — Lepître refuses to Sign — Toulan signs — Insurrection on May 31 and June 2 — Toulan goes into the Suburbs — Attempt by the Baron de Batz unknown to Toulan | 165 |
|--|-----|

CHAPTER III.

| | |
|--|-----|
| Prophecies — 'Mirabilis Liber' — Louis XVII. parted from his Mother — Toulan informed of Everything through Letters from Madame Elisabeth — Official Attempt at Release — Maret and Semonville — Austria's Policy — M. de Thugut — Arrest of Plenipotentiaries — Popular Exasperation — Reverses in La Vendée — Mayence and Valenciennes surrender — Scarcity of Food — The Committee of Public Safety is renewed — Marie Antoinette, sent before the Revolutionary Tribunal, is taken to the Conciergerie — Toulan and Michonis — The Chevalier de Rougeville — Re-election of the Commune Council — Neither Toulan nor Lepître is re-elected | 173 |
|--|-----|

CONTENTS

XV

CHAPTER IV.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| Toulan arrested on October 7 — His Self-control — He escapes — October 8 — Lepître's Arrest — Sainte-Pélagie — The Queen's Trial, October 14-16 — Lepître as a Witness — His Evidence — Arrest of Madame de Jarjayes — Sentence and Execution of Marie Antoinette, October 16 | 184 |

CHAPTER V.

| | |
|--|-----|
| Toulan Leaves Paris on October 7 — Neuilly-sur-Marne — Antedated Passport — He returns to Paris — Signals — His Imprudence — Madame Elisabeth's Recommendation — Interview with Turgy — Toulan's Last Letter — Last answer, which does not reach him — Flight from Paris — Corbeil — The Auxerre Coach — La Charité — Toulouse | 195 |
|--|-----|

CHAPTER VI.

| | |
|--|-----|
| The Rumour of the Accusation has preceded Toulan at Toulouse — Danger of Staying longer in that Town — He thinks of Fleeing — Falsified Passport — Departure from Toulouse on October 26 — Arrival in Bordeaux — The Miserable House on the Quay at Royan — Public Writer — The Romance of 'Rosalie' | 201 |
|--|-----|

CHAPTER VII.

| | |
|--|-----|
| Toulan settled in Bordeaux — He tries to Start in Business — His Correspondence with his Wife and Cousin — Ricard — Ricardin — Guy | 218 |
|--|-----|

xvi A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

CHAPTER VIII.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| Germaine Toulan in Bordeaux—News from Paris—Trial of Toulan's Accomplices (November 1793)—They are Acquitted—Toulan resumes his own Name—Card of Citizenship—He is arrested on 5th of Germinal, Year II. (March 25, 1794)—His Examination—He is denounced to Isabeau—The Latter pays no Heed—Toulan in Prison | 249 |

CHAPTER IX.

| | |
|---|-----|
| Increase of the Terror—The Guillotine is taken to the Place du Trône Renversé—Toulan in Paris—The Revolutionary Tribunal—Judges and Jurymen—The Indictment—His Companions—Verdict—Sentence of Death—Execution | 278 |
|---|-----|

CHAPTER X.

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| CONCLUSION | 287 |
|----------------------|-----|

ILLUSTRATIONS

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| MARIE ANTOINETTE | <i>Frontispiece</i> |
| <i>From the picture by Prieur in the Musée Carnavalet</i> | |
| THE TEMPLE IN 1792 | <i>To face p. 13</i> |
| FACSIMILE OF LETTER FOUND AMONG JARJAYES' PAPERS | „ 36 |
| FACSIMILE OF LETTER FROM MARIE ANTOINETTE | „ 70 |
| FACSIMILE OF LETTER FROM MARIE ANTOINETTE | „ 132 |
| FACSIMILE OF LETTER FROM THE COMTE DE PROVENCE | „ 150 |



PART I

THE STAY AT THE TEMPLE

AUGUST 13, 1792—JANUARY 21, 1793



CHAPTER I

The Return to Paris after the October Days—The Royal Family Prisoners in the Tuileries—The Flight to Varennes—The Agony of the Monarchy—Insults to the Royal Family—August 10—The Feuillants.

WHEN Louis XVI., yielding to the demands of the rioters, came back to Paris with his family, after the October days of 1789, it was in reality the beginning of a captivity which was to end in the death of all of them except his daughter, Marie Thérèse.

If the King had any delusion when he left Versailles in order to satisfy the wishes of the Parisians, who had expressed them in so strange a manner, he was not long deceived. The Tuileries were nothing more than a kind of prison for their Majesties, with the National Guards, under the command of La Fayette, for gaolers; and the honours rendered to the royal persons ill disguised the close watch to which they were submitted.

The King made one attempt, if not to recover his authority, at least to evade this humiliating control; however this plan, badly prepared and quite as badly executed, failed, on June 21, 1791.

4 A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

Arrested at Varennes, the fugitives were brought back to Paris, and the only result of their futile attempt was to aggravate and render their position more awkward.

From that time the struggle between the people and the monarchy, which until then had preserved some appearance of respect, became bitter, violent, and unrelenting. Agitated, defiant, spiteful, Paris was in want of a victim ; it had got hold of one and meant to keep it.

Louis XVI. was beaten beforehand. Of all the sovereigns the branch of the Bourbons has given to France he certainly was the least fit either to understand the aspirations of his time or to aid them in so far as they were right, or even to fight them when they might create danger or be fatal. He had a kind heart, but his intellect was very poor ; and his education, as well as a natural tendency, had left in his disposition a sort of bashfulness and want of self-confidence which completely paralysed him. He was afraid of giving orders, and feared more than anything having to speak to an assembly. Besides, nature had not favoured him. True, his features did not lack nobleness, but he looked sad, his gait was heavy without dignity, he took no care of his appearance ; however skilled his hairdresser may have been, his hair was soon untidy from the absence of attention to his dress. His voice, though not harsh, had an unpleasant ring in it ; and if he

got excited, it would pass suddenly to a shrill tone.¹ In a word, nothing in his physique answered the conception that people might still form of royal majesty.

The Queen, on the contrary, seemed to be gifted with every good quality in which the King was lacking. Legend, which has appropriated the whole of that period, has made a splendid portrait of her ; and although history is more sedate, it does not altogether contradict legend on this point. This is the description it has given us through the pen of a contemporary who was in a situation to know, and who could afford to speak the truth. This was Senac de Meilhan.

‘Marie Antoinette of Austria,’ he wrote, ‘was striking rather than beautiful. None of her features taken apart were particularly good, but their *ensemble* was extremely pleasing. The word charms, which is so often used, was the real one to describe her graceful face. There was not a woman who could hold her head as she did ; it was poised on her shoulders so as to give grace and dignity to every one of its movements. Her gait was at once light and proud, and reminded one of Virgil’s saying, “*Incessu patuit Dea.*” What struck one most in her was this mixture of gracefulness and imposing dignity. She was by no means clever, and did not pretend to be ; yet she had something about her,

¹ *Mémoires de Madame Campan*, vol. i. p. 123, vol. ii. p. 230.

6 A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

a kind of inspiration, which always prompted her to say the right thing at the right time and in the most appropriate words. Then, it was her heart rather than her mind which dictated her speeches and her answers. . . .'

And to this portrait Senac de Meilhan adds the following judicious remarks: 'Entirely her own mistress at the age of twenty, a foreigner, handsome, amiable, all-powerful over the heart and mind of a king who was as young as herself, surrounded by seduction, she acted many a time unwisely, and was applauded for actions which later on were to be imputed to her as crimes. Being the object of public enthusiasm, she was not warned of her faults nor of her unwise conduct. . . .'¹

Later on she paid dearly for her imprudence. When the Revolution broke out the people, who always go from one extreme to the other, hated her just as passionately as they had loved her. She was in their eyes the evil genius of monarchy, the origin and the cause of public misfortunes.

Was it possible for her to swim against the tide? Certainly not, for it was beyond human strength. Having realised the situation, she was equal to circumstances when danger appeared; but her efforts were paralysed by her unpopularity. She was obliged to bear with apparent resignation, although she revolted at it inwardly, the humiliating

¹ *Portraits et Caractères*, p. 74.

lot which was in store for the last representatives of monarchy, thanks to her husband's weakness.

It is easy to imagine what the months which followed the return to Paris before the final fall must have been for her. This period, which extends from June 26, 1791, to August 10, 1792, was perhaps not the most bloody, but certainly the most troubled, we might say the most painful period.

It was constant uncertainty and confusion; every day witnessed a change in the unsettled mind of the Sovereign, who took the most opposite resolutions.

Sometimes he seemed to take a step in favour of the Revolution, and then staunch Royalists would blame him openly for his weakness; at another moment, through an abrupt change, he relied entirely on his supporters, and the constitutional party charged him with duplicity. Below these parties the crowd, which was undergoing the hardships of a severe winter, hunger, slack work, believed all the accusations and called out, 'Treason!' To crown all misfortunes, emigration deprived the King of his natural defenders, and achieved the ruin of the Throne more surely by compromising monarchy abroad.

During this time the Queen, who was surrounded by enemies and obliged to suspect everyone around her, dared not write openly to those whom she knew to be still her friends. She hardly

8 A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

dared run the risk of entrusting a faithful servant with an unsigned note, in which names were disguised and in which she dissembled her thoughts under conventional and figured language.

Just like any other human mind, hers was divided between alternatives of fear and hope. She was afraid for her children ; she feared for royalty, if not for the King, that they would have to endure the worst humiliations. She anticipated for herself a frightful fate. Nevertheless, she struggled on.

It was impossible for her to commend the faithful battalions or to put on the popular uniform of the National Guards, which the King himself dared not put on, because he was afraid of breaking the constitution ;¹ she could not speak before the Assembly, nor make a royal speech, for she was a woman and not even a regent. However she made use of circuitous means ; she tried to flatter, to win over those fierce republicans, whose very name made her motherly heart tremble.

She had already made Barnave's conquest on his return from Varennes, and she kept up a regular correspondence with him. She induced Guadet, the stern Girondin, to come one night to the Tuileries and talk with the King ; and she would not let him go before he had been brought to her son's cradle and had kissed the royal child on the forehead. She had even stooped lower for help,

¹ *Memoirs of M. de Vaublanc*, p. 174.

and had used seductive methods which were not quite so dignified.

Bribery was tried whenever it had a chance of being successful, and Danton, who was as mercenary as Mirabeau, sold himself for one hundred thousand crowns.

But Barnave, Guadet, or Danton could not stop the revolutionary movement any more than Mirabeau could. Barnave had tried to do so, but without conviction, and he at least fell honourably. Guadet and the Girondins were powerless. Danton did not even trouble himself about earning his money.¹

The Queen could hardly enjoy a few hours' sleep during the long months of agony for the monarchy. She used to be awakened at dawn, and would not allow the blinds to be pulled down or the shutters to be closed, for she could not bear darkness. It was then, during the short intervals when everything was calm in the city, that she entertained illusions, and at times dreamed of a near deliverance. One night as the moon was shining brightly, lighting up her room, she contemplated it, and then, making a confidant of the female guardian who was near her, said, 'In one month I

¹ I shall give elsewhere the documents upon which such an opinion of Danton is based. In the meantime, I beg the reader will kindly refer for this matter to vol. x. of the *Histoire de la Révolution Française*, by Louis Blanc, p. 409 and following.

shall not look at this moon without being rid from my chains, without the King being free.¹

On July 3, a fortnight after the Tuileries were invaded for the first time, she was still writing to her best friend, the Count of Fersen, 'Our situation is horrible, but do not be over-anxious ; I feel I have courage, and something tells me that we shall soon be happy and out of danger. This thought sustains me. . . .'²

Last and fleeting hours when mad expectations surge up before they vanish for ever !

As time goes on the popular tide advances full of anger and hatred. Everywhere one hears the Royal Family insulted ; in fact, insult is on every lip and in every eye. The little Dauphin dare no longer go and play in his small garden at the Tuileries ; the Queen dare not look out of the palace windows. The crowd is eager to show scorn for those whom it has loved and respected for so long ; it is for ever present, spying out every opportunity ; and for want of anything better this crowd, with its natural coarseness, enjoys soiling the King's palace with filth.

No refuge now remains unviolated. Revolution, being triumphant, seems to hunt royalty even to the foot of the altar. The singers of the Chapel Royal, who have embraced the new principles, make a

¹ *Mémoires de Madame Campan*, vol. ii. p. 227.

² *The Count of Fersen and the French Court*, vol. ii. p. 317.

point of raising their voices whenever they come to a passage which can be turned into a wicked allusion. They shout, as a heavenly curse, the sacred words : ' *Deposit potentes de sede* ' (' He has put down the mighty from their seats ').¹

The situation was so horrible that the Queen had come to wish for the end of the crisis, whatever the issue might be. Trusting in some vague words spoken by Danton, she imagined that if the Royal Family were insulted in a more obvious and perceptible way it would awaken the love of the French people for a secular monarchy ; at least she fancied that they could be saved only through circuitous means, and she began to wish they might be imprisoned in a tower by the sea-side.²

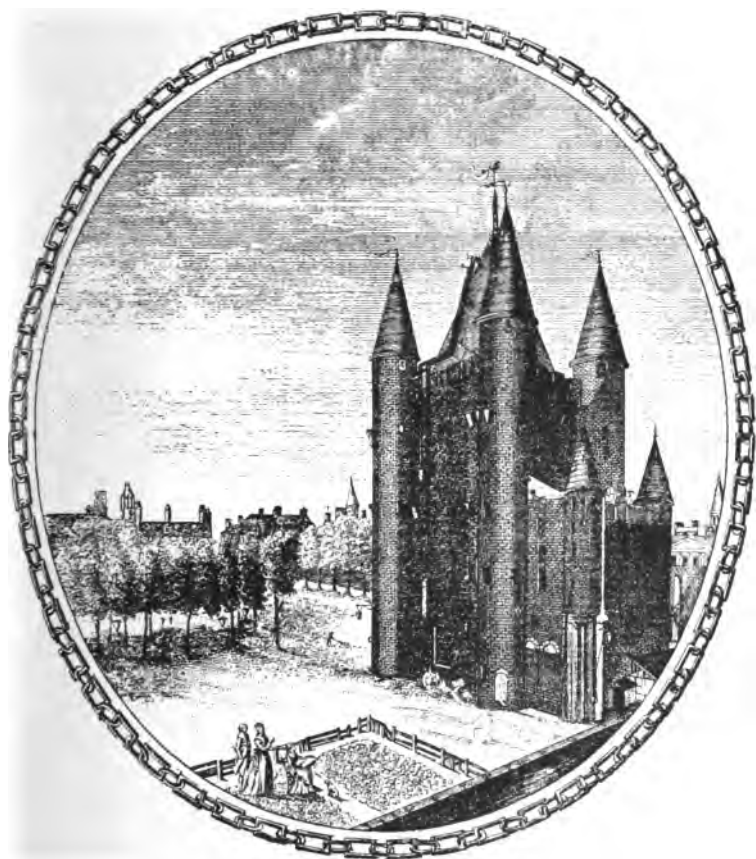
Owing to an irony of fate her wish seemed as if it were to be granted her, and at last the catastrophe, so long expected, was at hand. August 10 put an end to constitutional monarchy, which had sprung from a double weakness — that of the Royalists, who wanted to maintain the old order of things, and that of the Revolutionists, who wished to establish at once a form of government in keeping with their theories. The situation was made clearer : the King and Royal Family were henceforth nothing more than prisoners, whose lot depended on their rebellious subjects' wishes.

¹ *Mémoires de Madame Campan*, vol. ii. p. 238.

² *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 237.

After having left the Tuileries in the morning Louis XVI., his family, and a few friends spent the whole day in the stenographer's lodge. The following day they were sent for a time to the Feuillants', next to the building where the Assembly met, until the Luxembourg should be ready to receive them, as that palace had been fixed upon by the Assembly for the King's residence.

But the Assemblée Législative had not reckoned on the Paris Commune. As a prelude to the tyranny which it was to exercise for more than a year and a half with extraordinary cruelty the Commune tore up the decree of the Assembly, took possession of the royal prisoners, and as early as August 13 shut them up in the Temple Tower, where they remained under the keeping of commissaries and National Guards.



THE TEMPLE IN 1792
(Musée Carnavalet)

PUBLIC

ASIDE

CHAPTER II

The Temple—The Main Tower—Feelings of the Royal Family at the Beginning of their Captivity—Temporarily Settled in the Small Tower—Life at the Temple—The Kitchens—Municipal Officers.

THE Temple, which was pulled down in 1811, was not a single building, but an assemblage of buildings enclosed within a large wall ; the grounds measured from 120 to 130 hectares.¹

It was named after the Templars, who had been the first owners.

In 1792 this space was surrounded by walls and separated from the rest of the town, forming thus a kind of city inside Paris. Several noblemen had taken up their abode at the Temple, whence could be seen the Hôtel de Boisboudran, the Hôtel de Guise, the Hôtel Boufflers, with its pretty garden laid out in English style, an hôtel which was used by the Prince de Conti as his private strong-box ; lastly, the Grand Priory, built towards the year 1667 by Jacques de Souvré, in the part adjoining the Rue du Temple. It became afterwards the usual residence of the Comte d'Artois when he was in Paris.

Besides the abovementioned houses the Temple

¹ One hectare is equal to 2 acres 1 rod 35 perches.

enclosure contained an old monument known under the name of Cæsar's Tower, a church, a cemetery, several fountains, large stables, extensive kitchens, even a butcher's shop.

The garden of the Grand Priory was a large one, and the large Temple tower was built on one side of it. It had been raised by a treasurer of the Order, Father Hubert, who died in 1212.

The following is a full description of it, such as was given us by a writer who lived at the time when it was pulled down.

‘This large building was composed of a square tower flanked with four small round ones. Besides, on the northern side was a massive building lower than the rest and finished by two turrets much smaller than those of the main building. The height of the square tower was at least 150 feet, without the slanting roof, which I presume, perhaps wrongly, was added at a later period. At the bottom of the roof, and inside the battlements all round the tower, was a gallery from which there must have been an extensive view. The building was four stories high; each floor contained a room thirty feet square, and three other smaller rooms, one in each of the round towers; the fourth one was occupied by a beautiful staircase, leading to the various apartments, both in the main and in the small buildings. In the middle of each large room was a pillar from which darted curvilinear arches;

this was repeated on each floor. The walls of the main tower were nine feet thick, and the whole of the building was of freestone of medium size. Formerly there were several underground passages, one of which in particular led, it was said, to the Bastille, and thence to Vincennes; but they have been destroyed long ago and filled up by the various houses which were built on the ground covering those passages.¹

The Royal Family entered this building, which the Paris Commune had decided should be its prison, on August 13, 1792.

The Temple was not for all of them an unknown abode. In brighter days the Queen had often come there. During the severe winter of 1776 she drove there in a sledge, and the Comte d'Artois, her brother-in-law, asked her to lunch. She also used to go to the Temple when coming out of Notre Dame de Paris, when she went to offer thanks after the birth of her children.²

What must have been Marie Antoinette's reflections when she compared her former visits with this unexpected one, especially if, as the poet says, there be no grief so bitter as a bright recollection in days of trial? We must not, however, exaggerate her troubles, for we cannot forget that the future

¹ *Recherches Historiques sur le Temple*, by J. J. Barillet, pp. 87, 88.

² *Ibid.* p. 82.

was as much unknown to the victims as it was to the tormentors.

It is certainly difficult, if not impossible, in our time to understand what happened then, if we separate the incidents of the period from events which followed them, by neglecting to consider their consequences. We look at all the facts of that dreadful period through the recollections of the dead and with the constant thought of the bloody *dénouement*. That is why the real significance of the events of that period is obscured by the haunting remembrance, and in very many instances our understanding is completely at fault.

Thus, it is a general belief that Louis XVI. and his family entered the Temple with the darkest presentiments, and as victims who had no doubts as to their future lot.

Yet such an opinion is contrary to the truth ; for, in spite of the sadness of their situation, when the prisoners compared their actual position with that of days gone by, not only during the whole of the preceding year, but merely with the two famous days of June 20 and August 10, when they were actually threatened with death, the first days spent at the Temple were for them days of relative calm and rest.

No longer could they hear the cries of death, the sound of guns, the groans of the dying, or the howling of the victorious crowd. Besides, if they

were captives their captivity at least shielded them against the hatred of passions. They found themselves in greater security at the Temple than at the Tuileries. And the September massacres confirmed rather than contradicted such an opinion, in spite of their sinister horror.

Both the King and the Queen, who were deceived, or rather kept in ignorance of the real state of popular feeling, considered the future without any real dread. What had they to fear? His Majesty might be considered as being responsible, but according to the constitution the only penalty that could be inflicted was dethronement. He might, further, be banished. Well. They had nothing worse to expect. As they had not been murdered, neither on June 20 nor on August 10, they had given up dreading such a fate.

Cléry, who ought to know, wrote in very plain words, 'I was far from entertaining any fears for the King's life. The Queen was of the same opinion, and her husband was entirely guided by her.'¹

This conviction entertained by Marie Antoinette explains many things. Could we otherwise understand that the Queen played the *clavécin*, as she often did, not only to teach her daughter, but for her personal pleasure? She played the very day before Louis XVI. appeared at the bar of the

¹ *Mémoires de M. de Cléry*, p. 24.

Convention Nationale on December 10 ; and, from what Cléry says, the airs she sang were anything but sad.¹

As to the manner in which the Royal Family were treated, we cannot accept entirely and without reserve the assertions of certain authors. In their generous indignation they have made the darkest statements ; they mixed up two different periods, one from August 13 to December 11, 1792, and the other which begins at this latter date, with the King's trial, and treated them with equal reprobation—thus causing a confusion contrary to historical truth.

During the first period, and in spite of the difficulties resulting from a hasty installation, the Commune treated the prisoners with regard. Thus 'the royal table was served in very good style ; there was a good attendance of servants in the kitchens and pantry. Most of them were old servants who had requested as an honour to be appointed to this post.'²

We give here the list of those servants, with their names and salaries :—

| | Livres a year |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Gagnié, chef | 4,000 ³ |
| Remy, chief butler | 3,000 |

¹ *Mémoires de M. de Cléry*, p. 83.

² *Quelques Souvenirs*, by M. Lepître, p. 26.

³ *Louis XVII*, by A. de Beauchesne, vol. i. p. 332, footnote.

| | Livres a year |
|--|---------------|
| Mâcon, second butler | 2,400 |
| Nivet, pastry cook | 2,400 |
| Meunier, roast cook | 2,400 |
| Mauduit, pantry man and butler | 2,400 |
| Penaut, kitchen boy | 1,500 |
| Marchand, valet | 1,500 |
| Turgy, valet | 1,500 |
| Chrétien, valet | 1,500 |
| Guillot, pantry servant | 1,500 |
| Adrien, scullery servant | 1,200 |
| Fontaine, kitchen porter | 600 |

‘The same etiquette and form as at Court were used for Louis’s table at the Temple,’ so says Verdier in a report. The purveyors’ bills amounted for the first twenty-five days to 11,237 francs, but the commissariat reduced this sum to 10,400 livres. For the last twenty-three days of September expenses amounted to 8,102 francs, for October to 8,245 francs, and for November to 8,435 francs.

It is evident that at that time the Commune paid largely for the prisoners’ table, and meals were abundant ; no fewer than twenty dishes¹ were served at a meal, and each carefully prepared.

The cooking was even so good that the municipal officers on duty, who at first had their meals brought from some neighbouring restaurant, demanded that they should be served by the proficient servants of his Majesty, and their request was granted.

¹ *Histoire parlementaire de la Révolution française*, by Buchez and Roux, vol. xxi. p. 307.

For the service inside the Temple, besides Cléry, specially attached to the King's service, and François Hue, the household was composed of Tison and his wife, who received respectively 6,000 and 3,000 francs. They were attached to the Queen's, Madame Elisabeth's, and Marie Thérèse's service. Madame Rockenstroh, in charge of the linen; her son, clerk to the steward; Danjout, hairdresser; Angot, woodcutter; several wood carriers, a sweeper, Mathey, Tower doorkeeper; and several turnkeys and key-bearers.

When the Royal Family arrived at the Temple, they had nothing with them; their everyday clothes had been left under seal at the Tuileries. But the commissariat did not object to clothes, linen, and other necessaries being bought. For this purpose a sum of 31,000 livres was spent between August 13 and the end of November.

These figures, which are official, are so different from what the legend would have us believe, that it is both interesting and useful to give them.

The Commune, which had from the beginning taken possession of the Royal Family, had undertaken the watch at the Temple, and its members, transformed into guardians, came in turn to fill this post near the prisoners.

Most of the Commune's members were common men who had made themselves conspicuous by their hatred of royalty and their staunch revolutionary

principles. But many of them, though fierce in speech, were human; some sympathised with the royal prisoners, some even were so devoted as to give their life. History has kept for us the names of those heroic guardians 'who had received from the Revolution the mandate to be deaf, blind, and mute under penalty of death and who defied death as soon as they became familiar with the royal misfortune.'¹

Unfortunately, and thanks to an inevitable contrast, others were nothing more than ignorant, depraved, and coarse brutes; and along with the names of Lebœuf, Moelle, the grocer Dangé, Jobert, master mason, the architect Beugnot, the professor Lepître, and the chemist Follope we have to recall some which are truly despicable.

First among these was a man called Mercereau, a stonemason, who made a rule of coming to the Temple in the dirtiest dress, and who would loll on the brocaded sofa where the Queen used to sit; another, Pierre Bernard, a former priest, whose language was most offensive. Jacques Roux, who, like Bernard, was a renegade, took particular pleasure in troubling the prisoners' sleep by singing all night at the pitch of his voice. There was still a man—Léchenard, a tailor—who was always disgracefully drunk, and who vomited in the room adjoining the Queen's.²

¹ *Marie-Antoinette*, by Ed. and J. de Goncourt, pp. 408, 409.

² *Quelques Souvenirs*, pp. 22, 27, and 30.

Such humiliating vexations shocked the captives without taking anything from their ever-cherished hopes. As soon as the offenders had departed the Royal Family forgot their sufferings. The King was a ready talker, and, provided his guardians be a little polite, he willingly addressed them. He took an interest in many little things with the thoughtlessness of a mind free of cares. Marie Antoinette herself showed a certain amount of cheerfulness. She would sometimes nickname the guardians; and she funnily called one of them 'the Pagoda,' because he was very sullen and silent, and never answered otherwise than by a nod.¹

Besides, Louis XVI.'s usual resignation made him accept his misfortunes as trials sent to sanctify his soul, which was the soul of a Christian rather than of a king. The Queen, whose mind was noble and strong, knew how to keep in those painful hours that calm and haughty serenity which she was to preserve even in the presence of death.

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, p. 21.

CHAPTER III

The Royalists in Paris—Unknown Attempt to Deliver the Royal Family—January 21, 1793—The Baron de Batz—The Attempt of the Porte Saint-Denis.

THE Comte d'Artois had left France in 1789, as soon as the revolutionary agitation began. The King's aunts, Mesdames Adélaïde and Victoire, had exiled themselves in February 1791; the Comte de Provence had left Paris on the same day as Louis XVI.—June 20, 1791—but, more fortunate than the King, he had safely reached Brussels.

Encouraged by and making a pretext of such examples, thinking also that they would be more useful to their sovereign beyond the frontiers than in France, many Royalists had left the country. But they fortunately had not all acted the same, and a few faithful men, braver and more active than the others, were watching over the last representatives of the old monarchy.

But, dispersed in Paris, hiding their secret opinion, mistrusting all men and all things, they were unable to assemble and combine their efforts; consequently they were powerless to succour and deliver the King. Yet, being constantly on the

24 A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

watch, and ready to take advantage of any favourable opportunity, they came as near to him as possible. All the houses in the neighbourhood of the Temple were soon occupied by those unfortunate people, who took a delight in catching a glance of the august prisoners or looking at the walls behind which they were detained. At times they would be bold enough to sing well known airs, and in the silence of the night the Queen could hear 'Pauvre Jacques' sung close to her prison by friendly voices.¹

Whether those Royalists did attempt during that period to deliver the Royal Family is not known, as there are no documents left testifying to it. The only reference to any attempt is to be found in a short note at the foot of a page in 'Quelques Souvenirs,' written by Lepître, a municipal official: 'Toulan's wife told me that a first one (attempt) had been made to save the King; but the opposition of an honest yet timid municipal had prevented it from being carried out' (p. 73).

As a rule, and as this narrative will prove further on, Lepître's assertion and the references he points out as the source of his information are worthy of serious attention. It is, therefore, neither impossible nor unlikely that a first conspiracy may have existed, although nothing up to this day has corroborated the saying of 'Toulan's wife.'

What is certain, however, is that if that plot

¹ *Marie-Antoinette*, p. 394.

really existed it came to nothing, even before any active steps were taken to put it into execution. Cléry does not mention it in his 'Mémoires,' and yet he did not leave his master until January 21. It cannot have been more than spoken of.

Besides, at that time not only was such an enterprise very hazardous, but the idea of a flight must have become very repugnant to the King. He had in various circumstances opposed a formal refusal to such propositions, though they were made by bold and faithful servants. The Varennes experience had taught him that a second failure would make his situation far worse, and he was aware that there were many chances against success in renewed flight. Why, therefore, should he run the risk of such an adventure, which at any rate could only be justified in a desperate case? And he was far from thinking that his situation was a desperate one.

Such a frame of mind had nothing extraordinary in it when one remembers the strange blindness of the Queen, who, even in the first weeks of January 1793, when sentence was virtually passed on his Majesty, yet refused to believe 'that either the French people or the foreign sovereigns could witness so cruel an action without trying to prevent it.'¹ Events were to be in strange contradiction with Marie Antoinette's blind confidence, for the National Convention passed sentence of death on Louis XVI. on January 17.

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepître, p. 29.

His execution was fixed for January 21. The greatest precautions had been taken, so that nothing should hinder the people's justice from having its course. The whole of the troops were in readiness. From the prison to the scaffold—that is, from the Temple to the Place de la Révolution—the procession passed on, protected by battalions whose faithfulness could not be suspected. It seemed utter folly, even madness, to attempt to rescue Louis XVI. from death at such a moment; and yet one man thought of it; he put or tried to put his foolish plan into execution. This man was the Baron de Batz.

The Baron was a mysterious man for his contemporaries, and who from many points of view has remained an enigma for the historian. He is certainly one of the most uncommon figures of that time, which offered numerous surprises. We shall meet him again later on, in another attempt to save the Queen, and we shall then go deeper into his character and the part he played. But we shall give now only a very short account of the sudden attack he made on January 21.

As soon as the sentence had been passed he had, with the help of Devaux, his secretary, formed with three or four hundred young men a plan for the deliverance of his Majesty. They were to be armed and assemble near the Porte Saint-Denis. There they should mix with the crowd and be ready

to move at the first signal. Their plan was to attack the convoy by main force, and take advantage of the surprise and commotion caused by this unexpected attack in order to carry off Louis XVI. Everything being arranged the conspirators parted, promising to be punctually at the rendezvous.

Faithful to his word, the Baron de Batz is at his post at the appointed hour; but he looks in vain for his companions. The side streets are empty; and yet it was from them that the attack was to be made. He is distressed at being abandoned. Must he give up his plan and draw back before the revolutionary forces? Standing on the height of the Boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle, he sees the carriage which leads Louis XVI. to death; it advances, reaches the Porte Saint-Denis. Just then Batz thinks he can see some of his friends; true they are not in great numbers. But this is enough for him; he feels his hopes revive; he will make the attempt. Two young men come out of the crowd and stand beside him. Time is pressing. Followed by Devaux and the two brave young men, he makes a dash towards the cortège which allows them to pass. They cross the line, draw their swords, and brandishing them call all four together repeatedly—

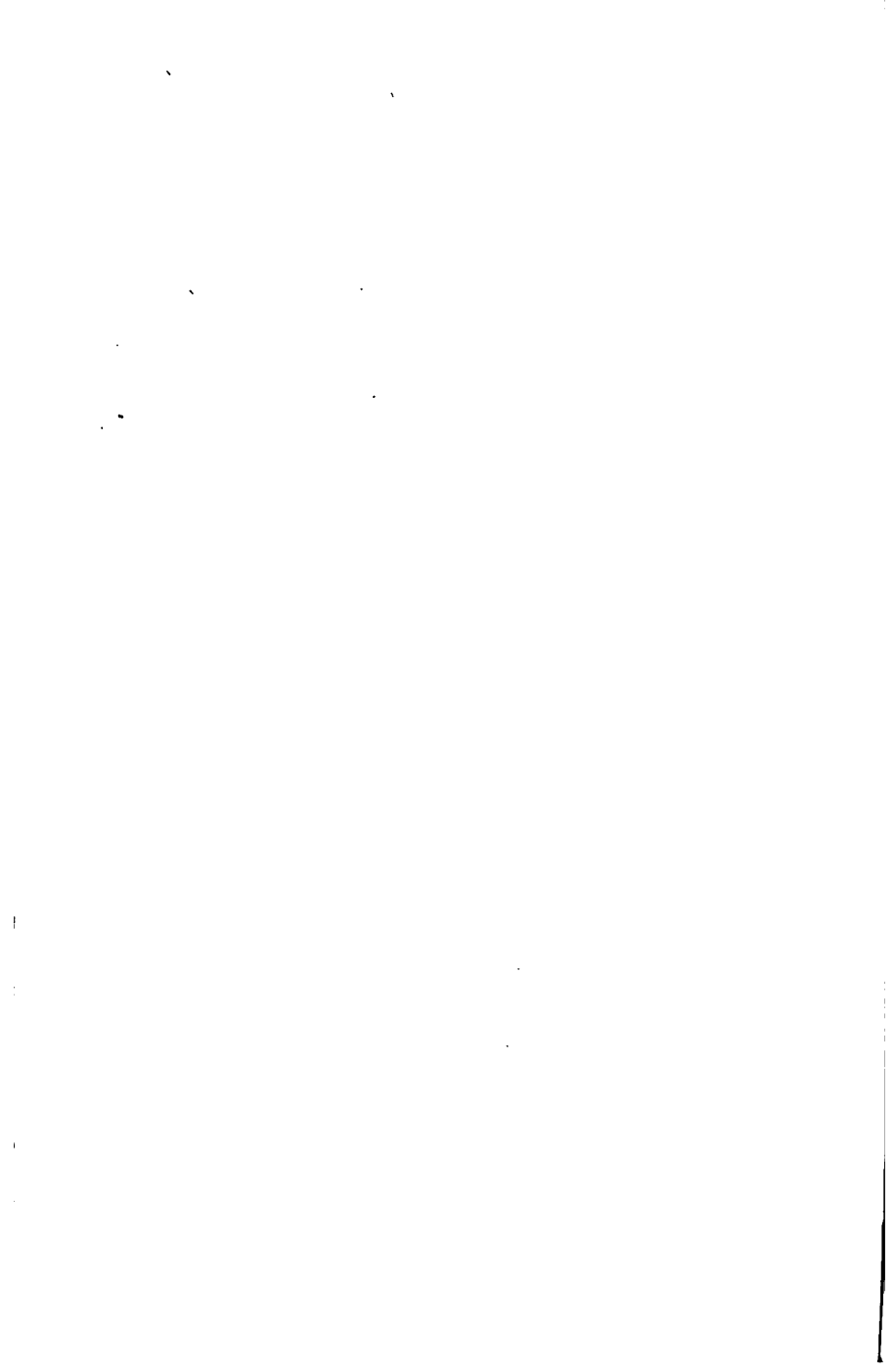
‘Help, Frenchmen! help, all those who want to save their King!’

Their cries brought no echo; no one in the crowd answered, and a dead silence prevailed

everywhere. The small party, perceiving no movement, and seeing that they were abandoned, turned round, crossing again the living fence composed of men and of National Guards who stood mute with fear, and endeavoured to disappear. Just then a reserve corps, who had been warned by a sentry, made a rush for M. de Batz and his brave followers. The two young men attempted to enter a house, but they were caught and massacred with sabres. Whilst this was going on M. de Batz and Devaux had vanished, escaping thus the fury of their pursuers. . . .¹

¹ *Mémoires Historiques sur Louis XVII*, by Eckard, pp. 125, 126.

PART II
THE CONSPIRACY



CHAPTER I

The Royalists are Discouraged after January 21—The Chevalier de Jarjayes—General de Bourcet—M. de Jarjayes's Marriage—The First Ladies in Waiting to the Queen—Importance of this Office—Missions given to the Chevalier—The Comte d'Artois in Turin—Relations between the Court and Barnave—Secret Correspondence—Note in Disguised Language—Roxane and Lucius—The Eve of August 10—The Stenographer's Lodge—M. de Jarjayes's Despair—He is on the Point of leaving Paris—February 2, 1793—The Queen's Envoy—Toulan.

It is evident that if the Convention meant to perform a political action rather than an act of justice when it beheaded the King it was entirely successful. From that day terror reigned in Paris, and the Royalists were discouraged and felt they were powerless.

But among those faithful Royalists none felt the blow as cruelly as the Chevalier de Jarjayes, who till now has not been known as well as he deserves to be.

As he was called to play a most important part in the following narrative it is right that his past and his position should be known before going further.

François Augustin Reiner Pélisson de Jarjayes was born at Grenoble on October 24, 1745. He

entered the army, and found there, from the first, an excellent patron, General de Bourcet, his uncle.

Among the list of persons recommended to Louis XVI., his father, the Dauphin had placed the name of M. de Bourcet 'as a man whose knowledge could be trusted.' In 1769 Jarjayes became aide de camp to his uncle, with whom he remained ten years, until 1779, when he entered the staff of the army with the rank of colonel.

About this time an event took place which was of vital interest to him. His marriage, which brought him in close connection with their Majesties, allowed him to penetrate into their intimacy, to gain their confidence, and, later on, to acquire a right to their gratitude.

He married one of the first twelve ladies in waiting on the Queen—Louise Marguerite Emilie Quetpée de Laborde.

Everyone knows how important and how remunerative was this office. It implied a careful supervision of all the bedroom service, the receiving of the Queen's orders for her rising, dressing, going out, and travelling. In addition to this the first ladies in waiting had charge of the Queen's private purse, the payment of pensions and gratifications. They were also entrusted with the diamonds. Their salary did not, it is true, exceed twelve thousand livres a year, but the whole of the bedroom, private rooms, and gambling room candles were their daily

perquisite, and this raised their respective salaries to fifty thousand francs a year.¹

Both the King and the Queen had many opportunities to see the Chevalier de Jarjayes, and it was not long before they esteemed him. He was straightforward and clever, thoroughly reliable, and his devotion was a tried one. Jarjayes knew how to be sincere, and yet never be deficient in respect. He was not afraid to speak the truth, and on various occasions he gave wise advice. He did not emigrate ; on the contrary, having remained one of the last devoted servants of the sovereigns, he was entrusted with several extremely delicate missions.

In 1791 Louis XVI. had appointed him field marshal and sub-director of the War Depôt. Soon after he put him into a situation where he could serve his Majesty still better.

In March 1791 the Comte Alphonse de Durfort had been entrusted by the King and the Queen with a secret mission to the Comte d'Artois and the German Emperor.² M. A. F. de Bertrand-Moleville has given lengthy particulars of this mission in his 'Mémoires Particuliers sur le Règne de Louis XVI.'³

The King, who was always wavering, soon gave up this plan in order to adopt the one proposed by

¹ *Mémoires de Madame Campan*, vol. i. p. 291.

² The head of the Austrian House lost his title of German Emperor only after Austerlitz, by the treaty of Presbourg, 1806.

³ Vol. ii. chap. xxxv. p. 308 and following.

M. de Breteuil, which consisted in leaving Paris, in order to seek refuge in a fortified place on the frontier. The result of this is known. After the return from Varennes it was no longer possible to carry out the plan formed by the Comte d'Artois and the Austrian Court without the Royal Family incurring great and useless risk. The King then sent Jarjayes to his brother in Turin, in order to induce him to give up the idea of entering France through Lyons. Jarjayes was successful, but not without difficulties.

On his return to Paris Jarjayes became the link between the Queen and Barnave. She it was who gave him the order to see this Deputy and his colleagues Durport and Alexandre Lameth.¹ He often received Barnave's communications in his pockets, from which Marie Antoinette took them, and replaced them by her answers.²

Those negotiations were without result. Barnave, seeing that the Queen did not make use of any of his advice, resolved to leave Paris. The result would probably have been the same had she followed it. At that time the revolutionary agitation was so violent that no voice, however eloquent, no arm, however powerful, could have checked it, far less stopped it.

Mémoires de Madame Campan, vol. ii. p. 150.

Deux Femmes de la Révolution, by Ch. de Mazade, pp. 251.

It was not always easy for the General to enter the palace which had been turned into a real prison. Is it not to this circumstance that the mysterious note is due which was found in Jarjayes's papers, and which excites curiosity from its form, its contents, but does not give any indication which may serve as a clue to its meaning ?

We give this note as we thought it should be reconstructed, and we give also a facsimile of the original.

‘Roxane sends this ring to Lucius, so that he may exchange it for a certain heart, which he will bring to her the first time (he visits her). It contains the same precious relics and seems to be more suitable. Roxane was expecting to hear yesterday from Lucius ; she requests he will explain to her certain movements which seem to be forming round the camp of Artaban, and which, if they are not true, are disquieting on account of the consequences which she foresees. She also requests him to tell her whether the news he gave her the day (she saw him) have not taken a perfectly different aspect from that he expected ; also what does Pradius think of it all ? Fatime, who does not understand it in the least, has taken the wise resolution to be cross. Both of them request Lucius, if he cannot see (Roxane) during next week, to send them news, and not to forget to inform . . . Pradius . . . of the day.’

On the reverse side—

‘to compromise one’s self, from the place where those things are hidden, and speak to him about them, when the big eclipse is over and the planets, meeting again, shall resume their usual course. Should it be too difficult to discover the old friend Mercinus the great man . . . will certainly be able to give Lucius reliable news of these things.’

As it seems impossible to make any clear interpretation of this note we must be satisfied with conjectures, and after careful examination the following seem to be the most suitable and plausible ones.

The front side of the note was written by some one belonging to the Queen’s household, and most likely under her dictation. The comparison of writings enables us to assert that it was written neither by the King, Madame Elisabeth, nor Madame Royale. Hence the conclusion that the note was not written at the Temple.

Besides, the familiar and lively tone gives us a clue to the probable date, between 1791 and 1792. The situation was already serious, but it was not yet irretrievably lost. ‘The time when the great eclipse is over, and when the planets, meeting again, shall resume their usual course.’ This phrase must contain allusions to the expectations which were still surviving in Marie Antoinette’s heart during this cruel period.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATION

Peux-tu m'écrire à l'égard de ces lettres pour
le changer avec certain cœur qu'il lui rende
la première fois qu'elle lui enverra, elle vaudra
le même reste précieux, et peut-être même
convenir. Peux-tu espérer avoir bien
des nouvelles de lui, elle le prie de lui
expliquer certains mouvements qui semblent à
présent autour du camp d'octobre, et qui
s'il se voit remis l'inquiète pour les suites
qu'elle en prévoit. Elle le prie aussi de lui
faire savoir si les nouvelles du pays ou
~~de la ville~~ ont pas pris une forme
très différente de ce qu'il conçoit, et si
quelqu'un pense de tout cela, femme qui
ne comprend rien prend la sage part
l'avouer, elle prie toute les deux lui de
ne point voir ~~rien~~ dans la semaine
prochaine de leur faire donner de ses nouvelles
et de ne pas oublier de dire le jour à laquelle
André

se compromettre, de le servir ou sont
enjoué les objets, pour lui en parler
au moment ou la grande eclipse sera
rafée et ou les planètes par leurs
reunion reprendront leur cours
ordinaire. Si mercure la visibilant
est trop difficile a deterrer.
le grand homme de l'etat, pourra
surement donner a salivius, des renseignements
certains sur tous ces objets

2321

AMERICAN

The reverse side is in the Queen's own handwriting. She must first have dictated, then written herself.

Roxane is probably meant for her. The proud Roxane represents the Queen of France. As to the 'precious relics,' they may have been hair from some of the members of the Royal Family, perhaps her son, the Dauphin, who had died in June 1789. During that period hair used to play an important part; as will be seen, both the Queen and the King gave on several occasions some of their own hair, sometimes their children's hair, as a precious and dear souvenir.

'Lucius' must be Jarjays. This opinion is founded on the facts that Jarjays was a gallant man, a knight in the true sense of the word, and he was incapable of keeping, and could not keep, a note from the Queen unless it was addressed to him. Besides, later on he alluded to a note which he had received, and in which mention was made of a *depôt* known to Mercy-Argenteau, who evidently was meant by the words 'the old friend Mercinus.' This allusion of Jarjays was made in a letter which he wrote on February 18, 1794, to the Comte Axel de Fersen, who was then at Brussels. The letter reached its destination only on the following March 25. It said:—

'Being able to write to you more easily and more openly to-day than I could before urges me to ask for your advice concerning another note

relative to a deposit which has been entrusted to M. de Mercy. . . .'¹

This deposit was doubtless a sum of money which the Queen had endeavoured to put in safety for dark days. We know for a fact that Mercy had a million and a half francs belonging to her. He had sent this sum out of France through the Abbé de Montesquiou, who had brought it over to England.²

Marie Antoinette anticipates the time when 'the old friend Mercinus' might be difficult 'to find.' This sentence agrees with the presumed date of the note. The Vienna ambassador had taken the necessary precautions against the unpopularity which prevailed with regard to everything touching Austria, and he had wisely gone to Belgium, as he thought it would be more convenient and less dangerous for him to watch the course of events from Brussels rather than in Paris.

'The movements forming around the camp of Artaban' are easily explained by the frequent riots and the numerous signs of revolution which troubled the life of the capital every day. The only difficulty is to choose between incidents. It might be a reference to the famous Marseilles bands, which had recently arrived in Paris, led by Barbaroux, and which served as heads of the columns and a rallying

¹ *Le Comte de Fersen et la Cour de France*, vol. ii. p. 430.

² *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 92.

centre for the enemies of the Court. They filled Marie Antoinette with the wildest apprehensions. 'The arrival of about 600 Marseilles men,' she wrote to the Comte de Fersen, 'and of a large number of other delegates from all the Jacobin clubs, is increasing our anxieties, which are unfortunately too well grounded. . . . The people are roused. . . . Part of the National Guards show ill-will, others weakness and cowardice.'

'Pradius' must have been some friend of Jarjayes', and, like him, devoted to the Queen. They were not many who remained zealous and who fought until the end. Among those faithful Frenchmen were Goguelat, who having been wounded at Varennes returned to Paris and rendered endless service to the Royal Family, M. de Laporte, the Baron d'Aubier.

Was not 'Fatime' Madame de Jarjayes, who was shut up in the Tuileries with the Queen? Or was it the sweet Princess of Lamballe, who had returned to her friend early in November 1791? At present it is impossible to answer such questions. Nevertheless, and in spite of its obscurity, this note was interesting enough to be published, for every day brings new discoveries, and some one may have both the glory and pleasure of deciphering it entirely.

The Queen had already given tokens of her confidence in Jarjayes when she disclosed to him her connections with repentant Constitutionals; she

again gave him a proof of her confidence a few days before August 10. This is related by Madame Campan, one of the first ladies in waiting and a colleague of Madame de Jarjays. 'The fear that the Tuileries should be again invaded caused us to make a thorough review of the King's papers. I burnt nearly all those belonging to the Queen. She put into a pocket-book, which she handed to M. de Jarjays, her family correspondence and several letters which she thought might prove useful in writing the history of the Revolution, especially Barnave's letters and her answers, of which she had taken copies.'¹

Unfortunately, this deposit could not be saved from destruction. The depositary was afraid that his hiding-place might be found out, and, as such papers would have exposed his sovereign to the greatest dangers, he resigned himself to burn them.

The Chevalier did not leave the King in the hour of danger, although he had no doubt whatever as to the issue of the struggle.

On the eve of August 10 Louis XVI. had shown to Jarjays the plan for the defence of the palace, as it had been prepared by General Vioménil. It was very easy for a soldier as well trained as Jarjays to see the weak points of the scheme; and as he met Madame Campan just after his conversation with the King he said to her,

¹ Vol. ii. p. 218.

‘Put into your pockets all your money and jewels ; we run unavoidable dangers. There are no means of defence ; they could be found in the King’s courage alone, and it is the only virtue which he lacks.’¹

In spite of his sombre anticipations Jarjayes stood beside the King on the following day whilst the Tuileries were invaded ; he followed him to the Assembly, into the stenographer’s lodge, and it was there, before parting with him, that Louis XVI. gave him a formal command not to leave Paris, as he was his Majesty’s ‘best, bravest, and surest friend.’²

His respect and submission increased as his sovereign’s power was decreasing, and he took good care not to disobey such a command. He remained in Paris with Madame de Jarjayes, who was anxious to be as true as her husband and to share his perils.

They had not, like many others, the good fortune to keep up their connection with the royal prisoners. They had no other means of knowing what was going on behind the walls of the Temple than public rumours. They must have been shocked when they heard how the Royal Family were treated by the guardians and keepers. All the municipal officials, and above all those who had been secretly won over, behaved in public as true *révolutionnaires*, some to be consistent with their revolutionary principles, others to evade

¹ *Mémoires de Madame Campan*, vol. ii. p. 239.

² *Précis*, by the Baron de Goguelat, p. 71.

42 A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

suspicion by means of a fierce attitude and most improper language. Both M. de Jarjayes and his wife pitied their sovereigns for being exposed to the insults of men like Marcereau, Bernard, Arthur, or to the sarcasms of known fanatics, such as Michonis, Toulan, and so many others. . . .

But what could they do? Alone, the Chevalier was powerless.

Indeed, it does not appear that he ever knew the Baron de Batz; he was not, therefore, acquainted with the heroic scheme of this man.

The sentence and execution of Louis XVI. threw the General into the darkest despair. . . .

Overcome by grief, cast down by the horrible day of January 21, he was on the point of being completely discouraged, and of leaving France,¹ when his devotion was appealed to, thus showing him that he could still be useful to his King's widow. His courage was restored; he recovered at once his energy and his audacity.

It was February 2, 1793, and he was at home, when a stranger called and asked to speak to him in the utmost privacy. This man was young, about thirty, short, but supple and strong; his eyes were quick, his mouth thin, his forehead broad; on the whole, he would be a good-looking fellow were not his nose rather flat.² His dress as

¹ *Précis*, by the Baron de Goguelat, p. 71 and following.

² National Record Office, W 400, dossier 927.

well as his attitude denoted clearly to Jarjayes that he had before him a revolutionist.

The presence of such a man at such a time was dangerous. The man, however, insisted on being received, so that Jarjayes made up his mind to see him. He took him into a distant room and examined him attentively, though not without distrust and anxiety.

All at once the man rushed to the General and told him how much he regretted having taken part in causing the Royal Family's misfortunes. He had come to beg for Jarjayes' confidence, and to offer his aid to atone for the harm he had done—in a word, to attempt to rescue the Queen and to save her and the Temple prisoners.

On hearing such unexpected language the Chevalier, who was as a rule a prudent man, stood on the defensive. Was it a snare laid to entrap him? Or was that man sincere? In his uncertainty, ready for all events as far as he was concerned, but afraid lest an unwise word or gesture should be the loss of very dear lives, he was very reserved and would not listen to the stranger's confidences.

The latter was neither surprised nor offended at his reception; indeed, he must have been expecting it, for in order to prove that he had no evil intention he pulled a note out of his pocket and handed it to the General.

44 A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

‘You can have confidence in the man who will speak to you on my behalf when giving you this note. His sentiments are known to me—he has never changed for the last five months. Do not trust too much the wife of the man who is imprisoned with us here. I have no confidence either in her or in her husband.’

As he read this Jarjays felt an unspeakable emotion. Those lines were written by the Queen, Marie Antoinette. He was too well acquainted with her handwriting to have the slightest doubt.

But who was this stranger? Who was the messenger the Queen had chosen, the confidant in whom she had trusted? He questioned him, and his emotion was changed into real amazement when he heard that it was Toulan who stood before him. Toulan, the well-known fanatic revolutionary, who owed to his fierce principles his election as member of the Commune and his post of commissioner to watch the Royal Family at the Temple.

CHAPTER II

June 30, 1789—The Café de Foy—At the Palais Royal—The Gardes Françaises at the Abbaye—Popular Agitation—The Prison Doors are Forced—The Night at the Variety Theatre—Appeal to the Assemblée Constituante—Delegation of Sixteen Members to the King—The King's Answer—The Prisoners are set Free—Toulan, his Origin and Marriage—He comes to Paris—District President of the Federation of 1790—A Rioter on August 10—Member of the Society of the 10th of August Men—Member of the Commune—He is on Guard at the Temple on September 19, 1792—His Devotion to the Prisoners—His Revolutionary Attitude and Language—Minor Services he Renders—His Fears for the Queen after January 21—He makes a Plan to Save her—The Queen's Acceptance—Toulan's Mission to Jarjayes.

ON June 30, 1789, a few days before the Bastille was taken, there was quite a crowd at the Café de Foy.

This establishment, which has now disappeared, was situated in the Palais Royal Galleries. At that time the Palais Royal was a centre of attraction in Paris and the greatest resort for meetings. The Parisians, who in troubled times feel an irresistible desire to be out of doors, and to talk in public of politics or to discuss events, had taken good care on that particular day not to abandon this old custom. The café and the garden around it were crowded ;

46 A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

the patriots formed the large majority of the people, and they created a lively stir.

Suddenly, about six o'clock, a commissioner entered the café, threw a letter among the drinkers seated round the tables, and disappeared.

The people rushed for the letter, picked it up, and read it. It was written in the name of eleven soldiers of the regiment of the Gardes Françaises who had been incarcerated at the Abbaye. They had been punished by their colonel for having adhered to a secret society which had been formed in the Paris army ; its members agreed not to obey any orders which might seem opposed to the interests of the Assemblée Nationale.

Those eleven soldiers stated that they were to be transferred to Bicêtre during the night, as if they had been ordinary criminals.

After he had heard the contents of the letter a young man left the café at once. He mounted on a table and addressed the crowd around him.

'Gentlemen,' he said, 'the brave soldiers who prevented the blood of our fellow citizens being spilt at Versailles are imprisoned at the Abbaye ; let us go and release them !'

'To the Abbaye ! to the Abbaye !' responded the over-excited crowd.

This young man was Toulan. He started ; they followed him. At first they numbered only two

hundred ; when they reached the prison they were four thousand.

In those days prisons were broken into with amazing facility. In less than a few minutes the first gate was forced open ; the inside doors were broken with mallets, iron bars, and hatchets. At eight o'clock the prisoners were at liberty.

Proud of their success, the young men carried the Gardes Françaises in triumph to the Palais Royal ; and, as night had fallen, they took them to the Théâtre des Variétés. Camping beds were stretched for the soldiers in the pit, and they spent the night there, guarded by their liberators. The next day rooms were taken for them at the Hôtel de Genève.

Night had brought reflection ; the rioters were not yet accustomed to see every one of their wishes fulfilled, and they decided that they should place themselves under the only authority which could counterbalance that of the Government ; they at once set about seeking its support, in order to confirm and strengthen their victory.

The next morning a numerous delegation, with Toulan as one of its members, came to the door of the Assembly at Versailles.

The minutes of the proceedings of that day's meeting refer to it thus :—

‘ Sitting of Wednesday, July 1, 1789.

‘ 11 o'clock A.M.

‘ At the opening of the sitting several persons

who had come from Paris, saying they had been delegated by a large number of citizens, came to the *Assemblée Nationale* and sent in a letter to the President. This letter was read. The object of both the delegation and the letter was to beg the *Assemblée Nationale* to act as mediator with the King, in order to obtain his pardon for a few soldiers who had been incarcerated for an act of disobedience, and whom the crowd had set free by force.

‘The citizens, bearers of this letter, requested to be received by the Assembly, but the latter decided that there was no occasion to grant them such a favour.

‘After this a discussion was opened concerning the answer which should be made to the letter. . . .

‘The Assembly decided to send to the King a delegation composed of sixteen members “to beg him to use for the restoration of order the infallible means of leniency and kindness which are so natural to his heart, and of the confidence his good people will for ever deserve.”’¹

On July 2 the Archbishop of Paris, who was chairman of the delegation, gave an account of his interview with the King. The latter, after he had read the decision taken by the Assembly, had answered, ‘I think your decision is very wise. I approve the dispositions of the

¹ *Journal des Débats et des Décrets*, vol. i. p. 80 and following.

Assemblée des Etats Généraux, and as long as it puts its confidence in me I trust that everything will go on smoothly.'

Then, after he had enquired into the affair, his Majesty wrote the following letter, which the Archbishop of Paris read to the Assembly in its sitting of July 3.

This letter is interesting, because it was another token of the good intentions as well as of the weakness of the sovereign. It was in the following terms :—

'My Cousin,—I asked for an exact account of what occurred during the evening of June 30. The violence used in order to deliver the Abbaye prisoners is entirely to be condemned, and every society, every corps, all honest and peaceful citizens have the greatest interest in upholding the action of laws to their utmost extent, as it is a protection of public order. I shall, however, on this occasion, when once order has been restored, permit a feeling of kindness to prevail ; and I trust I shall not have to regret having shown leniency when for the first time the Assembly of the representatives of the nation appeal to it ; but I have not the slightest doubt that the Assembly will attach an equal degree of importance to the success of all the measures I am taking to restore order in the capital. A spirit of licence and insubordination is hurtful to the general welfare ; and if it should become common

not only would the peace of all citizens be disturbed, and their confidence impaired, but people would perhaps in the end undervalue the generous work which the representatives of the nation are about to undertake. Communicate the contents of my letter to the *Etats Généraux*, and do not doubt my esteem for you.

‘(Signed) LOUIS.

‘July 2, 1789.’

Both soldiers and rebels answered the too visible submission of the Government by an appearance of submission. The *Gardes Françaises*, who had been sent back to the *Abbaye* during the night of July 3-4, were pardoned on the 5th.¹

This was the revolutionary episode in which Toulan appeared in public for the first time, and which was the origin of the notoriety which was to raise him later on to an important public post.

François Adrien Toulan was a southerner. Born in Toulouse in 1761, he had wedded in his native place, in July 1787, Françoise Germaine Dumahon. This woman, who, though not educated, was clever, had a deep affection for her husband, and he returned it. She was in every way a faithful wife and often a devoted helper.

¹ *Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution Française*, by Buchez and Roux, vol. vii. p. 31 and following; National Record Office, W 400, dossier 927; M. Léon Lecestre, *Revue des Questions Historiques*, April 1886.

A month after their marriage they came to Paris—in August 1787—and took a shop, not far from the Tuileries, in the section called the Feuillants. Toulan started as book and music seller.

This was a trade suitable to his tastes. Many a time he must have glanced at the books he had for sale; and his readings must have inspired him with his fierce love for freedom and his hatred of royalty, which threw him into wild adventures and soon gave him in his district the reputation of an ardent patriot.

The successful way in which he led the rioters on June 30 resulted in his being appointed president of the Louvre district. It was thus that he took part in the procession of the Federation in 1790.

Soon after this, whether his shop did not bring him enough money or whether he was urged by his active disposition to do other things, he left his wife to manage the business, and he entered first as junior clerk, then as head clerk, the emigrants' property office for the Paris district.

Later on he resigned his post, and, going into partnership with a man of the name of Fondard, opened an independent office for the prompt settlement of emigrants' claims.

His new business necessitated his living nearer the 'Maison Commune'—Town Hall—and he took up his quarters in that district, Rue du Monceau Saint-Gervais, No. 13, opposite the

'Elm.' The Rue du Monceau Saint-Gervais was a narrow and winding street, between the Hôtel de Ville and the Church Saint-Gervais ; in it was the Rue du Pourtour, which is still in existence. The Rue du Monceau Saint-Gervais was pulled down long ago : its site is now occupied by the Place Saint-Gervais and by part of the Lobeau barracks.

It is not known whether Toulan took any part on June 20, but on August 10 he took a prominent one among the assailants of the Tuileries Palace. He was elected member of the 10th of August Men's Club, and soon after member of the first Commune, called also the 10th of August Commune.

He constantly wore the medal and certificate of the Commune.

The certificate was worded thus :—

COMMUNE OF PARIS,
 August 29, 1993,¹
 SECOND YEAR ✕ OF THE FRENCH
 REPUBLIC.
Secretary Registrar
Medal
 Given to the Cⁿ Toulan, Member
 of the 10th of August Commune.
Signed : COULOMBEAU, Secret^r Regst.

Between the words ' year ' and ' of,' where we have

¹ This is evidently a misprint, and 1993 must stand for 1793.

put a cross, is a medallion, which bears at the top the inscription 'Commune of Paris,' with a Phrygian cap between. In the centre of the medallion and between two laurel branches is inscribed—

Liberty,
14 J^r, 1789.
Equality,
10 August,
1792.

These various titles and the numerous proofs of patriotism given by Toulan very naturally pointed him out for the post of watcher at the Temple.

He was not an ordinary man ; he was broad-minded and proud-hearted. Gifted with an intellect full of resource, he combined extreme ingenuity with immovable audacity and courage. Ready for a joke, he deceived his friends as well as his enemies by his habit of taking and turning everything in a jocular way. He was one of those deceitful people who are exceedingly clever in hiding their dissimulation under the appearance of talkative good-nature.

When he was sent for the first time to the Temple his reputation, his conduct, and his extravagant language made the prisoners fear that they would find in him an unrelenting enemy, under an appearance more refined than that of his colleagues. It seemed as if it would take a miracle to change that man. But the miracle took place. He had

come to the Temple with a horror of the tyrant and his family ; and yet his two days' guard were not over before his hatred and prejudices had been changed into a deep admiration for the victims.

What were the causes of so sudden and so extraordinary a change ? Although his devotion may lose in romance and poetry, we must confess that love had no share in it. It was prompted only by compassion.

Marie Antoinette, despite her years—she was then seven-and-thirty—and despite her white hair—white with the emotions she had felt during the journey to Varennes¹—had not lost much of her proud and imposing beauty. Toulan did not feel for her love in the real sense of the word.

Those strange passions for the 'stars' attributed to 'worms of the earth' are quite a modern conception born of romanticism. Men belonging to society, like the Comte de Fersen, or to the upper middle-class, like Barnave, or even men of the middle class elevated by talent or a high political education might have fallen in love with the Queen. This was quite possible, although it was not quite proved in the case of Barnave ; but for a man like Toulan, who was an obscure plebeian, and who remained one in spite of the social downfall, which was more apparent than real, such a supposition is improbable.

¹ *Mémoire de Madame Campan*, vol. ii. p. 149.

And what shows that Toulan did remain a plebeian is his conduct even during and after his stay at the Temple. At no period does he seem to have forgotten his republican principles. He was humane and gentle towards the prisoners, but when they were in question he never thought of the political point of view. Even when he was prompted by his devotion to save Marie Antoinette he saw in her the woman who might be freed, not the Queen who might be replaced on the throne.

His devotion was not even exclusive. After Marie Antoinette had been transferred to the Conciergerie he remained at the Temple, and exchanged signals with Madame Elisabeth, to the peril of his own life. Must we suppose that he was in love with that princess? When at last events had frustrated his calculations, when the woman whom he had wished to save was inevitably lost, he submitted easily. His conscience was satisfied, for he had done all in his power. Then he only thought of saving himself, and he gave signs of an entirely free mind, which was not compatible with a real affection.

Such an opinion is based, not on vague conjectures, but on the knowledge we have of actions which he performed after the conspiracy due to his instigation; this knowledge rests on serious and true documents, such as letters from his lady cousin Ricard and his friend Rosalie Lafont. These letters are in keeping with his character, as it is easy to see.

Courageous and sensitive, Toulan had at first embraced the new theories because they were most attractive as a programme. They aimed at protecting the weak and humble, and doing away with privilege ; in a word, they were the summing up of the philanthropy which filled all minds at the outset of the Revolution. Later on, after the republicans had conquered royalty and seized power, Toulan's hatred did not survive the struggle. He left to others the care of pursuing with vexations the fallen victims ; he refused to consider whether the Queen prisoner had, in the eyes of a patriot, deserved her lot or not as an expiation of the faults with which he had reproached her before ; he saw in her nothing more than fallen grandeur, an unfortunate princess, who defied adversity by the dignified calm which she opposed to the worst blows. He was conquered by the sight of this unfortunate mother ; perhaps he was also attracted by the thought that he, the paltry clerk and unknown citizen, might become the protector of a Queen of France ; and thus moved, yielding to the charm which attends misfortune, he passed over from the side of her enemies to the side of her most reliable and faithful servants.

Nevertheless, he remained what he had always been. Whilst becoming a hero of a particular kind, devoted to Marie Antoinette, he never ceased to be a republican and to love his wife.

He was on duty at the Temple for the first time

on September 19, as is shown by a note in the handwriting of the doorkeeper Mathey. His communications with the prisoners dated from that very day, since Marie Antoinette wrote on February 2 that 'his sentiments are known to her; that for five months he has not varied.'

How did he manage to make his sudden conversion known to the princesses, and how could he do so without attracting the attention of his colleagues? It is not known, and never will be. What, however, is certain is that the princesses had soon the greatest confidence in him. He convinced them so fully of his truthfulness and his loyalty that they feared neither treason nor snare on his part. Madame Elisabeth informed Turgy at once of this understanding, and she told Turgy in one of the notes which he kept for posterity how they had nicknamed him: 'You will give this to Toulan, whom we shall call henceforth "Faithful."' ¹

But Faithful was of no use unless he kept his mask of a revolutionist. The Temple tower was crowded with informers and spies, always on the lookout. Toulan was careful not to betray himself. He was too clever a man to let those people see through his game. He therefore remained the same in appearance, speaking as freely of the prisoners, remaining a zealous patriot, greatly shocking those of his colleagues who had worshipped the Royal

¹ *Fragments*, by Turgy, p. 355.

Family in secret.¹ He deceived everybody except those whom he did not want to deceive, so that on December 2, 1792, when the members of the Commune were renewed, he was re-elected without opposition, as being a staunch citizen and an enemy of the tyrants.

Until January 21 he only rendered a few minor services to the prisoners. He it was who had the idea of paying a crier with a stentor's voice to come every evening, about ten, and call out all the news contained in his newspaper. This information was very vague, but he supplemented it by going inside the Temple as often as his duties would allow him, under various pretexts. He it was again who, on January 1, 1793, acquainted the Royal Family with the wishes of Louis XVI., to whom he made known those of the Queen, Madame Elisabeth, and the royal children.²

The King's death had shaken Marie Antoinette's confidence. For his part, Toulan saw the danger that hung over the Queen's head at an early date. He trembled for the life of her whom he surrounded with the most chivalrous and generous attentions. In his devoted zeal he was not afraid to mention his fears, and he did it so as to point out how safety lay at the side of danger—not certain, of course, but possible and probable.

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepitre, p. 19.

² *Ibid.* pp. 23-27.

It was evident that the men who had been so bold as to kill the King of France would not be afraid of committing other crimes. It was, therefore, necessary to find some means of depriving them of their other victims. Toulan's imagination did not remain idle, and he had soon shaped out a plan for such an attempt.

For his own part, he undertook to take the prisoners out of the Temple. But taking them out of Paris was a more difficult task for him. Did not Marie Antoinette know of any servant or friend who could help her in this matter?

The Queen, dazzled by such an offer, refused at first to believe that such good luck could still be in store for her; but, little by little, persuaded by the Gascon's talk, his assurance, excitement, and confidence, she consented to consider his offer. Yet she wanted first to have the advice of a wise and cautious man. One name came to her lips—Jarjayes. Where could she indeed find a better councillor for herself, or a safer and more precious help for Toulan?

She had not the slightest doubt that he had remained in Paris, for she knew him, and she remembered that he had received from his King the formal order to stay. Without any loss of time she gave the municipal officer the name and address of the General. She handed Toulan the note which was to accredit him with De Jarjayes.

Notwithstanding the danger he ran, Toulan did

not hesitate to go to the Royalist's; but he managed so well to disguise the change which had taken place in him, even to those who saw him frequently at the Temple, that nothing leaked out, and to all he was still the fierce patriot. Thus are explained the emotion and wonder of the Chevalier when he heard the extraordinary and unexpected revelation.

CHAPTER III

Conversation between Toulan and De Jarjayes—The Latter wishes to see the Queen—Difficulties of such an Enterprise—The Couple Tison—Precautions taken by the Commune regarding Them—Second Interview—Second Note from the Queen—Toulan Finds a Means—The Chevalier Disguises Himself—He Enters the Temple—He Sees the Queen—Description of Marie Antoinette's Room—The Chevalier's Emotion—Fears of the Queen—Third Note—Jarjayes's Answer—Fourth Note.

THE first moment of surprise over, the Chevalier soon recovered his presence of mind. The Queen called him ; his duty was to answer her appeal.

Although the Queen's note brought by Toulan was very plain, and gave him the necessary assurance for opening negotiations with Toulan, M. de Jarjayes did not think fit to speak without reserve. His bravery was cool and calculated, and the experience he had acquired in witnessing the events, added to the maturity of his mind, urged him to be cautious. And in so important a matter he would not leave to chance anything which he could provide for.

He questioned the commissioner on his scheme, intentions, and means of success.

Although Toulan was much younger than his interlocutor, he was not the less experienced of the

two, and was quite as cautious as De Jarjayes. He was extremely reserved, and only gave some vague indications which he thought ought to tell the Chevalier what he wanted to do.

The Chevalier, whilst appreciating as much as he ought the commissioner's communication, nevertheless wished to make sure that everything was clear before making a single step forward. The Queen's safety was at stake, and this was so important an undertaking that things should not be done without some certainty of success.

He saw only one means of doing so, and this was by securing an interview with the Queen, so as to speak to her and receive from her own mouth the instructions she had to give.

Counting as nought the dangers he might personally incur, he at once imparted his idea to Toulan ; he asked him to introduce him into the Temple, were it only for a few minutes, and to enable him to see the Queen. The hearts of heroes understand one another ; Toulan was not at all surprised. He only answered that it was difficult to manage, but not impossible ; he would think it over and would try to find a way to comply with M. de Jarjayes's wish. Then before he left the Chevalier he asked him to kindly give him a line for the Queen, so as to prove to her that he had fulfilled his mission.

The General had no hesitation in granting this

request, and he entrusted to this Commune official, whom a few moments earlier he had mistaken for an enemy, a letter for Marie Antoinette.

'Faithful' brought the Chevalier's answer to the Queen and communicated to her the bold plan he had conceived. The Queen rejoiced, and yet she trembled. However, her pleasure at seeing this devoted servant, to talk to him and make out a plan for her deliverance, was stronger than her apprehensions or her scruples. Obedient to the wishes of both, Toulan set to work to carry out successfully this undertaking.

As we said before, it was no easy matter ; for all, the probable dangers were great and numerous. The Temple was crowded with guards and, what was worse, with spies. Among the servants many had been chosen solely because they could be trusted for their revolutionary zeal and their hatred for the royal personages. Among them, and more dangerous by themselves than all the others put together, were Tison and his wife.

This hateful couple had been sent to the Temple by the Commune under pretext of helping Hue and Cléry, and they were specially in the service of the Queen and her children ; in reality, they were there for the dirtiest work. The couple were well matched ; the husband, 'false and cruel, could easily compose his expression, and endeavoured to gain the confidence of the commissioners, whom he saw

for the first time. Cruel in his language when he spoke to those whose villany was known to him, he affected to show a certain amount of compassion before those whom he believed to be honest and sensitive.¹ The same could be said of the woman : she took her husband as an example, although more out of fear than from her natural disposition, and, 'with a devilish hypocrisy, she seemed to sympathise with every one of the august prisoners' troubles,² in the hope that she might thus obtain their confidence, which the couple were ready to sell to their employers.'

In order to make sure of these two, who had been placed at the Temple as traitors, and who therefore inspired no confidence in their masters, the Commune had used every possible means to keep them in its power ; it had even made use of a strange device—one worthy of the Commune. The couple Tyson had a daughter about fifteen. It appears that they were both fond of the child, and this affection was about the only human feeling which affected them. The Commune had hidden the girl, and played with the scoundrels as if they had been animals, famished or satisfied in turn,³ by allowing them to see her and then taking her back again ; she was a miserable hostage who had to answer for both the faithfulness and the villany of her parents.

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepître, p. 17.

² *Précis*, by the Baron de Goguelat, p. 74.

³ *Marie-Antoinette*, by Ed. and J. de Goncourt, p. 420.

One can easily understand how dangerous such people would be. The Queen herself from the very first, when it was only a question of bringing Jarjayes and Toulan together, had thought of warning the General against this hypocritical and wicked couple. 'Do not trust too much the wife of the man who is shut up with us. I trust neither her nor her husband,' she had written.

And now it was far worse. The Chevalier wanted to come to the Temple. But when there was talk of making such an attempt Marie Antoinette, more than ever on her guard, gave the municipal officer a new note, in which, while approving Jarjayes' plan, she requested him to make haste, and renewed her first warning in the most pressing manner.

'Now, if you have made up your mind to come here, the sooner the better. But, whatever you do, take good care not to be recognised—above all by the woman who is here with us.'

In fact, Toulan's clever imagination and inventiveness, which never failed him, had soon suggested to him the way to comply with the joint wish expressed both by Marie Antoinette and M. de Jarjayes.

He had noticed among the numerous people employed at the Temple, who could easily come and go by means of the cards the municipal officers gave them, a lamplighter who came every afternoon about half-past five, either alone or with one or two of his children. The sentries, who were used to seeing

him, often allowed him to pass without asking him for his card.

To arrange with this man, and pay him for his complicity handsomely, might have been possible, but, like all other complicities, it involved danger, the more so when the accomplice was a poor man ; for, in possession of a secret, he might betray it out of cupidity, wickedness, or merely through stupidity.

Toulan found a better plan than that.

He pretended that he wished to show a friend of his, as good a patriot as he was, the Temple and the Queen ; and he persuaded the lamplighter to give up his place for one evening, which the man did without any suspicion.

Thanks to this arrangement, M. de Jarjayes put on the lamplighter's dirty clothes, and, under this disguise, entered the prison, where he did his work without being recognised.¹ This happened on February 6 or 7, when Toulan was on duty at the Temple.

The General was able to see the Queen for a few minutes, but long enough for her to have time to confirm *vivâ voce* what she had told him in her letters. She exhorted him to trust Toulan implicitly, to take his advice into consideration, and to carefully examine the plans he would submit for her escape.

Jarjayes must have been deeply moved when he

¹ *Mémoires de Madame Campan*, vol. vi. p. 218, footnote.

saw his sovereign in a room badly paved with bricks, the walls of which were covered with a paltry green paper with a large pattern ! And what furniture !— an Italian bed and a couch with back and sides, each in a corner of the room ; on one side and in front of the window a sofa ; over the mantelshelf a looking-glass forty-five inches wide and a timepiece. This timepiece, which was to mark time for Louis XVI.'s widow, represented Fortune and her wheel.¹

Whatever control the Chevalier had over himself, he surely did not conceal his impressions as well as he had disguised himself, and his expression drew the attention of some of the servants ; for hardly had he left the Temple when Marie Antoinette, who was always afraid for those who were devoted to her, sent him the following note :—

‘ Beware of Madame Archi. She seems to me to be on very friendly terms with the man and woman whom I mentioned in my former note. Try to see Madame Th. . . . You will be informed why. How is your wife ? She has too kind a heart not to be ill.’

We are reduced to conjecture with regard to the people designated under the words ‘ Madame Archi ’ and ‘ Madame Th. ’ The first was most probably a woman in the service of the prisoners ; it may have been the laundress. As to Madame Th., who was certainly a friend, as she was acquainted with the plot,

¹ *Marie-Antoinette*, by Ed. and J. de Goncourt, pp. 393, 394.

does it mean Madame Thibaut, who, like Madame de Jarjayes, was first lady-in-waiting? After having accompanied the Queen to the Feuillants and then to the Temple, August 10-13, she was incarcerated at La Force, and, as by a miracle, escaped the September massacres.

The Chevalier was deeply touched by the solicitude the royal prisoner showed for him and his wife, and such solicitude was much more appreciated by him in the actual circumstances. He answered at once, expressing warmly his gratitude and his faith in the future. He also took advantage of this opportunity to reassure the Queen with regard to a friend of hers whose name had been mentioned in the short conversation they had had together, and who is prudently designated under the name of the 'Nivernais.'

The gentleman in question can be no other than the Baron François de Goguelat, born at Château Chinon, in the Nivernais, who, though deeply attached to the Royal Family, was not always successful in his efforts. A brave soldier, but gifted with a slow intellect, he had more than once compromised the interests which had been entrusted to his care, especially during the King's flight in the month of June 1791. Too obedient to the orders of young Choiseul, he had forsaken with the latter his post at Pont-Sommevesle; and when he arrived at Varennes, two hours after the fugitives' arrest, he had uselessly exposed himself to

being twice wounded, although Louis XVI. had given strict orders that no one should make any attempt to deliver his Majesty by force. Goguelat's excessive zeal and bravery were therefore rendered useless.

He was arrested for this offence, but was soon released ; for when the King decided to submit to the Constitution of 1791 it was with the stipulation that there would be an amnesty for all those who had compromised themselves in his service.

Goguelat, who had recovered from his wounds, returned to Paris and put himself at the disposal of his sovereigns. During the following year (from July 1791 to August 1792) he was the most useful of Marie Antoinette's auxiliaries. It was he who wrote most of the letters she addressed to M. de Fersen, and who undertook to carry several important messages to Brussels. He took part in those interesting negotiations the recent discovery of which has thrown quite a new light on the secret doings of the Revolution.¹ He emigrated after August 10, and enlisted in the Bercheny hussars.²

Like Jarjays, whose friend he was, he had not always been a favourite in the Queen's intimate *entourage*. Marie Antoinette was aware of it, but for all that she never ceased to have the same

¹ The narrative of this period is to be found in *Un Ami de la Reine*.

² He came back to France in 1815 and died in Paris on January 3, 1831.

esteem for a servant whose merits and services she appreciated. She speaks of it in the note she wrote to Jarjays (a facsimile of which is annexed), in which, before telling him what had been decided upon in regard to the plot, she thanked him for the pleasure he had given her by his language and expresses her confidence in the 'Nivernais.'

'Your letter has done me good. I had not the least doubt with regard to the Nivernais; but I felt exceedingly sorry that anyone should think ill of him. Listen attentively to the ideas which will be laid before you; weigh them thoroughly and cautiously. As for us, we give ourselves up to entire confidence. I shall above all things be glad to be able to reckon you among those who can be useful to us. You will see the new man: his appearance is not prepossessing, but he is indispensable, and we must have him. T. [Toulan] will tell you what must be done in the matter. Try to find him and arrange everything with him before he comes here again. In case you do not succeed in this, and if you have no objection, see M. de la Borde for me. You know that he has money belonging to me.'

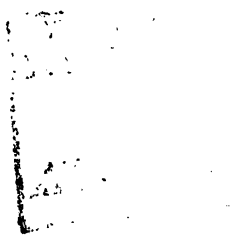
Things had advanced. Let us now see what Toulan's ideas were for the escape of the Royal Family.

NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR
LENOX
TILDEN

votre billet ma fait bien du bien
je n'avois aucun doute, sur le
river noir, mais j'étois au
desespoir; qu'on put seulement
en penser du mal, écoutez bien
les idées qu'on vous proposera
examinés les bien, dans votre
prudence, pour nous nous
livrons avec une confiance
entière. mon dieu que j'éserois
heureuse, et surtout de pouvoir
vous compter au nombre de
ceux, qui peuvent nous être
utile. vous verrez le nouveau
personnage, son extérieur ne
previent pas mais il est
absolument nécessaire et
il faut l'avoir t... vous dira ce
qu'il faut faire pour celatachi de
vous le procurer et de finir avec
lui avant qu'il ramienne icy
si vous ne le pouvez pas voyez

m^r De la borde de ma part
si vous n'y trouvez pas de
l'inconvénient, vous savez qu'il
a de l'argent a moi.



CHAPTER IV

Frequent Interviews between Toulan and Jarjayes, Toulan, and the Queen—The Prisoners refuse to be separated—Vigilance of the Commissioners at the Temple—Organisation of the Guards' Service—The Two Commissioners—Necessity of Finding Accomplices—A Difficult Choice—The Queen decides.

TOULAN and Jarjayes had given up mistrusting each other since the Queen had spoken to them, and had at once set to work at their plan of escape. The municipal officer was the link between the Chevalier and the prisoner. By-the-bye, it is right to mention that the commissioners often went to the Temple on other days than their days for duty. They made use of the least pretext to do so, and the three-coloured scarf was sufficient to open every door to them. Toulan used this privilege freely. This fact was perfectly well known, for Marie Thérèse relates that when examined on October 8, 1793, she was asked if she knew Toulan, 'a short young fellow who so often came to the Temple on duty.'¹

The first point which they settled was that the various members of the Royal Family who remained should not be separated. But it was impossible to

¹ *Récits des Evénements arrivés au Temple*, p. 58.

bring four persons out of the Temple if the guards were not put off the scent or bribed.

At first the prisoners were watched by four municipal officials ; during the King's trial the number of warders had been raised to eight, but since January 21 there were again only four. Each commissioner was on duty for forty-eight hours. Every second day names were drawn by lot at the general committee of the Commune.

Guard began at 9 P.M. It was divided into two parts—twenty-four hours with the prisoners and the same length of time in the committee room. This was on the ground floor ; above it, on the first floor, was the guards' room ; on the second were the apartments where the King had been confined ; the Queen was on the third floor.

When the commissioners came they began by sitting down to supper ; then they would draw by lot the names of those who should first mount guard over the prisoners. Those whose names came out for the night went up after supper to the Queen's apartment, and remained there until eleven o'clock next morning ; after dinner they resumed their guard till the arrival of the new commissioners. On the second day they still mounted guard for a few hours.¹

This arrangement did not last, and it was not long before the system of drawing names by lot was

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepître, p. 16.

dropped. All the members of the Commune were supposed to be regularly on duty by turn ; but in reality it was not so. After their first curiosity had been satisfied many of them tried to escape what they considered a nuisance. Most of them gave excuses on Fridays, and still more on Saturdays. 'They were not anxious to spend the Sunday at the Temple. Those men who were busy all the week valued the pleasure and rest which they might enjoy on that day too highly to sacrifice it for the sake of keeping guard over the Royal Family and being shut up with them.'¹

The result was that the commissioners chosen for duty at the Temple were almost always men who were willing to go there, and who offered themselves for this service. Toulan, more than anyone else, took advantage of such opportunities.

Volunteers or not, there were always two together on sentry, and before the plotters could proceed with their plan of escape it was strictly necessary to secure another municipal official's complicity. Toulan would then do his utmost, first, to be on guard as often as possible with him, so as to concoct their plan together ; secondly, to make sure that both of them should be on duty on the day appointed, so that they might co-operate in carrying it out.

How could the necessary colleague be found ! The commissioners who were most sympathetic to

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, p. 23.

the Royal Family kept before others the same fierce attitude towards the prisoners, and in the presence of other guards or warders made use of their usual revolutionary language. How could one choose between the good and the bad when their manners were identical ?

The Queen alone knew those who were devoted to her ; she had already attracted Toulan's attention to one of them, called Lepître. In the present circumstances she mentioned the latter to Toulan as being best fitted to help them in their bold enterprise, and as being the man who must by all means be won over.

CHAPTER V

Jacques François Lepître—His Disposition—Representative of the Paris Commune—Member of the Provisional Commune—On Duty at the Temple for the First Time—His Secret Royalism—He Discloses his Personality to the King and Queen—His Connection with Toulan—He Offers a Song to Louis XVII.—He is appointed President of the Passport Committee.

THIS Jacques François Lepître was indeed a strange character.¹

He had neither the physique nor the mind of a hero, yet he had enough imagination to be one. He was a strange mixture of bravery, cautiousness, and even faintheartedness ; he was full not only of contrasts but of contradictions. Educated and hard-working, he had plenty of faults and quite as many good qualities.

Born in Paris on January 6, 1764, he was married and a professor of rhetoric at the Lisieux College before he was twenty. On reaching his majority he opened and managed a boarding-school at No. 168 Rue Saint-Jacques, in the Observatory

¹ For the whole of this chapter see *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepître.

Section.¹ He used to speak with the floridness of a fluent teacher, often enriching his language by Latin quotations ; as a schoolmaster he was honest, shy, and perfectly correct in his manners and private life.

If Toulan had been won over to the person of the King rather than to royalism by compassion, Lepître, on the other hand, who was a born royalist, became a republican both out of cautiousness and misfortune. However, he showed just enough conviction to be put down as a patriot and to be credited with civic virtues. On the whole, he was a moderate republican, and by cleverly manœuvring between revolution and reaction he inspired confidence in both parties. This is why, when, after July 1789, an Assembly of three hundred representatives of the Paris Commune took the place of electors, he was chosen by his fellow citizens to sit in that Assembly. It met for the first time on September 18.

Barristers being the majority and professors few in number, Lepître did not get a chance to speak. The learned Professor, who was accustomed to speak before an easily pleased audience, found silence hard to bear, and he wrote maliciously, ‘ Lost in this crowd of men who were eager to speak, I confined myself to listening, and this was not the least tiring part of ’

He left his post after the first federation, July

¹ Houses were then numbered by sections and not by streets.

14, 1790. He had just been appointed professor of *belles-lettres* in one of the Paris colleges, all the while being at the head of his own school, and this was work enough for him; he had no time to devote to public affairs. He therefore was out of touch with political life until December 2, 1792.

At this time he had more leisure: boys were not then given to study, and he was again tempted by politics. His aim remains doubtful. Was it out of a desire to help the royal prisoners at the Temple, as it was reported that the decent citizens of his section urged him to do, or was it, on the contrary, to show himself off as a true republican? Was it, perhaps, only out of curiosity to know whether there might be fewer barristers in the new Assembly, and whether he might have a better chance to speak? Whatever his motive may have been, he was a candidate for election, and was duly elected a member of the municipality, which assumed its duties on December 2, 1792, under the name of Provisional Commune—Commune Provisoire.

A few days after the 9th he was sent to the Temple. He was deeply moved by the dignity with which both the King and the Queen bore their trials, and the sight awakened his dormant Royalist sympathies.

On the 15th, as he was in attendance on his Majesty, he attracted Louis XVI.'s attention by a

little display, quite in keeping with his nature and profession.

Making a pretext of getting rid of a dull and silent colleague, he went to the King's room and asked leave to take the works of Virgil from the mantelshelf.

'Do you know Latin?' said the Sovereign with surprise.

'Yes, your Majesty,' he replied very low; and he added—

*'Non ego cum Danaïis Trojanam excindere gentem
Aulide juravi !'*

It meant in plain French, 'I have not, like the Revolutionists, sworn to destroy monarchy.' This was a clever and flattering way of telling his Sovereign his opinion, while keeping on the safe side with his colleagues, who probably did not know Latin.

A single glance from his Majesty told him he had understood.

This first success made him bolder, and in one particular case he did not hesitate to give tokens of his solicitude for the Queen. He had heard a few remarks made by Toulan on the prisoners, and in a pamphlet Lepître, speaking of them, called them unwise remarks. He mentioned the matter to Marie Antoinette, and asked her if she was perfectly sure of the man with whom she had been talking. She kindly reassured him on this point.

These various tokens of respect attracted attention to him. Warned by the princesses, Toulan made enquiries, and learned that Lepître was more reliable than the others. He then told him in confidence what he had done for the august prisoners, and when Lepître could do so he helped Toulan, and was proud of the confidence Toulan had put in him, as it gave him importance.

He was far from being a handsome man. Being very ugly, short, and corpulent, he was not at all attractive; besides, he was lame. He consoled himself for all his physical defects by the moral superiority he supposed he had. He speaks of it in his 'Souvenirs' with true simplicity, but without bitterness.

He was shocked at the death of Louis XVI. It inspired him with manly resolutions, which found vent in a song of five verses. He wrote it for little Louis XVII., and presented him with it on February 7. It was pure Royalism, and was written with the best of intentions.

This last act, added to the tokens of sympathy which he had given previously to the Royal Family, decided Marie Antoinette in the choice she had made. There was also another strong point in his favour. Lepître was president of the Passport Committee, and his help was more than precious—it was indispensable.

By the Queen's order, Toulan imparted to Lepître the plan made to rescue the royal prisoners.

CHAPTER VI

Lepître's Imagination at Work—Reflections—The Queen insists—He must be put in the Secret at any Cost—Money Sacrifice—Appeal to M. de la Borde—Jarjayes refuses this New Aid—Too many Accomplices—Fifth Note—Jarjayes and Lepître—Agreement—Sixth and Seventh Letters—The Gold Box.

THE first words Toulan spoke set Lepître's imagination on fire.

A conspiracy ! To take part in a conspiracy ! What a dream for a man who for so many years had translated and expounded the Greek and Latin classics, in whose countries conspiracies were common and honoured ! It was a means of making his name remembered in history and of securing for himself a few lines of praise in the works of a future Thucydides or Livy. No man could have resisted such a prospect, the Professor least of all. He therefore gladly agreed to take part in the conspiracy.

This was his first impression, the result of an uncontrollable imagination which sets to work without troubling about consequences. Unfortunately, Lepître's heart followed with difficulty his imagination ; or, rather, it did not follow it. The first excitement over, Lepître thought it was a matter for very great consideration. He remembered that he

was a married man, at the head of a prosperous school; that he would have to leave France, and with France his school of the Rue Saint-Jacques. These were sacrifices hard to make.

He cautiously mentioned his objections to Toulan, who himself referred them to Marie Antoinette.

The very fact of having instructed Lepître as to the plan rendered it necessary to keep him among the accomplices. It would, indeed, have been very unwise to apply to anyone else, and to arouse the curiosity of several commissioners, without making them accomplices who would be held together by a common danger. Besides that, who else could be chosen? Lepître, moreover, was chairman of the Passports Committee, and he alone could give the fugitives the required passports. Lastly, time was short.

As the Professor had raised no objection with regard to the perilous side of the enterprise, and as the only objection he made was on account of the loss he might suffer, it became a mere question of the indemnity to be paid to him in advance, so as to safeguard him against any possible loss. The Queen was of opinion that Lepître's objection must be overcome at any cost, even should it be necessary to bribe him.

One man alone could succeed in this task, and for a very good reason. This was Jarjays. She sent Lepître to him.

She was fully aware that the straightforward and disinterested General's impression would be an unfavourable one when he heard the motives of Leptre's visit. Knowing also that the commissioner's physique was not in his favour, Marie Antoinette was afraid that Jarjayes, through an outburst of temper, would endanger the success of her negotiations. She therefore took particular care to caution him against a bad impression. Her note showed her insistence in repeating to the Chevalier that this man was 'absolutely necessary, and that he must be won over.'

She further requested Toulan to explain clearly what means were to be used. But as the sum required might be a large one she dared not ask M. de Jarjayes to advance it. She therefore named her banker, to whom Jarjayes might apply if necessary : it was Jean Benjamin de la Borde, ex-gentleman-in-waiting of Louis XV., who after the King's death had been made a farmer-general. 'He had in his hands money belonging to Marie Antoinette.'

Nevertheless Jarjayes thought it would be wanting both in wisdom and prudence to add to the number of people who were already in the plot,¹ and, being ready to risk his life, the Chevalier was also ready to risk his fortune. He answered the

¹ Besides, M. de la Borde had at that time left Paris. He had sought refuge in Normandy, where he was arrested the following year. Brought back to Paris, he was guillotined on July 22, 1794

Queen that he wished to carry out the business alone, and she understood the importance of his reasons.

‘I think, indeed, that it is impossible to make at present any demands upon M. de la Borde. All of them would be inconvenient, and it is better that you should yourself conclude the business—that is, if you are able to do so. I had thought of him, so as to save you advancing a sum which is too large for you.’

The General put himself in communication with Lepître, and succeeded in overcoming his last objections. The schoolmaster, being satisfied on the point of the material loss he might incur by taking an active part in the plot, put himself at the disposal of the conspirators. He even offered them his house for their meetings.

When the Queen heard of this result she wrote to the Chevalier, telling him how pleased she was. ‘T—— [Toulan] told me this morning that you had finished with the com. [commissioner.] What a precious friend you are!’

Yet she could not forbear comparison between Lepître—who was receiving a fortune—and Toulan, who received not a penny, although he was running far greater risks. She mentioned this fact to Jarjayes.

‘I should be glad if you could do something for T—— [Toulan]. He behaves too well towards us to allow us not to show our appreciation of it.’

84 A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

But Toulan was not Lepître. As disinterested as he was sensitive and devoted, he refused to accept anything from the Queen except a gold box which she sometimes used.¹

Marie Antoinette was fatal to her best friends, and her gratitude was to carry the strangest consequences. This same box was to become the basis of a terrible accusation against its owner.

¹ *Précis* by the Baron de Goguelat, p. 77.

CHAPTER VII

Plan of Escape—Meeting at Lepître's House—Toulan brings his Friend Ricard—Parts are Distributed—Precautions taken at the Temple against Indiscretions—The Queen and Madame Elisabeth to Disguise themselves—Clothes are Brought to the Temple by the Commissioners—Toulan's Hat—Three-coloured Scarves—Marie Thérèse's Disguise—The Lamplighter and his Children—Difficulty to bring out Louis XVII.—A New Accomplice.

WHATEVER means may have been used to convince Lepître they were successful, and the plan of escape might henceforth assume a practical phase.

This was a most intricate question, for there were no fewer than four people to make their escape—the Queen, Madame Elisabeth, Marie Thérèse, and a child—little Louis XVII. The number of prisoners to rescue increased the difficulties of the task a hundredfold.

Yet those difficulties, however great they might be, did not frighten men like Toulan or Jarjayes ; but the question was how to overcome them all, and everything had to be carefully considered. This required many meetings, in which the ideas of the accomplices could be weighed with the greatest care.

They decided to meet at Lepître's house, in the Rue Saint-Jacques, because it was far from the Temple. Besides the schoolmaster, there came to those

86 A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

meetings Toulan, Jarjayes, and a fourth man called sometimes Ricard, but whom Lepître called Guy.

We do not know much of this man, and this ignorance is to be regretted, for he certainly was of importance. The reader will learn further on¹ the discussion which took place concerning him, and he will see how, by means of the documents we possess, we have been able to find out who he was, and discover the curious love affair which caused him to be mixed up with the events which form the subject of this book. What appears certain from the beginning is that he was introduced to Toulan by a cousin of the latter, of the name of Ricard, and, thanks to his patronage, Toulan gave him a situation in his office. Although Guy Ricard was not so enterprising as his employer, whose friendship he had won, he had a certain amount of courage, even audacity; he was called afterwards to give a striking proof of this. Like Toulan, he was gifted with a bright disposition and Gascon wit, and they give a fresh and uncommon flavour to this episode.

He soon became aware of the transformation which the opinions and general conduct of the member of the Commune had undergone; he helped him on several occasions in the services which Toulan rendered to the prisoners. It was he—we shall henceforward call him Ricard—who copied the letters which were smuggled in to the

¹ Part IV., Chapter VII.

Royal Family, when they were somewhat long. According to a witness, his very fine and clear handwriting and his discreet zeal were most useful.¹

Brought to the meetings which took place in the Rue Saint-Jacques, he was informed of the conspiracy, and willingly accepted the part which was marked out for him.

Meanwhile, in the intervals between the meetings, the two commissioners used to go to the Queen, inform her of what had been decided upon, and take her advice. They availed themselves of the opportunities afforded them by the reluctance of their colleagues to be shut up at the Temple as guardians, to offer themselves as substitutes as often as possible, and they often succeeded in being chosen to replace them.

In order to make sure that they should not be separated, Toulan thought of the following ruse: The commissioners were very often only three in number. As soon as they met in the commissioners' room they wrote an equal number of tickets, one of which was marked 'Day,' and the others ought to have borne the word 'Night.' Instead of this Toulan wrote the word 'Day.' The tickets to be drawn were then presented to the third commissioner, and when he had drawn his, Toulan and Lepître threw their tickets into the fire without looking at them, and each of them took up his

¹ *Fragments*, by Turgu, p. 352.

post. As they seldom came with the same commissioner their trick was always successful.¹

When they had to talk to the princesses they had other dangers to fear besides Tison and his wife. The baby King was too young to be taken into their confidence ; and the indiscretions of the boy, either voluntary or unconscious, were very much to be dreaded, for, although his reason was not above that of his age, he was extremely inquisitive and paid great attention to everything that was said.

The most minute precautions were taken with regard to him ; yet they were useless, since it was he who later was to disclose the secret. The conspirators always spoke in a low voice before him, and whenever there was to be a conference he was sent to one of the turrets to play with his sister, Madame Royale.²

Towards the end of February 1793 the conspirators had agreed on a plan ; and this is what had been decided upon with regard to each one :

The Queen and Madame Elisabeth would escape under a disguise, and, of course, the one decided upon was the dress of a municipal official. The commissioners who came to the Temple were numerous, and they often came without being called there on official duties. With their scarves on they could go freely about.

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepître, p. 32.

² National Record Office, W 290, dossier 261.

It was, therefore, a wise plan to choose such a disguise—all the more so that, as it was winter time, the fugitives would be justified in wearing a long wadded cloak over their uniform, which thus concealed the figures of these singular Commune officials from inquisitive glances, and made their walk less suspicious.

As soon as this point was settled they began to make the uniforms. It is most probable that Madame de Jarjayes worked at them, as must have done Toulan's wife and her cousin Ricard, who seems to have known of the plot. The various parts of those uniforms were brought to the Temple by the two commissioners, who hid some in their pockets, whilst they put on the others—which could not be noticed under their long cloaks.¹ The question of hats was more difficult to solve. However, Toulan's imagination served him in this circumstance; he left his own hat in Madame Elisabeth's room and went out bare-headed. Owing to his caustic spirit and his unfailing coolness this did not even raise the slightest suspicion in the minds of the warders or sentries.

They were careful not to forget the scarves and cards of entry, similar to those used by the members of the Commune.

As for Princess Marie Thérèse, they devised the following scheme :

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepître, p. 34.

Toulan, remembering the means by which he had introduced Jarjays into the Queen's apartment early in that month, thought that he could employ some similar method. The lamplighter did not come alone to the Temple ; most often he brought with him one or two of his children, and they helped him in his work. Toulan thought of dressing Madame Royale like one of them and making her pass for one of the lamplighter's children.

The conspirators examined carefully their clothes and prepared similar ones. The princess was to put on a light garment, and over it a dirty pair of trousers and a coarse *carmagnole* jacket. Thick shoes, an old wig, and a shabby hat to cover the hair were to complete her attire. Her face and hands were to be in such a state as to deceive the lookers-on. She was to be dressed in the turret adjoining the Queen's room, where neither Tison nor his wife ever entered.¹

But the lamplighter could not be taken into their confidence—even less than on the first occasion ; they decided to make use of him without his knowing it.

He used to come about half-past five and leave long before seven. It was just about that time the sentries were changed. It was the moment Ricard was to choose—for it was his part—to come to the Temple dressed as a lamplighter and holding a tin

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepître, p. 35.

box in his hand. He was to go up to the Queen's apartment and knock at the door. Toulan was to open the door, and speaking harshly to the lamp-lighter he was to find fault with him for coming so late and sending one of his children in his stead to do his work ; then he was to order the man to take away the child, telling him at the same time to be off at once, and Ricard was to do so quickly.

There remained the young King.

It is almost certain that the conspirators thought of dressing him up like his sister and making him pass for another child of the lamplighter. This was not impossible ; however, the idea was given up, most likely out of prudence. It was feared that this would be too difficult a part for the child to act. A cry, a gesture, the very look of his face might betray him. Was it possible to leave the security of so many people at the mercy of the involuntary imprudence of such a young child ?

A better way to take the child out of the Temple was soon found, and that thanks to a new accomplice—Turgy—whose faithfulness could be depended on ; for it is only rendering justice to the men of that period to record that, if fatality relentlessly beset Marie Antoinette and her family, devotion was never wanting when appealed to on her behalf.

CHAPTER VIII

August 13 at the Temple Gate—Ruse employed by Turgu to follow the Royal Family—Services rendered—Secret Correspondence—Easy Communications with the People outside—The young King—He is to be Carried off in a Basket.

WHILST so many aristocratic families, so many men on whom favours had been showered, were emigrating, anxious for nothing but their own safety, humbler servants, taken haphazard from the household, gave tokens of the greatest and most courageous devotion to their masters, who in some cases hardly knew them.

Some of them equalled Turgu in those circumstances, but none surpassed him.

A mere kitchen boy, he had once before, at Versailles, saved the Queen's life during the October days by opening the secret door of the private apartments. After that he had come to Paris and quietly resumed his work.

He did not live at the Tuileries. On August 10, going to meet peril, he came to the palace gate, but could not get inside. He consoled himself on hearing that the King had left the palace. On the two following days he made several attempts

to enter the Feuillants, but without better success. When he heard that Louis XVI. was to be taken to the Temple he hastened to M. Ménard de Chouzy, general steward of the King's household, in order, to obtain what he considered a favour, leave to resume his service. M. Ménard de Chouzy sent to the municipality for entrance cards; they were promised for the following day—the 14th.

But these delays did not suit Turgy. He foresaw that when once the King was at the Temple no one would be admitted there without being thoroughly examined and undergoing formalities which would not be in his favour.

He made up his mind to be daring. He and two other kitchen boys, Chrétien and Marchand, came to the main entrance.

One of the commanding officers had just allowed someone who had a card to pass, and Turgy had recognised the man as being in the King's service. Turgy asked the officer to allow him to speak to this man, as he and his friends also belonged to the service. At first the officer hesitated; then he replied, 'Take hold of my arm; let your comrades take hold of yours, and I shall bring you in.'

They did as they were told, and thus entered the Temple, where they joined the kitchen staff.

Every difficulty seemed to be smoothed over, and yet it was not so. Two days later the Commune

officials came to inspect the household. Turgy was questioned.

Far from being embarrassed, he coolly answered that after inquiries had been made in the various sections the Assembly committees gave him and his comrades leave to resume their service. The commissioners retired without asking anything more.

But on the following day Chabot, the Deputy, Santerre, the Commander-General, and Billaud-Varennes, who was then substitute to the Attorney-General for the Commune, came in their turn to make a list of the names of all persons who had remained with the Royal Family. They asked Turgy, Chrétien, and Marchand if they had been formerly in the King's household. Turgy answered in the affirmative.

'Who was it that gave you admittance here?' exclaimed Chabot.

'Pétion and Manuel have granted us leave to come, after having made inquiries in our own sections,' replied Turgy coolly.

'In that case you must be good citizens. Remain at your post, and the country will take better care of you than the tyrant did.'

After they had gone Turgy was flattering himself on the success of his double stratagem, but his comrades said with frightened looks—

'You want to bring death on us all. You tell the municipal officers that we have been sent by

the Assembly, and you tell the members that the Commune sent us! . . . We should indeed like to be far from here.'

They stayed, however, and all three did their best until October 1793, when they were finally dismissed from the Temple.¹

Turgy was hardly settled at the Temple when he endeavoured to make himself useful to the prisoners. Taking advantage of moments when the supervision slackened, he very cleverly managed to establish for the benefit of the Queen and Madame Elisabeth a system of signals which enabled him to inform the prisoners of what was going on outside.

He did better still. Making a very ingenious use of every opportunity, he often managed, either in a passage or at a turn of the staircase, to replace the paper cork of a water bottle by a note written either with lemon juice or with an extract of gall. Although eight or ten people were constantly watching, hardly a day passed, during the fourteen months he managed to stay at the Temple, without the Royal Family receiving some such notes through this means.²

As he was in charge of the supplying of provisions it was easy for him to go out; besides, being careful always to give the commissioners and the warders whatever they asked for when they

¹ *Fragments*, by Turgy, pp. 341-345.

² *Ibid.* pp. 348-350.

went to the kitchens, he was seldom searched when entering or leaving the Temple. Thanks to his clever precautions, he enjoyed real freedom.

From the very first he was informed by Madame Elisabeth of what Toulan had said, and, as his work brought him into daily intercourse with the captives, he was at once introduced to the municipal officer, who had to be more on his guard than a servant, and the two met frequently in various places.

The plan of escape could not be kept secret from him. Soon, indeed, he was called upon to take part in it. It was arranged that he should carry the young King out of the Temple in a manner quite in keeping with his usual occupation ; he was to carry the child in a basket covered with serviettes.¹

The royal child, who was barely eight years old,

¹ *Fragments*, p. 360. In the work which Lepître wrote concerning the above episodes he does not mention Turgy. According to his narrative, the young King and Madame Royale were to pass for the lamplighter's children and both leave with Ricard. On the contrary, in the *Mémoires* he has left, Turgy clearly defines the part he took in the conspiracy. He speaks of it in very clear words ; besides, he takes good care to mention that this part of his narrative was written from his own notes. This statement has for us a character of authenticity and truthfulness which cannot be cancelled by Lepître's silence. One must not forget, indeed, that, in spite of the part he attributes to himself in his *Souvenirs*, Lepître was never more than a supernumerary, and that the conspiracy was entirely arranged by Toulan and Jarjays. They told Lepître what they chose to tell him. There was no reason why he should know how the youthful King was to leave the Temple.

was thin, miserable-looking, very light in weight, and so short that he was not much more than three feet two inches high. This we know from an inscription left by Marie Antoinette on the walls of her prison—

‘ 27th of March, 1793 . . .

‘ Three feet two inches—1^m026.’

Turgy gladly accepted his mission.

CHAPTER IX

Tison and his Wife had to be Baffled in their Watch—Spanish Tobacco—A Narcotic—Leaving the Temple—The Queen and Lepître—Madame Royale and Ricard—The young King and Turgy—Madame Elisabeth and Toulan—Rue de la Corderie—The Three Cabs—Flight towards Havre—Amabert—Chances of Success.

THE fourfold departure from the Temple could be accomplished only with the complicity, voluntary or compulsory, of all to whom the Commune had entrusted guardianship and watch over the Temple. The two municipal officers Toulan and Lepître being the instigators of the plot, Tison and his wife were the only two who had to be deceived, and from whom all preparations for escape, as well as the departure, would have to be concealed. How could they be hoodwinked? How were those spies, always on the look-out, to be prevented from overhearing anything?

After many discussions, although the means were distasteful to every one of the conspirators, it was decided, owing to the urgency of the case, to administer a powerful narcotic to Tison and his wife, who would thus instantly fall fast asleep.

Toulan, who was acquainted with their weakness for Spanish snuff, gave them plenty of it whilst he was at the Temple. It was he who on the appointed day was to mix the narcotic with the snuff which he was to offer them.

They were to take that pinch of snuff about half-past six ; thus leaving a full hour, if not two, perfectly secure. As soon as the couple should have fallen asleep, preparations for flight were to be begun.

First, the Queen with Lepître would leave at once, but not before. Out of charity, she had left a note clearing the couple Tison of any participation in the flight. Darkness and disguise would help the prisoners' departure. The guards were not to be feared, as it was sufficient to show a card to the sentries for them not to move ; besides, the tricolour scarf would prevent any suspicion.

A few minutes after seven, just when the guard was being changed, Ricard would, as previously arranged, come to the gate with a card similar to those of workmen coming to the Temple, and his tin box on his arm. He was to meet Madame Royale in disguise and leave with her.

Turgy was to go out carrying the basket in which the little Prince lay hidden ; lastly Toulan, who remained last, was to quit the tower with Madame Elisabeth dressed as a municipal officer.

After having passed the outside gate and reached the Rue du Temple all of them were to turn to the

left into the Rue de la Corderie,¹ where M. de Jarjayes would be waiting for them.

And now began the second part of the plan, the departure from Paris after leaving the Temple.

They could not for one moment dream of staying in Paris ; indeed, it was most important that they should quit the city as soon as possible, in order to escape the dangers which would necessarily arise from a stay there, however short. After careful examination of the various directions which might be followed, the flight to the eastern side of France had been given up, both on account of the distance and because fighting was going on on the frontier. Flight to La Vendée was equally out of the question, for it was too far away. Therefore they had to fall back on the Normandy coast, as it was easy of access, and thence a boat could very easily carry the fugitives to England.

The necessary changes of horses had been arranged as far as the sea. There, at a given point of the coast close to Havre, M. de Jarjayes had a boat in readiness, which his intimate friend Amabert, first clerk of the Treasury, had put at his disposal.

The next question was discussed at great length : it was the travelling point. Should they travel together or separately ?

Lepître was of opinion that they should remain

¹ The name of the Rue de la Corderie has been changed into that of Rue de Bretagne.

together, and advised the prisoners to travel in a large berlin with six seats, in which the Royal Family, he, and Jarjayes would drive, whilst Toulan would precede them on horseback, riding in front of them as fast as he could.

He gave as a reason for his choice that not only would they be all together, but a berlin would not excite any more curiosity than would several cabs. And then, they would not be parted; while with cabs, if an accident happened to one of them, it might cause the loss of all the others.

Such reasons were certainly logical and not without force. Yet the Queen would not hear of a berlin; the recollections of Varennes were still too vivid in her mind; and although circumstances were quite different, nothing could prevail against her idea. Thus they decided in favour of the three cabs, which Jarjayes was to bring into the Rue de la Corderie. In the first the Queen, her son, and the Chevalier would take their places, in the second Marie Thérèse and Lepître, whilst the third was to carry Madame Elisabeth and Toulan. Ricard and Turgy were to remain in Paris.

The day for putting the plan into execution was fixed for the beginning of March, as Toulan and Lepître would then both be on duty at the Temple.

Such a plan, it is true, offered enormous difficulties, but they were not insurmountable.

A few writers, not thoroughly acquainted with

the plot, have called it chimerical and foolish. Such an appreciation is due to imperfect knowledge, if not to complete ignorance of the means the conspirators could make use of in order to ensure success. It is sufficient to read them to be convinced of this.

It is evident that a large share of the unknown belongs to any plan of escape. There may be hazardous circumstances, a thousand and one incidents which cross life and sometimes alter it beyond all expectation, without there being any possibility of foreseeing or circumventing them. But beyond the element of chance always attaching to plots of such a nature, the one concocted by Toulan and Jarjayes had a good chance of success, provided the prisoners and their accomplices had as much good fortune as they had boldness.

In the first place, the time was a propitious one. Public curiosity and popular passions, which had been busy with the King's trial and satisfied by his death, were somewhat diverted from the Temple. The prison now contained no one but women and children. The captives had even won a certain amount of pity : this was clear when, shortly after her father's execution, news of Marie Thérèse's death had spread abroad, although the report was soon acknowledged to be false.¹

As for the Government, their attention was

¹ *Journal of Perlet.*

concentrated elsewhere. The Convention, already undermined by intestine quarrels, was witnessing the struggle between the 'Girondins' and the 'Montagnards,' and these disputes ceased only a sufficient time for the deputies to deal with the troops on the frontier, who were in want of men, food, and money. The Commune had to provide for the provisioning of Paris : this was no light task for the members, who had rightly made it a first and foremost question, though it was constantly hindered by riots and rebellions.

In addition to the favourable circumstances outside the Temple it must be observed that the great number of people employed therein made going backwards and forwards relatively easy. Turgy, as has been seen, is very clear in his statements on this point. In Marie Thérèse's examination the fact that Toulan came often to the Temple, even when off duty, is mentioned. It was these frequent visits which enabled the Queen to exchange so many letters with Jarjayes. Between the interior and exterior of the Temple there was a constant exchange of communications ; this allowed the prisoners to pass unnoticed.

One must not forget that neither Toulan nor Lepître had yet been denounced, and that they were not even suspected of conniving at the escape of the Royal Family. As a proof of the cleverness and success with which they had up to that day

acted their parts it may be sufficient to remind the reader that Michonis—who was also a member of the Commune and a commissioner at the Temple, the same man who was secretly devoted to the Queen, and who twice renewed Toulan's endeavours—mistrusted his colleague, regarding him as a fierce republican, and it was only a few months later that he heard the truth concerning Toulan.

Who, then, would have had any suspicion on seeing municipal officials, with their scarves on, walking in the dark, accompanied by patriots like Toulan and Lepître? Unless there should be an access or an excess of zeal, which was most improbable, on the part of the sentries and doorkeepers, it was certain that the prisoners could come out from the Temple.

Besides, one has only to remember another escape far more difficult—that of the Royal Family when they escaped from the Tuileries on June 20, 1791. It was during a summer night, the shortest in the whole year, when the sun sets after eight o'clock at night and rises at four in the morning, that Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, the royal children, Madame Elisabeth, Madame de Tourzel, and a few devoted friends found means to baffle the close vigilance of the National Guards who filled the palace; and this watch was more strict and more active than that of the guards at the Temple, since the commissioners were in collusion with the prisoners. It is a known

fact that as soon as night had fallen at the Tuileries, from 1789 to 1792, the King, Queen, and Madame Elisabeth were shut up in their apartments. The guardians used to lay a mattress on the floor across the door, and the princes could not get out of their rooms without stepping over the bodies of those strange defenders of their country who had become jailers.¹

This was not all. Once out of the Tuileries the prisoners had to flee in various groups through a quarter where everyone knew them and could recognise them. They were too many in number not to attract attention everywhere; and at that time the palace was strictly watched, for rumours had been spread at different times that the King had gone away; the people wished to retain their prisoner. Moreover, they were to meet in the very centre of Paris, pass through barriers, and proceed on their flight in a berlin, which from its form, its size, and the travellers it contained must attract attention, and surely ran the risk of exciting suspicion even in the most indifferent.

In spite of so many obstacles, and even, one may say, blunders, the flight of the Royal Family had been successful, and, indeed, never were so many blunders accumulated in so short a time. It was neither by an order nor even through a warning from Paris that the King was arrested at Varennes.

¹ *Louis XVII*, by A. de Beauchesne, vol. i. pp. 87, 88.

Therefore the escape from the Temple, with the help of Toulan and Lepître, presented itself in a much less unfavourable light. If another proof be necessary, one has only to remember with what facility M. de Jarjayes had freely entered and left the Temple in the early days of February.

Outside the prison the flight as far as the coast offered still fewer chances of failure. There was no electricity, no steam in those days. The only means of catching the fugitives was to run after them, and, provided they had a few hours in advance, the success of the chase was more than doubtful. And this was how matters stood. All precautions had been taken, and Lepître himself, in 'Les Souvenirs,' which he has left concerning some of those episodes, enumerates them complacently. The quotation deserves to be given in full.

'Our dispositions were such that no one could have started in pursuit of us sooner than five hours after our departure. We had calculated everything. First, the servants did not go up the tower before nine o'clock to set the table and serve supper. The Queen would have asked to have supper only at half-past nine. They would have had to knock several times at the door, and, being surprised at getting no answer, they would question the sentry, who, having been changed at nine o'clock, could not know what had happened. Then they would have been obliged to go down to the council room and

inform the two other members of their surprise. After this they would have to go up a second time with the officers, knock again, and call the previous sentries, from whom they could only gather very scanty information. A locksmith would have to be sent for to open the doors, the keys of which we should have taken care to leave inside. It would take a long time to open the doors, as one was of strong oak, covered with large nails, and the second was made of iron. Both had such strong locks that they would have had to be smashed, or else a very large hole to be cut in the main wall. After this the turret apartments would have to be visited ; and Tison and his wife might be strongly shaken without awakening them. The servants would have again to go down to the council room, write out a report, take it to the Communal Council, which, supposing it was not yet over, would have lost more time in futile discussion. Lastly the police, the mayor, &c. would have to be informed. . . . All these delays would give us time to proceed on our flight. Our passports would be in order, as I was then president of the Passport Committee, and could prepare them myself. We were thus left in no uneasiness concerning our journey so long as we kept well in advance.'

CHAPTER X

Lepître's Tergiversations—His Fears—The Pretexts he gives for Delaying the Execution of the Plan—No Time to be Lost—The Queen's Endeavours to overcome his Faint-heartedness—March 1, 1793—'Filial Piety'—Hair from the Queen, the Little King, and Marie Thérèse—'Poco ama ch'il morir teme'—'Tutto per loro'—The Cap knitted by Madame Elisabeth—Outside Complications.

How could such a plan fail when it had been arranged so carefully, so thoughtfully, and so wisely? Why should its execution be delayed indefinitely, and finally given up after such careful preparations?

Here we must bring forward the faint-heartedness of Lepître.

Contrary to Toulan, Jarjayes, Ricard, and Turgu, the unfortunate schoolmaster, who had been charmed for a time by the grandeur of the plot, and later on won over by the large sum which was offered him, was not of a stamp to face the dangers pertaining to such an adventure.

So long as it had only been a question of forming a conspiracy, of concocting plans, and of holding secret meetings, he had enjoyed mixing with the conspirators, and his quick and bold imagination traced

before his eyes a splendid picture of the vicissitudes and episodes of an action which reminded him of his classical studies. Unfortunately he was not only physically but also morally blind ; his unsettled mind followed his imagination with difficulty.

As soon as he had to pass from theory into action everything in him was changed. He was seized with an excessive and exaggerated prudence which was closely allied to fear. Trembling, wavering, ashamed of his weakness, he hesitated, and avoided action ; he never thought the time a favourable one.

Every day he had a new reason for not acting, demanded new delays under the most futile pretexts. If necessary he invented them. Thus he had promised the fugitives passports. Nothing would have been so easy for him as to keep his promise, yet he put it off from day to day, giving as an excuse the dangers of the present time, the riot, which had caused the sugar and coffee shops to be pillaged in Paris, and had consequently put a stop to passports being delivered, and obliged the Government to close the town gates on February 25-28, 1793. He willingly forgot that by the law of September 5, as well as by several others, the gates could not be closed without an order from the Convention, the penalty for doing so being death ; and in fact, in spite of the uproar and threats of the rioters, the General Council of the Commune

decided that, until the Convention had made known its intentions on the subject, the gates should remain open ; and they did remain open. As to passports, the Council stated that it requested the Passport Commissioners to be very careful in giving them.¹ This could scarcely trouble Lepître, as he was president of the Commission.

In short, he seemed incapable of co-operating in the bold attempt in which he had taken part in a moment of thoughtless enthusiasm. He confesses it in the first edition of his 'Souvenirs,' which was published in 1814, but bore no author's name.² Always affected and classical when he expresses his feelings, he speaks of himself and his weakness in the following words : ' . . . I confess that I thought with fear of the moment when the sacred deposit for which I had to answer should be entrusted to my care. I could almost have said, like Æneas, when he leaves Troy—

' Ferimur per opaca locorum ;
Et me, quem dudum non ulla injecta movebant
Tela, neque adverso glomerati ex agmine Graii,
Nunc omnes terrent auræ, sonus excitat omnis
Suspensum et pariter comitique onerique timentem.'

It is true that at a later period, when he was introduced to the Duchesse d'Angoulême, he very

¹ *Mémoires Historiques sur Louis XVII*, by Eckard, pp. 425-427.

² P. 41.

³ *Æneid*, book ii., lines 725-729.

cleverly recalled the time of captivity, and made the most of the services which he very nearly rendered to the Royal Family. On being made a knight of the Royal Order of the Légion d'Honneur, he thought at once of writing out a list of the things he had done. Hence came a second edition of his 'Souvenirs' in 1817. He struck out his unwise confessions and turned to his glory all the episodes of the conspiracy. But the first edition is still in existence, and history makes use of it.

Marie Antoinette realised how the many delays caused by the hesitation of this accomplice worked against the success of their plan. As time went on the chances were fewer. The longer they waited the greater their risk of being discovered. The Queen tried by all possible means to impart to this man, 'who was frightened at a shadow and afraid of a whisper,' a little of the courage which she felt to be so great, so impatient for action, in Toulan, Jarjayes, Ricard, and even Turgu. She stung his vanity; she endeavoured to appeal to his heart.

She remembered the song which, early in February, the schoolmaster had brought to her son. Madame Cléry had adapted the words to some easy music; the young King learnt it, and on March 1 the commissioner was present at a moving sight. 'Louis XVI.'s daughter was sitting at her *clavécin*; her royal mother was on a chair near her, holding her son in her arms, and her eyes filled with tears.

She could hardly lead her children's voices. Madame Elisabeth, standing at her sister's side, mingled her sighs with the sad accents of her nephew.

'LA PIÉTÉ FILIALE.

' Eh quoi ! tu pleures, ô ma mère !
 Dans tes regards fixés sur moi
 Se peignent l'amour et l'effroi :
 J'y vois ton âme tout entière.
 Des maux que ton fils à soufferts
 Pourquoi te retracer l'image ?
 Lorsque ma mère les partage,
 Puis-je me plaindre de mes fers ?

' Des fers ! O Louis, ton courage
 Les ennoblit en les portant.
 Ton fils n'a plus, en cet instant,
 Que tes vertus pour héritage.
 Trône, palais, pouvoirs, grandeur,
 Tout a fui pour moi sur la terre,
 Mais je suis auprès de ma mère,
 Je connais encor le bonheur !

' Un jour peut-être . . . (l'espérance
 Doit être permise au malheur),
 Un jour, en faisant son bonheur,
 Je me vengerai de la France.
 Un Dieu favorable à son fils
 Bientôt calmera la tempête ;
 L'orage qui courbe leur tête
 Ne détruira jamais les lis.

' Hélas ! si du poids de nos chaînes
 Le ciel daigne nous affranchir,
 Nos cœurs doubleront leur plaisir
 Par le souvenir de nos peines.

Ton fils, plus heureux qu'aujourd'hui,
 Saura, dissipant tes alarmes,
 Effacer la trace des larmes
 Qu'en ces lieux tu versas pour lui !

‘À MADAME ÉLISABETH.

‘Et toi, dont les soins, la tendresse
 Ont adouci tant de malheurs,
 Ta récompense est dans les cœurs
 Que tu formas à la sagesse.
 Ah! souviens-toi des derniers vœux
 Qu'en mourant exprima ton frère :
 Reste toujours près de ma mère,
 Et ses enfants en auront deux !’¹

This was not all. The Queen gave to this indirect flattery, which was destined to gratify the conceit of an author, other encouragements, better calculated to touch a Frenchman's heart. She gave to Lepître some hair of Louis XVI., her children, and Madame Elisabeth ; she gave him also some of her own hair, with the Italian motto, ‘Poco ama ch 'il morir teme’ (They little love who fear to love.)

But all was in vain. The Professor felt flattered, but his courage was not roused ; and, as regards this, what a difference there was between Toulan and Lepître !—the latter ascribed everything to himself, the former thought always of others.

Toulan, in fact, had received a present similar to

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, pp. 42, 43.

Lepître's. He had the locks of hair arranged in the shape of sheaves on the cover of a box, one of the sheaves falling and the other four straight up. This was an allusion to the members of the Royal Family, four of whom were still alive, and were to owe him their lives and liberty. Under the sheaves he wrote an inscription, the image of his soul, 'Tutto per loro' (everything for them). Lepître, on the contrary, bought a ring, in which he had the locks placed separately. On one side he had engraved the motto given by the Queen, which his conduct fully justified; on the other the following inscription: 'The hair in this ring was given on March 7, 1793, to J. Fr. Lep. by the wi., chil., and sis. of L. de B., King of France.' In order to join caution with vanity, and give satisfaction to both at the same time, he carefully covered the inscription with a movable gold cap.¹

Madame Elisabeth joined her sister in her efforts. She knitted with her own hands a cap which she gave to Lepître. Nevertheless, none of these flattering and precious tokens could overcome his fears, and the day was nearing when all the delays he caused in the execution of the plan completely ruined the chances of success, and when the false pretexts he gave because he was afraid of acting were destined to become too real and too true.

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, p. 44.

The state of universal stupor which had followed Louis XVI.'s death had gradually died away. The monarchical States of Europe had recovered from the shock, and revolutionary France had rejoiced over her triumph.

The struggle had begun again between the two hostile forces. As early as the beginning of March the foreign troops gained signal victories. News reached Paris of the surrender of Aix-la-Chapelle and the raising of the siege before Maastricht ; then Dumouriez betrayed and surrendered to the Prince of Coburg ; lastly there was a rising in La Vendée.

To all such regrettable news were to be added other evils. Poverty was on the increase in Paris ; misery and famine threatened the city. Every day new riots, new insurrections took place. The working people were starving ; sufferings roused their anger, and again they shouted, 'Down with the traitors ! Death to the Austrian woman !'

This is the cry whenever the distress of the people grows worse ; and now the prisoners at the Temple are once more threatened with danger.

Precautions which had for a time been relaxed were now again increased. Once more the captives attracted attention, for they were the hostages of the Revolution. The people were instinctively afraid that attempts would be made to rob them of their prey. Suspicion was aroused. The prisoners were watched

more closely than ever, especially the young Prince, whom La Vendée, the emigrants, and foreign monarchs had lately proclaimed King of France, under the title of Louis XVII.

To take up the old plan, and to risk such an adventure, had now become utter folly. Every chance had gone, and failure was now certain. Lepître was the cause of it, and Toulan and Jarjays shudderingly acknowledged the fact.

CHAPTER XI

The New Plan of Toulan and Jarjaves—The Queen alone can Escape—She Consents to it on Madame Elisabeth's earnest Entreaties—The young King's Sleep—She Refuses—Letter to Jarjaves.

SEEING the impossibility of putting into execution the plan they had so fondly worked out, men different from Toulan and Jarjaves might have given up the idea of saving the Royal Family, satisfied with the thought that they had done their duty to its fullest extent. But those two heroes did not belong to the class of indolent and weak men who lose heart in the face of misfortunes, and who stand still when they meet with an obstacle.

As brave as they were generous, they did not believe that devotion had a right to remain barren. Their first plan having become impracticable they will throw it aside, but only to form another.

The first thing to ensure the success of this second scheme was to leave out the man who had been the stumbling-block in the previous attempt. But Lepître left aside, who was to take his place? Time was short, and how could they open new negotiations with another commissioner? These were serious difficulties, and they

would occasion delays which, as they recurred, would all the more surely ruin the few chances of success which they still possessed.

But without the aid of Lepître, how could they procure the necessary passports? They could not dream of obtaining any. On the other hand, supposing that the Royal Family succeeded in leaving the Temple, they would soon be arrested, for it was quite impossible to suppose that such a large party could pass unnoticed.

But if they could not attempt to save four persons, was it impossible to try to save at least one? Strictly speaking, it was not. The remaining prisoners would screen and ensure the flight of that one. And, bowing to necessity, Toulan and Jarjayes arrived at this conclusion.

Whom were they to save? Of course the one marked out beforehand was the Queen. She alone seemed to be actually threatened, and she alone had energy and serenity of nature enough to help the two daring conspirators.

They imparted only part of their project to Marie Antoinette, but disclosed it fully to Madame Elisabeth; for they were aware that her help would be required to persuade the Queen to flee alone—to induce the mother to part with her children.

When they first spoke of it she manifested all the resistance and the stubbornness which they had expected to meet with. They certainly would not have been able to overcome it without Madame

Elisabeth ; but with her heartfelt eloquence, her sweet persuasiveness, the authority which her virtues and angelic resignation had given her, she insisted again and again ! She pointed out to her sister that she alone as Queen was in danger, and that the repeated shouts of ‘Down with the Austrian woman !’ made it her duty to think of her own safety. For the sake of her children, for the interests of those dear creatures who had already lost their father, she owed it to herself to neglect no means of escaping the hatred of the madmen who were demanding her head. Would not the young King and the Princess Royal find in their aunt a second mother, until God in His mercy should bring them together again, but this time outside a prison and in a more hospitable and less cruel country ?

Then the Princess added that the Queen had really no right to refuse Toulan and Jarjays’ offer, nor to render such devotion barren. In short, she succeeded in securing Marie Antoinette’s consent, and a day was fixed for the perilous attempt.

Louis XVI.’s daughter, who disliked dwelling on these sad and painful recollections, has handed down to history the narrative of what took place afterwards—episodes of which she was the only surviving witness. She entrusted M. de Beauchesne with the story, and in his remarkable work ‘La Vie de Madame Elisabeth’ he relates it in the following words :—¹

¹ P. 114 ff.

‘The day was fixed, and it came. . . . The night before, both mother and aunt were sitting at the bedside of the young Prince, who was asleep. His sister had also gone to bed, but her bedroom door was open, and Marie Thérèse, worried by the sad and thoughtful look which she had noticed on her mother’s face all day long, had not fallen asleep. Thus it was that she overheard the words which she repeated later. Marie Antoinette, having agreed to make the sacrifice which was demanded of her, was sitting near her son’s bed.

“ ‘May God grant that this child may be happy!’ ” she said.

“ ‘He will be, dear sister,’ ” answered Madame Elisabeth, showing to the Queen the Dauphin’s sweet but proud face.

“ ‘Youth as well as joy is of short duration,’ ” murmured Marie Antoinette, with a pang at her heart. “ ‘Happiness, like everything else, has an end!’ ”

‘Then she rose and walked a few steps in her room, saying—

“ ‘And you, my good sister, when and how shall I see you again? . . . It is impossible! It is impossible!’ ”

‘Young Marie Thérèse heard these words, but it was only later on that her aunt explained to her their meaning. The Queen’s exclamation meant nothing less than the rejection of the means which

were offered for her safety. She had made up her mind. Her love for her children was stronger than any other consideration—than her sister's entreaties, or her instinct of self-preservation—stronger even than the promise she had made to her brave friends. But she reproached herself as a perjurer on account of the promise she had given, and could no longer keep ; she felt that she was bound to give explanations and to apologise to those two generous hearts who were bent on risking their own security for her sake ; so that as soon as she could speak to Toulan, on the following day, when he came, excited because of the grand act he was on the point of performing—

“ You will be angry with me,” she said, “ but I have thought it over. Here there is nothing but danger ; death is preferable to remorse.” . . .

‘ During the course of the day she found an opportunity for whispering to Toulan the following words :

“ I shall die unhappy if I cannot give you a proof of my gratitude.”

“ And I also, Madame, if I have not been able to show you my devotion.”

‘ They had yet to inform Jarjayes. The Queen sent him a note through Toulan. She told the Chevalier of her resolution in words full of touching simplicity and admirable courage :

“ We have had a beautiful dream, that is all ; but

we have gained much by it, because we found in it renewed proof of your devotion to me. My trust in you is boundless, and on every occasion you will find high spirit and courage in me ; but my son's interest is my only guide ; and whatever joy I might have felt at being far hence, I cannot consent to part with him. However, in all that you have written to me I recognise your affection. Be assured that I realise the excellence of your reasons for acting in my behalf, and also that we may not again have such an opportunity ; but I could not enjoy anything when leaving my children behind, and I regret nothing." ¹

The sacrifice was consummated. The Queen could not anticipate that at a later period other schemes would be formed for setting her at liberty. We are certainly entitled to say that when she refused to follow the Chevalier de Jarjayes and Toulan she willingly threw away a supreme chance of escape.

She proved herself to be really strong-minded and truly great. She responded to her friends' devotion by self-sacrifice. Death could now overtake her ; but death alone, and not flight, would part her from her children.

Before such grandeur of heart politics and passions must be silent. This grandeur cannot be denied ; it would be unjust not to acknowledge it.

¹ The original of this letter was given in 1873 to the Comte de Chambord. I cannot say in whose hands it now is.

PART III

THE RING AND SEAL OF LOUIS XVI



CHAPTER I

The Ring and Seal of the King—*Procès-verbal* of the Commune
—Sequestration of Cléry—Audacious Abduction accomplished
by Toulan.

THE Queen's refusal rendered purposeless and useless the presence of Jarjayes in Paris. For all that, it did not cease to be less perilous, for the recollection of the offices he had filled, and the missions with which he had been entrusted, especially with Barnave, who was now in prison, were not forgotten, and he might be denounced by mere chance. Marie Antoinette decided to make him leave Paris while there was still time, and she thought she might take advantage of his departure to ask him for a last service and entrust him with a last mission which she had at heart.

She wanted to send out of France and to place in sure hands the few things which had belonged to the King, and which she considered as both souvenirs and relics.

The manner in which these objects had come into her hands after so many vicissitudes shows once more what boldness can achieve in the most dangerous and difficult situations.

After he had been sentenced, and at the time when any respite had been refused him, Louis XVI. had, on January 20, an interview with his wife and family ; he also promised to see them again on the following day, a few hours before his execution.

The last interview had, however, not taken place. Anxious to spare his relatives the frightful anguish of a last parting, Louis had gone to the scaffold without seeing them again. But he had requested Cléry to hand to the Queen a few things which he valued highly for various reasons, and which death alone could induce him to part with. These were his wedding ring, his seal, and a small packet containing the hair of the Queen, Madame Elisabeth, Marie Thérèse, and the Dauphin.

Cléry, being specially attached to the late King's service, had no intercourse with the other prisoners at the Temple ; it was, therefore, not possible for him to fulfil his mission directly, and he was obliged to report to the Commune.

The General Council of the Commune, suspicious and tyrannical, refused to allow the King's last wish to be fulfilled, and it stopped the objects on their way, as must be concluded from the deliberation entered on the registers of the Temple Council on January 21, 1793. We give an extract from it.

‘ GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE COMMUNE OF JANUARY 21.

‘ Appeared before us Citizen Cléry, Groom of

the Chamber to Louis Capet, who asked to make a declaration of the objects which had been entrusted to him this morning by Louis Capet, before several commissioners who have borne witness to it ; those objects are a gold ring, inside which are engraved the letters ' M.A.A.A., 19 Aprilis, 1770,'¹ and he requested the said ring to be given to his wife, saying that *he was grieved at parting with them*. Again, a watch seal in silver, opening in three parts : on one the arms of France are engraved, on the other L L, and on the third a child's head with a helmet. The said seal he requested to be handed over to his son. Lastly, a small piece of paper on which is written in Louis Capet's own hand, ' Hair of my wife, sister, and children.' It contained indeed four little packets of hair which he requested Cléry to give to his wife, and to tell her that he was sorry he had not asked her to come down that morning, as he wished to spare her the grief of such a cruel parting.

'The Council, deliberating on the request of Citizen Cléry, has left him guardian of these objects until another decision shall have been taken by the General Council of the Commune, to which the question will be referred.'²

¹ ' Marie Antoinette, Archduchess of Austria, April 19, 1770,' the day on which the ring was presented and Louis XVI. married to this princess.

² *Journal of Perlet*, vol. ii. pp. 437, 438.

Cléry remained at the Temple more than a month after this, and kept his trust all the more carefully that the Commune had, so to speak, imprisoned him, not allowing him to communicate with anybody. When he left on March 1¹ the commissioners obliged him to produce them again. The seals were affixed on them, as well as to several articles of clothing which the King had worn.² They were deposited in the room which they used for their meetings, on the ground floor of the Temple. Toulan saw them and mentioned them to the Queen.

At that time the plot for the deliverance of the prisoners was very nearly completed, and, thanks to the measures which had been taken and the preparations which had been made, as well as to the political situation, there was a probability, if not a certainty, of success. The Queen could not bear the idea of going whilst leaving in the hands of the Commune those things which she regarded as at once personal souvenirs and royal attributes. She spoke of it to Toulan, and expressed her wish to recover possession of those things which she considered as having been stolen from her, and as for many reasons rightfully belonging to her.

¹ Sitting of February 28, Paris Commune. The General Council rules that Citizen Cléry shall leave the Temple within twenty-four hours. (A. de Beauchesne.)

² Eckard, p. 153.

Always naturally heroic, in order to obey Marie Antoinette's least wishes, Toulan foiled his colleagues' watch, broke the seals, untied the parcel which contained the ring, seal, and hair, took them out, and gave them to the Queen.

He was thus risking his life. No doubt the Commune would have severely punished the audacious man who thus defied its authority. Had he been discovered, death on the scaffold would have been his fate.

His danger was great, for as soon as they discovered the robbery the municipal officers felt very uneasy at the disappearance of the royal souvenirs. But Toulan had been so clever that he was not even suspected. The excitement subsided ; and as the seal, bearing the arms of France, had a gold setting, the commissioners presumed that it had tempted a common thief—for all kinds of people came every day to the Temple.¹ Looked at in that light, the robbery was no longer a crime against the safety of the State, and so lost all its gravity. Silence was kept as to this incident, and the affair had no after-consequences.²

¹ *Récits des Evénements arrivés au Temple*, p. 33.

² M. Léon Lecestre, in his remarkable article on 'Les Tentatives d'Evasion de la Reine Marie-Antoinette,' published in April 1886 in the *Revue des Questions Historiques*, places Toulan's act on the day following the King's death. The documents and authorities I have quoted contradict this opinion and leave no doubt with regard to the date which I have given. Messieurs Ed. and J. de Goncourt,

in their *Histoire de Marie-Antoinette* (p. 413, ed. of 1884), say that 'Toulan had broken the seals, substituted similar objects, and replaced the seals.' They give no authority for their assertion; and the narrative of events left by Madame Royale entirely discountenances their opinion. Moreover, how could Toulan have got, made, or obtained 'similar things' in so short a time, since, as long as they were in Cléry's hands—from January 21 to March 1—he never parted with them, nor did he show them to anybody belonging to the Queen's *entourage*? A passage in his *Mémoires* will prove this to the reader: see *Journal du Temple*, by Cléry, 1816, p. 194. The testimony of Turgot must also be taken into account. 'Cléry,' he writes, 'remained more than a month longer at the Temple, but he could not communicate with us' (p. 359).

CHAPTER II

The Queen sends the Articles to Jarjayes through Toulan—Letter sent with Them—The Chevalier's Double Mission—At Brussels—A Friend of the Queen, le Comte Jean Axel de Fersen—His Journey to Paris in February 1792—At Hamm—The King's Brother—Old Souvenirs—Prejudice and Fears—The Emperor Francis II.—The Queen's Debts—Septeuil, Ex-Treasurer of the Civil List—Letters from Marie Antoinette, Madame Elisabeth, and the Royal Children to le Comte de Provence and le Comte d'Artois—Last Letter from Marie Antoinette to M. de Jarjayes—'Good-bye.'

AFTER she had given up all idea of flight the Queen surveyed the situation without despair, but also without delusion. When would she be free? Would she ever be so? And if she should ever be free, after what vicissitudes and trials? The future being so insecure, she thought of putting her husband's relics out of reach of her tormentors. It was then that she bethought herself of Jarjayes, whose blind devotion wished only for opportunities of exercising itself in her service. This plan had another advantage: it ensured the Chevalier's security.

Toulan, as usual, was the medium. 'From the turn events are taking,' the Queen said to him, 'I may expect at any moment to be prevented from communicating with anyone. Here are the ring,

seal, and packet of hair for the recovery of which I am indebted to you. I request you will leave them in M. de Jarjayes' hands, and ask him to forward them to Monsieur and le Comte d'Artois, as well as the letters which my sister and I have written to our brothers.'¹

The note which she sent on this occasion to the Chevalier has never yet been published. It is valuable from many points of view, for it contains, so to speak, several dispositions, which open new horizons with regard to Marie Antoinette's feelings, or else confirm what we already knew of them. Moreover, the people mentioned in it are named by initials or are referred to by facts known only to the Queen and Jarjayes. It seemed at one time that this letter was an enigma, the key of which could not be found. However, thanks to documents which have been published lately, and thanks to the knowledge we now have of that period, the problem is no longer incapable of solution.

This is the text of the letter, a facsimile of the original of which is annexed :—

'T—— [Toulan] will give you the things for ha . . . The stamp I enclose is quite another thing. I wish you would give it to the person who you know came from Brussels last winter to see me ; and at the same time you will tell him that never was the motto more true.

¹ *La Vie de Madame Elisabeth*, by A. de Beauchesne, p. 116.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATION

T... vous rem~~ette~~tra les
chores convenues pour ha...
l'impression que je joins icy
est toute autre chose j'désire
que vous la remettiez à la
personne que vous savez
estre venu me voir de bruxelles
l'hiver dernier, et que vous
lui disiez en même tems, que
la devise n'a jamais été plus
vraie.

Je vous n'ety pas content
de h... des trouver mon neveu
de ma part, vous pourrez
auji si vous voulez voir septemb.

qui est ma ton dit a Londres
depuis le mois d'août et
lui demandes ce que vous
avez payé, & pour nous
si vous en avez besoin. il
connoit ma confiance en
votre femme je pense qu'il
doit vous connoître aussy.
mais si est nécessaire vous
pourriez lui faire voir ceci,
et lui dire ce que vous avez
fait pour nous il nous est
trop attaché pour ne pas en
sentir le prix. au reste je
m'engage a lui faire tenir
compte de ce qu'il vous
remettira et j'en fais même
s'il le faut mon affaire prior.

Dites moi ce que vous pensez de ceci je vous prie

PUBLIC

THE RING AND SEAL OF LOUIS XVI 133

‘If you are not pleased with h . . . go and see my nephew on my behalf. You can also, if you like, see Septeuil, who, I am told, has been in London since August, and, if you require it, ask him for what you have paid for us here. He knows what confidence I have in your wife. I suppose he must know you also, but, if necessary, you may show him this, and tell him what you have done for us. He is too devoted to us not to value it ; besides, I take it upon myself to repay him what he shall give you, and, if necessary, I make it a personal matter.’

In the margin, crosswise, are the words, ‘Tell me what you think of what is going on here.’

Let us see first who was ‘the person who came from Brussels last winter’ to see the Queen. ‘Last winter’ meant the winter of 1792, as this note was written in March, and the winter of the year 1793 was not yet over. Besides, the Queen had been a prisoner at the Temple for the last eight months, and was not able to see any of her old friends save Jarjayes. Who, then, at that time, had come from Brussels to Paris ? The indication given appears at first to be very vague, but consideration soon narrows the circle of research. Since the Queen was sending a stamp with a motto it could only be to someone with whom she was intimate ; and when one recalls the people who were in Marie Antoinette’s intimacy their names are very few.

First on the list comes le Comte de Fersen.

He was really, as will be seen, the addressee of the 'stamp.' But first it is advisable to give some biographical information in regard to this person.

Jean Axel de Fersen was a Swedish gentleman, belonging to a great family. His father sent him abroad at an early age ; he came to France for the first time in 1774. He was at once struck with the beauty and grace of the Princess, who at that time was only Dauphiness. At his second journey, in 1779, he fell in love with the lady who had become Queen of France. His passion was a noble and chivalrous one.

Whether it was to put a stop to backbiting, which credited him with a love-affair with royalty, or whether it was to free himself from a passion which he was afraid would master him, he left soon after to go and join, under Rochambeau's command, the North Americans in their fight against England during the War of Independence.

In the month of June 1783 he returned with the French troops to France, and was made a colonel in the Royal Suédois, still remaining a colonel in his own country. These double duties obliged him to divide his time between France and Sweden. But wherever he went, even in the North, he was reminded of Marie Antoinette, for Gustavus III. was one of her most fervent admirers.

Fersen was at the Queen's side during the October days of 1789, ready to defend her against the rioters.

He it was who prepared the flight from the Tuileries, and who, under the disguise of a cabdriver, drove the Royal Family from the palace to Bondy. There he left them to go to Belgium, where he was grieved to hear of the arrest of the fugitives at Varennes.

From that time he determined that he would do all in his power to save the Queen of France, and entirely devoted himself to this work. From Brussels, where he had settled, he entered into negotiations throughout Europe. He also wrote frequently to Marie Antoinette.

The part he had taken in the flight to Varennes had been divulged, and he had been forbidden to return to France. Yet the grief he felt at not seeing the Queen any more urged him to come back, in spite of the dangers his journey might offer. At first Marie Antoinette refused, then she consented. He entered in his diary under the date of January 21, 1792: 'The Queen has agreed to my going to Paris.'

On the 29th he received another letter, in which she begged him to defer his journey until the decree on passports should have been passed and quietness re-established in Paris. On February 3 she declared that his journey was impossible and he must give it up. Yet he did not obey, and on the 6th he decided to go. On the 11th he disguised himself and started. Travelling under a false name, he arrived in the capital on the 13th. He saw the Queen the same

day, as will be seen from a note in his diary : 'Called on the Queen ; went my usual way ; fright of the National Guards ; not seen the King.'

Afterwards he had long conferences with Louis XVI., as well as with Marie Antoinette, and started on the 21st, at midnight, for Brussels, where he arrived on the 24th. He was stopped on his way several times, and very narrowly escaped being found out.¹

His activity kept pace with the dangers which were increasing in France ; yet this was all in vain, as he met with a good deal of indifference and ill-will. His correspondence with the Queen was interrupted by her imprisonment at the Temple. It is clear that he fully deserved she should remember him.

Through a strange coincidence, he wrote to her, just about the time of her transfer to the Temple, a letter full of advice with regard to her deliverance. This letter did not reach its destination. He knew nothing of the Chevalier's mission, and it was only a little later on that he received the souvenir which Marie Antoinette had sent him.

The second mission consisted in handing over to *ha* . . . 'the things fixed upon.' The two letters were the beginning of the name Hamm, and stood for this town, the residence of Monsieur, Comte de Provence. It was indeed from Hamm, a

¹ *Le Comte de Fersen et la Cour de France*, vol. ii. p. 3 and onwards.

small town in Westphalia, that a few days after January 21 this Prince dated his solemn protest against the Revolution, in which protest he had claimed the Regency for himself, thus disregarding the Queen's rights. This Regency was, however, purely theoretical ; it had no effect save at foreign Courts, and could have no other result than that of effacing Marie Antoinette's personality in the eyes of monarchical Europe ; yet she remained first and foremost in those of revolutionary France.

By the word 'ha' the Queen meant the Comte de Provence as well as her other brother-in-law, the Comte d'Artois. Toulan was to explain those orders *vivâ voce*, and tell the Chevalier that the seal and the hair were for the Comte de Provence, whilst the wedding ring was for the Comte d'Artois.

It was quite natural that the Queen should send these things to the Princes of the Blood, as they were the chiefs next to the captive Louis XVII., and it was also a flattering mark of attention to them.

The letter, however, did not fail to betray fears concerning the reception M. de Jarjayes would receive. 'If you are not pleased with h . . .' the Queen writes a little further on. At this point she recollects that her friends are not the friends of her brother-in-law, and she remembers the differences in regard to her between the King and his brothers.

The Comte de Provence's behaviour had been most reprehensible. He had acted as her worst

enemy. She was aware that if the people hated her, if she was so unpopular, it was due to the calumnies which this backbiting Prince had so wantonly uttered.

Even the Revolution and the misfortunes of the Royal Family had failed to bring back the erring Prince to better feelings; and history has handed down to us the too just grievances of the slandered Queen. As a proof of this it is sufficient to quote some passages of a letter which she wrote on Oct. 31, 1791. 'Monsieur's letter to the Baron [de Breteuil] surprised and greatly offended us, but we must be patient and not show too much ill-temper just now; nevertheless I shall copy it, in order to show it to my sister. I should like very much to know how she will *explain* it in the midst of what is going on. Our house is infernal; we cannot say the least thing, even with the best intentions in the world. . . . I see that Monsieur will be entirely led astray by the ambition of the people around him; at first he thought that he was everything, but whatever he does he will never be prominent. . . . It is most unfortunate that Monsieur did not return at once after our arrest; ¹ he would then have followed the course which he had always said he would of never leaving us.' ²

Moreover, the Princes had made their own cause one with that of emigration, and the emigrants had

¹ At Varennes.

² *Le Comte de Fersen et la Cour de France*, vol. ii. p. 207.

been the greatest source of misfortune for both the King and Queen, who had remained in France. 'The follies of the Princes as well as of the emigrants have forced us to act as we have done,' the Queen wrote on September 26, 1791.¹ 'We still owe this cruel persecution to Coblenz and the emigrants' (November 7).² 'This step [the return of M. de Mercy] would excite still more the emigrants' rage against the Emperor and myself.'³

Not knowing whether the Prince had retained against herself or her envoy any of his old prejudices, she therefore advised the Chevalier, in case he did not receive a suitable reception, to go to her nephew Francis II., who had been made Emperor of Germany in 1792.

But her doubts, which arose from the recollection of too real grievances, which she confided to Jarjays alone, could not prevent the Queen from sending to her husband's brother tokens of an affection which was intensified by misfortunes. It was like a generous pardon that she was sending from her prison to the exile.

The whole Royal Family took advantage of this opportunity, which might be the last, of exchanging a few sad and affectionate remembrances with those who, more fortunate than they, were far away from the storm.

¹ *Le Comte de Fersen et la Cour de France*, vol. ii.

² *Ibid.* p. 213.

³ *Ibid.* p. 268.

The Queen wrote to the Comte de Provence—

‘Having a faithful subject on whom we can depend, I take this opportunity of sending to my brother and friend a packet which can be trusted to no other hands than his. The bearer will tell you by what miracle we were able to recover these precious souvenirs. I reserve to myself the pleasure of telling you one day the name of him who is so useful to us. The impossibility in which we have found ourselves until now of sending you news of ourselves and the excessive misfortunes we have undergone cause us to feel our cruel separation much more keenly. May it not last long ! In the meantime I kiss you as tenderly as I love you, and you know I do so with all my heart.

‘M. A.’

Marie Thérèse also sent a few lines to her uncle, and the young Prince added his signature to the note in a very unskilled hand :—

‘I am charged for my brother and myself to kiss you with all our hearts.

‘M. T., Louis.’

Madame Elisabeth added to the preceding the following note :—

‘I enjoy beforehand the pleasure which you will experience in receiving this token of friendship and confidence. All I wish is to join you and see you

happy. You know how much I love you ; I kiss you with all my heart.'

'E. M.'

The wedding ring, which was intended for the Comte d'Artois, was forwarded to him with the two following letters :—

From the Queen :

'Having found means to entrust our brother with one of the few tokens which remain to us of him whom we all loved, and whose loss we deplore, I thought you would be very glad to have something coming from him. Keep it as a token of my tenderest friendship. I kiss you with all my heart.'

As to Madame Elisabeth, the deep affection which she had for this brother, who was her favourite, fills her letter ; with the most perfect sincerity this admirable Princess, forgetting herself entirely, speaks only of the sufferings she experiences from seeing her relatives unhappy ; she thinks of the future only in order to prepare herself for new acts of devotion.

'How happy I feel, my dear friend, my brother, to be able, after such a long lapse of time, to express my feelings to you. How much I have suffered for you. I trust the time will come when I shall be able to kiss you and tell you that you will never

find a truer or more affectionate friend than I. I hope you do not doubt it ?'¹

She also entrusted the Chevalier with a mission to her eldest sister, Princess Clotilde, who had married the Prince of Piedmont, the son and heir presumptive to the King of Sardinia.

This mission decided Jarjays to leave France for the South, and he prepared to start for Turin in the course of April 1793.

The Chevalier found himself in very reduced circumstances, owing to the enormous sums he had spent in his devotion to the Queen. She had set her heart upon clearing herself of the money debt, wishing only to keep the debt of gratitude, and she advised Jarjays to go to see M. Septeuil, who, in more fortunate times, filled at Court a post of confidence, that of Treasurer of the Civil List, and who, like most of those who had received the greatest kindness from monarchy, had not hesitated to ensure his security by settling abroad.

Madame de Septeuil had been arrested in August 1792, with most of the ladies of the Queen's household. As soon as she was set at liberty—that is, a few weeks later²—her husband

¹ *Mémoires Historiques sur Louis XVII*, by Eckard, pp. 478, 479.

² List of persons who were prisoners at La Force on August 30, 1792 ' . . . Angélique Euphrasie Peignon, wife of M. de Septeuil, aged 21½, sent to this prison to be detained there until further orders. . . . She was set free on September 3' (A. de Beauchesne).

hastened to take her to England, a quieter and safer country.¹

It was very difficult for Jarjays to go to London, especially as the object of his journey necessarily took him in quite a different direction. But he thought of nothing but his duty, and as soon as he had received his last instructions he started.

It was not without a terrible pang that Marie Antoinette saw such a faithful friend go; for she had been in almost daily correspondence with him for the last two months: during those few weeks his existence had been almost one with hers, thanks to the community of their thoughts, their hopes, and their sorrows. She sent the General a very touching farewell, the last line of which betrays the grief of a woman who feels the weight of the misfortunes hanging over her, and anticipates a frightful and implacable destiny.

¹ M. de Septeuil was the cause of one of the worst accusations directed against Louis XVI. During his trial the King was examined on the subject of the monopoly of corn, food, &c. 'Have you not authorised M. Septeuil to start as a corn, sugar, and coffee merchant at Hamburg and in other cities? This fact is proved by letters from Septeuil.' What was proved in reality was the trade carried on by Septeuil, and not the participation nor the authorisation of the King. He was not acquainted with Septeuil's doings. When the latter heard of the charge he wrote from London a letter in which he stated that his purchases had nothing to do with the King, and were entirely confined to the private speculations of a company in which he himself and a few friends of his had invested money. (*Mémoires Particuliers de A. F. de Bertrand-Moleville*, vol. ii. pp. 266 and 372). The accusers refused to believe him.

Toulan could not fail to be the Queen's messenger. It was he who took this last note to Jarjayes :²

‘Good-bye ! I consider that, if you have quite decided to go, the sooner you do so the better. Oh ! how I pity your poor wife ! T—— [Toulan] will tell you of the formal promise I make to give her back to you if it be possible for me to do so.

‘How happy I should be if we could soon meet together again ! I never can be grateful enough for all you have done for us.

‘Good-bye !—this is a cruel word.’

¹ *Le Comte de Fersen et la Cour de France*, vol. ii. p. 408.

CHAPTER III

M. de Jarjays' Departure—M. de Joly—Madame de Jarjays remains in Paris—Dangers which she runs—M. de Jarjays at Turin—The Court of Sardinia—The Emigrants' Talk about the Chevalier—Le Comte de Provence's Message—Surprise of this Prince—Letter of Thanks—The Queen is not informed of the Success of the Mission—Madame Royale's Narrative—Cléry at Blankenberg.

HAVING decided to go, Jarjays had left Paris very suddenly, taking with him only the necessary luggage to go to Turin. A friend of his, M. de Joly, whom he had called to the War Depôt when he was at the head of it, was his only companion on that journey. The Queen had requested that Madame de Jarjays should remain in Paris, that she might have there a sure friend, and be able to maintain communications with the outside, thanks to her and Toulan. The grief of parting with his wife increased Jarjays' sadness at having to leave ; he did so, indeed, with a very anxious mind.

Beyond the Royal Family, concerning whose destiny neither his intellect nor experience allowed him to entertain the slightest delusion, he was frightened at the dangers his wife was running by remaining in Paris.

In fact, Madame de Jarjayes had not been left in ignorance of the projects and attempts made by her husband ; and should the part played both by the Chevalier and Toulan be either divulged or discovered—and this was within the scope of possibility—she would certainly have to endure the reprisals which would not fail to be made upon those who were devoted to the Royal Family. Her situation at Court, her office as lady-in-waiting to the Queen, would be for her the cause of irremediable loss. Events very nearly caused his gloomy forebodings to be realised.

Jarjayes, however, had started, taking with him the dear and precious souvenirs which he was to give to the brothers and sister of Louis XVI. He and his fellow traveller were lucky enough to escape the perils which their route offered : they crossed the whole of France without accident, and reached Piedmont safely towards the middle of April 1793.

The Sardinian Royal Family was allied to the French Royal Family by many marriage bonds : the Comte de Provence had married Marie Joséphine Louise de Savoie ; the Comte d'Artois, her sister, Marie Thérèse de Savoie. In 1777 the Prince of Piedmont, heir to the throne, had married the Princess Clotilde, sister to Louis XVI., the same Princess who was familiarly called Gros-Madame, on account of her stoutness.

The reigning King was Victor Amadeus III.

The scene which took place between him and his people after January 21 shows a very strange state of mind both in the Prince and among his subjects ; it is worth while, for this reason, to relate the episode.

As soon as the King of Sardinia heard of Louis XVI.'s death he showed signs of the deepest grief, lifting up his hands to heaven and saying that if his subjects were desirous of adopting the French laws he was ready to relinquish his throne ; and in his sadness he abdicated there and then. The people, who apparently accept abdications only when they have demanded them, refused that of Victor Amadeus, exclaiming, 'No ! no ! Long live our good King !' At the same time they begged of him that he would resume his power and receive a new oath of fidelity. He agreed, and was carried in triumph to his palace.¹

The Chevalier could only expect a great reception from such a Court. He was, indeed, admirably received at Turin. The news which he brought, the stories he told, struck the King so vividly that he took him into his service and refused to let him go.

M. de Jarjayes, who, as well as his friend M. de Joly, had come to the end of his resources, was glad to find a situation which would enable him to live until better days should come. He accepted the King's offer. He had, however, another mission to

¹ *Mémoires Historiques sur Louis XVII*, by Eckard, p. 418.

fulfil, and, in order to ease the Chevalier's conscience, Victor Amadeus III. undertook to forward to the Comte de Provence through a special envoy the messages of the Temple prisoners.

Beyond the money question, which was not to be disregarded—for it sensibly increased the difficulties to be met with in going from Turin to Hamm—the Chevalier was not at all anxious to see the Comte de Provence personally.

He felt apprehensions with regard to the reception which was in store for him. Jarjayes was then nearly fifty, and during his life—a well employed one up to that day—he had learned to judge men and the world. He was aware that he had made some jealous and others enemies.

He was, indeed, far from being appreciated by all the Royalists as he was by his sovereigns. During the months preceding August 10 he had very often contradicted at the Tuileries the speeches of zealous but short-sighted persons, and he had not concealed from anyone his too reasonable fears. This is why a certain number of people who were shocked at his plain speaking accused him as early as that period of having embraced constitutional principles¹ and joined the enemies of Royal authority.

His persistence in staying in France had been wrongly interpreted by those who had thought fit to cross the frontier, and it had given rise to fresh

¹ *Mémoires de Madame Campan*, vol. ii. p. 128.

calumnies; rumours had spread amongst the emigrants that he had rallied to the revolutionary Government and had even offered his services to it.

These insinuations reached the ears of the Comte de Provence, who, always ready to listen to what his *entourage* said, naturally believed them. The General's misgivings were, therefore, not groundless, and he willingly handed over the seal and letters to a courier who took them to Hamm.

Great was the Comte de Provence's surprise at receiving such souvenirs, and through Jarjays! He then acknowledged how wrong he had been and manifested deep regret at having listened to the evil and unfounded talk concerning the Chevalier, and representing as a traitor the Queen's confidant and messenger. In the letter of thanks which he sent him on this occasion he spoke openly of it.

We give here a facsimile and translation of this letter, which has never yet been published in full:—

‘Hamm: May 14, 1793.

‘SIR,—Your letter has given me untold pleasure, but before speaking of this I must make a confession. My surprise equalled my sorrow when I saw your name on the list of general officers of the so-called Republic; and, as men can only judge from appearances, it is not possible for me to conceal from you that you had lost my esteem. But I acknowledge my error with real

pleasure. How well you have revenged yourself on me, and how much I admire and esteem you for it! The name of Pélisson is uttered with respect, but when it becomes possible to know, as I hope may be the case, the full extent of your devotion, your name will be on every lip. But I have dwelt long enough on your glory, and I must now speak of my gratitude. You have brought me the most precious thing I possess in this world, and the only true consolation I have had since misfortune befell us. I only want now to find the means of telling those who are dearer to me than my own life, and from whom you have brought me news, how much I love them and with what deep and sweet feelings their letters and other tokens of their friendship and confidence have filled my heart. Yet I cannot hope to experience such a joy, though I am certain that if you knew of any means of doing so you would inform me of it. I should have liked to see you, to tell you of my gratitude, to talk with you of them and of the most minute details of the services you have rendered them. I can only approve of your reasons for staying in Piedmont. Continue to serve there your young and miserable King as you have served the brother whose death I shall deplore all my life. Tell M. de Joly from me how pleased I am with his behaviour, and rely, both of you, upon me for ever.

‘LOUIS STANISLAS XAVIER.’

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR LENOX
TILDEN FOUNDATION

A Hampton le 14 Mai 1793.

Votre lettre, Monsieur, m'a causé un plaisir indicible, mais avant
de vous en parler, je vous dirai un aveu. J'ai vu avec autant de
surprise que de peine, votre nom sur la liste des Officiers-généraux de
la soi-disant République et comme les hommes ne peuvent juger que
sur les apparences, je ne puis pas vous cacher que vous avez perdu mon
estime. Mais avec quel plaisir je reconnais mon erreur? comme vous vous
êtes vengé de moi? combien je vous estime, combien je vous admire? On
ne prononce qu'avec respect le nom de Sciffon, mais quand on pourra
comme je l'espère, connaître toute l'étendue de votre dévouement, on ne
parlera plus que de vous. Mais il est assez parler de votre gloire, il faut
vous entretenir de ma reconnaissance. Vous m'avez procuré le bien le
plus précieux que j'aie au monde, la seule véritable consolation que
j'aie éprouvée depuis nos malheurs. Il ne me manque que le moyen
de témoigner moi-même aux êtres plus chers que moi-même, dont vous
me avez donné des nouvelles, combien je les aime, combien leur bien,

ce l'autre gage de leur amitié, de leur confiance, ont pénétré mon
cœur de ce plus doux sentiment. Mais je ne puis pas me flatter de tant
de bonheur et je suis bien sûr que si vous teniez conseil, un moyen, me
me l'indiquer. J'aurais désiré vous voir, vous parler de ma
reconnaissance, m'entretenir avec vous d'une, des moindres détails des
services que vous leur avez rendus, mais je ne puis qu'approuver les
raisons qui vous font rester en Picéme. Continuer à y servir notre
jeune et malheureux Roi, comme vous vous avez servi le frère que je
plaurerai toute ma vie. Dites de ma part à M. de Jolly combien je suis
satis fait de sa conduite et comptez tous les vœux à jamais sur moi.

Louis Stanislas Xavier.

Jarjays had, therefore, succeeded in his mission in every respect. It would have been a consolation for the Queen to know that the objects which she was so desirous should one day be in her son's hands were in safety. This satisfaction was not given to her. It was even a long time before Marie Thérèse knew of it herself, for she wrote that 'the persons who had taken them did so with good intentions . . . that this brave man died later, not on account of this affair, but for another good action. . . .' And she adds, 'I cannot mention his name, though I hope that he may have been able to entrust someone with these objects before he perished.'¹

In his 'Journal du Temple'² Cléry relates on this subject a scene which is not without grandeur. He had left Vienna for England. He passed through Blankenberg, intending respectfully to present his manuscript to King Louis XVIII. When the Prince came to the part of the diary speaking of the jewels left by Louis XVI. he looked into his writing desk, and showing with emotion a seal—'Do you recognise it, Cléry?' he said.

'Ah, sire, it is the same one!' exclaimed Cléry.

'If you have any doubt,' the King replied, 'read this note.'

Trembling, Cléry read the note written by the Queen—'Having a faithful creature . . .' He

¹ *Récits des Evénements arrivés au Temple*, p. 33.

² *Ibid.* p. 134.

could no longer doubt. His astonishment was great, for everything tended to induce the belief that this precious token had been either burnt or melted on April 23, 1793, at the same time as the ribbons, crosses, decorations, and various gold and silver jewels found by the commissioners of the Commune when they searched the apartment of the late King.¹ And it was on January 21, 1797, that Cléry found in Louis XVIII.'s hands that symbol of royalty which Louis XVI. had meant to keep for his son !

.

Thus all the efforts which had been made to save the Royal Family from the Commune had, through a series of mishaps and fatalities, resulted in nothing but keeping the last souvenirs of Louis XVI. in the hands of the Bourbon family.

But besides this material result, so slight in comparison with the greatness of the enterprise, it would not be just to pass over the moral result in silence, and to deprive the intrepid accomplices of such a daring project of the merit of having watched over the Queen prisoner with brave and active fidelity.

Was it nothing for Marie Antoinette to see Toulan and Jarjays 'fall at her knees and offer her, in the shadow of her cell, a devotion which the place, peril, and coming death elevated above all the

¹ *Mémoires Historiques sur Louis XVII*, by Eckard, p. 153.

THE RING AND SEAL OF LOUIS XVI 153

devotion that was showered on her at the time of her prosperity' ?¹

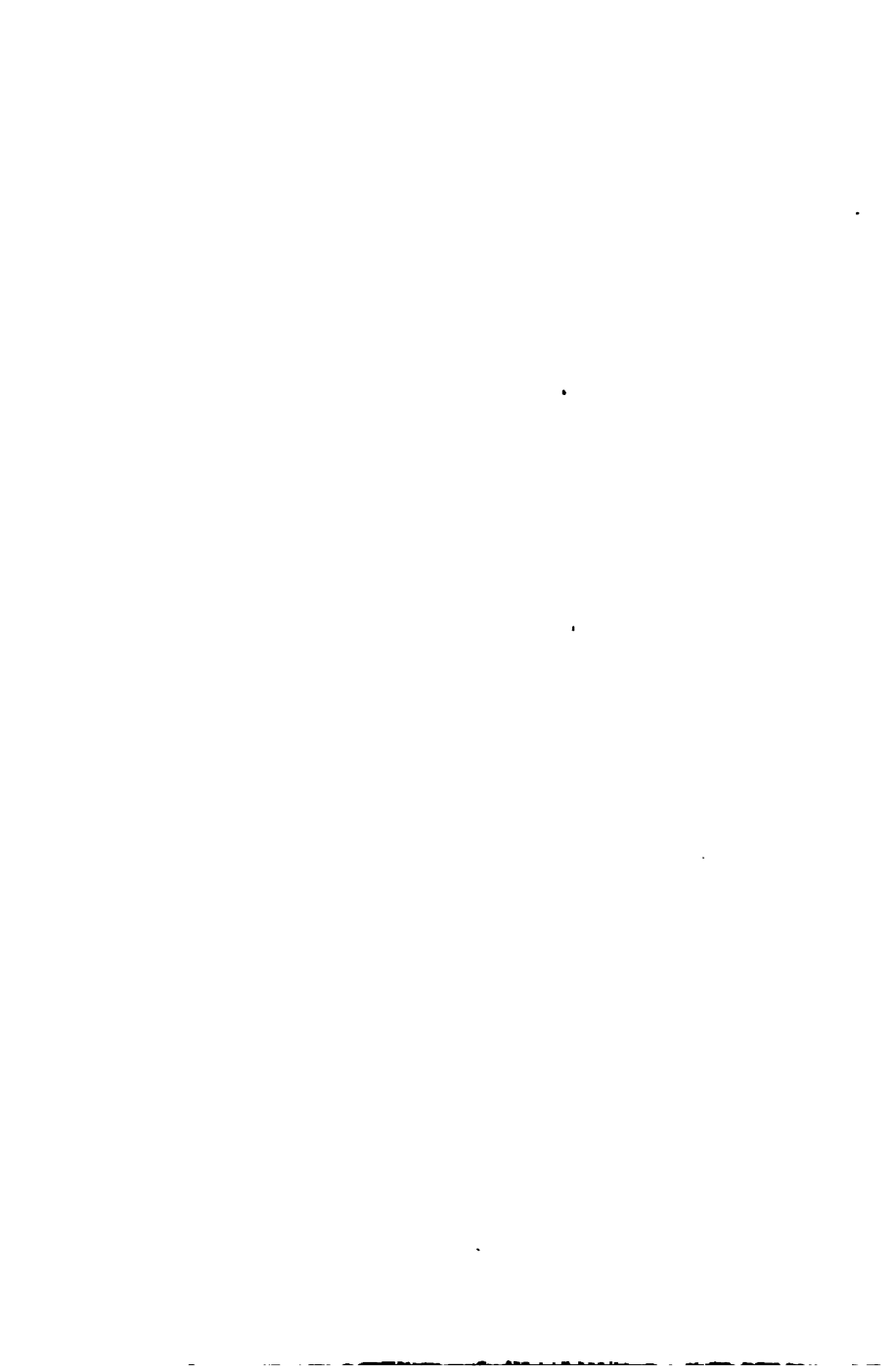
Then, was it nothing to give her for six weeks the hope of being soon released, to draw her away for a time from her trials and grief, and to procure her the final joy of knowing that she had near her a few real friends ?

When the prison door closed behind her, never to be opened until she should be handed over to the revolutionary tribunal—which meant certain death—was it nothing to have given her, even for a short time, the delusion that she might be saved from it ?

True, it was a dream ! But Marie Antoinette, who knew what dreams were, herself said that it was a beautiful one. Besides, who can say that the bravery of those two men, Toulan and Jarjays, has been useless, since in this case it has shown to posterity what an energetic woman, what a devoted mother was the last Queen of France ?²

¹ Lamartine, *Histoire des Girondins*, vol. iv. p. 334.

² M. de Jarjays had made for Louis XVI.'s brothers a report upon these episodes. The report and the originals of a few—by no means *all*, as says M. Feuillet de Conches—of Marie Antoinette's letters came by inheritance to the Baron Zangiacomi, councillor at the Cour de Cassation. In 1871 the Commune ordered a search to be made at his house. The various documents were seized, with many other rare and precious papers, and taken to the Palais de Justice ; but they disappeared in the fire which destroyed that building. The letters which are reproduced in facsimile in this volume are all that remain.



PART IV

**CONSEQUENCES OF THE
CONSPIRACY**

CHAPTER I

Suspicious—Arthur's First Denunciation—Lepitre's and Toulan's
Justification—They are removed from Duty at the Temple—
The Tisons give Information—Search at the Prisoners'—
Toulan's Hat—Madness of the Woman Tison.

'You are a traitor, and you will be guillotined!' a knitting woman said one day to Toulan. Although the thing was said in joke Toulan, in spite of his usual self-control, felt somewhat put out of countenance at this prophecy on the part of one of the people.

Fear increased the anger of that crowd which rushed to liberty through blood and tears; for, since the terrible events which had threatened the Republic with the worst of dangers, revolt had broken out in La Vendée, and the foreign troops had been successful; while Dumouriez was the third commander who had passed over to the enemy, thus following Bouillé and La Fayette.

Anger took the form which it always assumes with the ignorant; it was suspicious, wicked, ready for any cruelty. Everybody mistrusted everyone else, and the fear of being betrayed made people see traitors everywhere. The usual accusation in those days was simply that of treason; it was not necessary to be convicted of being a traitor, not even

to be guilty of treason ; to be a victim it was sufficient to be suspected.

However clever Toulan might be, whatever prudence Lepître might display, it was not possible but that in the long run their conduct should arouse the suspicion of their colleagues or of the servants who had been placed at the Temple to watch them. Besides, it must be said that the most dangerous of the spies was not one from whom it was easy to hide things. It was the poor little Prince, in whom misfortune had developed a habit of observation, without giving his intellect discernment equal to this habit. He knew who were the municipal officers who were favourable to his mother. How could he be prevented from speaking about them or taught not to show his knowledge ? His childish nature was incapable of such dissimulation.

A few commissioners who were on the alert, either through vague indications or from natural instinct, spied upon Toulan and Lepître with jealous care, for they had suffered in their pride from the ill-disguised disdain which the vain Professor showed towards uneducated people who did not know Latin, as well as from the railleries of the caustic Gascon. And the fierce levellers could not forgive such moral superiority.

They watched the two municipal officers carefully, and soon discovered that both were almost always on duty at the Temple on the same days ; moreover,

they listened to various rumours which were beginning to spread here and there. Was it not said that Toulan had received from the Queen a gold box?—that his wife had spoken of it to his clerks, and had even shown it to them? The clerks were repeating it to everybody and to anybody.

It required no more than this to set people talking. On March 26 Arthur—a wealthy wall-paper manufacturer, well known for his revolutionary fanaticism—who had become famous on August 10 for having eaten the heart of a Swiss Guard whom he had murdered on the Tuileries steps, denounced his colleagues for having intercourse with the Temple prisoners. He charged Lepître with having mysterious familiar conversations with Marie Antoinette, and accused Toulan of making her and her family laugh at jokes which were degrading to the dignity of a magistrate of the people.¹ These were the only charges that could be brought against them.

They would have been sufficient to ruin them if Hébert had been in one of his bloodthirsty fits when he heard of them. Fortunately the Deputy Attorney-General of the Commune was in a good humour at the time. He sent for the culprits, and questioned them kindly. Lepître denied everything, and Toulan laughed in his face. Convinced for the time, Hébert let the matter drop.

The schoolmaster, reassured as to his fate, and

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepître, p. 52.

wishing to get over his emotion, spent the evening of the 27th at the Théâtre du Vaudeville. He was proud to show himself in public in a velvet coat; and in an offhand way, and without looking as if he attached any importance to it, he managed to inform his neighbours that he was a member of the Commune.¹ That evening they were playing the 'Chaste Suzanne,' a play which was a great success, and which the Government, out of a strange condescension, quite opposed to all its other acts, had allowed to be given, although it contained the sentence: 'You are his accusers; you cannot be his judges'—an echo of Louis XVI.'s trial. Lepître tells us that the hall was crowded with spectators who applauded furiously.

This was a strange proof of the quick but flighty, fierce and yet kind, cruel and yet good nature of a people who in the morning went to see someone guillotined, fought at the door of the bakers' shops for bread during the day, used its guns to make or put down a riot, and in the evening must go to the theatre and enjoy itself in spite of all.

Nevertheless, the issue of Arthur's denunciation had fully satisfied none but the two accused people, and the prejudice against them was as great as ever in the Council of the Commune. But Toulan and Lepître did not care, and, brazening it out, they had their names put on the list of commissioners

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepître, p. 54.

to the Temple for Easter Day. This roused the anger, nay, the fury of real patriots. Such a scandal must be put down. Lèchenard, a tailor by trade and a drunkard by profession, carried the Council with him and had the appointments cancelled.

This was only a childish game and a preliminary amusement. Clouds were gathering, and soon the storm would break. They were not to be punished alone ; the Queen also must suffer. The Council had the means in their own hands ; they had only to prevent Tison from seeing his daughter. He began to grumble. One evening he saw a man entering the Temple for some duty or other. He got into a passion at seeing a stranger going inside the Temple when his own child was not allowed to enter. He thought that the watch over the prisoners was too exacting, and he used strong language when speaking of it. What he said was at once repeated to Pache, the Mayor of Paris, who was downstairs, as if by chance. He thought it worth while to question Tison, and sent for him.

‘What are you complaining of?’ he asked.

‘Of not seeing my daughter,’ Tison answered ; ‘and also that some of the municipal officers do not behave as they ought.’

‘What do they do?’

‘They whisper to the prisoners and enable them to correspond with the outside world.’

‘And those municipal officers—their names?’

‘Toulan, Lepître.’

Asked to give a proof of what he was saying, he stated that one evening at supper Marie Antoinette, pulling out her handkerchief, let a pencil fall ; another time he had found wafers and a pen in a box in Madame Elisabeth’s room.

Whilst he was talking someone was writing ; and when he had finished he was asked to sign his denunciation. His wife was next called. Frightened, she confirmed all that her husband had said ; she added also that the Royal Family were informed by Toulan and Lepître especially of all that happened ; that they brought the newspapers, gave them the means to correspond by bringing letters and taking the answers ; that they were constantly in the Queen’s room, sitting near the prisoners, and talking freely with them. In a word, she told all that she had been able to see and all that she had suspected.¹

This scene took place on April 19. The Tisons saw their child on the following day.

And on the same day, just as the Queen and Marie Thérèse had gone to bed, Hébert came with several municipal officers. They at once got up, and an order of the Commune was read to them, in which the municipal officers were directed to make a search according to their discretion—which they did, even examining the mattresses.

¹ *Récits des Evénements arrivés au Temple*, p. 35 et seqq. ; *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepître, p. 56.

They took from the Queen the address of a shopkeeper which she had kept ; from Marie Thérèse they took a Sacred Heart of Jesus and a prayer for France. In Madame Elisabeth's room they found some sealing-wax and a hat ; they carried both away. The results were small for so much work. At last, at two o'clock in the morning, the municipal officers made up their minds to retire. They were furious.

Three days later they came back and had Madame Elisabeth brought downstairs. The hat which had been found in her room was puzzling to them. They questioned the Princess, asking her where it came from, how long she had had it, and why she kept it. She answered that it had belonged to her brother, and that she was keeping it as a remembrance of him.

They did not know what to think of the answer. They were certainly not convinced, as, so far as they could recollect, Louis XVI. had only one hat—the one he put on to go to the gallows.

The municipal officers were certainly right in being suspicious, for the hat which they had found under Madame Elisabeth's bed had never belonged to her brother, but was the one which Toulan had left one day, that it might be used by the Princess to disguise herself as a municipal officer when the plan was made for flight.

The denunciation did not answer its purpose.

Toulan and Lepître were perhaps a little more suspected than before, yet there had been no serious proof brought against them. Therefore no steps were taken against them, save that, out of prudence, they were henceforth removed from duty at the Temple; but they kept all their other duties as members of the Commune.

The first victim of this machination was the principal accomplice in it; for one day a short time afterwards the woman Tison began to chatter to herself.

The young Marie Thérèse laughed; and her mother and aunt looked at her complacently, as if her laugh did them good. But the woman Tison went on talking: she spoke aloud of her wickedness, of denunciation, of prison, the scaffold, the Queen, the Royal Family, and their misfortunes. Finally she threw herself at the Queen's feet and implored mercy.

The Queen raised her, endeavouring to calm her, but in vain. The unfortunate woman was mad.

As she had not seen the municipal officers whom she had accused return to the Temple, she thought they might have perished on the scaffold. She spent her days waiting for news, and at night she had horrible dreams. She had at last to be taken away and carried to the Hôtel-Dieu, where she died not long afterwards.¹

¹ *Récit des Evénements arrivés au Temple*, p. 42 et seqq.

CHAPTER II

Toulan in the Precincts of the Temple—Signals agreed upon—Correspondence through Turgy's Intervention—Note from Madame Elisabeth—'Produce'—Political Agitation—The Committee of Twelve—Opposition of the Commune—Petition against the Girondins—Lepître refuses to Sign—Toulan signs—Insurrection on May 31 and June 2—Toulan goes into the Suburbs—Attempt of the Baron de Batz unknown to Toulan.

AFTER their unsuccessful attempt to re-enter the Temple on Easter Day, after the kind of ostracism to which they had been sentenced by their colleagues, Toulan and Lepître realised that they had better submit in order to avoid a grave responsibility; for the Revolutionary Tribunal was already in existence, and it was as by a miracle that they had escaped it.

Lepître resigned himself to giving up the fine plans which his fertile imagination had formed, and with a wealth of recollections he resumed his usual work, whilst he attended regularly the meetings of the Commune.

Passive resignation was not one of Toulan's qualities. He took no notice of the decisions the Commune had come to with regard to himself, and he swore that in spite of all he would continue

his relations with the prisoners of the Temple. He did as he had decided.

He rented a room close to the prison, as near as he could to the main tower ; and, as he had kept up his acquaintance with Turgy, he began at once to correspond through him with the Queen and Madame Elisabeth.

The latter, being less closely watched than her sister-in-law, principally carried on the correspondence, sometimes writing direct to Toulan, sometimes sending *vivâ voce* messages through Turgy. Of course, more than ever made-up names were used, and 'Fidèle' often recurs. It was thus that the prisoners still had news from the outside.

The following is one of the letters which we owe to Turgy :—

'After supper, go to Fidèle and ask him if he has news of Produze' ('Produze' stood for the Prince de Condé). 'If he has good news, the napkin will be under the right arm ; if he has none, under the left arm. Tell him that we are afraid the accusation may have caused him annoyance. Ask him to let you know when he hears from Produze ; you will communicate with us by the signals agreed upon.'¹

But such communications were too slow for Toulan's taste. Turgy could not go out as often as was necessary ; and, besides, in a case of urgency, either of a serious event or of unexpected news,

¹ *Fragments*, by Turgy, pp. 364, 365.

how could they correspond quickly enough? The intrepid Gascon found a better way. He would contrive to play on the horn: each tune was to have a special meaning which was agreed upon with the prisoners. Thus he could from his room give prompt advice to the Temple prisoners. With incredible audacity, and in spite of the dangers which it presented, he made frequent use of this strange means of communication.

The times made it necessary. Never has a more troubled and diversified epoch been found in French history.

At the same time came a troop of emigrants upon the eastern frontier, foreign armies upon all the others, risings in La Vendée, in the Cevennes, in Lyons, Marseilles, even in Paris, where, besides the Royalists who remained in concealment, there was rivalry between the Convention and the Commune, whilst in the Convention itself there was the struggle between the 'Girondins' and the 'Montagnards.'

As happens to political parties, who are always more inclined to reproach themselves with their misfortunes than with their faults, Montagne and Gironde accused each other of being the cause of France's disasters, after which each proposed remedies, some violent, some mild, but all useless.

In the frightful fights which often changed the House which sat in the Tuileries from May 10 into a gladiators' arena, the most atrocious accusations

were exchanged ; the Montagnards accused the Right of compounding with La Vendée, whilst the Girondins replied, more truly indeed, that the Left agreed with the Commune.

The only point on which they were unanimous was the election of a commission, composed of twelve members, whose duty was to examine the Commune's deeds and to enquire into the plots concocted against the national representation (May 18). Each of the two parties expected to gain the victory in the election of the twelve commissioners.

The Gironde won the day. The Commune, feeling its existence threatened, began the struggle at once. It commenced its resistance by coming to the Convention and demanding justice from the commission of twelve members which had ordered Hébert's arrest ; and in order to compel the representatives of the people to yield, it sent to the different sections a petition for Hébert's release and the suppression of the 'Twelve.' It invited all the patriots to sign it.

They stopped at no stratagems in order to collect the largest number of adhesions, and Lepître had a narrow escape from falling a victim to them. Without anybody having been warned of it, for the presence-sheet, which usually lay on the Council's table, another was substituted, bearing the heading 'Names of those who adhere to the Address to the Girondins.' The schoolmaster, having come rather late to the

meeting, wrote his name on this last sheet without looking at the superscription.

A colleague having told him of the error he had committed, he hastened to go to erase his name. On this being discovered the following day there was quite a commotion. Then with real courage, quite uncommon to him, as in other circumstances he had not shown as much, Lepître explained his mistake and kept to his decision. Vainly did they blame him, calling him 'a coward and a liar'; he persisted in his refusal to sign the petition.¹

Toulan made no difficulty and signed the petition boldly.

What can have been Toulan's motive in so doing? At first sight his action is in perfect contradiction to his conduct and his newly assumed manners. We cannot admit that just as Lepître was getting brave Toulan was turning a coward; the past as well as the future life of the Gascon are contrary to such a supposition. To credit him with the Machiavellian intention of exciting disorder and confusion, of aiding in throwing the parties into dispute with each other, and of creating a new attempt to secure the safety of the Queen under the cover of such disturbances, would be, in our opinion, to greatly overrate the part that Toulan could aspire to fill. That would be to ignore his practical intelligence and clear-sightedness, especially with regard to the difficulty

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, pp. 58, 59.

that then existed in ensuring the Queen's safety. We may still more readily discard the opinion that by pursuing the Girondins he was beginning to exercise vengeance against the King's murderers. Toulan had never been actively devoted to Louis XVI. The man of the Tenth of August was not bent on avenging in so indirect and so carefully studied a manner, if we may use these words, the 21st of January.

But what is possible is that by making such a show of his patriotism Toulan may have thought that he would thus efface the last vestige of the charges brought against him; he would regain his good name of zealous revolutionary, and thus be allowed to resume at the Temple and near the prisoners the situation which he had lost through his imprudence and the denunciations. This would have been neither against his nature nor his inclination to mockery, he who was so clever at dissimulating. We must, however, recollect that the Commune had its suspects, and such a qualification could never be annulled. Toulan was far too keen-sighted to fancy that he would so easily bring back and convince men like Arthur, Lèchenard, and the majority of his colleagues, who were not less suspicious than the former.

But if one thinks it well over, the most plausible and the simplest hypothesis is that the Gascon had remained a true republican, in spite of his devotion to a woman and his active sympathy for her mis-

fortunes. On this occasion the Gascon found in himself the old Jacobite germ which had been dormant ; and in a case where Marie Antoinette's life was not at stake, when his heart had not to fight against his opinions, he was once more what he had always been, the republican patriot who would not accept the Girondins, the men who caused the disintegration of France, and who persecuted in them the enemies of the Republic one and indivisible.

What tends to confirm this opinion is that not only did Toulan' sign the petition, but he agreed to go with several of his colleagues to the outskirts of Paris, with a view to asking the neighbouring communes to join the Paris municipality, so as to be united as one, with one and the same opinion—thus being capable of breaking every resistance. He fulfilled this mission zealously, and was able later to appeal to the testimony of his colleagues.¹

After two riotous days, May 31 and June 2, the Convention, invaded by the people, yielded to force. The 'Montagne' decided upon the arrest of two ministers and thirty-one members belonging to the Gironde party or favourable to its notions. The Commune had carried the day.

If Toulan thought that his strong revolutionary attitude would bring back to him the goodwill of his colleagues he made a great mistake, for, in spite of its victory, the Commune did not in the least

¹ National Record Office, W 400, No. 927.

forget the past, and did not restore to him its confidence; so that while attending its deliberations he had to go back to his horn in order to communicate with the Temple.

It was about the same time that a second attempt was made to save Marie Antoinette. This attempt was mysterious in every way—in its conception, its execution, and still more in the bad luck which caused it to fail. The Baron de Batz, the municipal officer Michonis, and the grocer Cortey were the principal actors in it. Toulan was not connected with it. It even seems that he only heard a few weeks later of the devotion of Michonis to the Queen.

CHAPTER III

Prophecies—'Mirabilis Liber'—Louis XVII. parted from his Mother—Toulan informed of Everything through Letters from Madame Elisabeth—Official Attempt at Release—Maret and Semonville—Austria's Policy—M. de Thugut—Arrest of Plenipotentiaries—Popular Exasperation—Reverses in La Vendée—Mayence and Valenciennes surrender—Scarcity of Food—The Committee of Public Safety is renewed—Marie Antoinette, sent before the Revolutionary Tribunal, is taken to the Conciergerie—Toulan and Michonis—The Chevalier de Rougeville—Re-election of the Commune Council—Neither Toulan nor Lepître is re-elected.

THE masses have an innate taste for the supernatural. In times of calamity they dream of infinite happiness; and in days of oppression, of marvellous deliverance. This, of course, is in perfect agreement with that double sentiment on one side of hope, and on the other of powerlessness, where one has to look to one's own efforts alone for the realisation of that hope.

In that particular year, 1793, credulous minds—and they were numerous—did not fail to follow tradition. It was then that a so-called prophecy was circulated which was attributed—without any ground, however—to St. Césaire, Bishop of Arles, and mingled with many other visions in a collection

called 'Mirabilis Liber.' This incomprehensible nonsense, published at the beginning of the sixteenth century, brought to the National Library a crowd of inquirers who sought in it for predictions which might apply to the principal events of the French Revolution. It was not a difficult matter, for, like all similar books, this was written in bad Latin, and with the want of precision and vague wording which characterise prophetic language. It was possible to interpret the predictions in many ways, so that in reality the prophecy was not so much the prophet's as his translator's.

In the text of the 'Mirabilis Liber' was the following sentence: 'Juvenis captivatus qui recuperabit coronam Lili . . . fundatus, destruet filios Bruti,' which may be translated thus: 'The young captive who shall recover the Lily crown, once on the throne, will destroy the sons of Brutus.' It was explained as follows: Young Louis XVII. will one day ascend his father's throne, and will then destroy revolution and revolutionaries.

This belief was beginning to spread, so that many people, frightened by the horrors of the Revolution, drew new hope from the thought of the victory which St. Césaire had predicted to the 'juvenis captivatus,' when the Committee of Public Safety thought it necessary to bar the way to such a movement of opinion by using violence in order to fight against the prophecy. It issued the following

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY 175

decree : 'The Committee of Public Safety orders that Capet's son shall be separated from his mother.'

And, as the 'sons of Brutus' had the law, if not the prophets, on their side, the decision was made known to the Queen by the municipal officers on duty on July 3. It was ten o'clock at night, and the child was in bed. On hearing the very first word the Queen rushed to the little bed and made a rampart of her arms to protect him against those who had come to carry him off. They command, she weeps ; they threaten, she rebels. They have recourse to violence. 'Kill me ! kill me, at any rate, first !' she cried.

At last, after an hour's struggle, violence was triumphant and a mother's love was defeated. The boy King was taken from her to be placed in charge of Simon. The 'Mirabilis Liber' had seemed only to add to the grief of Marie Antoinette : it caused her intense sorrow, which it had not foreseen.

Yet this was not all : the Commune was now on the alert, and it ordered the surrounding wall to be raised, bolts to be added to the doors, and blinds to be put up at the windows. It was as much as the mother could do to see her son a few minutes each day through a narrow crack in the woodwork of the tower platform, or through a window in the wardrobe staircase.

These sights were her only joy and comfort in her

trials. But she wished to share them with her friends, and, as Toulan had remained one of the most faithful, she was anxious that he should be informed.

‘Give this note to Fidèle from us,’ Madame Elisabeth wrote to Turgu. ‘Tell him, “My sister wished that you should know that every day we see the little one through the wardrobe staircase window, but do not let this prevent you giving us news of him.”’¹

This recommendation was soon to be changed into a contrary order. In proportion as Simon tortured the child, Madame Elisabeth endeavoured to save her sister this increase of grief, and it was she who asked all around to keep silence on the kind of education which the shoemaker, who had become the Prince’s tutor, was giving him. Marie Antoinette knew or suspected quite enough.

The prisoners were now trying to learn what was going on outside. Both the rising in La Vendée and the march of the allied troops gave them hopes. But it was difficult to keep the Princesses informed, as events succeeded each other rapidly and constantly brought new personages to light.

‘A letter for Fidèle. Where is that gentleman in command? When you mention a new name to me tell me where its owner lives, for I do not know a single one of those gentlemen . . .’ Madame Elisabeth wrote to Turgu.²

¹ *Fragments*, by Turgu, p. 374.

² *Ibid.* p. 375.

A few days later she asked him to thank Toulan.

‘Tell Fidèle how grateful we are for his last note. We did not require that assurance for us always and surely to rely upon him. The signals are good ; we shall say, “To arms, citizens !” only in case they should be thinking of bringing us together, but we are very much afraid such precautions will not be necessary.’¹

Although the situation of the Queen and the other Temple prisoners appeared at that time to be more than dangerous, if not irremediable, it is none the less true that in this same month of July, had the Austrian Court wished it, Marie Antoinette could have been saved.

This point, which for a long time was an obscure one, has now been cleared up, owing to the discovery of most important documents—upon which a few words may now be said.

Whilst the Commune was raging against its victims, those at the head of the revolutionary agitation were somewhat uneasy about the future destinies of France and the Republic, as well as about their own fate. Beyond the feeling of humanity which urged these men—who were not so cruel or not so blind as others—to spare what remained of the Royal Family, there was also a powerful political motive for showing mercy.

¹ *Fragments*, by Turgy, p. 375.

This was the only way to retain the last allies of the French Republic, to enable it to obtain an honourable peace, and even perhaps to save it from destruction. According to them, Europe was fighting merely to release the Queen, and should she be spared it would lay down its arms and allow France to complete and strengthen the conquests of the Revolution.

Many people thought so. Hence the projects, most of which were barely outlined, but which were tokens of solicitude for Marie Antoinette, though they were unfortunately without result.

Did Danton really wish to save Marie Antoinette and to redeem by that act of generosity and of good policy his guilty compliance? If we are to believe the son of the member of the Convention Courtois, this idea occurred to his father, and Danton shared it. Both dreamed of helping the Queen to escape. That may have been the case, though it seems improbable. At any rate, we have no other proof than Courtois' statement.

What is much more serious is an almost official attempt made in 1793, and about which a man who had been officially mixed up with it, and who played an important part in it, has left some memoirs which allow of no doubt. That man was Maret, the same whom later on Napoleon created Duc de Bassano, and who became Minister of War and of Foreign Affairs.

This is his testimony :—

‘The Revolution was taking a cruel turn, yet there were still men in power who were not deluded concerning the future: they were frightened at it and were capable of devoting themselves to attempt to save whatever was still worth rescuing of the great wreck. The wisest part of the Government came to an agreement to forward a Note to the only Powers who were still the allies of the Republic. These were Venice, Florence, and Naples. The republicans did not care to be disowned by the whole world. They felt sure that if the three States above mentioned made the safety of the Queen and her family a condition of the maintenance of their alliance they would not get a refusal. The plan was arranged, the instructions were given, and I was commissioned to execute them. . . . M. de Semonville was asked to take part with me in the negotiations, which were to begin with Venice and Florence, and finish with Naples. . . . I met M. de Semonville at Geneva. . . .’

But the missions of the two plenipotentiaries interfered too much with the secret plans of the Austrian Court. Once before, when it had been proposed to exchange the Royal Family for the four members of the Convention who had been handed over by Dumouriez to the Prince of Coburg, Austrian diplomacy had managed to leave those propositions

unanswered,¹ and again Marie Antoinette's life came after the interests of the Austrian Court. More than that, it was bent on taking advantage of the Princess's misfortune in order to satisfy its desire to conquer part of France; M. de Thugut was afraid that if the Queen and Louis XVII. were released it would be injurious to his policy. Indeed, how could he rob them of the finest provinces in their kingdom if their lives were saved?

In defiance of the *droit des gens* he had Maret and Semonville arrested at Novale, on the neutral ground of the Grisons. They were taken to the prison of Gravedona, and thence to Mantua, where they arrived on July 24, 1793, at six o'clock in the morning.

Their captivity lasted until 1795. At that time the Queen, Madame Elisabeth, and the young King were dead. Their liberty could no longer injure the policy of Francis II. and his minister M. de Thugut.

This lost opportunity never presented itself again. And soon the worst reverses were added to the insult which had been offered to France in the persons of her envoys. These reverses brought the universal exasperation to a climax.

Each day brought its share of bad news: the La Vendée irregulars had forced the republicans to recross the Loire on July 17. A week later, on July 25,

¹ *Le Comte de Fersen et la Cour de France*, vol. ii. pp. 71-75.

Mayence surrendered. Valenciennes capitulated on the 28th ; lastly, the most frightful famine and complete misery reigned throughout France, and in Paris above all. The *assignats* (paper money) had fallen to a sixth of their nominal value.

The Revolution did not give way under repeated blows. It resolved to make a supreme effort which might save it, and, as usual, it had recourse to terror.

On August 4 Barère came to the tribune of the Convention and made a report on the conjunction of the whole of Europe against French liberties : one of the conclusions of this report was that Marie Antoinette should be tried by the Revolutionary Tribunal.

This measure having been voted by the Convention, it was immediately adopted by the Commune itself, and the very next day, August 2, the Queen was taken to the Conciergerie, 'that ante-chamber of death.'

The cries of despair with which she had manifested her grief when she was parted from her son were not renewed in the case of this last outrage. Her heart was broken.

She was also very ill, and this is thoroughly proved by statements which reliable witnesses have left. Her moral strength survived her failing health ; yet she was sombre and silent.

After Madame Elisabeth and Marie Thérèse

were left alone at the Temple, confined on a floor higher than the one where Louis XVII. was imprisoned, they endeavoured to obtain news of the Queen. They could ask no one but Toulan.

They were obliged now to inform him of the secret feelings of one—his colleague Michonis—who was quite as brave as Toulan himself, as devoted, if not more so, and as clever and self-controlled.

This municipal officer, who had already attempted once to save the Queen, and who until that day had been able to avoid being suspected, was frequently on duty at the Temple, where he was able to go almost daily without exciting suspicion, as his patriotism was not only well known but fully established and unquestioned.

His faithfulness was a guarantee to Madame Elisabeth that the Queen would not suffer too severe treatment at the Conciergerie. Her only anxiety was, then, to ascertain whether coarse or hostile colleagues might not prevent him from giving free course to his feelings of pity and compassion.

She wrote to Turgu—

‘. . . As for Fidèle, ask him if Michonis sees my sister, and if she has no other warder than Michonis.’¹

¹ *Fragments*, by Turgu, p. 376.

Toulan reassured Madame Elisabeth as far as the situation enabled him to do so.

In reality Michonis, in spite of his remarkable zeal, could do nothing openly in favour of the Queen ; as to try to save Marie Antoinette from the death which was in store for her, by favouring her escape, was an attempt far more difficult, far more hazardous, and, in fact, much more unrealisable, than the attempt made by Toulan and Jarjayes, or even than the first one made at the Temple by Michonis, Cortey, and the Baron de Batz.

And yet he tried it, with the Chevalier de Rougeville as his accomplice. But everything was found out, from the time of the Chevalier's first interview with the Queen. Rougeville escaped, but Michonis was arrested. This adventure, which is known under the name of the Pink Flower Conspiracy, was the last. The fatal circle was drawing itself closer round the Queen, and the rage of her enemies was increasing in proportion with her friends' incapacity.

New elections took place on August 7. The accusations of Arthur, Lèchenard, and the Tisons had had their effect, and neither Toulan nor Lepître was re-elected.

Their rejection was a warning. Having become suspects, the two ex-commissioners had everything to fear. They, however, remained, and lived in Paris without being molested until the beginning of October. Then everything changed.

CHAPTER IV.

Toulan arrested on October 7—His Self-control—He escapes—
 October 8—Lepitre's Arrest—Sainte-Pélagie—The Queen's
 Trial, October 14-16—Lepitre as a Witness—His Evidence—
 Arrest of Madame de Jarjayes—Sentence and Execution of
 Marie Antoinette—October 16.

ON Monday morning, October 7, Toulan was walking in the streets of Paris, when he was stopped by a few people. He recognised some of his friends among these, and they began talking. Toulan thus learned that, as the Queen's trial was about to begin, the attention of the Commune had been drawn again to all those who at one time or another had shown respect or devotion to the prisoner, and that in order to assert its authority it had decided to arrest the suspects. They added that Toulan was among them, that he had been most particularly mentioned, and that they had themselves been requested to arrest him.

On hearing the news, sufficiently surprising even at that time, the Gascon did not lose his presence of mind. He realised his danger, and at once began to think, as dispassionately as possible, how to escape.

The men who had come to arrest him were not all of savage nature ; in fact, a certain number of

them were not, at the bottom of their hearts, over-anxious to fulfil their mandate ; while some would have liked to have nothing to do with it. Toulan in these had unconscious accomplices, and he resolved to gain time, look round, weigh matters, and take advantage of a lucky chance, if he could find or create one.

Consequently, he feigned perfect submission to their orders. He told them that, having been arrested unexpectedly in the street, he had not with him the clothes he would require should his imprisonment last some time, and he therefore asked for leave to go home and get what he wanted ; they could go with him, and in that way he would always be at their disposal. He added that he had some important papers in his desk, which it would be better to seal in his presence before they took him to prison. This was a just demand ; they assented, and all started for the Rue du Monceau-Saint-Gervais.

On their way they met Ricard. As soon as Toulan had seen his friend, who was at the same time his clerk, he asked him to accompany them. He might be useful to put in order the papers relating to their business and help in affixing the seals. Toulan warned him by a sign, and he, being as clever and keen as his master, at once understood.

Having arrived at the house of the ex-commissioner, they set to work at once to search in the cases, to examine the various documents, and to

write their official statements ; they all began to talk, and the noise grew louder.

This was what Toulan was waiting for. He pretended he wanted to wash his hands, and going to a neighbouring room, he turned on a tap. While the water was running from the tap he opened a door which led to a back staircase and escaped as quietly as possible.

Ricard, who knew the house well, guessed what Toulan was about ; he saw that his master was succeeding and tried to cover his retreat. He encouraged conversation, discussed, began a quarrel about some papers which he wanted to leave ; they refused, but he insisted. The water was still running ; the increasing noise drew the attention of the commissioners from their prisoner, and deceived them so entirely that when they thought of him they did not see him. They looked for him, but there was nobody. Toulan was already far away.¹

Nothing was left for the commissioners but to go, and they retired abashed. This was not, however,

¹ *Mémoires Historiques sur Louis XVII*, by Eckard, p. 427 *et seqq.* Eckard, who as a rule is well informed, places the arrest and escape of Toulan immediately after the denunciation by the Tisons. He adds : 'Although he was obliged to remain hidden, Toulan continued to render services to the Royal Family, as can be seen from the *Fragments*, by Turgy ; but in October 1793 he received advice which forced him to leave Paris.' Eckard clearly makes a mistake here ; for, as the reader has seen, Toulan continued in his post as member of the Commune until August 7,

the case with all of them, for it is almost certain that some few facilitated Toulan's ruse and allowed him to escape. The charges against him were too strong to permit of his being saved if his arrest were enforced. The Commune was beginning to rival the Convention on one point : it wanted to disperse the latter at its own will, and would not allow its authority to be lessened in the least by any attempt against the life of its members.¹ Toulan benefited by this good disposition, which, however, did not last.

When Lepître heard of the incident, on October 7 apparently, he said to his wife at supper time—

‘If they wanted to lock me up I should ask to be sent to Sainte-Pélagie ; there at least I should find people whom I know, and I should not be as miserable as I should in another prison. . . .’

On the following day, as early as six in the morning, a member of the Revolutionary Committee came to the house in the Rue Saint-Jacques and gave the Professor the order to follow him to Sainte-Pélagie. This was done at once.

after the accusation by the Tisons, except that he was no longer on duty at the Temple. Therefore, he remained in concealment. Besides, he stated himself in his examination at Bordeaux that it was in the beginning of October that he attempted to escape, and he added that he had left Paris on October 7 at ten o'clock in the morning, because he was going to be arrested.

¹ *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepître, p. 70.

Lepître was half consoling himself for his misadventure by the thought of how clever he had been, when, as soon as he had entered his prison, he was placed in close custody. This was not what he had expected, and he was somewhat disconcerted. However, he did not lose courage, and he awaited events whilst preparing his justification.

These various measures had been taken on account of the Queen's trial, which, after many hesitations and several adjournments, had been fixed for October 14.

Of the examination and debates we shall mention now only what refers to the Toulan-Jarjayes plot; the full account will be given elsewhere.

The absence if not of proofs at least of written documents against the Queen had been the cause of the delay in her trial. Hébert thought of filling up this blank. On Sunday, October 6, the day before Toulan was to be arrested, he went to the Temple and snatched from the weakness and ignorance of young Louis XVII. a series of statements, some of which were shamefully vile and false, while others were true. It is necessary to say that the latter were in reality of not the slightest importance, and were not sufficient to sanction condemnation.

They are related in the following manner in the report of the examination: 'He [Louis XVII.] stated to us that last winter, whilst he was living in the same apartment with his mother, aunt, and

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY 189

sister, a civilian called Dangé, who was on guard near them as Council commissioner, was looking after him one day whilst he was taking his walk along the Tower platform. He took him in his arms and kissed him, saying, "I wish I could see you in your father's place."

' He also stated that another civilian, of the name of Toulan, being also on guard at the Tower about the same time, the said women locked him and his sister in one of the turrets for an hour and a half, a short time before the candles were lit, and that during that time he¹ spoke with the said women, and that he [Louis] did not hear what the subject of their conversation was ; that on another occasion he heard the said Toulan tell his mother and aunt that every evening, at half-past ten, he would send a newsvendor near to the Temple, who would cry any news that might be of interest to them ; he noticed that one evening the said women did not go to bed before eleven o'clock, and that they showed temper because they had not, as usual, heard the newsvendor's cries. He also stated that four civilians—Lepître, Bruneau, Toulan, and Vincent—during the time of their guard in the apartments were in the habit of approaching the said women and holding conversations with them in a low voice. . . .'²

¹ Toulan.

² National Record Office, W 296, No. 261 : Document contained in the iron safe.

In spite of this denunciation Lepître was not called as an accused person during the trial : they wished to try the Queen alone, and with a Machiavellian forecast they hoped that her old accomplices would charge her, as it was supposed they would be anxious to save their own lives by overwhelming Marie Antoinette. That is why on that day Lepître appeared merely as a witness. His case was put aside for a later period.

He had made up his mind to deny everything ; and this plan succeeded as well as it had a few months earlier before Hébert.

He stated that he had seen the accused at the Temple, when he was at the Temple in his quality of notable commissioner for the provisional municipality, but that he had never had any private conversation with her, nor spoken to her in the absence of his colleagues.

‘ Did you not sometimes talk politics with her ? ’ asked the president.

‘ Never, ’ he replied.

‘ Have you not procured for her the means of hearing news by sending every day a newsvendor who called the evening paper near the Temple Tower ? ’

‘ No. ’

Then the president, addressing the accused, asked, ‘ Have you any remarks to make on the witness’s statement ? ’

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY 191

The accused : ' I have never held any conversation with the witness ; besides, I had no need for newsvendors to be sent near the Tower ; I heard enough of them every day when they passed the Rue de la Corderie. . . .'¹

Again the judges showed Lepître a few gold coins, miniature portraits of the Princesses of Hesse and Mecklenburg, friends of the Queen from her childhood, and asked him if he had seen them before. He pretended he did not know them, although the Queen had shown them to him several times. This was all ; the judges were satisfied with an examination which had lasted twelve minutes, and Lepître was taken back to Sainte-Pélagie.²

Although Toulan was absent, his name was mentioned at various times during the examination of different witnesses.

Hébert remembered the hat incident. At another time he found in Madame Elisabeth's room a hat which was recognised as having belonged to Louis Capet. This discovery did not allow him any longer to doubt that among his colleagues there were men capable of degrading themselves to the point of serving tyranny. He remembered that one day Toulan had come with his hat on into

¹ *Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution Française*, by Buchez and Roux, vol. xxiv. pp. 376, 377.

² *Quelques Souvenirs*, by Lepître, p. 64.

the Tower and had left bareheaded, saying that he had lost his hat.¹

Jean François Mathey, gatekeeper at the Temple Tower, stated—

‘I even one day heard Toulan say to the accused, referring to the new elections for the reorganisation of the municipality, “Madame, I have not been re-elected because I am a Gascon.”’

The witness had also observed that Lepître and Toulan very often came together, and that they used to go up at once, saying, ‘Let us go upstairs; we shall there wait for our colleagues.’

The president to Marie Antoinette: ‘Have you not given a gold box to Toulan?’

‘No, neither to Toulan nor to anyone else.’

Hébert interfered again. A commissioner of the peace had brought to him in the prosecutor’s office of the Commune an accusation signed by two clerks of the tax collector’s office,² at the head of which was Toulan, which announced³ this fact in the plainest way, whilst proving that he had boasted of it himself in the office.⁴

These statements tended to prove an understanding between the Queen and Toulan. At the time not much attention was paid to them, for it was

¹ *Les Crimes de Marie Antoinette*, by L. Prudhomme, p. 408.

² He probably means the office for emigrants’ property.

³ He must have meant ‘mentioned.’

⁴ *Les Crimes de Marie Antoinette*, by L. Prudhomme, p. 509.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY 193

difficult to charge them as crimes against the prisoner. They were destined to be used later against Toulan.

The Queen had the misfortune to be fatal to all her friends, and her trial was not to end without giving a new proof of this.

The reader will remember that when Marie Antoinette gave a mission from France to the Chevalier de Jarjayes she wrote to him that she was keeping his wife, but that she took 'a formal engagement to give her back to him if it were possible.' This restriction was more than necessary : the Queen of France could no longer keep her formal engagements.

Madame de Jarjayes had remained in Paris.

On October 15 the trial was over ; the accused was unanimously convicted and sentenced to death.

Marie Antoinette wished to give Madame de Jarjayes a token of her deep affection and to send this courageous woman a last proof of her gratitude. Before leaving the court she asked one of her counsel, Tronson du Coudray, to give Madame de Jarjayes the two gold earrings which she was wearing and a lock of her hair.

The suspicious Commune mistrusted even the counsel whom it had appointed for the accused. Tronson du Coudray was searched as he was going out. The earrings were found on him. The paper in which they were wrapped bore the name of

Madame de Jarjayes. She was immediately arrested and sent to La Force.¹

The Queen had been brought back to the Conciergerie. The following day, October 16, at twelve o'clock, she mounted the scaffold.

¹ *Précis* by the Baron de Goguelat, p. 82.

CHAPTER V

Toulan leaves Paris on October 7—Neuilly-sur-Marne—Antedated Passport—He returns to Paris—Signals—His Imprudence—Madame Elisabeth's Recommendation—Interview with Turgot—Toulan's Last Letter—Last Answer, which does not Reach him—Flight from Paris—Corbeil—The Auxerre Coach—La Charité—Toulouse.

WHAT had become of Toulan while these grave events were taking place?

Having escaped, thanks to his audacity and also to a happy concurrence of circumstances, from the men who had come to arrest him, he had then realised that staying in Paris was becoming extremely dangerous for him. His situation might not always be as favourable, and if he were arrested a second time it would then be impossible for him to evade a sentence, not to say certain death.

The most ordinary prudence obliged him to go. He no longer hesitated, and at ten o'clock in the morning of the very day of his abortive arrest he went to Neuilly-sur-Marne, to a friend's house. At that period it was necessary to have a passport in order to avoid being treated as a suspect, which meant imprisonment. He hoped to find one in that locality.

196 A CONSPIRACY UNDER THE TERROR

The friend to whom Toulan had applied succeeded beyond expectation. He brought him back the following document :—

‘In the name of the Republic one and indivisible.

‘Neuilly-sur-Marne Municipality.

‘We, the Mayor and municipal officers of the Commune of Neuilly-sur-Marne, Gonesse district, Department of Seine-et-Oise, certify that the citizen François Toulan, a native of Toulouse, Department of the Haute-Garonne, aged thirty-three, height five feet, brown eyes, ordinary face, bulging forehead, mouth medium size, flat nose, is really an inhabitant of this commune, where he possesses landed property, and he has resided on it, having for the last year lived a retired life. He is an excellent citizen, having proved it in Paris as well as here ; and he has stated to us that he wishes to go to his native place on business, passing through Auxerre, Moulins, Clermont, Rhodéz, &c., in order to be present at the allotting of an inheritance in which he is interested, and he has shown us letters proving this. Consequently we request our brethren in the departments which are on his route and others to let him pass freely, lend him their aid and assistance if necessary, as he deserves it, and as we ourselves would do on their recommendation.

‘Done in our common house on the sixth day

of the month of October of the second year of the French Republic one and indivisible.

‘Blancpain, municipal officer ; [an illegible name ;] Hesson, Mayor ; Campion, officer ; Benoît ; Dulion.

‘Seen, certified as correct by us, the administrators of the directory of the Gonesse districts, the seventh of October of the second year of the French Republic.

‘BAUDOIN, BRAYER, LAURENT.’¹

All the statements contained in this document were untrue except the name and description of the bearer. Toulan had never been a proprietor in Neuilly-sur-Marne, still less had he resided there during the past year. The pretext of a succession to be divided was perhaps true, although it would appear that it did not concern him, but his sister.

The friend had been careful to have the passport antedated, so that Toulan was supposed to have spent the previous day at Neuilly-sur-Marne, which would enable him, if necessary, to deny that he was aware there was a warrant against him.

These precautions having been taken, Toulan waited. He could not tear himself from Paris and the dear beings whom he was leaving there—not only his family, but those whom he had made his friends through devotion and affection. He could not bring himself to leave.

¹ This and the following documents have been taken from Toulan's *dossier*, National Record Office, W 400, No. 927.

As three days later he had not been molested he felt reassured by the inaction of the police and started ; but instead of going away from danger he went to Paris. Whether it was to defy the Government which he had so often and so easily deceived, whether it was to correspond a last time with the prisoners whom he was on the point of abandoning for ever, or whether it was for this double motive at the same time, he could not resist the pleasure of committing such a frightful imprudence.

Having returned to Paris, he did not conceal himself much. He ran to his room near the Temple, and there, again taking his horn, he sent to Madame Elisabeth the agreed signal, with such fierce boldness that he frightened the prisoner herself. She sent Turgy to him at once—Turgy, who was on the point of being dismissed from the Temple by the Commune, and who had just informed her of the imminence of such a measure.

‘ October 11, 1793, a quarter past 2.

‘I am very sad. Reserve yourself for a time when we shall be happier and when we shall be able to reward you. Take with you the consolation that you have served faithfully your good and unfortunate masters. Advise Fidèle not to risk his own safety too much by signalling to us. Should you by chance see Madame Mallemain give her news

from us and tell her that I think of her. Good-bye, honest man and faithful subject.'¹

Without losing any time Turgy hastened to Toulan. The latter related to him all the episodes of the last few days, and entrusted him with a note for Madame Elisabeth, in which he gave her an account of his arrest and escape, and sent a supreme expression of his devotion and faithfulness. Turgy was able to fulfil this mission. On the following day the Princess sent him the note given below.

‘October 12, 1793, 2 o’clock.

‘. . . This [a note] is for Fidèle. Tell him that I am convinced of his feelings. I thank him for the news he has given me. I feel deeply sorry for what has happened to him. . . .’²

But this time Turgy was not able to obey Madame Elisabeth’s order. Toulan had not waited; Fidèle never received the last note which was intended for him. The Revolution had at last mastered his devotion.

He had left Paris for good on October 11. A longer delay might have rendered useless the passport he had so fortunately obtained at Neuilly-sur-Marne, and he had at last made up his mind to take the journey mentioned in his passport. In the evening of the 11th he presented himself at the

¹ *Fragments*, by Turgy, p. 279.

² *Ibid.* p. 380.

Communal House of Corbeil, where he had his passport *visé*. He then took the coach from Corbeil to Auxerre, on the way to Toulouse.

He seemed quite bright over his journey, and not in the least concerned. He talked willingly with his fellow travellers, who gave him the latest news ; one of them showed him a newspaper. He had the satisfaction of reading in it the denunciation concerning himself. He thus saw that he was accused of having had secret conversations with the prisoners at the Temple. To tell the truth, he expected as much ; but the Gascon was quite himself again, and could laugh at his dangers ; he enjoyed this singular subject of conversation. His lively, energetic, and bold nature did not belie itself.

He followed closely the route indicated in his passport. After Auxerre he passed through La Charité on the 15th, as is shown by the endorsement on his passport, and he continued his journey by Moulins, Clermont, and Rodez. About October 20 he arrived at Toulouse.

Once in his native place, in the midst of his relatives and friends, he believed that he was at last in safety.

CHAPTER VI

The Rumour of the Accusation has preceded Toulan at Toulouse—
 Danger of Staying longer in that Town—He thinks of Fleeing
 —Falsified Passport—Departure from Toulouse on October 26
 —Arrival in Bordeaux—The Miserable House on the Quay at
 Royan—Public Writer—The Romance of ‘Rosalie.’

TOULAN’S illusion that he was sheltered from the vengeance of the Commune was not of long duration. He had hardly arrived when he heard from his friends that he had not been forgotten in Toulouse, and that his fame had preceded him there, so that no one in that town was ignorant either of the post he had filled in Paris or of the accusations directed against him ; and, as he was not without enemies, he would have been exposed to the greatest inconvenience—not to say peril—by staying longer in Toulouse.

Lepître, who was not over-grieved at having been arrested, because it flattered his vanity, might have challenged such glorious dangers ; but Toulan was not inclined to change one evil for another ; besides, he had grown wiser, and therefore he thought at once of leaving Toulouse. He had not given the slip to the Paris police and deceived the Commune in order,

like a fool, to be arrested by his fellow-citizens in his own native place.

Taught by the above revelation that it would be dangerous for him to travel under his own name, which was a well-known one, he set to work to obtain a new passport which should enable him to conceal his identity. His safety depended upon it.

Although he had in Toulouse a larger circle of friends than at Neuilly-sur-Marne, none of them could or would render him the service he asked for. He was obliged to appeal to a woman's kindness.

Who was this woman who, at such a critical moment, was willing to come to his aid? The question is a very difficult one to solve; but, thanks to letters which were found at a later period among Toulan's papers, one can form a conjecture which, in default of an impossible certainty, presents at least an air of great probability.

Without being a handsome man, Toulan knew how to captivate women. His sarcastic wit, his constant good humour, won for him admiration and sometimes affection. He had not only left male friends in Toulouse, he had also lady friends, lady relatives, companions of his childhood. Among the latter were two sisters—one who was called and signed her name 'Belon,' and the other whose name was Rosalie.

Rosalie's correspondence paints her as a woman

of lively imagination, very charitable, and incapable of refusing her favours to anyone who asked for them properly. Brought up in the old principles, but having embraced the new ideas, she had made a rather strange, if somewhat agreeable, mixture of both ; and this mixture had given her a rather piquant conception of morals, of love, and even of marriage, which was not without originality.

Toulan, a nice fellow and a fine talker, had found this old friend again. His situation was a terrible one, and would not admit of troublesome scruples. He put them aside, and sang a lover's song to Rosalie's ears. Rosalie was not deaf : she listened complacently to his voice, and replied the best way she could.

While talking of love the Gascon confessed he was obliged to conceal himself for the present, perhaps even to flee. His life was at stake. If he could only get a passport with another name than his ! Flattered by the passion of a man who was so near the scaffold, Rosalie understood what she had to do. She went to the Communal House and asked for and received a passport in the name of Rosalie Mestre. Was this her own name or an assumed one ? I cannot say. However that may be, whether her declaration was true or not, the clerk accepted it. What caused his mistake when he wrote 'Rose Alimestre' ? This is of slight importance. Rosalie herself carefully avoided making any remark on the

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY 205

‘ROQUER, mûpal off^r; MUZAIGNE, notable;
COUDER, mu^p off^r.

‘SOULÈS, clerk.

‘Rocallimestre’

(Here a name is erased and replaced by shapeless signs, under which can be detected a few letters of the word ‘Rosalie.’)

The ink having become paler, and the paper being thinner in places, owing to the scratching, one can easily detect the parts which Toulan altered. Thus one can see that originally there were the words *citoyenne*¹ *Rose Alimestre*; ² the word *thirty* replaces probably *twenty*; as for the words *Very Flat* with two capital letters, it is easy to see that they were written above other words, as well as *Bordeaux*. The glazing of the paper having disappeared through scratching, the ink has soaked in, and it is impossible to decipher the original words except a few letters, *r* and *e* in *Bien Ecrazé* (very flat), and likewise *r* and *e* in *Bordeaux*. The word *le-quel* (he) has clearly replaced *la-quelle*.

On the left-hand side at the bottom there is a series of shapeless letters and down strokes which hide an erasure. One can, however, still see a capital *R* and an *a*, something like the skeleton of the word *Rosalie*. She must have been requested to

¹ Or rather *citoyene*.

² Or *Ros alimestre*, according to Toulan's statement in his examination. Yet this may have been only a mistake of the clerk who filled up the passport.

sign the passport at the town hall. Afterwards it was found necessary to erase this signature, which did not correspond even with the words *Rose Alimestre*.

Next to this scribbling can be read the word *notable*. Toulan probably wished to make people believe that this badly written signature was that of a witness not clever at writing.

After this he signed *Rocallimestre* in one word.

How can this strange spelling be explained, above all on the part of a man who was fairly well educated, and who as a rule wrote very correctly? Many reasons can be given for this, and they are so natural that they must be true.

In the first place, Toulan did not care to pass for a well-educated man. He knew that ignorant and common people were not so much suspected as others. Besides, as he had scratched out the word 'Rose' and replaced it by 'Roch,' he had some reason to fear that this alteration might be discovered. By signing *Rocallimestre*, which, phonetically, was the same name, he did not materially alter the first statement, and in the second place he avoided being suspected of having made the erasure himself. One might believe that the clerk to whom he had spelt his name did not hear properly or did not understand, and that he could not himself correct the mistake. The other misspelling can be explained in a similar manner.

If this was Toulan's reasoning, subsequent facts showed that he was right. His passport, badly written as it was, served his purpose just as well as one in due form. On October 26 the Gascon left Toulouse and started for Bordeaux, where he arrived quickly and safely.

He took up his quarters with a man called Babein, a lodging-house keeper ; but being short of money and unable to get any for a few days, not even knowing whether his wife and his lady cousin Ricard, who had remained in Paris, would be prepared to send him any, he thought of taking up a trade of some kind which might enable him to live.

Having neither friends nor money, a new-comer in a town which he hardly knew, as he had stayed there only a short time in his youth, there were few professions open to him ; so that, like Figaro, with whom he had so many points of resemblance, he started as a public scribe. He wrote a fine hand, and his new vocation required nothing but a pen and paper. He rented No. 47 on the quay at Royan—a wooden hut—wrote on the door the name of *Roch Allimestre*, called himself a public scribe, and awaited customers.

They came. Among the Bordeaux population there are many working men and sailors who, even more at that time than nowadays, were not versed in the art of letter-writing. Thus Toulan had to write out letters and petitions. He did not do it badly

either, judging from the rough draft of one of these petitions which is written on the back of a letter he had received. It was a request to a Deputy—this proves that such solicitations are not new—from a sailor in favour of his wife.

‘The citizen Joseph Peyrefort, master carpenter on the barge “La Commission,” Captain Villedieu, wishes to state that his wife, the citizen Marie Cantinaire, living at Rochefort, came to join him at Bordeaux, as she had heard a rumour, which was a false one, stating that he had been dismissed from that ship ; but having heard that this was not true, and intending to go back to Rochefort, she would like to be allowed to make the return journey on board the boat on which her husband sails. The citizen captain is willing to take her on board, but would like to be authorised to do so by the citizens’ representative of the people. Peyrefort asks you, therefore, for this sanction ; he is deserving of it for his zeal in fulfilling his duty, and expects it from a representative who likes to oblige his patriots.

‘Salut et fraternité.’

Toulan had also a stock of letters in the grand style. On the 20th of Pluviôse, year II.—February 8, 1794—he drew up a letter for an aunt, in which are to be found sentences like the following :—

‘I was very anxious on your account when your letter reached me ; your silence was grieving me.

I was afraid you might be ill, you whom I love above all, and this thought prevented me from enjoying a moment's peace. At last your letter comes. I think that I shall find comfort ; I open it, and see that you are ill. I am very much afraid that you are concealing part of the truth from me, and that you are worse than you say . . .

‘ . . . I hope you will answer me as soon as your occupations allow you to do so ; you will thus fulfil the wishes of him who glories in being your friend rather than your nephew.’

Toulan had hardly arrived in Bordeaux when he wrote to the person who had most contributed to the success of his journey—and that person was Rosalie.

We know this from the fact that he received at his small house, No. 47, on the quay at Royan a letter addressed to the ‘ Citizen Alimestre.’ It bore on the outside—for at that time envelopes were not used—the word ‘ Toulouse,’ stamped with a blank stamp, and dated November 3, 1793.

This letter is not signed, and it is written in disguised handwriting, but the address is distinctly in the handwriting of Rosalie, as she signs herself in another letter ; the word ‘ Alimestre ’ is spelt with a single *l*, and that *l* has a peculiar and special shape to be found only in Rosalie's writing.

Therefore, the graphological signs being identical,

the material resemblance is established. Moreover, the quickness with which the answer came proves that Toulan had hastened to give his address. Besides, to whom could he have applied if not to the person who was already aware of his assumed name?

What still more strengthens such conjectures is that the letter is in the third person and in an ambiguous style. It was probably intended to prevent other people from understanding the contents, as well as to blind the police. This last design is still more manifest in the entirely political passage with which the letter ends.

It must be remembered that the Girondins had lately been sent to the scaffold—on October 31. It was not safe to be looked upon as one of their partisans, in Bordeaux above all. Toulan's correspondent frees him from any possible blame by writing the following short passage, which would be read by the police: 'The Assembly has taken strong measures and does us justice. I think that we shall be happy, and shall triumph over all obstacles. Justice has been done on twenty-two Deputies who were betraying us, so that the others will perhaps be wiser. All this is necessary for the maintenance of order, without which we should be lost. I close by kissing you, and beg you will believe me for life your co-citizen RICHARDET. This 3rd of November, 1793.'

Toulan thanked in an appropriate manner the lady who had signed herself for life his 'co-citizen

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY 211

Richardet,' but who hardly was so, as far as he knew. As a gallant man he knew how to flatter the young woman's heart, for she replied, in a fine, widely spaced handwriting, by the following letter :—

'MY DEAR FRIEND,—How I enjoyed your letter ; I was particularly pleased to hear that you had arrived safely. Your brother must have been delighted to see you, and I was grieved at not being able to enjoy any more the pleasure of being near the one I love. This is a painful confession for my modesty to make, but, as my heart has dictated the words, I leave them, trusting that you will not use them against me. I do not know if your sister intends to come. I forward you one of her letters, which was received here, hoping it will please you. . . . Is one at present better than you said in your last letter ? Doubtless the representatives of the people are aiming at the means.

' Alimestre did right in renting a shop in order to earn something. One must live, and although I know his saving disposition he has not talent enough to bring something out of nothing. I forwarded your letter to your sisters at the Paradoux : they told me they would have liked to be able to do more. As for myself, it is too good of you to set such a high value on the little attentions I gave you. They were dictated by friendship and the warmest interest. They

were accepted with the same feelings ; therefore we are quits. Belon is far more deserving of your praise. Working incessantly under her father's and mother's eyes, she tries to give them, with the help of their own work, the necessaries of life. Is there anything more beautiful ? Good-bye, dear friend. All those who interest you are in good health.

‘ I am your sweetheart,

‘ ROSALIE.

‘ November 25, old style.’

After this confession which had escaped her heart, but which, being made in a letter, could not have escaped her unknowingly, the cunning Gascon apparently understood her meaning : it was a direct invitation to go ahead—for confessions are never made if not to call for confidences in response.

When in Toulouse he was free to act the part of a lover ; but in Bordeaux it would have been silly to go on with it, since the play could not end with a marriage, as he was already married, nor with its counterfeit, as he did not wish it. Unable to answer in the same tone, and unwilling to offend a friend by himself tearing away the veil, he was silent and kept quiet.

The impetuous Rosalie, who had been so hasty in her rapture at meeting again in Toulouse the ex-member of the Commune, was none the less quick in understanding what was passing in his

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY 213

mind. Seeing he did not return her affection she turned another way. She probably had another lover in store. Once her mind was made up she informed Toulan of this in a note which must have been written under her dictation by a public scribe.

‘From Toulouse : December 11, 1793,
old style.

‘DEAR CITIZEN,—Your Rosalie, the same to whom you opened your heart—well, would you believe it, has already disposed of her hand ; and in favour of whom ? I will tell you his name. I feel that you will never know him better, but your absence, your estrangement induced me to take this decision. I must confess that my choice is in keeping with my tastes, and I shall be happy if Citizen Lafont, the one who was clever enough to take your place, proves that his love is as constant as mine ; he promised it to me when we signed the marriage settlement ; to-morrow we are to swear it to each other at the altar.

‘I must tell you that this marriage seems to please the parents of both of us, and this is a double satisfaction for all parties concerned.

‘Good-bye, my dear friend. Pray the Lord for me ; you know what faith I put in your prayers.

‘As you might make some mistake with regard to this Lafont, he is the eldest son of Citizen Lafont

the hairdresser, a friend of your father's ; he takes the liberty to assure you that he feels great pleasure at entering into our family, and at the same time begs you will let him hear from you. His address is Citizen Lafont, ladies' hairdresser, Rue Pharaon, 5th Section, No. 132.

'Father, mother, and my sister send their kindest regards,

' And I am your sweetheart,

' ROSALIE LAFONT.'

Rosalie, as may be seen, wrote this note with more than one purpose : she was not sorry to inform Toulan that she had not been long in finding a substitute for him, and to give him to understand that she was first in detaching herself. She was also anxious that he 'should not make any mistake with regard to this Lafont.' It is always awkward for a woman when her husband knows her to have been the 'sweetheart' of another man. She thus appealed to Toulan's tact, so that he might spare her any annoyance, and consequently she sent him the necessary information.

The Gascon must have had a good laugh over the letter of his Rosalie, above all when he read the sentence where she spoke of an 'affection as constant as her own' to the man for whom she had found a substitute so soon after having made such a tender confession. This was for him a

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY 215

splendid opportunity to give free scope to his caustic fancy, and this time he answered in a manner fit to soothe the fears of the ladies' hairdresser's newly wedded wife.

This letter, which unfortunately has not been preserved, must have been a pleasant joke concealed under charming and flattering words. We do not know whether he promised the young wife to offer to God those prayers in which she put so much faith ; it is, however, certain that he reassured her completely concerning possible blunders, for she answered by the following letter, a document which savours of originality :—

‘ 26 Nivôse, year II. of the French Republic—January 15, 1794.

‘ *CITIZEN AND STILL DEAR FRIEND*,—Your praises touch my heart and make me regret deeply your absence. *My husband, from whom I hide nothing, and who saw your letter, believing all the fine and pleasant compliments you pay me, congratulates himself on his choice* ; therefore, what would I not do in order that the affection which he seems to have may last ? I confess, dear patriot, that I am quite satisfied, for his disposition is good, sociable, all that I could wish. All those who know him like him. You can realise how I like him. *Yes, I love him ; I love no one but him, and during the whole of*

my life I shall never love anybody else. However, do not forget me. If you have any right to my esteem I have some to yours, and I implore you will continue to entertain it for me.

‘Father, mother, my dear husband, my sister all kiss you from the bottom of their hearts. Never forget us.

‘Salut et fraternité.

‘ROSALIE LAFONT.’

At that time Toulan was very busy both with his Bordeaux business and with the affairs he had left in Paris ; he was also anxious about his wife, for whom he was thinking of sending. He did not think it was necessary to continue this correspondence. He was moved by the appellation ‘dear friend,’ and he did not even answer Rosalie’s letter, which asked him several questions concerning his aunt and cousins.

The eldest sister—Belon—took the young wife’s place.

‘The 3rd of Pluviôse, year II. of the French Republic—January 23.

‘CITIZEN AND DEAR FRIEND,—Your Rosalie receiving no answer to her last letter, in spite of her desire for it, I, for my part, thought it my duty to take pen in hand, in the hope that I might be more fortunate than she, or that my letter

would find you more at leisure. However, I must have an answer, and that on receipt of this . . .'

What did Toulan do? Did he write a last time? Did he persevere in his silence? No other letter was found among his papers, neither from Rosalie nor from Belon. We must suppose that he stopped there.

Thus ended this romance, which in the midst of the sombre events whose narrative we have undertaken is the comic episode which destiny always places side by side with the dramatic. It has this advantage, that it shows us historical personages in their true characters. It is, indeed, a mistake to believe that heroes are inflexible: they are neither above nor below the level of human nature, still less are they outside it. But their failings, even when known, detract nothing from the greatness which is granted them, any more than the Himalaya Mountains lose their height because they have their bases at the level of the lowest land.

CHAPTER VII

Toulan settled in Bordeaux—He tries to Start in Business—His Correspondence with his Wife and Cousin—Ricard—Ricardin—Guy.

THIS last correspondence and the one he is to continue to keep up with his lady cousin Ricard disclose with unquestionable sincerity Toulan's state of mind at that period. We see once more how wrong it would have been to attribute his devotion to the Queen to rapturous and passionate love. At any rate, we are obliged to confess that the proverb which says, 'Out of sight out of mind' was never more really or more quickly fulfilled. How, indeed, can one believe in the depth of a passion the fleeting nature of which is alone apparent? It is impossible. The true character of this man, as we said before, was a mixture of chivalry, courage, and boldness. Capable of feeling compassion, he was gentle and kind towards those who experienced great trials; then, helped by events, he was gradually led to act with heroism: this he had not anticipated at the beginning, but he was willing to bear all its consequences, and did so with the spirit of a southerner and the impetuosity of youth, which

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY 219

concealed the real magnanimity of his soul and his disdain of peril. When circumstances changed, thus paralysing his efforts, he saw that his devotion was barren and powerless, and his conscience was satisfied that he had fulfilled his duty to the end ; this was his comfort. When he was threatened in his turn, his one thought was to defend his life and to try to save it from the scaffold ; a result he had not been able to accomplish in the case of Marie Antoinette.

News of the Queen's death must have reached him. Outwardly he could not alter his manner ; he was forced to use dissimulation in order to ensure his security. Inwardly he must have felt deep and lively regrets, but his Gascon disposition, good-heartedness, fondness of a joke, soon mastered his grief, and, thanks to his strong-mindedness, Toulan soon recovered himself. He was again the Toulan of former days.

It is right to add that anxiety to defend his life, added to the care of earning his daily bread, did not leave him much time for dark melancholy or prolonged sadness.

Besides, he was fond of his wife. His first thought was to enquire about her fate ; later on he would send for her, and would work hard, so as to shorten the time of separation.

He wrote to her, but, as she could not write, she asked their cousin Ricard to answer his letters for her.

‘MY DEAR COUSIN,—I beg you will not be anxious concerning the fate of the citizen Bichette : she has been staying with me for more than the last six weeks. She is a little better now, having been ill on account of not receiving news from her husband. She was extremely pleased with the letter you sent her . . .

‘You may well think that she does not intend to go to her friends ; she wishes to wait until further orders. Would you please tell her husband this ?

‘She is resolved to stay in Paris, unless her husband writes to her that he has a good situation, capable of enabling them to live without care.

‘As I have moved I send you my new address—Citizen Ricard, care of Citizen Finot, No. 1030 Grande Rue Verte.’¹

Although this letter bears no date it is evident that it was the first written by Madame Ricard. It says, in fact, that Bichette—a familiar name which must mean Toulan’s wife—has been with her for the last six weeks. Toulan having started on October 11, this gives as a probable date the end of November. All the other letters are dated, and the earliest date is December 8.

Moreover, Madame Ricard says that Bichette was very ill because she did not receive news from

¹ I may remind the reader that houses were numbered by sections and not by streets.

her husband. A regular correspondence having been established between Bordeaux and Paris, this complaint could only have been made in the first letter sent to Toulan.

Lastly, Madame Ricard gives in it her new address. Toulan wrote probably to her old abode, which she had left, just as Bichette must have forsaken the Rue Monceau-Saint-Gervais, where she was no longer in safety after the attempt at an arrest in the beginning of October.

Before we give the other letters, it is necessary, in order to make them clear, to say who this cousin Ricard was. She has been mentioned before, when we spoke of Toulan's friend, the same who was mixed up with the plot, and who was, it must be remembered, to play the part of the lamplighter.

The truth does not come out clearly at the first reading of these letters. At first there are several difficulties in the way. I shall mention merely those which are caused by the complete absence of punctuation and by the strangely fanciful spelling of the writer. These are merely material difficulties which can be easily solved with a little care and knowledge. Here are, however, a few specimens of her style :—

‘Ci tu veux que je tenvoy ton ta Bac par Le caros avec ton abit et cris Lemois . . .’

‘Sito que cesera fait je te La feray passer avec tout ce que tu me demande ainsi qun a Bit . . .’

‘Je te prie de me mettre une enveloppe quand tu man et cira tan . . .’¹

There are other and more considerable difficulties which, for the most part, come from the precautions taken by Madame Ricard in order to speak in an ambiguous manner of what might implicate Toulan, and also from her disguised language, which was intended to put the police off the track, who, as we know, are at all times great openers of letters. Hence surnames, strange appellations, veiled expressions, *sous-entendus*. Usually she calls Toulan her cousin, though in one letter she calls him her dear brother; sometimes she says ‘you,’ and at other times ‘thou.’

What sort of a woman was she?

Madame Ricard was a cousin of Toulan’s. She was married and had a child; but though she kept her child with her, her husband had left France for ‘the Islands’—*i.e.* for San Domingo. His departure dated from July 1792. Being thus forsaken, she came nearer to the Toulan couple, and from the first felt a very strong affection for the wife and great admiration for the husband. Outside the halo of glory which he derived from his important dignity, the municipal official’s humour and disposition pleased

¹ ‘Si tu veux que je t’envoie ton tabac par le carrosse avec ton habit, écris-le moi . . .’

‘Si tôt que ce sera fait, je te la ferai passer avec tout ce que tu demandes, ainsi qu’un habit.’

‘Je te prie de me mettre une enveloppe quand tu m’en écriras tant.’

his cousin. She, for her part, shows in her letters a very similar disposition to that of Toulan.

Of a bold nature and quick intellect, Madame Ricard used the strong and straightforward speech of the common people. She did not scorn a joke, especially a spicy one ; nothing embarrassed her. She knew how to get out of trouble in the most difficult circumstances ; when necessary she was sharp, cunning, and full of resources. Nothing could daunt her good humour, and on this point she must have been able to rival the Gascon and to enliven a home to which the gentle Bichette, Toulan's wife, brought her quieter kindness and more artless intellect.

What relation to Madame Ricard was the man whom Turgy calls 'M. Ricard, that friend of Toulan's,' of whom Eckard speaks as 'a friend of Toulan's,' and whom Lepître describes as 'M. Guy, a clerk in Toulan's office' ?

The similarity between the names has led people to suppose that this Ricard, improperly called Guy by Lepître, was merely the husband of the lady cousin Ricard, and they stopped at this simple interpretation. A more careful study and thorough investigation forbid one to adopt such an opinion. The following seems to us the only plausible one.

This man was a clerk in Toulan's office. As for his name, it may have been Guy, as says Lepître, or perhaps Ricard. There is no reason why he should not have been a relative of the husband of Toulan's

cousin ; it is, again, possible that he bore the same name, Ricard being a rather common one. There is still a last explanation, not in the least improbable, if we consider the customs and manners of the time ; that is, that he may have been called Ricard merely on account of his assiduous attentions to the young woman.

Indeed, if the latter had for Toulan a deep admiration, her namesake felt a passionate reverence for Madame Ricard. It was, in reality, this feeling which prompted him so lightly to endanger his own life in the attempts made to save the Queen, although he hardly knew Marie Antoinette. What better means had he to please this woman than to imitate and equal her cousin ?

Did she yield to him or did she limit herself to promising to become his wife after she should have obtained a divorce from the husband who had forsaken her ? This is a doubtful point. But those who were not in the secret may have put a false construction on a situation which was not very clear, and called Ricard Madame Ricard's lover. Whatever the truth may be she kept this man in her house after Toulan's departure, and in her letters she speaks of him sometimes as Ricardin, sometimes as Ricardet. At other times she gives him a charming and picturesque surname, smart in its fancifulness and very much in keeping with her character : she calls him ' her day husband.'

This last explanation is the only one which is in

accordance with the letters found on Toulan at Bordeaux, letters which are kept at the National Record Office. If, on the contrary, one keeps to the other version, there are many difficulties that need explanation. How could the young woman say on January 2 that her husband had left the Islands eighteen months before? Why should she ask Toulan on December 12 to send letters to her husband by boat or through sailors going to San Domingo?

It must not be forgotten that at the beginning of October—on the 7th—Ricard helped Toulan to escape, and it would not have been possible for him to leave Paris, reach a seaport, embark, arrive in San Domingo, write to his wife, and receive her answer in the time between October 7 and December 12, or two months and five days, at an epoch when steam was unknown, when travelling on land was done by coach and on sea by sailing vessels.

Again, how could Madame Ricard write on February 12 that she had had news of her husband through Deputies delegate for the island of San Domingo, and that he filled there the post of clerk to the court of justice, with a salary of 4,000 livres a year? For it was improbable that a new-comer could acquire such a good situation on landing from the boat by which he had come.

As she repeatedly speaks of Ricardin and of her 'day husband,' who accompanies her and Toulan's

wife, and follows and helps them during those December, January, and February months of 1793-4, how can we believe that Ricard, who is at San Domingo, and whom she calls her husband without any qualification, is an imaginary being whom she had invented? On what occasion, or for what purpose, should she have done so?

Moreover, if this were the case, would she have troubled herself about him, or about the precarious state in which he had left her and her son? She wishes 'he would send them some *sous*.' This is certainly not invented to blind the police. In that case she would not speak in the same letters of Ricardin, of Ricardet, and of her 'day husband.'

Her application for a divorce, about which she writes to Toulan on January 2, would also have to be an invention. What would be the use of the particulars she gives regarding her marriage settlement, which she cannot show, because it is in her writing-desk, and seals are placed upon it? She even says that she is going to bestir herself in order to have the seals removed and bring this affair to a close. Lastly, on January 26, she is proud to inform her cousin that she has obtained her divorce. What could be the reason for such a comedy?

As the reader will see, there are numerous objections to the general belief, and, what is worse, it involves many impossibilities. If, on the contrary, one gives, as I have done, a simple and

natural meaning to Madame Ricard's own sayings, interpreting only a few obscure points, one is able to explain facts in a more reasonable way and, in my opinion, in the only way.

If we recognise and admit the situation as explained, the correspondence between Toulan and his cousin becomes quite clear.

The first letters refer to the most urgent things ; each for his own part wishes to be reassured on the other's lot. How are the women living in Paris, where they remained with Ricardin ? How does the fugitive manage in Bordeaux, the large town where he is alone ? He left Paris with his affairs more or less entangled—first his bookseller's business, then his partnership with Fondard—Madame Ricard calls him *Fondu*, *i.e.* 'melted'—for the settlement of claims against the emigrants.

Cousin Ricard, who is the more sensible and better educated woman of the two, writes the letters. It is most regrettable that we have not those of Toulan, for they would have been precious documents. We are obliged to fill the gap by guessing what they were from an attentive reading of Madame Ricard's letters which formed the answers.

And although all the things of which she speaks are not of great importance, it is good and useful to give numerous extracts. These letters have a very peculiar savour and are invaluable for

the historian. They show how people could live, joke, and laugh even at the time of the Terror, when scaffolds were erected everywhere, when accusations threatened every life, and were never fruitless. The letters are a new proof of the disposition I have attributed to Toulan ; they show him always equal to himself in the most critical circumstances. With regard to this, what better testimony can we invoke than those letters written offhand, and which, in the thought of both the sender and the receiver, were not destined ever to be made public ? These testimonies are certainly not to be suspected.

Nothing less than an extraordinary chance has brought them down to us ; we owe them, indeed, to the very catastrophe which was the ruin of the man to whom they were addressed.

The first letter sent by Toulan only partially reassured the two women. The fugitive's journey was safely accomplished ; but would he not meet in Bordeaux with the same reception as at Toulouse ? Was he not there short of money ? How did he live ? Had he any furniture—a bed ? And meanwhile what would become of his affairs in Paris ? He had left his shop, with its stock of goods. What was to be done with them ?

Then Madame Ricard writes to *the Citizen Alimestre, Public scribe, Quai de Royan, No. 47, in Bordeaux*, and addresses him as ' dear brother.'

‘Paris, December 8, 1793.

‘MY DEAR BROTHER,— . . . Our cousin Bichette is very anxious about her husband ; she begs you will let her know why he does not give news of himself, and if he is still in the same quarters, so that she may write to him, as she wishes to do. She begs you to ask him what she is to do with all that is in the passage, and especially with all her music. . . .

‘I should like to know if you have recovered from the fatigue of your journey, for I was very anxious about you. Let me know if your situation is a good one, and if, later on, I shall be able to join you. Our cousin Bichette wishes this very much ; she is pining for you.

‘You remember that a few years ago we lent some candlesticks to Fondu ; my opinion is that we should ask him for them. I do not know how we stand with him, for we have had no accounts for the last three years. . . . When you write tell me how we stand with him, also where is the agreement you signed to him, and does it bear both your signatures ? Until now I have not been able to find it. He offered me to tear them up, but I refused. If you remain yonder and require a bed I will send you the one which I lent to Armandette. I expect your answer at once, for I am very anxious about you and wish to know whether you have received what I sent you. Good-bye ; take care of yourself. I am always

your big sister Ricardin. Our cousin Bichette kisses you. I gave you my address in my last letter.

‘My day husband and Rigaudon send you their compliments, so does the lady friend of the friends.’

‘This 12th of December, 1793.

‘MY DEAR COUSIN,—In answer to your letter without date, which we were expecting with impatience, all your letters reached me, but with some delay, on account of the distance at which I live. It was by mere chance that I went to Armandette. I beg you to forward them [your letters] all to the address I sent you. I cannot at present go on the errands which you give me. I am not very well ; I am a little feverish and have a swollen face, but as soon as the weather is milder I shall make a point of doing what you ask, and shall send everything. I shall forward you a coat. I cannot send you a uniform. When I was getting into my new house domiciliary visits were taking place ; your clothes were on my bed. Those gentlemen told me that it would be doing the nation a great service to make a present of them, as levies were being made. I thought I should be useful to my country ; therefore some one came for them. As for your summer clothes, I keep them for the present. Your frock coat I sent to have dyed another colour. As soon as this is done I shall

send it to you with all the things you ask for, as well as your tail-coat. . . .

‘. . . With regard to the paper which you ask for, I told you before that it was not possible for me to forward it to you ; I have already told you often enough that it was impossible for me to send it to you ; but as soon as my affairs are settled—and it will not be long, for it has been going on for more than six weeks—I shall do everything. If the administration of justice had not been stopped it would be all over, but I had a great deal of trouble with this suit. Most of those whom you obliged in former days would not help me. Several of them, however, did help me ; some of these I did not know, yet they gave me their aid. You see, my dear cousin, that it is very unfortunate for me that you are not here. You would have helped me very much. You would at least have come with me to all the places where I must go in person. The most trying is the going to town. Fortunately, I have my friend with me ; he advises and follows me everywhere. Concerning my furniture, make yourself at ease ; when I get the authorisation my intention is to put it in a safe place or to take it to my house. . . .’

Next comes a paragraph difficult to understand on account of two illegible words. A careful examination of the writing would make them look like

the Queen. Such a conclusion seems at first most improbable, for in the whole of the correspondence there is not a single word of politics, and still less any reference to the Temple, the personages who were incarcerated there, or the events which caused the flight of Toulan.

On the other hand, the tone of this passage is graver and more solemn than elsewhere. Moreover, after these words Madame Ricard speaks of the Queen sometimes in the masculine, sometimes in the feminine. One is inclined to believe that it is a question of a portrait, of which the writer speaks in the masculine when she refers to the object itself, and in the feminine when she means the person it represents.

Toulan wishes to have *the Queen* sent to him. The desire was as natural for him as it was unwise to express it. But, Toulan had been too often imprudent for us to notice his thoughtlessness, and it would not, therefore, be an objection in this case.

However that may be, here is the passage as I think it reads ; I give it as thus reconstructed, but I must make the greatest reservations when presenting it :—

‘I do not know why you want me to send you *the Queen*. You ask the reason, and I have already told you that it was too cruel ; but *it* is in a safe place, and I hope I shall take good care

of it. Besides, it is to my interest to take good care of *her*; *she* will never leave me unless I go to another country.'

Then she resumes her ordinary tone.

'I am delighted that you have received the 600 livres and opened a shop. I should like to go there sooner than you say. It is still a long time till June or July. Until then, my dear cousin, I have time to grow tired of this place.

' . . . My dear cousin, in the parcel I shall send you I shall put several letters for my husband, and you can send them by various boats or by sailors, and you can tell them that they will be rewarded by the person to whom they shall hand them. This person is requested to do so, as well as to answer at once, his wife being very anxious about him, and also to try to send her some money. If you like, I will send you a few almanac covers as well as all the pens I have, and the pair of compasses.

'Good-bye, cousin. I am your cousin

' RICARD.

'Your sweetheart Bichette kisses you with all her heart. She deeply longs to see you. All your kind friends remember you; they send their kindest regards. Sophie and Céleste Chevalier do the same.

'I beg you to use an envelope when you write me such a long letter, because I tore part of what you wrote about my husband. You say nothing of Chevalier; you must make inquiries and

say whether he is with the citizen Ricard. He was holding a Government office.

[In the margin :] 'Bichette says that she is annoyed about her shop. We are going out to-day on that account, and at the same time we shall do your errands. It is my day husband who comes with us.'

Their situation in Bordeaux, as well as in Paris, presented many difficulties. In Paris, where business was very slack, the book and music-shop—left to itself by Toulan—could not bring in much ; on the contrary, the rent had in any case to be paid. The two women were doing their best to convert their goods into money, but their activity and goodwill were often rendered useless by the hardness of the times. In Bordeaux the public scribe's business was not very profitable. Toulan thought of combining with it the sale of stationery and cockades, which more than ever, and for many reasons, were the rage at that time.

He had sent to Paris for several articles, and the two good women had been glad to get whatever he wanted with the little money they had. They entertained the secret hope of joining Toulan in Bordeaux if he succeeded, trusting they might enjoy with him a less uncertain and precarious life. Thus, whilst doing their best to overcome their financial difficulties, they did not forget the commissions which Toulan had given them, and by dint of skill and cleverness they managed to send him some goods suitable to the business he had in view.

‘December 19, 1793.

‘MY DEAR COUSIN,—‘I send by to-day’s coach the clothes for which you asked me; they go at the same time as your letter, but in my name. You can claim them in the name of Ricard. We have hastened to carry out all your commissions, with the exception of the pocket-book, which is much more expensive than you think. There are no more at two livres. I send you some cockades, not as many as I should have liked, because there were no more in the shop. However, if you want more of the large ones, and if you think them nice, let me know. . . .’

There follows a list of what she forwards. It contains almanac covers, sets of dominoes, large, small, and medium-sized cockades, rolls of red elastic for garters, a snuff box with ‘his good snuff,’ &c. &c.

‘Your frock coat is not yet ready; I shall send it to you in the next parcel, when I am able to send you all the papers I have. As for the white garters, I have used them for my petticoats, as I asked you. I have presented myself with a pair of red ones, a pair to Bichette, and one to old Mother Chevalier.

‘I am going out to-day, my dear cousin, to attend a family meeting. I should have liked to have you with me, but this is impossible. Bichette wants to come with me; this is a queer task I impose upon her.

‘. . . My day husband sends you his kind regards,

as well as I, who kiss you ; not to speak of your sweetheart Bichette, who loves you dearly. She complains that you make her and me wear out our shoes with all your errands, without counting the rest. I [am] your cousin for life. ‘ RICARD.

‘ I drank your health yesterday with all the friends of whom I speak. Rivière brought us a sausage. I send you, my cousin, three letters for my husband in your parcel.’

Her husband perhaps received the letters she sent him, but he did not answer them ; at any rate, he did not send her any money, and she was, and had cause to be, very much annoyed at this. In presence of his silence and desertion she made up her mind to avail herself of the facilities which had been lately introduced into the law, and she petitioned for a divorce.

It is at all times an important matter, and one of great anxiety, to have dealings with lawyers. The woman Ricard, who had no influential friends, had to experience many difficulties, and more than once she regretted not having near her her cousin Toulan, who was so active, so clever, and so capable of clearing up the most entangled affairs. She says so plainly :

‘ January 2, 1794.

‘ If the administration of justice had not been stopped, the business would have been finished.

What causes delay is that seals have been affixed to my writing-desk, and my marriage settlement is inside ; but in a few days I shall bestir myself to have the seals removed and get this business settled quickly. My divorce will be granted on the 25th of Nivôse [January 14], provided I can get the seals removed. . . . My dear cousin, I appreciate your friendship for me ; you may depend on my gratitude. I should like very much to see my affairs settled according to my desire and my advantage, but it would need a man like my dear cousin to wind them up, for they demand some active person. Ricardin, as you know, is a good fellow, but he is not quick in what he does. I have been waiting for my income for the last eighteen months my husband has been away. . . .'

But her good humour soon gained the upper hand, and in the midst of difficulties and straitened circumstances she could not refrain from making a joke. Toulan had been ill, but had recovered. Whilst sending him his wife's and her own good wishes for the new year, she sends him another parcel of small stationery, among which were a good many cockades.

She was still very anxious to start, although it was not very wise on her part, above all, to go to Bordeaux, where she would make her cousin's life more difficult than it was. The day husband thought so—very wisely. She could not resist the pleasure

of laughing at him in a pleasant manner, but she does it with wit and piquancy—which is rather astonishing in a common woman who had received little education and not much learning.

‘Paris, January 6, 1793.¹

‘MY DEAR COUSIN,—I forward you everything you asked for. . . . You will see from what I send how much money I have spent, and how it has cleared me out. I put all the bills in the parcel, so that you may be guided by them for your sale. I must tell you that cockades are going to rise in price, although this time I paid the same price for them as before ; but next time you want any you will have to pay more for them. . . .

‘As for selling my furniture, as I told you I would, at the place which I mentioned when writing to you, it is not possible ; I must turn my attention to some other method of raising money.

‘I cannot send you any more for the present, for I could not find anybody to oblige me. All your friends are very poor. When I am ready to start, and after I have turned everything into money, you must let me know all you want ; send me a complete list. For my part, if nothing better is proposed, I am of opinion that you must have a quantity of cotton, ribbons, pins, everything in use at present and indispensable ; also cockades if you want to sell

¹ This is meant for 1794.

them wholesale and think that you may make something by them ; but you must raise the price. . . .

‘All my friends send you their compliments. They still talk of you. They advise me to go. My day husband alone differs in opinion ; I do not know why. Do not be jealous of him ; you must remember he is for the day only. Nevertheless, I do not listen to him much. . . .

‘I wish you a happy new year. I wish it better with regard to your health, for you must not take it into your head to have such an illness every year ; doctors would earn too much with you. Bichette kisses you with all her heart. She urges you to take some strong medicine, together with oysters, and to drink our health. Good-bye.

‘I am your cousin

‘RICARDIN.’

By robbing their own Paris shop, by buying goods here and there with their paltry resources, and by working at their task with all their heart, these two women, tired, worn out, and even ill, had, however, succeeded in fitting up the small shop on the Quai de Royan with a pretty good stock, and Toulan began to talk of having his wife with him. He painted the situation in sufficiently brilliant colours, and, after the dangers that he had encountered, he thoroughly enjoyed the tranquil security in which he now lived. He did not despise a good meal, or at

least oysters, which he could easily get at the sea-side ; and, as he was not a shamefully selfish man, he used to talk about his small orgies, seasoning them with jokes, in which his usual talkativeness, full of mirth, found free scope.

Cousin Ricard would have liked to share Bichette's hope of soon leaving Paris, but being a clever woman she understood that it was not possible. She speaks of this with sound common sense in a letter at the end of January.

Her divorce had just been granted. She tells her cousin of this. Is she cheered by the thought of it ? Whatever may be the truth, the end of her letter is quite merry, and although she finds fault with Toulan for his broad and somewhat coarse jokes, which he uses too freely, she does not spare them either. As she complains that she cannot show his friends the Gascon's letters on account of his free expressions we shall avail ourselves of this indirect reproof and omit those in which she herself indulges.

‘ 7 Pluviôse—January 26.

‘ Armandette's brother wants to buy Voltaire's "Henriade,"¹ his "Pucelle," and the "Atlas National of France." You must write and tell me the price, as there is also a tradesman of the Palais Royal who asks for it. . . .

¹ She writes *Lanriade*.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY 241

‘As for me and Bichette, we are ill. Yesterday Bichette was suffering from a sick headache and over-fatigue from having been out too much, and to-day it is my turn. I cannot lift my head.

‘Your cousin Ricard is in despair at not being able to follow her friend Bichette ; she cannot afford for the present to join you. If her affairs are concluded in a satisfactory manner it will be a great pleasure for her to go. If I had no child I might find enough [money] with the little I could make. In that case I should not be a burden to you, for on starting in business one is always very short of money. I should enjoy the pleasure of being with you and my friend Bichette, but I am deprived of it. The cursed stain is very much against us. We went to the Convention to present a petition which we had prepared, and a few days ago we obtained the correct number in order to get whoever may seem good to them nominated to take the matter up ; I trust we shall succeed in the end. Your poor Bichette is very tired through it all ; she has her share, and more than she can bear. . . .

‘. . . My divorce is granted. . . .

‘. . . I am very glad you have eaten oysters. If we had shared them and drunk with you your bottle would not have made you tipsy. However, I speak on~~y~~ for you, as you do not write like an inebriated man ; your letter is too long for that. I don't know how much a time you will pay me

for reading your letters. Later on I shall employ a reader, if we can afford one. Go on, however ; it gives us pleasure. . . .

‘ I am your cousin with a bad headache.’

‘ 23rd of Pluviôse—February 11.

‘ MY DEAR COUSIN,—It strikes me you speak very easily of our going out every day, as if it were for our pleasure. Yet it is not very pleasant to go about in the mud. Bichette has tried every way ; she followed the one pointed out by Joly, as he wrote himself to several law-courts in order to arrive at something definite. He would like to blot out that stain, but he cannot do so without an authorisation. . . .

‘ You say that we are merry in the midst of our fatigues. Far from it. We are so in certain circumstances, especially when, finding the doors closed, we are obliged to cool our heels outside. In fact, when we receive a letter like that which has just reached us, and which we cannot show, we cannot help laughing. I hope that in future you will write more decent letters, for I dare not show them to anybody. . . . It seems to me that you were slightly merry when you wrote. . . .

‘ I beg you will not write such broad jokes, for I cannot show your letters to anybody. I must tell you that I received news of my husband through some Deputies of San Domingo. I did not receive a letter, because they were forbidden to

carry any ; they themselves have been robbed of all their luggage. They know him very well, and speak highly of him. He holds the post of chief clerk to the General and Superior Council ; it brings him 4,000 livres a year.'

What was that stain of which she twice speaks ? It is difficult to say. What appears probable is that the landlord of the shop had not been paid, and had distrained upon what remained in it. Such an explanation corroborates what Madame Ricard wrote on December 12 concerning the shop, about which Bichette was annoyed, and what she wrote on the 26th of Pluviôse—February 14.

These were not their only troubles. The reader will remember that Toulan had gone into partnership with a man called Fondard. The winding up of this partnership was not without its difficulties, and Cousin Ricard was afraid that she would not be capable of discussing the matter. Toulan's interests were dear to her, and this makes her write to him the same day :—

'This 23rd of Pluviôse—February 11.

'MY DEAR COUSIN,—I cannot help writing to you at once. Bichette to-day saw M. Fondu ; he was intending ten days later to dismiss all his clerks, on account of a decision which obliges him to transfer all his business to the Public Treasury. Therefore see from this what you want me to do in the matter. . . .

‘. . . I am very much afraid we shall lose every penny, because he is on very good terms with Visnique. As they are friends, and I am only a woman, they will work hand in hand. . . .

‘. . . Send me, then, a note in due form ; I shall produce it as if I had found it among your papers which are at my house. Bichette and your cousin wish you a good night, but Bichette kisses you.’

The more Bichette wished to join Toulan, the more numerous were the obstacles which made her postpone her journey from day to day. The two women, however, did not spare themselves any trouble.

‘This 26th of Pluviôse—February 14.

‘MY DEAR COUSIN,—I must write to you to-day, for I want an immediate answer to my letter. I am very angry with Bichette’s husband ; poor wretch ! she is laid up—quite worn out. She is very much grieved. There is no end to this dreadful business, in spite of all we have done. We are sent from one court to another. To-day she went and paid her rent in order to be able to sell up and be done. The *citoyenne* Bannier gave her to-day a demand for two years’ taxes, as you will see from the paper I forward you. I beg you will inform her husband of this, so that he may write at once whether he has paid them, and where he put the receipts. It

maddens her to see how things are going. I do my best to keep her patient, but it is very difficult.

‘I know that, for my own part, I would willingly give my own blood to have this business over and see her quiet. If this were to last much longer she could not stand it. It needs more than saying or writing, for if I had been she, I believe I should have given up everything. She says that if her son were not alive she would have died long ago.¹

‘We went yesterday to the citizen Guillioux with regard to Fondu. I urged him as strongly as I could to help him in this affair; at last he consented to do so. As soon as he is free we shall see that he bestirs himself.

‘Above all answer me at once, so that she may arrange to pay her rent. She was sent to the tax collector’s office to settle; but she refused to give any money before she knew whether you had paid or not. Good-bye. I am your cousin.’

Then follows a copy of the two tax sheets.

| | | | | Francs. |
|------------|--------------|---|---|--------------|
| Year 1791. | Taxes | . | . | 88.17 |
| ” | Poor tax | . | . | 4 |
| Year 1792. | Taxes | . | . | 95.5 |
| ” | Poor tax | . | . | 4 |
| ” | Food tax | . | . | 7 |
| | | | | <hr/> |
| | Total amount | . | | <u>199.3</u> |

¹ As the Toulans had no children, it is evident that the word ‘son’ means her husband.

This letter corroborates the explanation which I have given of the stain. In the first place it makes it clear that Bichette owed several quarters' rent, for the letters mention *rents*. Moreover, she tried to pay what she owed 'in order to be able to sell up and be done.' She could not sell so long as the landlord or landlady was not paid; it appears, indeed, that the *citoyenne* Bannier was the landlady.

It is easy to realise Germaine Toulan's disagreeable surprise when, upon taking her rent money she was confronted with the claim which was made by the Exchequer, the amount of which was far above the limited means of the two women. Before making this new sacrifice they wished to enquire, and Bichette very wisely retired and refused to pay before ascertaining whether her husband had not already settled the debt. She was aware that the Exchequer receives but does not repay.

They did well to act as they had done. Matters, which had looked very dark for them, suddenly changed, and unexpected ease followed their difficulties. The month of February was not over when all obstacles had vanished as by a miracle. Bichette was at last free to start by coach to join her husband in Bordeaux.

Cousin Ricard did not look forward to the parting without anguish of heart. She could not herself go to Bordeaux. She might probably return to Toulouse to live with her relatives, but such a

prospect was only half a consolation. She was sad at not going to stay with her cousin Toulan, and still more so at losing her good friend Bichette.

However, she was a strong-minded woman, and her sorrow, though sincere, did not lead her to forget that they had been successful in winding up their business, nor that the husband and wife would be happy in being again together. The letter she wrote on this occasion is noteworthy, not on account of its style, but for the feelings it expresses. One feels that she is a good and honest creature.

‘ 9th of Ventôse—February 28.

‘ MY DEAR COUSIN,—I send you good news. We are victorious ; our stain is blotted out and my affairs are well advanced. Next Sunday I shall pack my bed and my boxes. I shall let you know on which day my friend Bichette will start. I think it will be one day next week. I see two people who are very glad, but I cannot say as much for myself. My turn may perhaps come at last ; my sole desire is to pass through Bordeaux, to take leave of you and urge you to travel with me. As you see, our affairs are well advanced and I no longer require the tax schedules. She has got rid of and is quit of that ; she will tell you how. It would take too long to write about it.

‘ My friend Bichette has no more troubles and her heart is glad. She has in hand her passport in

due form. With patience one overcomes every difficulty. She has sold all her furniture at a good price. To-day my furniture is to be sold, and on Saturday we shall buy the goods which you asked for. They will go with the bed and boxes, or else we shall have everything sent to the Grand Café, in the Rue Saint-Denis. As you see, everything is going on all right, and I trust you will never be in a bad humour any more.

‘When you receive this letter my friend Bichette will surely have started, but, to keep your mind at ease, I will write to you what day she takes the coach, so that you may be sure of the day she will arrive. Do not fail to prepare a good soup and good wine for her. Drink a glass to my health. Sophie kisses you with all her heart, as well as Céleste and Mother Chevalier.

‘Good-bye. We kiss you with all our hearts ; all your friends do the same.

‘I am your cousin

‘RICARD.’

Madame Toulan arrived in Bordeaux during the first week of March. The dark days were over. After a year of emotions and dangers the pair were again united. Reassured as to the future, husband and wife were at last going to enjoy quietness and security. At least they hoped so.

Their joy was of short duration. Three weeks after his wife’s arrival Toulan was thrown into prison.

CHAPTER VIII

Germaine Toulan in Bordeaux—News from Paris—Trial of Toulan's Accomplices (November 1793)—They are Acquitted—Toulan resumes his own Name—His Card of Citizenship—He is arrested on 5th of Germinal, Year II. (March 25, 1794)—His Examination—He is denounced to Isabeau—The Latter pays no Heed—Toulan in Prison.

MADAME RICARD always avoided, in her correspondence with her cousin, giving political news. She was wise to be silent, and this had certainly contributed largely to ensure the fugitive's security.

As soon as his wife had joined him in Bordeaux Toulan altered his conduct. He threw off his borrowed personality and was daring enough to openly take his real name. Only his shop still retained the name of Roch Alimestre. He gave up living there, and took up his quarters again at the citizen Babéin's, to whose inn he had brought his wife on her arrival.

What was the reason for this seeming imprudence and bravado on the part of a man usually so cautious? His wife was unconsciously the cause of it by the news she had brought him from Paris.

Since his departure from the capital events had

occurred there which were calculated to have a direct and considerable influence upon his position.

In consequence of the Rougeville-Michonis episode, which was so pompously and so inappropriately called the 'Conspiration de l'Œillet,' and at the time when the Queen's trial again called attention to all who had been more or less implicated with her, warrants were issued for the arrest of various personages who were accused of connivance with 'the Capet family.'

Ten municipal officials were committed for trial. These were Dangé, the grocer ; Lepître ; Nicholas Lebœuf, teacher ; Jean Beugnot, architect ; Germain Jobert, merchant ; François Moelle ; Bruno ; Vincent ; Michonis, coffee-house keeper ; and Toulan.

The reader will remember how the latter managed to elude arrest. Bruno likewise escaped. As for Lepître, Dangé, and Lebœuf, they were taken to Sainte-Pélagie ; Moelle and Jobert were taken to l'Abbaye ; Vincent, Beugnot, and Michonis to La Force.

Some of them appeared as witnesses during the Queen's trial, but their case did not come before the Revolutionary Tribunal until the 28th of Brumaire—November 18.

They had been taken to the Conciergerie five days earlier.

Lepître looked very proud on meeting there Barnave, Duport-Dutertre, and the superior of the seminary of Saint Sulpice, the venerable Emery. Flat-

tered at having such companions, he made up his mind to secure the services of Chauveau-Lagarde for his counsel—the famous lawyer who had defended Charlotte Corday, Marie Antoinette, and Brissac, and who appeared in most of the important cases of that time. As ill luck would have it, Chauveau-Lagarde was prevented from pleading that day for Lepître, who was obliged to fall back on a counsel called Vincent of no great reputation.

A M. Fontaine and his sweetheart, Sophie Lebon, whom the accused did not know, but who had been arrested in connection with the Rougeville matter, were tried at the same time. Michonis being implicated in this last case, the two were joined in one indictment, although there was no connection between them.

Magistrates were not very particular in those days, and so much the worse for the accused when indictments could be confused. This slight inconvenience, which, however, Fouquier-Tinville did not regard as one, enabled the Court to deal quickly with cases, and did not impair the indictment. This alone was considered as important. The Chevalier de Rougeville, who was included in the case with Toulan and Bruno, had likewise managed to escape.

The case lasted two days and took up four sittings.

If the fact of having had intercourse with the Temple prisoners, or with Marie Antoinette at the

Conciergerie, was to involve a sentence, it was certain that all, or nearly all, would be doomed. But there happened in this case a thing almost unique in the judiciary annals of that period.

The Commune exerted itself to save the accused. None of the members deposed against them. If they could not prevent the gatekeeper Mathey from making charges against some of them, especially Lepître, the magistrates, on the other hand, did not even examine Tison. There was an understanding that the municipal officers who were still members of the Council, beginning with Michonis, were to be saved ; and others, such as the Professor, escaped with them. It was not that their counsel was eloquent. On the contrary, Vincent's defence of Lepître was so poor that the latter cut him short and spoke in his place. And although this change in the defence could not alter a sentence which was decided upon beforehand it enabled Lepître to take the credit of it to himself. He therefore experienced a double joy when he heard that he and his fellow prisoners were acquitted. They were at once released.

Michonis alone was found guilty. There were grave charges against him, and he had evidently taken a part in the ill-defined or not well known Rougeville affair. But, although he was found to have been privy to it, he was discharged on the ground that he had no criminal intention. The judges, however, dared not release him at once,

and they applied to him the famous law of suspects. He was sentenced to prison until general peace should be made (Art. 10 of the law of September 17).¹

The decree was silent concerning the fugitives, Toulan, Bruno, and Rougeville. This omission could be interpreted in two different ways. It was possible to argue that, the Court not having returned a verdict of acquittal with reference to their particular case, they were liable to be again called to account and sentenced; on the other hand, no sentence having been passed and their accomplices having been found not guilty, their case was thus definitely decided, and they ought to have the benefit of this favourable decision.

Toulan's wife, who was acquainted with the result of the trial without knowing the particulars, thought that the acquittal applied without distinction to all the accused, and her husband shared her opinion on this point. It is only just to say that it was in no way contrary to law, and that it was even sound common sense. The ex-commissioner believed he was acquitted as well as his colleagues. Therefore why should he hide himself any longer? Why should he run the risk of becoming suspect in order to escape from a peril which no longer existed?

It was, then, neither out of imprudence nor

¹ National Record Office, W 296, No. 261.

from bravado, that he resumed his own name. Besides, this was not the cause of his arrest.

At that period popular mistrust, carried to an extreme, gave rise to secret accusations everywhere. Every man believed he was called upon to save the Republic one and indivisible, whose existence was constantly threatened, and accusations rained upon the Offices of the Department and of the Commune.

The latter never disregarded a denunciation, and either made a rapid enquiry or more often arrested the victim. In order to avoid inconvenience to recognised or self-styled patriots by preventive measures the committees created a card of citizenship which was given personally to trustworthy men. The want of such a card might entail the worst consequences.

Unfortunately for him, Toulan was denounced to the Revolutionary Committee of Bordeaux. Was this accusation made by a too enthusiastic citizen or was it due to vengeance on the part of a neighbour, perhaps an ill-tempered customer? Was it only through ill-luck? No one knows; but the Revolutionary Committee certainly treated Alimestre-Toulan as a suspect. He was asked to produce his card of citizenship. But he had none, and this for a good reason. Unable to show it and to prove that he was 'a good citizen'—what kind of proofs were wanted?—he was arrested and incarcerated on the 5th of Germinal, Year II.—March 25, 1794.

Vague rumours of the charges laid against

him had reached Bordeaux ; this incident had roused them.

Toulan, however, confident in the verdict of November 19, did not try to deny his identity, and showed on the following day, when he was examined, perfect frankness, save on certain points where too explicit answers might have injured the friends who had helped him.

His replies, never lacking in cleverness, revealed perfect serenity of mind. He evidently thought he was the victim of some misunderstanding, but he was convinced that this error would soon be cleared up, and had not the slightest idea that he ran any danger through being arrested.

The Bordeaux Revolutionary 'Comité de Surveillance' had appointed a member to examine Toulan, and this member, the citizen Coste junior, did not appear to be convinced of the prisoner's guilt ; therefore it was with a certain amount of kindness that he examined him on the very first day after his arrest, the 6th of Germinal, Year II. —March 26, 1794.

This examination, except for the form of it—and even this results mainly from the clerk's rendering—looks more like a conversation, for it has no definite line, no fixed plan.

'Your name, age, residence, vocation, birth-place, and last abode?'

'François Adrien Toulan, thirty-three years old,

born in Toulouse, public scribe and hardwareman in Bordeaux, living at No. 20 Rue Quai-Bourgeois.'¹

'Has he always carried on business as public scribe or hardwareman?'

'Before and at the beginning of the Revolution he was a book- and music-seller in Paris, after which he was clerk, then manager of an office for the settlement of emigrants' property in Paris.'

'Has he resigned his managership at the emigrants' office?'

'Yes.'

'Was he in charge of the receipt of money on account of the Republic?'

'No; he was in charge of nothing but the claims of the emigrants' creditors and of statements made in favour of the Republic.'

'Why did he resign?'

'Because having opened, in partnership with the citizen Fondard, an agency for the prompt settlement of creditors' claims, and his attendance at his own office being necessary, he sent in his resignation to the managers, who accepted it.'

'Did he not open a private office with the citizen Fondard rather to favour the emigrants, taking advantage of the post to which he had been appointed, than to forward the so-called winding-up of claims in favour of the Republic?'

This was an insidious question. Toulan replied

¹ This must have been the address of Babéin's lodging-house.

with as much firmness as usual, but could not refrain from being ironical at the end.

‘This office being worked in accordance with a law ordering creditors to associate in order to hasten the winding up of their claims, he agreed with the citizen Fondard to get the assistance of one or several lawyers to keep within the meaning of the law and accelerate a settlement ; it must be observed that as long as he filled his post he could not do anything but hurt the emigrants’ interests, and he had never thought he was serving them by opening an office for selling their estates or paying their creditors.’

‘In what year did he go to Paris ?’

‘In August 1787.’

‘In which section did he live, in which street, and where was his domicile ?’

‘He lived successively in three sections, the first of which was at the time only the Louvre district. When sections were organised this became the Feuillants Section ; but his office work making it necessary that he should live nearer the Town Hall, he removed to the section of that name, and took up his abode at No. 13 Rue du Monceau-Saint-Gervais, opposite Lorme.’

‘Was he living there on May 1, 1789 ?’

‘He was in the Louvre district.’

‘Did he fill any other post in the Paris Commune ?’

‘He had been appointed section commissioner, and consequently was elected twice as representative

of the Commune, first of the 10th of August Commune, then of the provisional Commune.'

'With which citizen did he associate more particularly?'

'Owing to his situation he was called to associate with all conditions of people; but having regard to nothing but his work he did nothing more than what his vocation demanded from him; his day's work over, he was again a member of society; he saw people belonging to his section, the Commune, and the members of the "Club des Hommes du Dix Août," to which he belonged.'

'When did he leave the city of Paris?'

'On October 7, 1793, at 10 A.M.'

'What principles did he hold concerning the Republic until May 31 last?'

'Those of a patriot, who considers nothing but his mother country; one who, a stranger to parties, regards and serves his country alone, guided as he is by the same principles which prompted him on June 30, 1789, to devote himself to the public welfare, offering of his own free will to go to the Assemblée Nationale, which was then up in arms, beg for the pardon of the Gardes Françaises, and request that their colonel should be punished for his arbitrary actions, which caused them to be imprisoned;¹ he

¹ This sentence is badly constructed; it should be 'and that their colonel should be punished for sending them to prison, thus acting in an arbitrary manner.'

obtained a decree, brought it back to the people, and has ever since thought and acted in the same way.'

'At what time did he cease to be a municipal officer?'

'When the present municipality was definitely organised.'

'Can he produce good testimonials for the time he resided in Paris, as well as a safe-conduct to leave this place?'

'He never asked for testimonials, but his various appointments ought to stand for such testimonials. As to his conduct, not a single Frenchman can reproach him with anything. He had not his safe-conduct when he left, although it never was refused him whenever he asked for it.'

'Why did he leave Paris?'

'Because they had come to arrest him; but his wife's sorrow, and the inward feeling which naturally prompts a man to flee from persecution, and also the conviction he had that the Government could not issue a warrant against him on account of his conduct and opinions unless it had been misled through some arbitrary deed, made him resolve to escape. He remarked, and if necessary would appeal to those who had come to arrest him to witness to it, that until his escape he had shown due regard and obedience to the Government mandatories; and if he employed a little cunning in order

to escape, he neither committed nor intended to commit any act of violence.'

'Was he aware of the reasons of his arrest?'

'If he had known them nothing would have induced him to obey the warrant; but it was only when in the coach which runs between Corbeil and Auxerre that a citizen, a chief at the head of one of the Paris legions, told him that he was accused before the Commune of holding private conversations with the prisoners at the Temple, and showed him a newspaper relating the accusation. . . .'

The clear and clever way in which Toulan gave his answers evidently made a deep impression on the commissioner who examined him. All was said in such a sincere and open manner that he did not know what to think of it. His perplexity was manifest in the next question.

'Far from the accusation being based upon that conversation, was he not on intimate footing with Brissot and the Girondins?'

At that time danger was indeed to be found on every side; it smote the Royalists as well as the Republicans. Hébert had just been guillotined; Danton's turn was to come ten days later; the Girondins, defeated on March 31, died on the scaffold a fortnight before Marie Antoinette.

But Toulan, who was strongly on his guard against the charges to which he was liable, was not slow in answering on a point where his conduct was

unimpeachable even in the eyes of the greatest anti-revolutionists, and he did so with assurance and in words which are not lacking in piquancy.

He said that, careful not to belong to any party, he had always had a horror of agitators ; he saw Brissot only once, both of them being district presidents, and this was at the Federation procession of 1790 ; he had never spoken to him, and did not remember ever seeing any Deputy for the Gironde department.

‘What were his opinions of the measures decided upon by the Convention on May 31 and June 1 and 2 ?’

‘Holding a municipal office, he was sent with several of his colleagues to ask the neighbouring communes to join the Paris municipality, so as to form a single body, and he behaved like a patriot ; as to this, he appealed to the testimony of his fellow travellers. He remarked that he was one of the members of the Commune who signed the petition asking that the twenty-two Deputies should be put on their trial. . . .’

On hearing such clear answers the commissioner, struck by the proofs of good-citizenship furnished by Toulan in the Girondin affair, came back to his first accusation. He asked him ‘if he really had held intercourse with the prisoners at the Temple.’

‘He stated, as he did before the Commune after

an accusation made previously by Tison, the manservant of the prisoners, that whilst on duty his mission was limited to watching the prisoners ; he was never ordered to molest them ; he never spoke to them, save in the presence of colleagues, and only on indifferent subjects, which had no connection with the prisoners or the Revolution. He never answered questions of that kind but in an evasive manner, so as not to compromise his dignity or the interests of the Republic. Yes or No was his usual answer, and even this was only in reply to very indifferent questions. Moreover, he remarked that in the thirteen times he had been on duty at the Temple, which made altogether twenty-six days, he never was one single minute alone with the prisoners.'

'Being certain that he had nothing to reproach himself with in the discharge of his duties, and knowing the accusations brought against him, how was it that he tried to avoid submitting to the law ?'

'A similar denunciation had been made, and the seals had been affixed to his papers at his own request ; he thought this denunciation had been taken for what it was worth, as it did not contain a single word of truth ; seeing on one hand unrelenting animosity, although he had been found to be innocent, as the warrant made no mention of the reason of his arrest, as it should have done in order to be in conformity with the law, he saw in such persecution the long-concocted plan of evil-minded

men against patriots, and thought it wise to escape from it until the truth should be made plain, as it had been at last, since the Revolutionary Tribunal had acquitted him at the same time as those accused with him ; he would explain later why he resumed his own name.'

He was so affirmative, so clear that the commissioner ceased questioning him on the main point of the accusation, and asked him secondary questions about himself, his condition, and the various circumstances of his departure from Paris.

'Was he married? What was his wife's name? Had he any children?'

'He had been married since July 1787. His wife was Françoise Germaine Dumasbon. He had no children.'

'Where was his wife staying?'

'His wife had always followed in his footsteps ; but although she was not learned, her heart was thoroughly French, and she rejoiced with him over the Revolution. They parted only, as he said before, when he left Paris, and about a fortnight since she had joined him in Bordeaux, as he was sure that, being found innocent, he would live there peacefully on the fruits of his labour, like the good republican that he was.'

'Since he said he was a native of Toulouse, how was it he did not seek refuge among his relatives rather than come to Bordeaux?'

‘He did go there at first ; but hearing on his arrival that news of the charge against him had preceded him, he was afraid to remain in a place where he was very well known, and preferred to stay in Bordeaux, where he had worked previously, but where he would not be easily recognised.’

‘Was this on the faith of a passport given by the Neuilly municipality, which he handed over to his section on October 6 last ?’

‘When he fled he went to a friend’s house. This friend, who did not live far from the Neuilly municipality, offered to obtain a passport for him. At his friend’s request it was filled up by himself, and the following day he brought him the passport quite ready ; it was this which enabled him to reach Toulouse, and it was stamped twice on the way.’

‘What was that friend’s name, and where was he staying ?’

‘He would not tell.’

‘Why, having reached Toulouse, had he taken on October 26 a passport under the name of Roch Alimestre, since his name was François Toulan ?’

‘As he said before, the charge against him had preceded him to Toulouse. To have asked for a passport in his own name would only have ensured his arrest. Some one, whose name he would never divulge, asked for one under the name of Rosalie Mestre, but the secretary made a mistake and wrote “Ros Alimestre” ; he himself wanted to use this

passport, being unable to do otherwise, and seeing the scratching out, and the similarity in the description, he made use of it to go to Bordeaux.'

'What had been his means of living since coming to Bordeaux?'

'His work, an honest life, the little money his wife sent him from Paris, his savings whilst he was a clerk, and the amount he had derived from the sale of his business and furniture in Paris.'

'Did he on his arrival at Bordeaux register his name at the municipality, and if so which of his names?'

'The citizen Babein's books would prove that on his arrival he was registered under the name of Alimestre; since then he and the citizen Babein had agreed that his name should not be removed from the books as if he had left, for he slept at his shop on the Royan quay, so that he might be found if he were wanted by those who thought that he was still staying at the citizen Babein's house; in fact, he was now living there, at least since his wife came; he also said that, although he was hiding, he was desirous to obey the law, and had his name Roch Alimestre put over his shop.'

'What sort of things did he write as a public scribe?'

'He wrote only letters, petitions. . . .'

And as at that time nothing could end without a solemn declaration of the rights of the State and

of God—although both were practically denied by the very men who most strongly affirmed them—to a last question, ‘When he wrote petitions, did he ever attempt to slander the constituted authorities in order to aid intrigue and the aristocracy?’ Toulan replied, perhaps with sincerity, ‘that every constituted authority being, in his opinion, after the Supreme Being, most worthy of respect, he was incapable of slandering or belittling them.’

Thus closed this long examination, during which the Gascon with extraordinary shrewdness took advantage of the smallest loophole in a question, and so answered as to clear himself in the eyes of his judge. In fact, his cleverness was very near being crowned with success.

When he was arrested the police had seized in his room his two passports, his correspondence with Rosalie Lafont and Belon, all his cousin Ricard’s letters, and various papers. The whole had been made into a parcel, sealed, and taken to the Comité de Surveillance. The seals were broken the day after his examination and the parcel made up again in his presence. This is proved by a report relative to it :

‘On this day, 8th of Germinal, Year II. of the French Republic,

‘We, members of the purifying committee of the Brutus section, together with Dorgueil, member of the Comité de Surveillance, betook ourselves to the

prisons of the Palais Brutus, in order to ask the citizen Toulan to come with us, so that he might be present at the breaking of the seals which were affixed by the undersigned, who were authorised to do so by the Comité de Surveillance. Being there, we proceeded, and after seeing that they were whole and in good condition, and carefully verifying every paper, we decided to take them away and submit them to the Committee ; the citizen Toulan agreed to this. We wrapped them up in a sheet of paper and sealed them in his presence. We found moreover a medal struck in commemoration of the Tenth of August, 1792 (old style), and a certificate. We made a complete report of all.

‘Bordeaux : the said day and year as above.

‘LEMAITRE, TOULAN, DORGUEIL, DOCHE.’

The presence of this Tenth of August medal among Toulan's papers made a deep impression on the members of the Committee. How could a patriot worthy of such a reward be guilty of associating in conspiracy with the enemies of France and betraying the Republic ? Doubt entered their minds, and, whilst remanding Toulan, they availed themselves of the stay in Bordeaux of Isabeau, a representative of the people, to enquire about the prisoner, and ask him, if necessary, to write to Paris on this matter.

Isabeau promised to do what they asked ; but he had to attend to more important affairs than that of a municipal officer who was implicated in an episode of more than a year ago. No sooner did he leave Bordeaux than he forgot all about the mission he had accepted.

Time, however, was passing, and no information came. Toulan was still in prison. The members of the Committee began to feel doubtful, and, deciding to put an end to this awkward situation, they in consequence applied directly to the Paris municipality.

Their letter is interesting for more than one reason—first, because it expresses their apprehensions with great simplicity, and then because it contains expressions which show the ridiculous zeal of a provincial committee who pile up words and epithets. For those Bordeaux people the words ‘Égalité, Liberté, Fraternité’ were not sufficient, and it was necessary to do more than proclaim the Republic one and indivisible. They added to the headings of their note paper expressions in keeping with their patriotic feelings :

‘ÉGALITÉ, LIBERTÉ, FRATERNITÉ, VERTU.

‘Bordeaux : the 26th of Floréal, Year II.

—May 15, 1794—of the French Republic one, indivisible, and imperishable.

‘To the Public Prosecutor.¹

‘To advise the police.

‘To advise the Bordeaux Commune.

‘The Revolutionary Comité de Surveillance of the Bordeaux Commune to the Paris Municipality :

‘Brethren and friends, two months ago we arrested the citizen Toulan, a native of Toulouse, and an inhabitant of Paris for several years, who lived in two different sections, on the Feuillants and afterwards on a section of that name, 13 Rue de Monceau-Saint-Gervais, opposite Lorme.

‘Toulan filled, he said, several public posts, such as clerk and chief clerk at the office for the Paris emigrants’ estates. As commissioner of his section, he was, in consequence, twice elected representative of the Commune of the 10th of August and the Provisional Commune. On May 31, June 1 and 2, he, being an official, was sent to ask the neighbouring Communes to join the Paris municipality. He ceased to fill those posts, he added, when the present Commune was definitely organised.

‘This citizen left Paris for Toulouse on October 7, and absconded, as there was a warrant out against him, issued by the constituted authorities of Paris, as he was suspected of having held secret conversations with the prisoners incarcerated at the Temple.

‘This citizen was arrested here for having neither

¹ Notes written by a member of the Paris municipality.

a card of citizenship nor anything which might prove that he was a good citizen.

‘ We therefore invite you, brethren and friends, to enlighten us as to this citizen. If, as he said in his examination, he is a sincere patriot, he deserves to enjoy his freedom and the esteem of his fellow citizens; if, on the contrary, he betrayed the confidence of his country, he deserves to be hated like a traitor.

‘ Salut et fraternité.

‘ The members of the Committee,

‘ MOREL (chairman), BARREAU,
LAYE, PLENAUD.’

On the following day these same members of the Committee thought that they had perhaps made a mistake in sending their letter to the Paris municipality, and they decided to inform directly the great purveyor of the guillotine, Fouquier-Tinville himself. They thought he must know Toulan, who had appeared before him, from what they understood him to have said.

‘ ÉGALITÉ, LIBERTÉ, FRATERNITÉ, VERTU.

‘ Bordeaux : the 27th of Floréal,
Year II.—May 16, 1794
—of the French Republic
one, indivisible, and in-
destructible.

‘The Revolutionary Comité de Surveillance of the Bordeaux Commune to the Public Prosecutor to the Revolutionary Tribunal of Paris :

‘We arrested as suspect about two months ago the citizen Toulan, who in his examination stated to us that he was in 1791 a municipal official, and afterwards a section commissioner, &c. He also declared that he had appeared before your tribunal and was acquitted.

‘As we had doubts concerning this individual we forwarded a copy of his examination to the citizen Izabeau [*sic*], a representative of the people, who kindly undertook to write to Paris to make an enquiry about him. We have been expecting this information every day ; but seeing the time elapse without receiving anything we made up our minds to apply to you for the information we require. You must know him, since he was tried at your bar ; in any case it will not be difficult for you to do us the service which we require of you, by making a short enquiry. We wish it all the more since we do not ourselves know the citizen Toulan. We should grieve very much if he did not deserve the imprisonment which he endures. If he be guilty we shall have him tried, but if he be innocent we must release him at the earliest date.

‘Be so kind, brother friend, as to clear up our uncertainty.

‘Be so kind as to enable us to know Toulan,

and depend upon the affection which your brethren and friends have vowed to you.

‘The Members of the Committee,
 ‘MOREL (chairman), BARREAU (secretary),
 LAYE, BLANCARD junior, PLENAUD.’

Their precautions were praiseworthy but superfluous. In those days an accusation seldom went astray. The Paris municipality hastened to transmit the letter of the Bordeaux citizens to Fouquier-Tinville.

‘Paris : 4th of Prairial, Year II. of the
 French Republic—May 23, 1794.

‘The Mayor of Paris to the Public Prosecutor to
 ‘the Revolutionary Tribunal.

‘CITIZEN,—I send herewith the letter written on the 26th of Floréal to the Paris Municipality by the Revolutionary Comité de Surveillance of the Bordeaux Commune. As you are in a position to have exact information on the citizen Toulan, who is mentioned in this letter, I thought it my duty to forward it to you, so that you may proceed against this individual as you may think fit.

‘Salut et fraternité.

‘LESCOT-FLEURIOT.’

The administrators of police came to the rescue.

‘Paris Commune, Police Department :

‘ 5th Prairial—May 24, 1794—
Year II. of the French
Republic one and indivisible.

‘To the Citizen Public Prosecutor to the
Revolutionary Tribunal.

‘CITIZEN,—The citizen Mayor has informed us that he forwarded to you a letter which he received from the Comité de Surveillance of Bordeaux relative to the arrest in that city of the citizen Toulan, who absconded last October in order to escape from a warrant issued against him, he being accused of holding secret conversations with the Temple prisoners. We inform you that we have at our office a copy of the report upon his escape, and the affixing of seals to his papers. Should this document be useful to you let us know, and we shall forward it to you at once.

‘The Police Administrators
SOUQUOY, MUZET.’¹

It is a pity that Fouquier-Tinville did not consider the document which was offered to him useful, for we might then still possess it. Instead of being placed amongst the *dossiers* of the Revolutionary Tribunal, which, having been sent to the National

¹ National Record Office, W 296, No. 261.

Record Office, were all kept, it remained at the Hôtel de Ville, and disappeared in the fire which destroyed that building in 1871—a fire which was lit by the successors of Souquoy and Muzet.

The terrible Public Prosecutor, Fouquier-Tinville, put upon the scent by these letters and accusations, remembered full well Toulan, the municipal who had defied the representatives of the Commune and had managed to evade his Revolutionary Tribunal. At last he was caught!

Fouquier immediately wrote upon the margin of the denunciation made by the Comité de Surveillance the following instructions:—

‘ Look for the Michonis documents.

‘ Ask for the indictment against Toulan.

‘ Answer this letter and say that Toulan was accused, but did not come before the Court, and that, on the contrary, he fled. Request the Committee to execute as early as possible the subjoined warrant.

‘ Then return me this letter.

‘ Written on the 7th of Prairial.¹ Sent the warrant.’

Being thus warned, the members of the Comité de Surveillance, rejoicing over their capture, proud of their discernment, and happy in being able to send to the scaffold a man who had escaped from

¹ May 26, 1794.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY 275

the Revolutionary Tribunal, sent Toulan to Paris with all despatch.

They wrote to the Public Prosecutor on the 15th of Prairial, Year II.—June 3, 1794—

‘BROTHER AND FRIEND,—In accordance with the request you made us we embark to-day the citizen Toulan under the guard and responsibility of the gendarmerie, to whom we have entrusted a parcel for you, containing—

‘1. His examination.

‘2. The report on the breaking of the seals.

‘3. Two passports, one from Toulouse and the other from Neuilly.

‘You will also find in the same parcel the papers which were seized at his residence when the seals were broken.

‘We hope you will be pleased at the promptitude with which we have sent you this parcel. You may always rely on our zeal in helping you in your painful work.

‘We remain your Friends and Brethren,
the Members of the Committee,

‘PLENAUD (secretary) ; MICHENOT (chairman).’

We have no document to tell us in what state of mind Toulan had been since his examination. He was in prison and in close custody. His wife was unable to help him, for even when she was in

Paris, in less critical circumstances, she had required the aid and advice of her cousin Ricard. Besides, whom did she know in Bordeaux? To whom could she apply in a town where she had arrived only a few days before? Her only hope now, if she retained any, was in the Gascon's cleverness and in the good luck which had till then been his.

The respite which Isabeau by his silence unwittingly procured for the prisoner was a good omen. Who knows? Toulan was perhaps hopeful; maybe he flattered himself he would be able once more to ward off the blow with which he was threatened and thus again escape from his enemies.

But fortune was growing weary; it forsook the unfortunate man. He who had braved the greatest dangers, he who had many a time saved his life in the worst of circumstances, was now the victim of a very trifling matter. He had no card of citizenship, and this was sufficient reason for his being sent to prison.

He was examined, and scorned denial. Besides had he not been acquitted before, and was he not a patriot? Beyond the compassion which led him to associate with the friends of royalty and to take part in a conspiracy whose object was not so much to injure the Republic, which was perfectly safe against any possible attempt, as to help a woman, a captive mother, what did they reproach him with? Where could they find a citizen who gave better

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONSPIRACY 277

proofs of patriotism than he? He could appeal to witnesses, he could quote dates—June 30, 1789; August 10, 1792; May 31 and June 1 and 2, 1793. He could show his commemoration medal, and his signature to the petition against the twenty-two. Vain defence! Fouquier admitted no palliations, and crimes, or what he considered such, could not be atoned for.

From the time of his arrest, Toulan's history is contained entirely in official documents, prosy and simple, like the Bordeaux ones—cold and awful, like the Paris ones.

Upon the last letter Fouquier wrote—

‘Warrant and duplicate received on the 4th of Messidor—June 22.

‘Conciergerie.’

Everyone knows what this word meant.

CHAPTER IX

Increase of the Terror—The Guillotine is taken to the Place du Trône Renversé—Toulan in Paris—The Revolutionary Tribunal—Judges and Jurymen—The Indictment—His Companions—Verdict—Sentence of Death—Execution.

THE Terror was increasing.

In order to find a pretext for condemnation the murderers had invented fabulous conspiracies both in prisons and abroad. Every man who was arrested was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal and found guilty of having taken part in either one or the other. And as these two conspiracies never existed it was very difficult to clear one's self of the charge.

Those who escaped sentence were few—not more than one in ten. As to the number sentenced, it was twelve hundred and sixty-nine from March 10, 1793, to June 10, 1794, and from that date to the 9th of Thermidor it amounted to fourteen hundred victims. Every day whole batches of them were sent before the Court and executed immediately after being sentenced. 'Things are going well,' Fouquier said; 'heads are falling like tiles.'

The dismal cart at first took the victims to the

Place de la Révolution, formerly the Place Louis XV., and now the Place de la Concorde. But the inhabitants of that district, above all those who lived in the Rue Saint-Honoré, complained of spectacles which injured their trade and interfered with the everyday business of life. Their complaint was taken into consideration, and the scaffold was removed first to the Place de la Bastille, and then to the Vincennes Gate, also called the Trône Renversé, and at the present day the Place du Trône.

Such protests, notwithstanding the Terror, pointed to a state of mind ready for a reaction. In fact, this feeling was dormant in every heart, except in the case of a few Montagnards who were behind their time. Even Robespierre himself was inclined to be lenient, thinking that enough blood had already been spilt.

But he had not sufficient strength of character to stand against the agitation which was then in full swing, and of which, in spite of himself, he was the personification. He was considered, and not unreasonably, as an accomplice in all the crimes committed during the Revolution and as responsible for all the executions. This popular belief was justified by the double execution of the Hébertists and Dantonists.

Such a Government, which was possible only as the result of the greatest political movement of modern times, when the last bonds of ancient society

were breaking on every side, and when foreign enemies were attacking and endangering the country, could not last. Could Toulan, who arrived in Paris on the 4th of Messidor—June 22—escape from Fouquier's hands until the reaction which was anticipated and certain should take place?

Whether he felt the ground giving way under his feet, or whether death called for other deaths, Fouquier was in a hurry. He was indefatigable; and, thanks to him, the Tribunal was constantly and well provided with victims.

A week after his arrival the ex-member of the Commune was arraigned before his unrelenting judges, on the 12th of Messidor—June 30. The indictment so far as he was concerned had been drawn up by the Public Prosecutor with open dishonesty—

‘Antoine-Quentin Fouquier *re* François-Adrien Toulan,’ &c.

‘It results, from a careful examination of the documents sent to the Public Prosecutor, that Toulan had intercourse with the woman Capet, that he had private conversations with her; one day in particular Toulan ordered Capet junior and his sister to be shut up in one of the turrets, in order to be alone with the two women. In fact, he talked with them for about an hour and a half, after which time the two children were allowed to return. On another occasion Toulan was heard to say to the widow Capet and her

sister Elisabeth that every evening at half-past ten he would send close to the Temple a newsvendor to call out whatever news might be of interest to them. It was observed that one night the two women did not go to bed until 11 o'clock P.M., and that they showed much temper because they had not, as usual, heard the newsvendor call out.

'It appears that as a reward for his kindness Toulan received, among other presents, a gold box. This fact was averred and recognised as true when the first discussion took place, which resulted in Michonis and other municipal officials being tried. It was likewise found out during the same discussion that when Capet was executed Toulan had managed to take his (Capet's) hat, leaving his own instead, and that he gave the hat to Madame Elisabeth; lastly, it was Toulan who handed over to Capet the list of the Paris electors which was found in Capet's cupboard.'

This indictment was a mixture of truths and falsehoods. The first part was based on the sayings which Hébert had forced out of the mouth of a sickly and stupid child, morally and physically exhausted. That alone ought to have rendered them suspect and caused them to be put on one side, although they might be true in reality. But what of the other assertions? In respect to them Fouquier was making false statements, and, what was worse, he knew them to be so. The letter

which we have reproduced, and which proves that he had access to the Michonis papers, proves that he barefacedly altered the truth.

Nothing in the Michonis affair proved that it was a known fact that Marie Antoinette gave Toulan a gold box ; the same may be said of the story of the hat and of the list of electors handed over to 'Capet.'

Toulan had certainly plotted in favour of the Queen, but the proofs of the plot were not produced at the trial ; the conspiracy was not even suspected. It was only later on that Jarjayes, Lepître, and Turgy were to speak, and this only for the benefit of posterity.

The facts mentioned, taken separately, were of little importance and proved nothing. But on this occasion Fouquier acted after his usual fashion ; he grouped round Toulan nineteen other prisoners who did not know each other, and a few of whom only were implicated in the same case.

The list of them is interesting, for it shows that the Revolutionary Tribunal was eclectic and despised no victims, not even those drawn from the lower classes.

In the dock were to be seen beside Toulan an ex-chief justice in the Toulouse parliament, Nicolas Pichard, his wife, and Jean Clerc, his steward ; two men from Calvados, Michel and Noël Taillepied, one a farmer and the other a hairdresser ; an

adjutant-major of the 6th Battalion of the Manche, J. B. Mausin ; a sculptor, Victor Laguepierre ; the president of the Rethel tribunal, Stanislas Vuibert, and a bookseller who had printed a pamphlet for him, J. B. Raucourt ; a cooper, F. Dubois ; a farmer, Guillaume Lagoudie ; a cook, Jean Bellegou ; a joiner, Pierre Caillet ; a baker, Nicolas Houlier ; a handkerchief-seller, Marie Anne Ferrand ; a lady of independent means, Marie Catherine Patissier, widow of M. Duvernay ; then an ex-priest, Jean Louis Mérot ; an ex-attorney, Georges Vechembre ; and an ex-marquise, Anne Marie Thérèse de Feuquières.

As their names had been grouped together so were the charges against them, and instead of mentioning opposite every name the particular accusation on which the prisoner was to be tried they were all together 'convicted of having become enemies of the nation, either by keeping up a correspondence or intercourse with the enemies of the Republic, at home and abroad, in order to provide help for them in men and money . . . or by contributing through decisions, printed or written by hand, to degrade and dissolve the national representation or to restore monarchy . . . or again by fighting with the English army in Toulon or the Federalists in the Department of Eure and Loire . . . by fomenting trouble among the men employed in public works . . . or by, as public officers, keeping

up intercourse with the woman Capet and her sister during their incarceration at the Temple . . . by assuming false titles, which caused several patriots to be molested and imprisoned unjustly . . . lastly, by endeavouring to arm citizens against one another, and, above all, against the constituted authorities.'

Such an intentional confusion, opposed to the most rudimentary rules of justice and in defiance of the sacred rights of defence, aggravated enormously the accusations brought against these unfortunate people. How could they make the truth clear in the midst of this confusion, and speak with thorough knowledge of the case, when the prosecutor was a clever and passionate man, the president partial, and the jury packed with men who could be depended upon ?

On that day, Messidor 12, Year II.—June 30, 1794—the Court was thus composed : Scellier, president, who was tried and guillotined after the 9th of Thermidor ; Charles Harny and Antoine Marie Maire, judges ; Fouquier-Tinville, Public Prosecutor, afterwards tried and guillotined with Scellier (Floréal 17-18, Year III.—May 6-7, 1795). The jurymen were Renaudin, Billion, Depréaux, Lumière, Prieur, Marbel, and Chatelet. The latter was well known for the habit he had of putting merely an 'F' against the names of those whom he wished to sentence. Four of the men who shared Fouquier's and Scellier's crimes suffered with them : these were

Renaudin, Lumière, Prieur, and Chatelet. On that day the capital 'F' was for him.

The *procès-verbal* of the Revolutionary criminal court 'established by law on March 10, 1793, and again on April 5 of the same year, astonished by its brevity and simplicity.'

The hearing began at 10 A.M. First the names of the accused, then those of the witnesses were read out. The latter were six in number, and all were summoned for the Houlier case. After this the *dossier* bears the note, 'The debate was closed,' which proves that it was hardly opened. The Court limited itself to a brief examination of the prisoners.

Then the report goes on, 'The said citizen Fouquier was heard as to the means of justifying the indictment.' And that was all. The printed paper made provision for a defence; but the unfortunate prisoners, who were debarred from having counsel,¹ could not even delude themselves into believing that they would be allowed to discuss the charges brought against them, so that the clerk erased from the sheet the useless words 'and after him the counsel of . . . accused . . . on . . . defence.'

The jury returned their verdict at once. At that time there was no scale of sentences; the accused were either sentenced to death or acquitted. Out of the twenty prisoners, through an exceptional

¹ By the law of the 22nd of Prairial the services of counsel were forbidden to conspirators.

leniency which is ten per cent. above the average, five were released — Laguepierre, Raucourt, Dubois, Caillet, and Houlier. The others, without anything more having been proved against them than in the case of these five, were sentenced to death.

The *procès-verbal* adds—

‘Ordered, that at the suit of the Public Prosecutor the present judgment shall be executed within twenty-four hours on the square called Barrière de Vincennes.’

Fouquier-Tinville did not wait twenty-four hours. Carts were always kept in readiness in the courtyard of the Palais de Justice. As they came out from the court, the fifteen sentenced prisoners took their seats in the carts and were taken to the place of execution.

We have no narrative telling us what was their attitude, but at a time when people died so bravely and with truly surprising submissiveness it is evident that these followed suit. Could Toulan die otherwise, he who had during his life given so many tokens of heroism?

Thus perished on June 30, 1794, this brave man, who very nearly played a great part when near Marie Thérèse’s daughter, and who, whilst remaining an obscure soldier in a desperate cause, was its sole victim. His good fortune, which so long protected him, forsook him a few weeks too soon. Twenty-seven days after his death Robespierre fell, the Terror ceased, the prisons were opened. Had he lived till the 9th of Thermidor, ‘Fidèle’ would have been saved.

CHAPTER X

Conclusion.

OF all the personages who were mixed up in the conspiracy to deliver the Royal Family in February–March 1793 Toulan was the only one who mounted the scaffold. After experiencing diverse fortune the others met again in France during the Restoration, and received tokens of gratitude from Marie Thérèse, who had become Duchesse d'Angoulême.

But before she reached this happy position she underwent many trials.

For a long time the Chevalier de Jarjayes, who had remained in Turin, entertained the worst fears concerning his wife—which, indeed, were fully justified. The reader will remember that she was arrested on October 15 and taken to La Force. There she remained for six weeks a prisoner, after which period she was released. But, arrested again a short time afterwards, she was incarcerated in the Convent of English Ladies. She was exposed to the greatest dangers during the nine months of her

imprisonment. The least bad luck might have caused her name to be put on the list of prisoners called to appear before the Revolutionary Tribunal, which would certainly have sentenced her. She was saved by the 9th of Thermidor, which opened for good her prison doors.

During this lapse of time, and in spite of the patronage of the King of Sardinia, the General led a life of poverty approaching misery, and suffered from the inaction in which he was forced to remain. On February 18, 1794, he wrote to M. de Fersen—

‘My intentions (as well as those of the friend with whom I left France, and whom I had taken with me from the General War Depôt, of which I was Director) are to serve in the army of the Prince de Coburg. I was extremely well received by the King of Sardinia, and this excellent prince continues to shower kindnesses on me ; but until now I have not been able to be of any use to him. It seems to me very cruel to have to witness a system of inactivity, which, in default of events which we have no right to expect, will inevitably lead Piedmont to ruin.

‘You will easily understand, Monsieur le Comte, that I am not only wanting to enter the army. I wish to make a position of some kind which will enable me to take my poor wife out of France, and enjoy in retirement the only consolation which

can henceforth be ours—remembrance of the kindness of our great and unfortunate Queen. No thought of selfishness ever mingled with my devotion to that princess ; I remained near her as long as I could be of use to her. . . .

‘ . . . I have no hope nor expectation of ever being able to put into execution the only plan suitable for me, unless you can persuade the Comte de Mercy to explain to the Emperor my wife’s and my own situation, so as to arouse his interest and induce him to give us, instead of the post I ask for in his army, a shelter and enough money to allow us to live until I can turn the estates I have in France into ready cash, or get the money for the Brussels bonds of which I spoke to you in my last letter. . . .

‘ . . . What attraction can a military career have for me while I am haunted by the idea that if the scoundrels heard that I served in the allied forces they would kill my wife and children ? . . . ’¹

The 18th of Brumaire restored peace to France, and offered all French people the possibility of returning to their country. The Chevalier hastened to take advantage of it. He came back to his wife and children ; and, as his fortune had been considerably impaired both by the sacrifices he had made for Marie Antoinette and by the bad times, he

¹ *Le Comte de Fersen et la Cour de France* vol. ii. pp. 430-432.

applied for and was granted the vice-presidency of the eastern salt mines. In 1815 he was appointed lieutenant-general by Louis XVIII.

He died in Paris on September 11, 1822, at the age of seventy-seven. Madame de Jarjayes, who survived him for fifteen years, died on June 23, 1837.

What became of Cousin Ricard is not known ; but the man who bore her name, 'the day husband,' received as his reward a situation in the National Lottery. A pension was awarded to Bichette, Toulan's widow.

The devoted Turgy, who managed to remain at the Temple after Marie Antoinette had been taken to the Conciergerie, had to leave when closer watch was kept over Madame Elisabeth and the royal children. At 6 A.M. on October 13 the municipal officers ordered him to leave the Temple at once. Forced to obey this time, he and his comrades Chrétien and Marchand said good-bye to that residence of kings, and retired to Tournans, in Brie.¹

Louis XVIII. ennobled him and made him an officer of the Royal Order of the Legion of Honour. In spite of his age he became first *valet de chambre* and usher in the Duchesse d'Angoulême's private apartments.

With regard to Lepître, his acquittal, and, later,

¹ *Fragments*, by Turgy, p. 381.

the 9th of Thermidor, restored him to safety. He was glad to resume his profession, and to enjoy recollections which flattered his vanity. He removed nearer to the Temple, and received permission to address some by no means poetic verses to Marie Thérèse.

He continued to teach during the whole period of the Empire, though he hated Napoleon. He was certainly not dazzled by that great man. In his leisure he wrote a history of the events in which he had been concerned. This account appeared about 1814 without the author's name. It was embellished with a summary written in the style of Bossuet, which broached a theory worthy of Joseph Prudhomme: 'May these lessons of the past never be lost to posterity, and may the memory of such great sufferings warn us against the excesses of which they were the mournful results.'¹

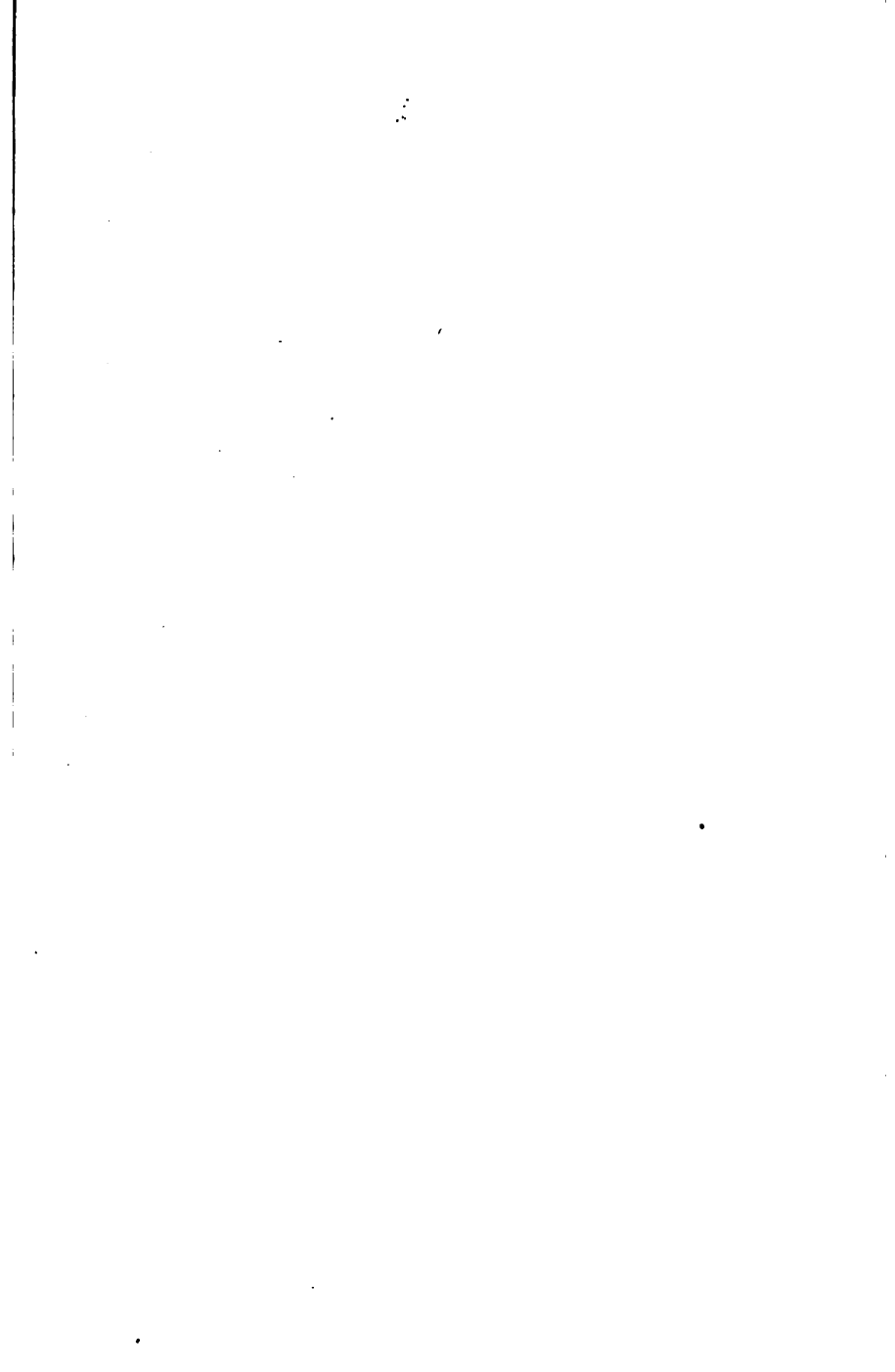
On May 19, 1814, he was presented to Marie Thérèse, who did not forget the services that he had rendered to her parents, and afterwards, on November 19, 1814, made him a Knight of the Legion of Honour. He blushed at not being more worthy of such a reward and such an honour, and resolved to fully deserve it. He at once prepared a second edition of 'Quelques Souvenirs,' carefully omitting all that might minimise his own part in

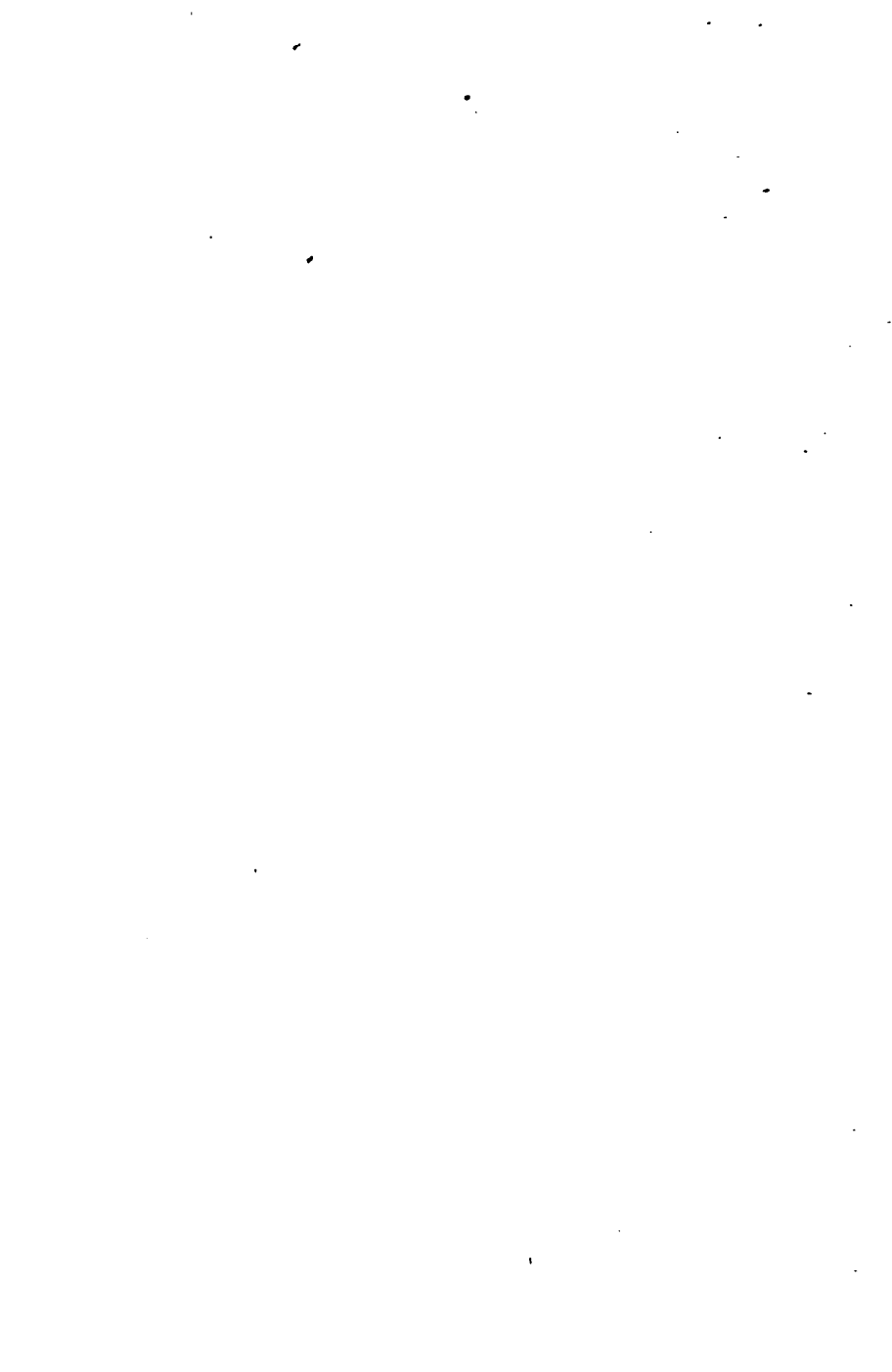
¹ P. 90.

the story. Toulan had perished; the Chevalier de Jarjayes, who was born in 1745, was very old, if he were not dead. Who could contradict him?

From 1816 he was professor of rhetoric at the college of Rouen; in 1821 he was appointed to the Versailles College, and he died in that town on January 18, 1826, taking with him to the next world the belief that he had been a hero indeed.

THE END.





2000

