

THE LAST DAYS OF LOUIS XVI AND MARIE-ANTOINETTE.

BY ANNA L. BICKNELL.

THE royal family left Les Feuillants for the Temple tower on August 13, the fourth day after they had quitted the Tuileries.¹ The three intervening days had been spent in the so-called «box» (*loge*) used by the journalists of the paper called «Le Logographe,» where they were crowded to excess, with their followers, under a low roof formed by the gallery above them, and where they suffered acutely from heat and want of air, while they were obliged to hear their future fate discussed by the Assembly, and to learn all the horrors of the massacre at the Tuileries. At night they slept in narrow cells of the building of Les Feuillants, formerly a convent of monks. Some of the faithful attendants had obtained leave to accompany the royal family to the Temple. Mademoiselle de Tourzel was included in the number, the anxiety and grief of the little Dauphin while her fate remained uncertain having touched the hearts of some of the deputies. Madame Campan entreated to be allowed to follow the Queen, but was refused, the number of attendants authorized to remain with the royal family being extremely limited.

At six in the evening one of the large vehicles of the court came to take the King and the royal family to the Temple. The footmen who, for the last time, attended their sovereign wore gray overcoats concealing their liveries. Several officers of the municipal police accompanied the King and Queen in the large carriage, a vehicle of a sort unknown at the present time. The King, the Queen, and the royal children sat facing the horses; opposite were Madame Elisabeth, the Princesse de Lamballe, and Péthion, the Mayor of Paris. Pauline de Tourzel and her mother were at one of the doors, and two municipal officers at the other, the latter keeping on their hats and affecting the most insolent airs. The moment the carriage passed through the gate of Les Feuillants there was a burst of insulting cries from the hostile crowd, who followed till they reached the Temple—a slow drive of two hours and a half, in the midst of insults and threats loudly vociferated. When they reached the

prison they found it illuminated as a sign of public rejoicing; and they were received by members of the Commune, who treated them with the coarsest rudeness.

The Temple prison consisted of one large tower of considerable height, with turrets at the angles; a smaller tower, of lesser height, was annexed, and seemed to form a part of the other one, but was, in fact, separate.

The royal family were at first located in the smaller tower. Each floor comprised two rooms separated by a sort of small anteroom which served as a passage from one to the other. The Queen, with her daughter, was on the first floor; the Princesse de Lamballe had a bed in the intervening anteroom; and Madame de Tourzel was in the second chamber with the Dauphin. The King was above, with a barrack-room next to his. Madame Elisabeth was put into a repulsively dirty kitchen. As usual, she showed the most gentle, uncomplaining resignation; and calling Mademoiselle de Tourzel to her side, she simply undertook to «take care of Pauline,» for whom she had a bed made up next to her own. The noise of the soldiers in the adjoining room precluded all possibility of sleep.

They rose early the next morning, and going down-stairs at eight o'clock, found the Queen up and dressed. Her room being the largest and the most cheerful (as it looked upon a garden, though a gloomy one), it was settled that it should be used as a sitting-room; so the whole party remained there during the day, and went up-stairs only to go to bed. But alas! they were never alone: a municipal guard, changed every hour, remained in the room, and thus prevented any private or confidential conversation.

Pauline de Tourzel had of course taken nothing with her from the Tuileries, and had only the torn and stained gown in which she had effected her escape. Madame Elisabeth, having received clothes through the care of some faithful attendants, immediately gave one of her gowns to Pauline; but, of course, what had been made for her own rather fully developed figure would not fit a very young and slender girl. The gown had to be taken to pieces and remade; the Queen, with

¹ At eight o'clock in the morning of August 10, 1792.

Madame Elisabeth and the young Madame Royale, worked assiduously to get it ready; but before it was finished the attendants were removed, and only one *valet de chambre* was allowed to remain.

One of the cooks belonging to the former royal kitchen, a man named Munier, with one of his assistants called Turgy, had contrived to get appointed to the same functions in the Temple by carefully concealing their real feelings and acting a «patriotic» part. Munier remained to the last; consequently the food was carefully prepared, and, especially at first, extremely good, till restrictions were exacted. The royal party dined in a room below the Queen's bedchamber. After dinner, at about five o'clock, they went into the garden to give air and exercise to the young people, of course followed by guards and treated with contumely, which they did not seem to notice.

Next to the dining-room was a fairly good library, which was a great comfort to the King especially. For several days they were thus comparatively quiet; but on the night between the 18th and 19th of August they were roused at twelve o'clock, and Madame de Lamballe and Madame and Mademoiselle de Tourzel were arrested with all the other attendants. The Queen and Madame Elisabeth rose hastily and dressed quickly, and the latter assisted Pauline in getting ready. The Queen tried in vain to retain Madame de Lamballe, pleading that she was a member of the family. But all were removed together, to the intense grief of the Queen and Madame Elisabeth, who embraced them with tears. They were never again to see the Princesse de Lamballe.

The three principal ladies were taken to the prison of La Force, where in a few days they received a box from the Queen, which she sent word that she had packed herself, containing divers necessaries: a gown given by Madame Elisabeth, and half a large piece of English flannel,¹ which the Queen hoped might «be a comfort.»

«Even in her own most dire necessities she never forgot what might be useful or agreeable to others,» says Madame de Tourzel on this occasion.

The royal party suffered greatly from anxiety as regards the fate of those who had been taken from them. «None of us slept on the night of the separation,» writes Madame Royale.² The mere privation of attendance mattered little; the Queen took the

little Dauphin into her room and dressed him herself. Having asked Cléry, the valet attached to the King's person, whether he could dress her hair, she accepted his services on his affirmative reply, and while engaged in this daily task he was often able to give her information which she wished to have, Madame Elisabeth meanwhile taking care to converse with the guard to divert his attention.

After the Queen had dressed the Dauphin, she made him kneel to say his prayers, with a particular remembrance for Madame de Tourzel and Madame de Lamballe. A woman called Tison, with her husband, had been appointed nominally to help in the menial work, but more particularly to play the part of spy on the royal family; the Queen did not accept their services personally, either for herself or her son.

The King rose at seven, and when dressed went into the turret adjoining his bedchamber while the latter was being put in order, and remained engaged in prayer and religious reading till nine. The Queen, who rose earlier than the King, began the day with her religious duties; she then dressed the Dauphin, and was ready herself by eight o'clock. At nine all joined the King for breakfast; but the happiness of meeting after the short separation of the night was much alloyed by the constant presence of a municipal guard, who never left them alone, and was relieved every hour. After breakfast the Dauphin took lessons with his father, and Madame Royale with her mother. There was an old harpsichord which enabled them to continue the study of music; and an attentive royalist had sent drawings of heads for the young Princess to copy. The library provided books for historical reading. The King delighted to have books, and read those at his disposal, but more particularly the reign of Charles I, in Hume's «History of England.»

The lessons lasted till eleven; the children then played together in the anteroom with Cléry; often Madame Elisabeth took advantage of the noise of battledore and shuttlecock, etc., to exchange a few words with him in a half-whisper, and hear what news he had to give them.

At noon the Queen, in accordance with old habit, changed her morning-dress of white dimity, with a plain lawn cap, for another of linen spotted with small flowers on a brown ground.

¹ Probably sent to the Queen by Lady Sutherland, English manufactures being forbidden.

² «Récit des événements arrivés au Temple,» par la Duchesse d'Angoulême.

To effect the change she passed into Madame Elisabeth's room. The royal party then went into the garden, where in a shady walk under horse-chestnut trees the children played at ball, etc., with Cléry. The necessity of air and exercise for their health induced the King and Queen to submit patiently to the multiplied insults of the guards, who smoked in their faces, uttered brutal jests, drew caricatures of the wall, and sang revolutionary songs. Sometimes there were sympathetic signals or significant songs from the neighboring houses; but a high wall was being built as quickly as possible to prevent such demonstrations. These walks in the garden were the most trying time of the day, and were endured only for the sake of the children. In the interior of the tower the more humane guards left them in comparative peace. The Queen, although not entirely spared, yet commanded some degree of respect which was not granted to the King, whose homely manners and appearance were entirely devoid of that prestige which is so necessary to those in a position of authority. The majestic air, the grave reserve, and the gentle sweetness shown by the Queen impressed the guards with a sort of awe, increased when any offense lighted up her flashing eye, or directed the truly royal glance which they could not meet unabashed. Some even felt the influence of the attraction which was so marked a feature in any personal intercourse with Marie-Antoinette.

At two o'clock the royal family returned to the tower for their dinner, where everything was minutely examined, to prevent the possibility of any correspondence being introduced, before they were allowed to partake of the food.

The Queen ate little, but very slowly, to give the King time to satisfy his hearty appetite, which was a subject of derision for the guards. The food was good and abundant. The King drank wine mixed with water, and took a small glass of liqueur after dinner; the princesses drank only water, and after some difficulty had obtained that of the Ville d'Avray fountain, to which they were accustomed. Their former servants, now employed in the Temple kitchen, did all in their power to procure them what they wished.

After dinner the Queen played with the King at backgammon or piquet, and seized the opportunity of thus saying a few words under cover of the game. When it was finished the King dozed in his chair for a short

time; the children respected the respite from care brought by this friendly slumber, and every one remained silent and quiet. The Queen often dropped her tapestry-work on her knees, and gazed at the sleeper with a particularly sad expression. When he woke occupations were resumed: studies for the young people, books and needlework for the others.

In the evening all gathered round a table while the Queen read aloud. The little Dauphin took his supper separately, and was put to bed, the Queen hearing him say his prayers, and undressing him herself. At nine the general supper was served; the Queen and Madame Elisabeth remained with the Dauphin on alternate evenings during that time, Cléry bringing what was required to the watcher of the evening.

The King retired early; before leaving the room he took his wife's hand in his, and held it for a moment without any other demonstration. The Queen, glad to shorten her sleepless nights as far as possible, remained with Madame Elisabeth, who often read to her from some devotional book, or assisted her in mending the clothes of the King and the Dauphin.

The life which they thus led seemed to bring relief after the horrible scenes which they had witnessed; and the royal party were resigned: the more so as they indulged in delusive hopes of deliverance through the invasion of France by the allied powers. Their blindness was extraordinary, for mere common sense would seem to indicate that, as hostages in the hands of an infuriated people, the progress of the invaders, with whom their name was connected, could only increase their own danger.

The comparative quiet which they enjoyed was, however, not to be of long duration. Bad news came to Paris. The French were repulsed, the invaders were advancing, Longwy was taken, Verdun was about to surrender. The whole population seemed then to become a prey to a sort of frenzy. The prisons, churches, convents, hospitals, and also the private dwellings of those suspected of royalist or religious sympathy, were broken open, and a general massacre began, with details of incredible ferocity. Not only did the so-called government attempt no repression, but the murderers were actually rewarded for their patriotism!

The King and the royal family, although subjected to the threats of some of the municipal guards, had but imperfect information of what was going on, and spent the

night between the 2d and 3d of September in great anxiety, but of an undefined kind, without imagining the shock in store for them. The Queen had anxiously asked Manuel, a member of the Commune, for news of Madame de Lamballe; he had evasively answered that she was safe at the Hôtel de La Force, but without saying that he alluded to the prison of that name, thus leaving the hope to the Queen that it was the private house of the «de La Force» family.

On September 3 there was a great noise in the streets about the Temple, and the municipal guards would not allow the usual recreation in the garden. The dinner took place as usual, and the Queen was about to begin the habitual game of cards or backgammon with the King, when a terrific noise was heard under the window, and the Queen seemed to hear her own name, with that of Lamballe. She started up, and stood terrified and motionless, as Cléry came in pale as death.

«Why are you not at dinner?» asked the Queen, in breathless anxiety.

«Madame, I am not well,» answered Cléry, who, alas! had seen the head of the Princesse de Lamballe carried on a pike, and had hastened up-stairs to warn the King.

The face of the unfortunate Princess had been rouged, and her hair frizzed and powdered, by a wretched hair-dresser, who nearly died with the horror of his ghastly task, inflicted by the populace, «that Antoinette might recognize her friend!» The long, fair hair of the victim fell in curls about the pike.

The municipal guards near the Queen were speaking together, with much agitation, in low whispers.

«What is the matter?» asked the King.

«You had better go to the window,» said one of the guards.

The King moved as if about to do so, when another guard threw himself before him, saying in imploring tones:

«No! no! For mercy's sake, do not go! do not show yourself!»

«But what is all this?» said the King.

«Well, if you want to know,» said a young officer, with coarse brutality, «it is the head of the Lamballe that they wish to show you. If you don't want the people to come up here, you had better go to the window.»

The Queen stood with fixed gaze, without uttering a sound, as if she had been turned into stone. Madame Elisabeth flew to her, and drew her into a chair, while her children knelt by her side weeping, and striving to

rouse her. At length a flood of tears brought relief to the alarming stupor which had seemed to annihilate her senses.

The King then turned to the brutal officer who had caused the fearful shock.

«We are prepared for everything, monsieur; but you might have spared the Queen the knowledge of this frightful calamity.»

The Princess, who had been taken to the La Force prison with Madame and Mademoiselle de Tourzel, had been massacred in the courtyard of the prison by the mob, who literally cut her corpse to pieces, with details of savage brutality impossible to relate, and beyond what imagination could conceive. The head was cut off and placed on a pike, and carried in triumph through the streets to the Temple, for the purpose of being shown to the Queen because the princess was her friend!

Madame and Mademoiselle de Tourzel escaped after many dramatic incidents, the coolness and courage shown by the young girl having interested a member of the Commune more humane than the others.

Until the shock of the dreadful death of Madame de Lamballe the Queen had preserved her habitual energy, and even cheerfulness, not only uttering no complaint, but trying to encourage all around her. After that event she lived in a state of terror, not for herself, but for those she loved. She had seen what unlimited ferocity might be expected from the populace, and had learned that the walls of a prison did not suffice as a protection. Daily the crowd assembled under the windows of the Temple, demanding with loud cries the heads of Louis and Antoinette. Had the danger menaced only herself, she would have faced assassins steadily, as she had done before; but the horrors of a general massacre, in which her husband and children might perish before her eyes, were too much even for her fortitude; and when, on September 29, the delegates of the Commune came to read a decree by which «Louis Capet,» as he was now called, was to be at once removed to the large tower, where his dwelling was ready for him, leaving the rest of the family in their present abode, the Queen fell into a state of absolute despair, being convinced that he was being taken away to be murdered there.

She spent the whole night in tears and sobs; in the morning she refused all food, and implored the municipal guards, with such passionate entreaties, for permission to see the King, if only at meals, that finally this last favor was granted, with a promise that they

should all be transferred to the great tower as soon as the rooms could be made ready.

They met meanwhile, but only at meals, and invariably subjected to the inspection of the guards, who never left them. Madame Elisabeth, having said a few words to her brother in English, was peremptorily informed that she must not use a foreign language. On October 26 they were transferred to the great tower, where the King lodged on the second floor with Cléry and the Dauphin, who was thus taken from his mother at night—a great sacrifice for Marie-Antoinette, but to which she was resigned, hoping that it might procure comfort for the King.

Her own bedchamber and that of Madame Elisabeth were on the third floor, and Madame Royale slept on a small bed near her mother. The rooms, though barely furnished, contained what was strictly necessary, and the Queen had a fairly good bed. Near them, on pretense of service, but literally as a constant watch kept over them, were Tison and his wife, already mentioned, who had filled the same office in the smaller tower, and now followed them to their new abode. But far more than before, everything here revealed a prison, with its hoodwinked windows, iron bars, and iron-bound doors, its formidable locks and massive keys. The rooms were dark and gloomy, without any lookout, and even the bright little Dauphin seemed depressed and sad.

The prisoners had vainly asked for divine service at least on Sundays and festivals. It was refused, but the King read the prayers and gospels of the day with the royal family. Their daily life was continued as before described, but no kind of annoyance was spared them by the so-called government. A first decree took from them pens, ink, paper, and pencils; a second, all penknives or sharp instruments, even to their toilet implements and those used for their needlework.

One day Louis XVI stood mournfully watching Madame Elisabeth, who was mending his coat, and biting off the thread with her teeth, her scissors having been taken away.

«You wanted for nothing in your pretty house at Montreuil.»

«Oh, my brother,» she earnestly replied, «how can I think of myself when I remember and share your misfortunes!»

At this time the King was thirty-eight years of age; the Queen completed her thirty-seventh year on the 2d of November; Madame Elisabeth was twenty-eight, Madame Royale nearly fourteen, and the Dauphin was seven.

The festive time of Christmas and the New Year brought only fresh sorrows to the prisoners. On the 6th of December Cléry heard that the King's trial was about to take place, and that during its course he would be separated from the Queen and the rest of his family. Cléry had the painful duty of preparing the King for this new ordeal, and performed it as gently as he could while undressing his master, who had only four days before him to concert with the Queen some means of correspondence.

On the 11th of December there was a great noise in the streets of Paris. The drums beat the call to arms, and troops came into the garden of the Temple, to the great alarm of the prisoners.

The royal family breakfasted together as usual, but the vigilance of the guards was so acute that they were utterly unable to exchange even a word in private. What the torture of this incessant supervision must have been may be imagined. After breakfast the King went down-stairs with his son for his usual lessons; but at eleven o'clock two municipal guards came to take away the Dauphin, who was to go to his mother. They vouchsafed no explanation to the King, who remained in great anxiety as to the meaning of this new decision.

At one o'clock came a deputation from the National Convention, who read to the King a decree ordering that «Louis Capet» should be brought to the bar of the National Convention. The King replied that his name was not «Capet,» which belonged to one of his ancestors,¹ and that in following them he yielded to force, and not to their orders.

When the Queen knew that the King was gone her alarm may be imagined. «We were all,» says Madame Royale, «in a state of anxiety which it is impossible to describe. My mother had tried every means of learning what was going on through the municipal guards; it was the first time that she condescended to question them.» After the melancholy dinner, Cléry contrived to follow Madame Elisabeth, and to warn her that during the trial the King would not be allowed to see his family. He tried to encourage the Princess to hope that the King would be sent into exile. Madame Elisabeth replied: «I have no hope that the King may be saved.» At six o'clock Cléry was summoned to receive the information that he would no longer be allowed communication with the princesses and the Dauphin, as he was to remain with Louis XVI.

¹ Hugh Capet.

At half-past six the King returned, and earnestly requested to be allowed to see his family, but in vain. Henceforward the royal prisoner remained alone.

The Dauphin was with the Queen. «My brother,» says Madame Royale, «spent the night with her. As he had no bed, she gave him her own, and sat up all night, so absorbed in grief that my aunt and myself would not leave her.»

In vain Marie-Antoinette, when morning came, entreated to be allowed to see her husband. She was never to see him again in this world save once—on the eve of his execution.

The King was told that he might choose counsel for his defense, and the now aged Malesherbes, who had been minister many years before, offered his faithful services to the King in his adversity. He was assisted by Tronchet and de Sèze, whose names deserve to be recalled, for the honor that they accepted was one which implied the probable sacrifice of their lives.¹

When the King saw Malesherbes, he went quickly to meet him, and embraced him warmly, while the old man burst into bitter tears on seeing the condition of his master, who, perhaps, would not have met with such a lamentable fate if Malesherbes and Turgot had been allowed to carry out wise and prudent measures.

Marie-Antoinette could not be comforted for the separation from the King, which she had so much dreaded, and to which she must now submit. She remained in a sort of mute despair, hardly speaking to her children, on whom she gazed with an expression of grief which deeply affected them, young as they were. She tried incessantly to procure some information from the guards, who answered with great caution; some, nevertheless, showed compassion, and endeavored to encourage her to hope.

In the midst of all this moral torture came Christmas day, without even the possibility of prayer in a place of religious worship. They read the service of the day, but this was a poor substitute.

The King chose this solemn Christian festival to express his last wishes to his wife and family, and his justification as a farewell to his people. We will give only a short extract from this remarkable document: «I entreat my wife to forgive me all that she has to suffer for my sake, and whatever sorrow I may have caused her during the years of our marriage, as she may rest assured that I retain no remembrance of anything for which she might be inclined to

feel self-reproach. I charge my son, in case he should ever have the misfortune of being a king, to remember that he must be entirely devoted to the happiness of his fellow-citizens, that he must forget all rancor or hatred, more especially with regard to the misfortunes and sorrows to which I am subjected.»

The truly Christian feelings of the King are sufficiently proved by the above extract from a paper addressed to the Queen, but which was not given to her.

On the 1st of January poor Cléry drew near, and diffidently asked leave to express his wishes for the King's future happiness. The King kindly and sadly accepted them, sending messages to his family through a municipal guard. They had also found means to communicate with him, assisted by Cléry and Turgy, one of their former servants, who was employed in the kitchen, and who contrived to put stoppers of twisted white paper in the bottles and decanters taken up to them. With these fragments and a bit of pencil, carefully concealed, the Queen and Madame Elisabeth contrived to write a few words, covered over by thread closely wound. Another thread dropped the pieces of paper by the window down to that of the King, where Cléry took them and fastened others, which were drawn up to the Queen's window. This was done at night, to escape the scrutiny of the guards.

Turgot and Malesherbes came also to offer their hopeful good wishes on the occasion of the New Year; but the King, with characteristic kindness, would not allow them to remain with him, reminding them that they had family claims which must not be neglected. «You especially, my dear Malesherbes, who have three generations behind you; I could not forgive myself if I took you away from them.»

One of the municipal guards, who had been conquered by the King's patience and kindness, addressed him, saying: «Sire, you have been King of the French, and you can still make me happy.»

«But I can do nothing for you,» said the King.

«Forgive me, sire; the least trifle, having belonged to you, would be very precious to me.» The King gave him his gloves as a remembrance.

The trial was over, and all the eloquence of the King's advocates could not save his

¹ Malesherbes died on the scaffold, with several members of his family. The other advocates survived the Revolution.

life; a majority of only seven votes decided his fate, and thus «Louis Capet» was sentenced to death.

Malesherbes, in deep distress, went to the Temple, and as Cléry hastily came forward to meet him, he told him that all was over and that the King had been sentenced. As Malesherbes came into the King's presence the latter said to him: «For the last two hours I have been examining my conscience and seeking whether, during the course of my reign, I have voluntarily given my subjects any just cause for complaint against me. Well, I can declare in all the sincerity of my soul, as a man about to appear before God, that I have constantly striven for the happiness of my people, and that I have not indulged in a single wish contrary to it.»

This was too much for Malesherbes, who fell on his knees, sobbing so as to be unable to speak. The King tried to comfort him, saying that he had expected what such grief announced, and that it was better to know his fate.

The three counsel urged him to try an appeal to the nation; he consented reluctantly, being convinced that it would be useless. De Sèze and Tronchet then retired, but the King detained Malesherbes, who was still overcome with grief. «My friend, do not weep,» he said, pressing his hand. «We shall meet again in a better world. I am grieved to leave such a friend as you are.» The King followed him to the door with another «Adieu!» They met no more, although Malesherbes came again and again to the prison entreating for admittance, which was refused to the last.

The King then took up the «History of England,» and read assiduously the trial and death of Charles I. The King's appeal to the nation was rejected through a motion of Robespierre, and on the 20th of January a deputation from the National Convention came to read the sentence, which was to be carried out within twenty-four hours. Louis XVI listened with perfect calmness, and then gave into the hands of the members a letter addressed to the Convention, in which he asked a reprieve of three days to prepare for death; the assistance of a priest of his own faith, with a guarantee that this priest would incur no danger by his ministrations; permission to see his family without witnesses; and the assurance that after his death the survivors would be left free to go where they pleased. He also recalled the claims of his former servants, creditors, and others.

The so-called Minister of Justice having

undertaken to deliver this letter to the Board of the National Convention, the King gave the name of the Abbé Edgeworth de Firmont as that of the priest whom he wished to see. The deputation then retired, and the King's dinner was brought as usual.

With perfect self-possession Louis XVI sat down to his meal. «I have no knife,» he remarked. He was then told that he was not to be allowed the use of a knife or a fork, and that his food was to be cut up by Cléry in the presence of the two guards, who would then remove the knife. The King showed some indignation at the implied supposition that he could be «so cowardly» as to have the intention of putting an end to his own life; and then merely breaking off a piece of bread, he pulled away a few spoonfuls of boiled beef, which he took, but would not allow his food to be cut up, and did not partake of anything else. The meal was over in a few minutes.

At six o'clock the Minister of Justice returned to the Temple, and announced that the King would be allowed to have any priest that he preferred, and to see his family freely and alone; that the Convention had not taken into consideration his request for a reprieve of three days; that the nation, «always great and just,» would settle what concerned his family, and give proper satisfaction to his creditors. To this the King made no reply.

The guards then asked the minister privately how they were to reconcile the permission given to the King to see his family alone, and the orders of the Convention that the guards were not to lose sight of him by day or by night. It was then settled that the King should receive his family in the dining-room, where the door would be shut, but where they could be watched through its glass panes.

The King then asked for the Abbé Edgeworth, who was down-stairs and came up immediately. When he saw the King he was deeply affected, and threw himself at his feet without being able to utter a word. The King was greatly moved at the sight of a faithful subject, and then took the Abbé into the turret, where they were allowed to be alone and remained long in earnest conversation. At eight o'clock the King came out of the turret, and desired that his family should be summoned; then with Cléry he went into the dining-room, where Cléry pushed the table into a corner, to give more room, and placed chairs in readiness. The King, ever thoughtful and considerate in what concerned the Queen, then desired

Cléry to bring a decanter of water and a glass, in case of need. Cléry brought iced water, but the King immediately said that it might make the Queen ill, and asked for water without ice.

The Queen, holding the little Dauphin by the hand, came in first, followed by Madame Elisabeth with Madame Royale. All had learned the dreadful truth through the cries of the news-venders under their windows. With floods of tears the Queen threw herself into the King's arms, and then attempted to draw him into his bedchamber; but he explained that he could receive them all only in the dining-room, where the guards could watch them through the glass door. Cléry closed it, and they could at least speak without being heard. The King sat down; the Queen took her place at his left, with Madame Elisabeth on the other side; the children were before him. All clung to him, and for some time only a burst of grief was manifest. At last the King spoke.

«He wept for us,» says Madame Royale, in her narrative, «but not through fear of death; he related his trial to my mother, excusing the wretches who were about to put him to death. . . . He then addressed religious exhortations to my brother; he especially commanded him to forgive those who were the cause of his death, and gave him his blessing, as also to me.»

The child was seen to raise his hand solemnly, the King having required him to take an oath that he would never seek to avenge his death; and the child did so.

During the last hours of his life Louis XVI seemed transfigured. His quiet and calm firmness, his truly Christian feelings of forgiveness toward his enemies, his faith, his resignation, are described with blended wonder and admiration by all who came near him.

The interview, so harrowing to all, had lasted nearly two hours, when, at a quarter past ten, the King rose decidedly, signifying to the weeping women and children that they must leave him to prepare for coming death. The Queen entreated to be allowed to spend the night near him, but he firmly refused, saying that he must be alone and calm.

«I will see you to-morrow morning,» he said.

«You promise this?» cried the Queen.

«Yes, I promise; I will see you at eight o'clock.»

«Why not at seven?» cried the Queen, anxiously.

«Well, then, at seven; but now adieu!»

The word was uttered with such intense pathos that a fresh burst of grief followed, and Madame Royale fainted at her father's feet. Cléry flew to raise her, assisted by Madame Elisabeth.

The King repeated, «Adieu! Adieu!» and broke away, taking refuge in his own bedchamber.

The princesses, still sobbing violently, went up-stairs. Cléry tried to follow, and to assist in taking up the still unconscious Madame Royale; but the guards forced him to desist.

The King, as soon as he had recovered sufficient self-command, returned to the Abbé Edgeworth, with whom he remained in spiritual converse till midnight. The Abbé had obtained permission to say mass on the following morning in the King's bedchamber, and had procured what was necessary from a neighboring church. But he was warned that all must be over by seven o'clock, because «Louis will be taken to execution at eight.»

The King then went to bed, and fell into the deep sleep of exhaustion.

At five o'clock in the morning he was awakened by Cléry, who was lighting the fire, and immediately asked for the Abbé Edgeworth. Cléry replied that he was lying on his bed; and the King, thoughtful for others to the last, then asked quickly where he had slept himself. When Cléry answered, «On that chair, sire,» his ever-kind master exclaimed, «I am sorry!» He then desired Cléry to summon the Abbé, and going with him into the turret, they remained in converse for an hour, while Cléry prepared what was necessary for the mass.

With the same perfect calmness which he had shown throughout, the King asked Cléry if he could serve the mass; he replied in the affirmative, but said that he did not know the responses by heart. The King took a missal, looked out the places, and gave it to his faithful valet, taking another for himself. Then, kneeling devoutly, he heard the mass and received communion. When the Abbé retired to remove his vestments after mass, the King affectionately took leave of poor Cléry, who was heartbroken, and thanked him for his faithful service.

A great deal of noise was now heard round the prison, and cavalry regiments were coming into the courtyard. The King said quietly: «They are probably assembling the National Guards. The time is drawing near.» He then saw that it was seven o'clock, and



PAINTED BY LOUIS-EDOUARD RIOULT. IN THE MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES. ENGRAVED BY PETER AITKEN, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., NEW YORK.

spoke of summoning the Queen and the royal family, according to his promise; but the Abbé earnestly dissuaded him on the ground of the harrowing nature of such an interview at such a time. The King hesitated for a moment, and then said with resignation that he felt it would be too distressing for the Queen, and that it was better to be him-

self deprived of this last comfort, so as to leave her a few minutes more of delusive hope. He then summoned Cléry and gave into his hands a small packet for the Queen, containing a seal for the Dauphin, and his wedding-ring,¹ with the hair of different members of the royal family. «Tell her

¹ In France men also have wedding-rings.

that I do not part with the ring without pain. Tell the Queen, tell my dear children, tell my sister, that although I had promised to see them this morning, I have wished to spare them the sorrow of such a separation. It is a great sacrifice for me to go without embracing them once more. I charge you to give them my last farewell.»

One of the guards came up to the King.

«You have asked for scissors; we must know with what intention.»

«I wish Cléry to cut my hair.» After deliberation the request was refused!

At nine o'clock the door opened noisily, and Santerre came in, followed by ten gendarmes, who stood in two lines.

«You have come to fetch me?» said the King.

«Yes,» answered Santerre.

«In one minute I will follow you.» The King then went into the turret, knelt before the priest, and asked for his blessing, and his prayers that divine support might be granted to the end.

Louis XVI then left the turret, and came toward the guards, who filled the room. Addressing one of these, he held out a folded paper, which he requested that he would give to the Queen—«to my wife,» he quickly added, correcting the expression.

«That is no concern of mine,» said the man brutally; «I am here to take you to the scaffold.»

The King turned to another:

«I beg that you will give this paper to my wife. You may read it; there are some wishes expressed which I should be glad that the Commune should know.»

The man took the paper, but the Queen never received it. The King then asked Cléry for his hat, and spoke of his faithful servant, requesting that his watch should be given to him, and that henceforward he should serve «the Queen—my wife.»

No answer was made. The King, addressing Santerre, then said firmly, «Let us go.»¹ The Abbé followed him as he went downstairs. On meeting the porter of the prison, the King said: «I spoke to you sharply the other day; do not bear me ill-will.»

The man made no reply, and looked away. The King crossed the first courtyard of the prison on foot, and turned twice to look up at the closed windows where wooden shutters prevented him from seeing those he loved. In the second courtyard was a hackney-

coach, near which stood two gendarmes. The King and his confessor took the two seats facing the horses, the gendarmes took the seats opposite, and the coach immediately drove off.

It was a dark, misty January morning. The presence of the two soldiers precluded the possibility of conversation; the priest therefore handed his breviary to the King, and pointed out appropriate psalms, which the King read devoutly and with perfect calmness, to the evident astonishment of the gendarmes. The shops were shut along the way, and crowds of armed citizens stood on the pavement as the coach, preceded and followed by cavalry and artillery, went slowly through the streets, where all the windows were closed. Lines of troops stood on each side, while drums beat solemnly, as if for a military funeral.

As the coach passed along the Boulevards near the Porte St. Denis, a few young men rushed forward, waving swords and crying loudly: «Come, all who would save the King!» There was no response, and they were obliged to flee for their own lives. They were pursued, and several were arrested, with fatal consequences. The King, absorbed in prayer and religious meditation, had not even perceived the vain attempt to effect his deliverance.

The coach had at last reached the Rue Royale and the Place de la Révolution,² where the crowd was immense. The scaffold stood a little to the left of the Place, where the Obelisk now stands, but nearer the Champs-Élysées, toward which the guillotine was turned. A mass of troops formed a square around the fatal spot. The coach stopped at a distance of a few paces. The King, feeling that the motion had ceased, looked up from his prayer-book, saying quietly: «We have reached the place, I think.»

One of the executioner's assistants opened the door. The King earnestly commended the priest who accompanied him to the care of the gendarmes, and then stepped from the coach.

Three men surrounded him and tried to take off his coat. He calmly pushed them back and removed it himself, opening his shirt-collar and preparing his neck for the ax. The executioners, who seemed at first disconcerted and almost awed, then again came around him, holding a rope.

The King drew back quickly, exclaiming: «What do you want to do?»

«To tie your hands.»

The King exclaimed indignantly: «Tie my

² Now the Place de la Concorde.

¹ No mention is made of any food taken by the King, or even offered to him; he seems to have gone to the scaffold fasting.



PAINTING BY ANTOINE-FRANÇOIS CALLET. IN THE MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., NEW YORK.
LOUIS XVI.

hands! No, I will not submit to this. Do your duty, but do not attempt to tie me; you shall not do it!»

The executioners persisted, and spoke loudly. The King looked toward the Abbé Edgeworth, who at once saw the impossibility of resistance, and said gently: «Sire, this last insult will only provide a fresh point of resemblance between your Majesty and the God who will be your recompense.»

The King looked up to heaven. «Assuredly, His example alone could induce me to submit to such an indignity.» Then holding out his hands: «Do as you please; I will drink the cup to the dregs.»

His hands were tied, and with the assistance of his confessor he ascended the steps of the scaffold, which were very steep. When he reached the top he broke away from the Abbé, walked firmly across the scaffold,

silenced the drums by a glance of authority, and then in a voice so loud that it was audible on the opposite side of the Place de la Révolution, he uttered these words:

«I die innocent of all the crimes imputed to me. I forgive those who have caused my death, and I pray God that the blood you are about to shed may never fall on France.»

There was a shudder that ran through the crowd like a great wave; but at the word of command the drums beat a prolonged roll, and the voice could no longer be heard. The King, seeing that all further address to the crowd would be fruitless, turned to the guillotine and calmly took his place on the fatal plank, to which he was fastened. The apparatus turned over, and the ax fell.¹ It

¹ The writer has found no mention, in the narrative of the Abbé Edgeworth or others, of the famous words, attributed to him, «Son of St. Louis, ascend to heaven.»

As then a quarter past ten o'clock A. M. of the 21st of January, 1793. The executioner held up the severed head, turning as he did so to the four sides of the Place.

The King of France was dead.

«Le roi est mort!»

But no one dared to cry the traditional response: «Vive le roi!»

«Le roi!» The heir to the once glorious title was now a poor little child weeping bitterly in a prison by the side of his widowed mother.

The unhappy Queen had spent the night, lying on her bed, without undressing, «incessantly sobbing and shuddering with grief,» says Madame Royale. The morning passed in the horrible expectation of the coming sorrow, supposing every minute that the door was about to open for the summons to the last farewell. Seven o'clock—eight—nine, and still no message. They heard the noise of horses and troops, but still the mourners hoped for the last word, the last look. Then all was silent. They scarcely dared to acknowledge what they feared; but after a period of agonized suspense they heard the public criers proclaim that all was over. The Queen then entreated to be allowed to see Cléry, hoping to learn from him what had taken place, why she had not seen the King, what messages he had left for her, for his children, for his sister. This was refused!

One of the municipal guards, however, who was more humane and compassionate than the others, managed to see Cléry, to gather all particulars from his lips, and to transmit them to the Queen, for whom he also procured newspapers, which the family was able to read secretly.

The Queen was in a state of absolute prostration, from which she was roused in some measure by the serious illness of her daughter. «Happily,» says the young Princess, with pathetic simplicity—«*happily*, I became so ill that her thoughts were diverted from her grief in some measure.» Mourning attire had been granted at the earnest request of the bereaved family; but nothing could induce the Queen to go down-stairs into the garden, even for the sake of her children's health, after the recovery of the young Princess. She could not endure the thought of passing before the door of the King's apartments; but this could not be avoided, as they were immediately under those that she occupied. After several weeks spent in close seclusion, some of the kinder guards suggested that she should go to the top of

the tower, where there was a sort of circular walk between the conical summit and the parapet bordering the roof. She consented to take the air with her children in this manner. Meanwhile, with the obstinate adherence to royalist traditions which at that time seemed a duty as sacred as that of a profession of religious faith, she treated her son, as King of France, with the etiquette which had been used by the royal family toward the King even in the prison. This was more than imprudent, under the circumstances of her situation, which she would not or could not understand, still preserving her delusions, still convinced that they would all be delivered by the interference of the allied powers. She never dreamed of being subjected to a judicial trial, like the King; the only possible danger seemed to be that of a massacre in the prison.

Her royalist adherents, who foresaw more clearly what would probably be her fate, formed many plans for the escape of the Queen and the royal family, with the connivance of some of the guards, who were won over either by real sympathy for the royal prisoners or by promises of a rich reward. But the spies placed near them—Tison and his wife—were on the watch, and perpetually gave warning of what they saw or suspected, causing all plans to fail, through some unforeseen complication, at the very time when success seemed within reach. These attempts only caused increased vexation to the prisoners, who were perpetually subjected to domiciliary visits, and were repeatedly searched, when everything that could be taken from them was carried away.

The respect shown to the boy-King irritated those who governed at that time, and they were further exasperated by the insurrection which had broken out in La Vendée, where Louis XVII was styled king. Thenceforward the poor child's fate was sealed. On the night of July 3 of that miserable year, at ten o'clock, the guards appeared bearing a decree by which it was ordered that «the son of Louis Capet» should be separated from his mother, and given into the hands of a «tutor,»¹ who would be appointed by the Commune.

The scene that followed is one of the most harrowing recorded in history. The terrified child uttered loud cries and entreaties, clinging desperately to his mother, who knew only

¹ This so-called «tutor» was the cobbler Simon, by whom the poor little Prince was treated with the greatest cruelty.



PAINTED BY MME. VIGÉE LEBRUN.

IN THE MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., NEW YORK.

MARIE-ANTOINETTE AND HER CHILDREN.

too well into what hands he was about to fall, and what would be his fate. She refused to give him up, and defended him with the strength of despair, telling them to kill her before taking her son from her. A whole hour passed thus—in desperate resistance on the part of Marie-Antoinette, in threats and violence on the part of the guards, in tears and supplications from Madame Elisabeth and Madame Royale. At last the guards declared so positively that they would kill both of her children, that the Queen, exhausted, ceased her resistance. Madame Elisabeth and Madame Royale then took up the child from his little bed, and dressed him, for the Queen was powerless. When ready she gave him herself into the hands of the guards, with floods of tears, «foreseeing,» says Madame Royale, «that she would never see him again. The poor little fellow kissed us all very affectionately, and followed the guards, crying bitterly.»

This blow was perhaps the hardest of all for Marie-Antoinette to bear. Her husband had been put to death, and the affliction was intensely bitter; yet he had died like a Christian hero, and she seemed to see him in heaven. But for a mother to know that her dear, sweet child, so fondly loved, so carefully tended, was given over into the hands of brutes, from whom every kind of ill-usage must be expected, and who would destroy both body and soul—here was indeed the most dreadful of all sorrows! A child from whom so much could be expected, such an exceptionally amiable and affectionate nature, so attractive in every respect, and such a treasure to the widowed mother!

After the poor little Dauphin was taken away they were left to mourn in peace, «which was some comfort,» says Madame Royale. The municipal guards locked them up in their rooms, but did not remain with them. No one now did the housework. Madame Elisabeth and Madame Royale made the beds, swept the rooms, and waited on the Queen. The guards came three times a day to bring food and to examine the bolts and the bars of the windows, lest anything should be disturbed.

The prisoners were able to go up by an inner staircase to the top of the tower, where the Queen spent hours looking through a crack in a wooden partition, in the hope of seeing her son go by. Madame Elisabeth was informed by the guards of the ill-usage to which the poor child was subjected, «and which was beyond imagination,» says Madame Royale, «more especially because he cried at

being separated from us.» But Madame Elisabeth entreated the guards to keep all these particulars from the Queen, who was only too much enlightened when she saw the child pass by, and watched his pale, sorrowful face.

The last time that such miserable comfort was granted to her was on July 30. She had watched long, and at last she saw him, cowed and terrified, bereft of his golden curls, wearing the red revolutionary cap, and, alas! singing a song of coarse insult against herself! She knew then how the child must have suffered before he could have been brought to this.

On the 1st of August one of those night visits of the guards which always brought woe to the prisoners aroused them, at two o'clock in the morning, to hear a decree by which Marie-Antoinette was to be removed to the Conciergerie prison. Her daughter and sister-in-law entreated to be allowed to follow her, but this was refused. The guards obliged her to dress in their presence, and then searched her pockets, taking possession of their contents, which consisted only of the hair of her husband and children, a multiplication table used by the Dauphin, and miniatures of Madame de Lamballe and two other princesses. They left her only a handkerchief and a smelling-bottle.

The Queen did not utter a word till she embraced her daughter, whom she exhorted to keep up her courage, to take care of her aunt, and to be obedient to her as to another mother. She then threw herself in the arms of Madame Elisabeth, who whispered to her a few words; the Queen then quickly left the room, without daring to look back.

The gloomy prison of the Conciergerie, on the quay bordering the Seine, was one of the most dreaded among the places where the victims of the Revolution were confined. It had, however, one redeeming point: the humanity shown to the prisoners by Richard, the chief jailer, and his wife. The servant of the latter, named Rosalie Lamorlière, has left a minute account of the time spent there by the unfortunate Marie-Antoinette.

On August 1, 1793, Madame Richard called her servant Rosalie, telling her the Queen was coming, and that they must both sit up to wait for her. Meanwhile a cell underground, like a cellar, but comparatively large, was prepared to receive her. A folding-bed made up of thin mattresses on a canvas frame, with a bolster and a thin covering, was prepared for her; but Madame Richard did her best to make it endurable by adding delicately finished sheets and a pillow. The furniture

was completed by a table, with what was absolutely necessary for her ablutions, and two straw chairs. The Queen of France, for whom such an abode had been prepared, arrived in a hackney-coach at three o'clock in the morning, and came into the prison with her usual majestic mien, surrounded by numerous gendarmes. She followed a dark passage, lighted by miserable lamps night and day, till she reached a low door; and as she passed through, her head, which had not been sufficiently bowed, struck against it. One of those who followed her asked if she was hurt. «Oh, no,» she replied; «nothing can hurt me now.»

When all formalities had been performed she was left alone with the jailer's wife and Rosalie. She looked around her with an expression of astonishment as for the first time she saw what a prison could be; for at the Temple she was provided with decent furniture and was given necessaries. But now! She was silent, however, although she looked earnestly at Madame Richard and at her servant, as if trying to guess what she could expect from them. Without speaking, she stepped on a stool which Rosalie had brought in the hope of adding something to her deficient comfort, and hung her watch upon a nail in the wall. She then began to undress quietly.

Rosalie, who was shy and frightened in the presence of fallen majesty, now came forward respectfully to offer her assistance. «I thank you, my good girl,» said the Queen, kindly; «since I have had no one to attend me, I have learned to wait upon myself.»

The dawn was just beginning to appear; Madame Richard took away the candles, and, followed by Rosalie, left the Queen alone.

The next day two gendarmes were placed in the cell, and remained there permanently, never leaving the unfortunate Queen any privacy. By the care of Madame Richard, a screen was put up before her bed, and was her only protection against their incessant watchfulness. They drank, smoked, played cards, quarreled, and swore in her presence; the smoke was particularly disagreeable to her, and affected her eyes, besides causing headaches. As she had brought nothing with her from the Temple, she begged to be allowed the use of the linen and other requisites which she had left there. After some delay a parcel was brought containing a few articles carefully folded and put together. As she looked at each, the Queen's eyes filled with tears, and turning to Madame Richard, she said mournfully: «In the care with which all this has been chosen and pre-

pared I recognize the hand of my poor sister Elisabeth.» After receiving this parcel of necessaries the Queen wished to put them away, but had no means of doing so in her cell. She begged Madame Richard to lend her a box of some kind, but the jailer's wife dared not procure one for her. At last Rosalie offered a handbox of her own, which the Queen accepted with thankfulness. Poor Rosalie also lent her a mirror of the humblest kind, which she had bought at a trifling cost for her own use—a small glass in a painted tin frame, which was received as a boon by the royal lady whose majestic beauty had been reflected in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles!

Two or three days after the transfer of Marie-Antoinette to the Conciergerie, Madame Richard came into the cell, followed by her youngest child, a pretty blue-eyed boy with curls of fair hair. The poor Queen ran up to him, caught him in her arms, and kissed him passionately, weeping bitterly as she did so, and saying that he reminded her of the Dauphin. She was so much affected by this incident that the kindly wife of the jailer never brought the child again to the Queen's cell.

All the narratives of those who came near to Marie-Antoinette in her days of misfortune are unanimous in their account of her gentleness and patience, and her quick feeling of gratitude for any attention or kindness shown to her. She never complained, says Rosalie, and cared only for cleanliness around her. She was particular in this respect; and as Rosalie tried to satisfy her, she received the pewter spoons and forks with a grateful smile, because they were always bright and clean. Her dinner was nicely served, with clean table-linen, and was carefully cooked by Rosalie. She had daily soup,—inevitable at a French table,—a dish of meat (alternately poultry and a joint), vegetables, which she seemed to like better than meat, and fruit. As usual, she drank only water, but the kind jailer managed to procure the Ville d'Avray water to which she was accustomed. Rosalie admired the neat adroitness with which she carved her food, and still more her beautiful hands, white and delicately formed. She wore at first diamond rings, and in the long hours of enforced idleness which were so painful to her she sat in deep thought, playing unconsciously with these rings, which were taken from her by the commissaries who frequently visited the prison, and who probably appropriated them to their own use; for they are not mentioned

in any list of confiscated articles. They also took her watch, which was particularly dear to her; for she had brought it from Vienna when, as a girl of fourteen, she had come to France to meet such an unexpected fate. She shed tears when these last treasures were taken from her, but made no complaint.

The loss of occupation was particularly painful to one whose time had been principally employed in needlework since her misfortunes had obliged her to live in retirement. Even knitting-needles were refused!

The women employed in the prison were obliged to mend her clothes incessantly, for they became injured, and in a manner rotted, by the excessive damp of her cell, which was far below the level of the neighboring Seine. Her black prunella shoes were covered with mold, although Rosalie cleaned them regularly. She wore alternately her black widow's garb and a white morning dress. She was so weary of inaction that she pulled threads from the canvas on which the paper covering the walls of her cell was pasted, and plaited these threads into a sort of flat braid, with the help of pins fastened to her knee. Sometimes, when the guards were playing at cards, she stood by and watched them. She daily read a devotional book that was in her possession, and was engaged in prayer for a considerable portion of the day. She sought relaxation by reading the travels of Captain Cook, in which she was interested, saying that she liked to read «dreadful adventures.» Poor Queen! Could any be worse than her own? No candle was given her when night came, and Rosalie tried to do what was necessary to prepare for the night in as dilatory a manner as she could, that the Queen might share the light which she brought with her for as long a time as was possible. She went to bed by the dim light of a lamp in the courtyard, on which the high window of her cell opened, allowing a glimmer to reach her.

But painful as was her condition, it was about to become worse still, in consequence, alas! of the royalist attempts to save her, which had no result save exasperating her enemies and increasing her sufferings. The Chevalier de Rougeville,¹ a devoted royalist, succeeded in gaining admission to the Queen's cell with a plan of escape. Unhappily, she was not prepared to see him, and started in a manner which did not escape

the observation of those around her. As he stood near her, he dropped a carnation on the floor at her feet. This she took up when she thought that she had found a suitable opportunity; it contained a bit of thin paper with a few words of apparently little importance, but ending more significantly: «I will come on Friday.» She tried to prick with a pin a sort of answer to this communication; but the guards, who had watched her, took the paper,² and announced the whole incident. The jailer and his wife, with their daughter, were immediately arrested and sent to the Madelonnettes prison; another jailer was appointed, whose wife, happily for Marie-Anoinette, retained the servant Rosalie as an assistant. The Queen was then (September 11) transferred to another cell, where she remained till the day of her execution (October 16).

The new jailer, a man named Bault, although harsh and rough in manner and strict in supervision, was not really unkind; but he was extremely afraid of what might be the consequence of any indulgence shown to the prisoner, although disposed to do what he could to alleviate her sufferings without injuring himself. The cell allotted to the Queen had still more the characteristics of a dungeon than her first prison. The walls were extremely thick, but so damp that the wet drops trickled down upon her bed. Bault nailed up a piece of carpet as a protection, saying gruffly to those who objected that he wished to prevent the prisoner from hearing what took place outside. At the same time he declared that, being responsible for the person of his prisoner, no one should go into her cell³ without his leave. The two guards were thus obliged to remain in the adjoining cell, Bault retaining the key of the intervening door. This delivered the Queen from the continual presence of the guards, but limited the attentions shown to her by Rosalie, who could not come in without the jailer.

Before the fatal conspiracy of the carnation the Queen had seemed hopeful of being soon claimed by her family in Austria, and Rosalie was told that she should go with her, the Queen wishing to retain her services. But since her transfer to the new cell she seemed anxious, and repeatedly paced to and fro, apparently in deep thought. In fact, the fate that awaited her, but which even now she did not fully anticipate, was only has-

¹ Called the «Chevalier de Maison Rouge» in the well-known novel of Dumas.

² The pricked paper still exists among the State Papers.

³ The Queen's cell is still to be seen at the Conciergerie. It is narrow, with thick walls and a small window, the top of which is on a level with the courtyard. The floor is paved with bricks, put up edgewise.



PAINTED BY MME. VIGÉE LEBRUN.

IN THE POSSESSION OF MME. LA MARQUISE DU BLAISDEL.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., NEW YORK.

tened by the unfortunate and useless attempts to effect her deliverance.

On October 3, 1793, the Convention issued a decree ordering judgment to be passed on the «Widow Capet.» Then began the odious attempt to gather testimony against her from her own children. On the 6th of October, two commissaries, Pache and Chaumette, came to examine the unfortunate Dauphin. The child had been beaten and ill-used «beyond what could be imagined,» as his sister, Madame Royale, testifies; he was also per-

petually threatened with the guillotine, which frightened him to such a degree that he fainted several times through excess of terror. Added to all this, he was forced to drink raw spirits, which threw him into a stupefied state! Cowed with terror, and too young to understand the meaning of the questions addressed to him concerning his mother, he answered as he saw that he was required to do. It must not be forgotten that the unhappy child was only eight years old, and that he had already witnessed

scenes of horror which had only too much enlightened him as to what he might expect.

On the 7th of October the commissaries, with several guards, went up to the rooms occupied by Madame Elisabeth and her niece, whom they ordered to follow them. For the first time Madame Elisabeth was pale and trembling; but she was not allowed to accompany the young girl, who went away with their persecutors. In her simple narrative she says: «It was the first time that I had ever been alone with men. I did not know what they intended to do with me, but I prayed internally to God for protection.»

When she saw her brother, who was to be examined again in her presence, she ran to embrace him; but he was taken from her, and she was examined alone in the first instance. «Chaumette then questioned me on many wicked things of which they accused my mother and my aunt. I was thunderstruck at such horrors, and although I was so frightened, I could not help saying that these suppositions were infamous. Notwithstanding my tears, they persistently questioned me for a long time. There were things that I did not understand, but what I could understand was so dreadful that I cried through indignation.» The Dauphin was then recalled, and the brother and sister were examined face to face; but the poor child was naturally more helpless than even the young and innocent Madame Royale. The ordeal lasted three hours before the young Princess was taken back to her aunt, who was then summoned in her turn. Madame Elisabeth answered with contemptuous energy and spirit, and was detained only an hour instead of three. «The deputies saw that they could not frighten her as they hoped to do in my case,» says Madame Royale; «but the life that I had led for the last four years, and the example of my parents, had given me strength of mind.»

Five days later the Queen was summoned in her turn for examination previous to her trial. She gave her name as «Marie-Antoinette of Lorraine and Austria, aged about thirty-eight years, widow of the King of France.»

She answered clearly and adroitly all the questions put to her, and was then informed that Tronson Ducoudray, a barrister of reputation, and Chauveau-Lagarde, had been officially appointed as counsel for the defense. But Chauveau-Lagarde, who at once went to consult with the Queen, found that the trial was to commence the next day (October 15), and vainly asked for a delay of three days (certainly not too much!) to

prepare his defense and examine the indictment. The refusal of the government proved only too clearly that no justice could be expected, and that the Queen's fate was sealed beforehand.

On the following day (October 15) the proceedings began before the Revolutionary Court or Tribunal, which then held its sittings in the large hall of the prison.¹ The Queen was summoned at eight o'clock in the morning, and, according to the testimony of Rosalie, without having taken any nourishment. She wore her widow's dress and cap, over which was fastened a black crape scarf. Her hair was simply but neatly arranged, rather high on her forehead; it was white on the temples, but not perceptibly gray elsewhere. She looked pale and thin, but the majestic lines of her queenly face remained, and she retained the grace and dignity of carriage which had always been so remarkable. She walked firmly to her seat—an arm-chair which, with unusual courtesy, had been provided for her use. She looked steadily at her judges, and as the indictment with its multiplied insults was read, and she heard herself compared to Frédégonde, Messalina, and all the similar monsters known to history, she drew up her still proud head, and played indifferently on the arm of the chair with her fingers, «as if on a pianoforte,» says one of the spectators. When questioned, she answered clearly and steadily, often showing considerable acuteness in her replies to treacherous questions, where the least inadvertence might have caused serious consequences. To one accusation—that concerning the Dauphin's revelations—she made no reply. This was brought forward as a sort of admission of guilt. She then spoke, exclaiming in vibrating tones which went home to all around her: «I did not answer, because nature itself recoils from such an accusation addressed to a mother! I appeal to all those who may be here!»

There were murmurs in the crowd—a momentary reaction in her favor, which alarmed those who had sworn that she should die. Witnesses were summoned, and the Queen was cross-examined on their testimony, often of the most absurd kind.

At four o'clock an interval of rest was granted, and the Queen, who was utterly exhausted, was allowed to leave her seat. An officer who saw that she was nearly fainting gave her a glass of water and assisted her to leave the court; it will scarcely

¹ Now destroyed.



PAINTED BY MME. VIGÉE LEBRUN.

IN THE MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., NEW YORK.

be believed that this act of common humanity caused his arrest! The jailer Bault then desired Rosalie to take some soup to the Queen; but the poor girl was not allowed to give it herself, the bowl being taken from her, to her great distress, merely to satisfy the curiosity of an abandoned woman who wished for an opportunity of seeing the Queen to her satisfaction!

At five o'clock P.M. the proceedings were resumed, and lasted till four on the following morning (the 16th of October), when the sentence was given out by which «Marie-Antoinette of Austria, widow of Louis Capet,» was condemned to the penalty of death, which penalty was to be carried out within twenty-four hours. Chauveau-Lagarde here states that the Queen had not even then

believed in the possibility of such a sentence; that the worst she anticipated was the separation from her children which would be the consequence of perpetual banishment from France. Both her advocates were put under arrest before she left the court, and were consequently unable to hear from herself what she felt; but they saw that she had received an unexpected shock, and for a moment seemed thunderstruck. However, she quickly recovered her presence of mind and her fortitude. As she reached the railing which separated her from the spectators assembled in the court, she raised her head, and walked out with a firm step.

When she reached her cell she asked immediately for writing-materials, without taking rest, although the night was nearly spent, and her trial had lasted for twenty hours, with no food but the bowl of soup taken on the preceding evening. The energy of mind which could command such physical exhaustion is truly wonderful.

She sat down, and by the feeble light of two tallow candles wrote to Madame Elisabeth a letter dated the 16th of October, half-past four o'clock in the morning. This letter, which is preserved among the State Papers, but was not given to Madame Elisabeth, has no signature; but it is nevertheless considered authentic, and is countersigned by several well-known revolutionists. The Queen writes most affectionately to Madame Elisabeth, thanking her for the sacrifices she has made for all; while assuring her of her own calmness in the presence of approaching death, she sends messages to her children, and, like the King, forbids them ever to seek revenge for her death. She then refers to the circumstance "which has been so painful to her heart"—the grief which her son must have caused Madame Elisabeth. She entreats her to remember his age, and to forgive him, reminding her how easy it is to make a child say what is suggested to him, and especially what he does not understand. The Queen then makes her profession of faith as a firm Catholic, expresses hope in the mercy of God, and bids an affectionate farewell to all; adding that if one of the schismatic priests who had taken the constitutional oath should be brought to her, she would refuse his ministry.

The Queen intrusted the letter to the jailer Bault, but he dared not attempt to send it to Madame Elisabeth, and gave it into the hands of Fouquier-Tinville, the public prosecutor, where it remained.

The Queen, after this last effort, lay down

on her bed, where Rosalie found her when the jailer sent to offer her nourishment. The two candles had burned low in the cell, and by their dim light Rosalie saw an officer half asleep in a chair, and the Queen, in her long black dress, lying on the bed weeping bitterly. Rosalie, in deep distress herself, asked in a low voice if she would take anything. The Queen, still weeping, replied:

"Oh, my good girl, all is over for me now!"

"Madame," then said Rosalie, in tones of entreaty, "I have some good soup ready. You have taken nothing to-day, and you had next to nothing yesterday. You require support; pray let me bring you some soup."

"No, no; I thank you, but I want nothing."

The girl turned away; the Queen, seeing that she was in tears, feared to have grieved her, and with the characteristic kindness which she retained to the last, called her back.

"Well, well, Rosalie, you may bring me your soup."

Rosalie hastened to fetch it, and the Queen sat up on her bed to try to take it, but could not swallow more than two or three spoonfuls. She then desired Rosalie to return about the break of day to help her to dress.

Meanwhile a "constitutional priest,"¹ as they were called, came to offer the Queen his spiritual aid, which she refused. He asked if he should accompany her to the place of execution. She replied with indifference:

"As you please."

He then said:

"Your death will expiate—"

"Yes, monsieur," she quickly rejoined, "errors, but not crimes."

At the appointed hour Rosalie came to assist her in changing her clothes; for she wished to appear before the people in as proper attire as was within her power. Rosalie had brought a change of linen, for which the Queen had asked, and unfolded it in readiness as the Queen stooped down behind her bed, desiring Rosalie to stand before her as she unfastened her gown to draw it down. Immediately the officer on guard came up to the bed, and leaning his elbow on the pillow, looked over to have a better view, staring insolently at the Queen, who blushed deeply, and hastily drew her large muslin kerchief over her shoulders, as, clasping her hands, she said imploringly:

"I entreat you, monsieur, in the name of

¹ A priest who had taken the forbidden oath, and was consequently under the interdict of the church.



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IN THE MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., NEW YORK.

THE DAUPHIN LOUIS-JOSEPH AND HIS SISTER THE DUCHESSE D'ANGOULÊME.

decency, to allow me to change my linen without a witness."

"I cannot allow it," said the man, roughly; "my orders are to keep eyes upon you constantly, day and night."

The Queen sighed deeply, and then quietly knelt down behind Rosalie, who screened her as best she could, while the unfortunate prisoner, with every care and precaution, changed her clothes. She had received orders not to wear her widow's mourning, "lest the people should insult her in consequence"; but, rather, lest she should awaken too much commiseration, as every one in the prison concluded. The Queen made no remark, and put on the white dress which she always wore in the morning over a black skirt. She wore a plain lawn cap, without the widow's scarf of crape, and fastened black ribbons to her wrists, after having crossed her large white muslin kerchief over her dress. She was now ready for whatever might be ordered, and knelt down in prayer. Rosalie was not allowed to remain, and retired, sobbing as if her heart would break.

At ten o'clock the judges came into the cell, where another officer had relieved guard. The Queen rose from her knees to receive the officials, who told her that they came to read to her the sentence.

"This is quite useless," said the Queen, in a raised voice; "I know the sentence only too well."

"That does not matter," answered one of those present; "you must hear it again."

The Queen made no reply, and the sentence was read to her. As this ended, the chief executioner—Henri Sanson, a young man of gigantic height—came in. He came up to the Queen, saying: "Hold out your hands." She drew back, seeming greatly agitated.

"Are you going to tie my hands? They were not tied in the case of Louis XVI till he reached the scaffold."

The judges said to the executioner: "Do your duty."

"Oh, mon Dieu!" cried the Queen. The executioner then seized the beautiful, delicate hands and tied them with a rope¹ behind her back. The Queen sighed deeply and looked up to heaven; but although tears were ready to flow, she restrained them. When her hands were thus firmly bound, the executioner took off her cap and cut off her hair. As she felt the touch of the scissors on her

neck she started and turned hastily, evidently supposing that she was about to be murdered in the cell; she then saw the executioner folding up her hair, which he put in his pocket.² Before she left the cell she said anxiously to the officer now on guard: "Do you think that they will let me reach the place of execution without tearing me to pieces?"

He assured her that she had nothing to fear from the mob, but she seemed anxious as she followed the officials who led her to her doom, scarcely hoping even for the dreadful security of a guarded scaffold! When she saw the cart awaiting her she again started, and seemed to receive a fresh shock; she had supposed that, like the King, she would have the protection of a closed coach. The cart was of a kind seen only in remote country parts at the present day, and made of four separate sides rudely tied together, the back part being let down for ingress, with a step-ladder attached. A plank put across the cart served as a seat. The Queen ascended the steps firmly, and prepared to sit facing the horse; but she was immediately told that she must sit backward, looking toward the spectators. She turned and took her seat with perfect calmness and a grave, resolute look, gazing straight before her, pale, with red, even bloodshot eyes, but carrying her head high, as was her wont. The executioner and his assistant stood behind her, leaning against the sides of the cart. The priest took his place next to her, but she turned away and seemed determined not to speak to him, though he held up a crucifix before her from time to time. She seemed to suffer pain from the ropes around her hands, on which he pressed to relieve the tension. The ends were held by the executioner, pulling the arms backward. The cart went on slowly, while an immense crowd³ followed in dead silence till they reached the Rue St. Honoré. There they found hostile elements, especially the abandoned women who in Paris always play such a prominent part in popular disturbances. Here there was such a burst of insult and execration that the unfortunate Queen might well dread the possibility of falling into such hands.

But the cart turned into the Rue Royale, and reached the Place de la Révolution, where the scaffold was erected. As the Queen passed

¹ "Too tightly," says an eye-witness.

² It was burned, after the execution, in the entrance-hall of the prison.

³ A young American, Daniel Strobel of Charleston,

South Carolina, grandfather to the writer of these pages, was in the crowd before the Conciergerie prison when the Queen came out, and followed closely to the last.

before the Tuileries she turned with an earnest, lingering look.

The scaffold was erected facing the garden of the Tuileries, before a statue of Liberty, on the spot where the Obelisk now stands, and not where the King's scaffold had stood, which was on the opposite side, facing the Champs-Élysées. The priest attempted to assist her in alighting, but notwithstanding the increased difficulty consequent on her tied hands, she turned from him and stepped down firmly, with apparent ease, as quickly as she could, seeming desirous to hasten the end as far as possible. The executioner offered to assist her in ascending the scaffold, but she went up alone and quickly, immediately going to the plank on which she was to be bound. In doing so she trod on the foot of the executioner, who made a motion as of pain. With the kind courtesy which characterized her even in this last hour, she quickly exclaimed, «Pardon, monsieur!» in a tone of regret and apology. The executioner and his assistant then fastened her to the plank, and tore off

her muslin kerchief, lest it should impede the action of the knife. The last motion of Marie-Antoinette was an involuntary attempt to bring forward her tied hands as a screen for her uncovered shoulders! . . . When the executioner held up the head to the populace, to the deep awe of the spectators, the face of Marie-Antoinette expressed perfect consciousness, and the eyes looked on the crowd!¹ The expression was that of intense astonishment, as of some wonderful vision revealed.

All was over; the eventful life was ended. The follies of early youth, the joys of the past, the dreadful sorrows of the present time, the heroic final atonement for what had been «errors, but not crimes»—all was over. All had vanished like a dream, save the eternal reward in store for the faith and trust of the Christian, more valuable now than the majesty of the Queen.

Requiescat in pace!

¹ Daniel Strobel always expressed his conviction that, for a short space of time at least, she was perfectly conscious, as if still alive.

«FROM THE YOUNG ORCHARDS.»

FROM the young orchards, thick with rosy spray,
Falls in the windless night the wreath of May;
And the young maples, fresh with early gold,
In one slow moon their emerald globes unfold:
So grows, through happy change, the tree of life.

The sweet arbutus to the violet yields;
Soon the wild daisies flood the fluttering fields;
And last the cardinal and the goldenrod
Lift to the blue the soft fire of the sod:
So moves, from bloom to bloom, the flower of love.

Oh, hidden-strange as on dew-heavy lawns
The warm dark scents of summer-fragrant dawns;
Oh, tender as the faint sea-changes are,
When grows the flush, and pales the snow-white star:
So strange, so tender, to a maid is love.

Oh, calling as the touch of children's hands
That draw all wanderers home o'er seas and lands;
Oh, answering far as from the world divine,
Whence unseen hands through Time and Space touch mine:
So in my breast I hear the voice of love.

The Eden-heart of this majestic frame;
God's will on earth; and flame within the flame
Far as yon suns in Nature's mystic dusks;
Deep as the life whereof our lives are husks;
Unspeakable, O love, my love, is love.

George Edward Woodberry.