THE LITTLE CAPTIVE KING.

I.

LOUIS AND THE COMPASS.

ONE morning in the month of August 1789, a man and a child were walking through the extensive and beautiful park of Rambouillet—a royal residence, thirty-six miles south-west of Paris. The man, though of a somewhat bulky frame, was yet in the prime of life, and had a mild and distinguished countenance. His simple style of dress did not indicate the precise rank which he held in society, yet his aquiline nose, his majesty of air, as well as the broad blue ribbon visible between his white waistcoat and lace frill, marked him as one of the royal family. As for the child, he was remarkable for almost angelic beauty and his clustering curls of fair hair which hung over his open neck and shoulders. About four years and five months old, but, like all precocious children, taller than usual at that age, he bore in his features an air of bright intelligence, shaded, however, as some would think, with a stamp of melancholy unsuitable to his years. Gay and lively in the extreme, his animal spirits were at one moment in wild exuberance; in the next his mood changed to deep depression. His bright blue eyes had the irresistible charm of having their brilliance softened by a pensiveness of expression, calculated to interest all who looked on his fair countenance.

The man was Louis XVI., King of France, the child was his son, Louis-Charles, the dauphin.

"Louis," said the king, "to-morrow is the queen's birthday, and you must think of something new for her bouquet, and compose some little compliment."

"Papa," replied the young prince quickly, "I have a beautiful everlasting in my garden, and it will just do for my bouquet and my compliment too. When presenting it to mamma, I can say, 'Mamma, I wish that you may be like this flower.'"

"Very good, indeed, my child," said the king, pressing his little hand which he held in his. "How much I wish that your conduct was always as satisfactory as your little sallies are pleasing and full of heart! I grieve to have heard that while studying your lesson with your tutor yesterday, you began to hiss. Was this as it ought to be, Louis?"

"What would you have me do, papa?" replied Louis with an arch smile; "I said my lesson so badly, that I hissed myself."

"What was the abbé explaining to you?" said the king.

"It was the use of the compass, and I own to you, papa, that I am just now greatly puzzled about it. I scarcely heard a word he said. All the time he was speaking, I was thinking how the sun would be burning up my garden and my beautiful flowers, and I was longing to get out to water them; so Monsieur the abbé will be very angry with me to-morrow, for I do not remember a single syllable. If you have time, papa, could you not tell me all about it while we are walking?"

"With pleasure, Louis," answered the king, "particularly as I happen to have a small compass in my pocket. Before, however, attempting to explain this curious instrument, I must tell you something of the magnet, from which its power and usefulness are derived. The only natural magnet with which we are acquainted is the loadstone—a mineral of a dark iron gray colour approaching to black, found in great abundance in the iron mines of Sweden, in some parts of the East, in America, and sometimes, though rarely, among the iron ores of England. Now, the loadstone has a property of attracting iron, which it draws into contact with its own mass and holds firmly attached by its own power of attraction. A piece of loadstone drawn several times along a needle or a small piece of iron, converts it into an artificial magnet. If this magnetised needle be then carefully balanced, so as to move easily on its centre, one of its ends will always turn to the north. Now, Louis, look at this small case. You see in it the magnet, made like the hand of a clock, with that end which points to the north shaped like the head of an arrow. You see that it is carefully balanced on a steel point, and beneath it is a card marked like a dial-plate with north, south, east, west, such being the cardinal points; also the intermediate points, as north-west, south-east, &c. By merely looking at the position of the needle when it settles to a point, the mariner can see the direction in which his vessel is sailing, and regulate his steering accordingly. The case, you see, is covered

with glass, to protect the face from injury. This is a small compass, but there are large ones which are not so well suited for carrying about. Whether large or small, the compass is one of the most useful instruments in the world. Without it, mariners dare not venture out of sight of land, nor would the discovery of America have been made by the great Columbus. You will remember that the magnetic needle always points to the north."

"Papa, tell me, is the compass as useful on land as at sea?"

"Assuredly, my child. For example, suppose we were to lose our way in the adjoining forest: I know that the Chateau de Rambouillet lies to the north of the forest, and to find out the north I look at my compass, and take the direction to which the needle points—so." And the king showed his son how the needle would act.

The boy, who had been most attentively listening to his father, suddenly cried, "Do, papa, lend me your compass, and let me find my way by myself to the chateau."

"And if you lose your way?" said the king, a little startled at the proposal.

"But the compass will guide me, papa."

"You are not afraid, then, of being alone in the forest?"

"Was a king of France ever afraid?" replied Louis, proudly raising his pretty fair head.

"Well, be it so," said the king; "here is the compass, and here, too, is my purse, for you may want money on your way. Now let us part; you, Mr Adventurer, may take to the right, I will keep to the left, and I appoint you to meet me at the chateau."

"Agreed," said Louis, kissing his father's hand as he took from it the compass, and then merrily plunged into the depths of the forest.

II.

LOUIS AND THE PEASANT.

For about an hour the dauphin pursued his way, directing his course by the compass till he arrived at the borders of the forest, without finding himself nearer home. A large meadow lay before him, in which some peasants were mowing, and he advanced towards them, not to inquire his way—the idea of seeking any other guide but his compass did not enter his head—no, he only wanted to know the hour. As he approached, a little dog began barking in rather a hostile way. His master called him back; but the dog did not immediately obey, and the peasant left his work, and with the handle of his scythe gave the animal several blows.

On hearing the cries of the dog, Louis ran to the peasant. "Will you sell that pretty dog, friend?" said he to him.

"Not so fast, my little gentleman," answered the peasant, who did not recognise the prince; "I would not sell my dog, do you see, for all the gold in the king's purse. My poor Muff—my only companion in my poverty—my only friend!"

"Then why do you beat him?"

"He that loves well chastises well, my little gentleman."

"Here, friend," said the child, taking a piece of gold from his purse; "I will give you this, if you promise me not to love your dog quite so well."

Astonished at this munificence in so young a child, the peasant said, "One would think you were the son of a king, to give away so much money at a time."

"I am the son of your king," answered Louis, artlessly.

"Pardon, my prince; I ask pardon," said the peasant in great confusion. "Pardon me for having refused you the dog: it is yours, my prince, and all that I have besides. Take Muff, my good young prince—take Muff."

"I am much obliged to you, my good sir," answered the child; "but you tell me he is your only friend. Now I have a great many friends, so I will not deprive you of yours. I only want you to tell me what o'clock it is."

"It is three o'clock, your highness."

"But how do you know?—where did you see it?" said the child with much surprise. "You did not look at your watch."

"If we poor peasants could not tell the hour without a watch, I do not know what we should do. Sure we have the sun."

"And how do you know by the sun?"

"Well, indeed, I cannot tell you that very clearly, my young prince; it is, however, according to its height. When as high as it will go nearly over our heads, and when it casts the least possible shadow anywhere, we know it is noon precisely. According as it comes down lower, and our shadow lengthens, it is one o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock, and so on. You see we just judge by the shadows, my good little prince."

"Thank you, friend, for all you have taught me," said the child; and then, notwithstanding the earnest intreaties of the peasant to be allowed to show him the way—steady to his resolve to consult no guide but the compass—he fearlessly struck again into the forest, and at length, after several hours of wandering, now finding now missing the track, he arrived at Rambouillet heated and panting, yet insensible to the fatigue he had undergone from exultation at having, unassisted, reached the end of his journey.

The moment the king saw him, he ran to him with an eagerness that betrayed what had been his anxiety. "I had almost begun to think you had lost your way, Louis."

"Lost my way, indeed! How could I have lost it?" said the child, with a half-indignant look.

"Oh, I see your pride is up in arms; but if it had not been for the compass——"

"Papa, if I had had no compass, my heart would have guided me to you."

III.

FAMILY HISTORY.

We must say something of the parentage and birth of our young hero, and shall commence with his father. Louis XVI. was grandson of Louis XV., by whom, while dauphin, or heir-apparent to the throne of France, he was kept in comparative seclusion and ignorance of the knowledge required for his high destination. In consequence of this imperfect acquaintance with the world and of state affairs, as well as from temperament, he was indecisive, timid, silent, and reserved; but full of benevolence, and of exemplary morals. In 1770, he was united to Marie Antoinette, daughter of Francis I. of Austria and Maria Theresa; Louis at the time being no more than sixteen, and Marie Antoinette fifteen years of age. Educated with great care, this young princess was highly accomplished, and endowed with an uncommon share of gracefulness and beauty. In a letter written by her mother Maria Theresa to her future husband, she says, among other things, "Your bride, dear dauphin, is separated from me. As she has ever been my delight, so she will be your happiness. For this purpose have I educated her, for I have long been aware that she was to be the companion of your life. I have enjoined upon her, as among her highest duties, the most tender attachment to your person, the greatest attention to everything that can please or make you happy. Above all, I have recommended to her humility towards God; because I am convinced that it is impossible for us to contribute to the happiness of the subjects confided to us, without love to Him who breaks the sceptres, and crushes the thrones of kings according to His own will." The departure of this young and fascinating creature from Vienna filled all hearts with sorrow, so much was she beloved. Conducted with great state through Germany to the borders of France, near Strasburg, she was there assigned to the care of the French nobles and ladies of honour deputed to receive her; but not till an important ceremonial, according to the usage of France, had been performed.

In the midst of a pretty green meadow was erected a superb pavilion. It consisted of a vast saloon, connected with two apartments, one of which was assigned to the lords and ladies of the court of Vienna, and the other to those of the court of France, including body-guard and pages. The young princess being conducted into the apartment for the Germans, she was there undressed, in order that she might retain nothing belonging to a foreign court; and with the slenderest covering she was ushered

into the apartment in which her French suite was in attendance. It was a trying moment for a delicate female. On the doors being thrown open, the young princess came forward, looking round for her lady of honour, the Countess de Noailles; then rushing into her arms, she implored her, with tears in her eyes, and with a heart-felt sincerity, to direct her, to advise her, and to be in every respect her guide and support. It was impossible to refrain from admiring her aërial yet august and serene deportment: her smile was sufficient to win every heart. Dressed by her tirewoman, the Duchess of Cossé, she became a princess of France; and on presenting herself to the numerous retinue, she was hailed with loud and protracted acclamations.

The journey of Marie Antoinette through France was like a triumphal march; and when she arrived at Versailles, the entertainments given on her account were remarkably splendid. On the occasion of her marriage, the city of Paris also gave a magnificent fête; but greatly to her distress and that of her husband, the overcrowding of the streets caused a deplorable catastrophe—fifty-three persons were pressed or trodden to death, and about three hundred dangerously wounded. To increase the melancholy recollections of the event, a fire broke out in the Place Louis XV. by which many persons perished, and hundreds lost their all. The dauphin and dauphiness were so overwhelmed with grief at this second disaster, that they sent their whole income for the year to the relief of the surviving sufferers. This and other traits of good dispositions seemed to endear Marie Antoinette to the French; but unfortunately she was from the first surrounded by mean factions, whose delight lay in misrepresenting all her actions, and rendering her unpopular.

The dauphin and dauphiness lived chiefly at Versailles, or in the small palace in the adjoining grounds, known by the name of the Trianon, where the princess had an opportunity of indulging in her love for flowers and gardening, and Louis could pursue unmolested the industrial occupations to which he was attached. Living much apart from state affairs, four years thus pleasantly passed away, when the current of their lives was greatly altered by the demise of the reigning sovereign. Any one who had visited the palace of Versailles at the beginning of May 1774, would have found the inmates in a state of extreme consternation. Louis XV. lay ill of a dangerous malady, small-pox, and a number of the courtiers catching the infection, died. At length, on the evening of the 10th of the month, the king closed his mortal career. The dauphin was at this time with the dauphiness in one of the apartments distant from the scene of death. A noise was suddenly heard by them; it increased like the rushing of a torrent. It was the crowd of courtiers who were deserting the dead sovereign's antechamber, to come and bow to the new power of Louis XVI. This extraordinary tumult informed Marie Antoinette and her husband that they were to reign; and

by a spontaneous movement, which deeply affected those around them, they threw themselves on their knees, and both pouring forth a flood of tears, exclaimed, "Oh God! guide us, protect us; we are too young to govern!"

Marie Antoinette was now queen of France; but the accession brought no real happiness. For many years the court had been a scene of demoralisation, and full of jealousies and intrigues, which she found it impossible to quell. The queen was likewise harassed with perplexing ceremonies, for which, being bred in a simple patriarchal court, she had no taste. She was little else than a puppet in the hands of her attendants. If she wanted a glass of water, she was not allowed to take it herself; it must be given by a lady of honour. At table everything was presented on bended knees, as if she had been a divinity. In making her toilet, she durst not pour water on her own hands; every movement was performed by waiting-women, all members of the nobility. Sometimes one trifling operation would require six persons: one would take an article of dress from a wardrobe and hand it to another, who would in turn give it to another, and so on, the last putting it on the person of the queen, who was all the time perhaps shivering with cold. Marie Antoinette spoke with satirical pleasantry of these useless ceremonies, and wished to abolish them; but this only gained her enemies, and became the pretext for the first reproaches levelled against her.

Louis XVI. and his queen were married eight years before they had any children. At length, on the 11th of December 1778, the queen was delivered of her first infant, a daughter, and great were the rejoicings on the occasion, although to a less extent than if the birth had been of a son. When the young princess was presented to the queen, she pressed her to her truly maternal heart. "Poor little one," said she, "you are not what was wished for, but you are not on that account less dear to me. A son would have been rather the property of the state. You shall be mine; you shall have my undivided care, shall share all my happiness, and console me in all my troubles." A great number of attendants watched near the queen during the first nights of her confinement; and this made her uneasy, for it was contrary to the etiquette of the court that they should lie down in bed. With much kindly consideration, she ordered a number of large arm-chairs for her women, the backs of which were capable of being let down by springs, and which served perfectly well instead of beds. It was thus that Marie Antoinette felt for all who were about her. Her daughter was named Marie Thérèse.

On the 22d of October 1781, the queen gave birth to a son, the dauphin, and on this occasion the hopes of all classes appeared to be crowned with universal joy. Numerous were the congratulations; and Versailles for some time bore the air of a perpetual holiday. In the society of her son and daughter the queen now

spent much of her time; and as they grew up, she endeavoured to cultivate in them every amiable quality. During the winter of 1783, when the poor suffered greatly from cold, she distributed large sums, saved from her allowance, among the most necessitous families in Versailles; nor did she fail on this occasion to give her children a lesson in beneficence. Having met on the new-year's eve to get from Paris, as in other years, all the fashionable playthings, she caused them to be spread out in her closet. Then taking her son and daughter in her hand, she showed them all the dolls and toys which were ranged there, and told them, that she intended to give them some handsome new-year's gifts, but that the cold made the poor so wretched, that all her money was spent in blankets and clothes to protect them from the rigour of the season, and in supplying them with bread; so that this year they would only have the pleasure of looking at the new playthings. When she returned with her children into her sitting-room, she said there was still an unavoidable expense to be incurred, and that was paying the toyman for the use of his toys and the cost of his journey, and a sum was accordingly paid to him for his services.

To the family of Marie Antoinette another addition was made on the 27th of March 1785, when Louis-Charles, the object of our present memoir, was born. Immediately on his birth, which took place at Versailles, the king, his father, conferred on him the title of Duke of Normandy, which had not been given to the princes of France since the time of Charles VII. He was baptised the same day, his sponsors being Monsieur, the king's brother (afterwards Louis XVIII.), and Madame Elizabeth, as proxy for the queen of Naples. This was a happy event in the royal family of France, and served to assuage the vexations in which the king was becoming involved with his state affairs. It was another bright moment when the princess Sophie was born in 1788; but she died while still an infant, and shortly afterwards the dauphin fell in a few months from a florid state of health into so weak a condition, that he could not walk without support. How many maternal tears did his languishing frame, the certain forerunner of death, draw from the queen, already overwhelmed with apprehensions respecting the state of the kingdom! Her grief was enhanced by petty intrigues and quarrels among the persons who surrounded her. The dauphin died in 1789; and Louis-Charles, or Louis, as his father usually called him, became dauphin in his stead.

To a naturally amiable disposition, Louis-Charles united an intellect premature in its development, with a countenance which bore the mingled expression of the mildness of his father and the lofty dignity of his mother. As he grew up in childhood, he showed a most decided love for flowers; and the king, who wished to cultivate tastes so simple and so conducive in their practical exercise to his bodily health, had given him a

little plot of ground in front of the apartments opening on the terrace at Versailles. There was the dauphin, day after day, to be seen with his little spade working away; and though the perspiration stood in large drops upon his forehead, he would suffer no one to help him. "No," said he; "it is because I make the flowers grow myself that mamma is so fond of them; so I must work hard to have them ready for her." And every morning the young proprietor of this little domain came to pull his fairest roses, his most fragrant violets, to form a bouquet to lay on his mother's bed; so that the first thing Marie Antoinette always saw on awaking was her boy's early offering; while from behind the curtain he watched her smile of pleasure, then sprang from his hiding-place to claim his reward—that reward a kiss—and that kiss was so sweet to him that no severity of weather could hinder him from going to his little garden to pull the flowers that won for him this prize.

And here we would pause to say, if, in this elevated rank, it is found that when affection is to be evinced it is evinced in a way common to all classes—evinced in the daily little attentions miscalled trifling—may not those in humble life who have perhaps felt inclined to murmur that all power to bestow large bounties, all opportunity to make splendid sacrifices in proof of love, has been denied to them, repress the vain wish that it had been otherwise, and rest satisfied in the recollection that however rare may be the occasions to save or serve, and vouchsafed to few, yet all may please. Let such, though they may not have even the flower in the bud to give, rejoice that a kindly look, the smallest office of patient love, the shrinking from giving pain, the bitter word repressed when rising to the lips, is no despicable offering, either in the eyes of an earthly friend or in the sight of that heavenly friend who forgets not the cup of cold water given for his sake, and who said of her of small power but loving heart, "She hath done what she could."

The young prince was not always equally studious or docile, and one day that he was to be punished for some misdemeanour, the plan devised was to take from him his dear little dog Muff, which the grateful peasant of the forest had brought as an offering to his young prince; and next to his parents and his flowers all his care was for Muff. On this occasion the dog was shut up in a closet where the dauphin might hear but could not see him —a privation apparently as great to Muff as to his master, for he never ceased howling and scratching at the door. The prince, unable to bear it any longer, ran with tears streaming down his cheeks to the queen. "Mamma," cried he, "Muff is so unhappy, and you know, as it was not he that was naughty, he ought not to be punished. If you will let him out, I promise to go into the closet instead of him, and to stay there as long as you wish." His petition was granted; Muff was set at liberty,

and the little dauphin remained patiently in the dark closet till his mother released him.

Like most children of his age, he did not always make proper application of the maxims which he heard. One day that, in the exuberance of animal spirits, he was about to throw himself into the midst of some rose-bushes, "Take care," said the queen, "those thorns might tear your eyes out, and will certainly scratch you severely."

"But, dear mamma," answered he in a most magnanimous tone, "thorny paths, you know, lead to glory."

"It is a noble maxim," replied the queen, "but I see you do not quite understand it. What glory can there be in getting your eyes scratched out for the mere pleasure of jumping into a hedge? If, indeed, it were to extricate any one from danger, there would be glory in it, but as it is, there is only imprudence. My child, you must not talk of glory till you are able to read the history of true heroes who have disinterestedly sacrificed life and fortune for the good of others."

On one occasion his governess, uneasy at seeing him running at headlong speed, said to the queen, "He will surely fall."

"He must learn to fall," replied Marie Antoinette.

"But he may hurt himself."

"He must learn to endure pain," said the queen, who, with all her fondness, had no desire to make her boy effeminate.

IV.

REMOVAL TO PARIS.

The love of rural pursuits evinced by the young dauphin was destined to be rudely broken in upon. While with his parents at Versailles in 1789, the revolution in France broke out, and filled the royal family with alarm. It was the misfortune of Louis XVI. to have fallen on evil times, and, with all his good qualities, to become the victim on whose head the popular resentment for long-endured injuries should be visited. It was another of his misfortunes to be surrounded by incompetent advisers, and to be deserted by the classes who might have been expected to rally round the throne.

When tumults began to take place in Paris, it was considered necessary that the king should proceed thither to show himself to the people at the Hotel de Ville. He went on the 17th of July 1789. Everybody knows that this movement gave a trifling lull to the storm. When the sovereign received the tri-coloured cockade from the mayor of Paris in front of an assembled multitude, a shout of *Vive le Roi!* arose on all sides. The king breathed again freely at that moment; he had not for a long time heard such acclamations. During his absence the queen shut herself up in her private rooms with her family.

She sent for several persons belonging to the court, but their doors were locked; terror had driven them away. A deadly silence reigned throughout the palace; fear was at its height; the king was hardly expected to return. He did however come back, and was received with inexpressible joy by the queen, his sister, and his children. He congratulated himself that no accident had happened; and it was then he repeated several times, "Happily no blood has been shed, and I swear that never shall a drop of French blood be shed by my order."

It is not our intention to relate the history of the revolution which had already commenced, but only to note a few particulars in the life of our young hero and his unfortunate parents. On various pretexts it was resolved by the mob of Paris, a large portion of whom were women of the lowest habits, to march to Versailles and bring the royal family to Paris. This alarming movement took place on the 5th and 6th of October. The court, deserted by the host of nobles who might have been expected to rally round the throne, and with scarcely any friends left but their immediate attendants and attached guards, were on this momentous occasion exposed to many gross indignities, and with some difficulty were able to save their lives. Carriages being prepared, they were compelled to go into them and proceed to Paris, attended by a rabble of many thousands. It was not the least of the many painful circumstances accompanying this removal, that the king was compelled to withdraw his son from the healthy breezes of the country to the comparative closeness of a city atmosphere. The boy, also, was inconsolable. To be taken away from his little garden was a sore grief; his beautiful flowers, the flowers reared with his own hands, would, he said, wither and die; and he was like to die at the thought. In order to console him, he was told he should have much nicer flowers at Paris, and as many as he could wish for. "They will not be my own flowers that I planted and watered," he answered; "I shall never love any flowers so well as these."

Clinging to his mamma in terror of the horde of wild-looking men and women who were shouting in demoniac laughter, the dauphin entered one of the coaches; the queen alternately trying to pacify his fears, and to look with calmness on the terrific throng. Already blood had been shed. The mob, in forcing the palace, had killed two of the guards who defended the queen's apartments from outrage; and with the heads of these unfortunate and brave men stuck on the end of poles, a party preceded the royal carriages to Paris. These wretches, with a refinement of cruelty which, we imagine, could scarcely be matched out of France, stopped on the way at Sevres, and compelled a hairdresser to dress the gory heads according to the fashion of the period. In the rear of this band slowly came the procession of soldiers, citizens, women—an indescribable crowd of the vilest beings on earth—some riding astride on cannons, some carrying

pikes or muskets, and numbers waving long branches of poplar. It looked like a moving forest, amidst which shone pike-heads and gun-barrels. After the royal carriages came the king's faithful guards, some on foot and some on horseback, most of them uncovered and worn out with want of sleep, hunger, and fatigue. Finally came a number of carriages containing deputies of the Assembly, followed by the bulk of the Parisian army.

In the course of the journey, which was protracted to a late hour, the king and queen were constantly reviled by the crowd of savage women who thronged about them. There was at the time a dearth of bread in Paris, arising from natural causes; but it was imputed to the king, and now that he was in the hands of the mob, they cried out that bread would no longer be either dear or scarce. "We shall no longer," they shouted at the windows of the royal carriages, "we shall no longer want bread; we have the baker, the baker's wife, and the baker's boy with us." In the midst of all the revilings, tumult, and singing, interrupted by frequent discharges of musketry, might be seen Marie Antoinette preserving the most courageous tranquillity of soul, and an air of noble and inexpressible dignity.

The departure of the royal family for Paris was so hurried that no time was afforded to make preparations at the palace of the Tuileries, which, since the minority of Louis XV., had not been the residence of the kings of France. Some apartments, however, were cleared for their reception; and from this time may be dated the captivity of Louis XVI. in the hands of his people.

On the day after the arrival of the court in Paris, a noise was heard in the garden of the Tuileries, which, terrifying the dauphin, he threw himself into the arms of the queen, crying out, "Oh mamma, is yesterday come again?" The child in his simplicity could not account for the revolutionary movements of which he, with others, was the victim; and a few days after making the above affecting exclamation, he went up to his father to speak to him on the subject. "Well, Louis, what is it you wish to say?" asked the king.

"I want to know, papa," he answered pensively, "why the people, who formerly loved you so well, are all at once angry with you; what is it you have done to irritate them so much?"

His father, interested in the question, took him upon his knee, and spoke to him nearly as follows:—"I wished, my dear Louis, to make my people still happier than they were. I wanted money to pay the expenses occasioned by wars. I asked my people for money, as the former kings of France had done; the magistrates composing the parliament opposed it, and said that my people had alone a right to consent to it. I thereupon assembled the principal inhabitants of every town, whether distinguished by birth, fortune, or talents, at Versailles; and that is what is called the *States-General.* When all were assembled, they required

concessions of me which I could not make, either with due respect for myself or with justice to you, who will be my successor. Wicked men inducing the people to rise, have occasioned the excesses of the last few days; the people must not be blamed for them."

The dauphin had now a more clear idea of the position of affairs, and to please his father and mother, he endeavoured to avoid giving cause of offence to those about him. When he had occasion to speak to the officers of the national guards, mayors of the communes, or revolutionary leaders who visited the Tuileries, he did so with much affability. If the queen happened to be present, he would come and whisper in her ear, "Is that right?"

The royal family were not permitted to consider the whole garden of the Tuileries as their own. The chief portion was claimed by the National Assembly. In that part appropriated to the king's household, the dauphin was given a small patch in which he might pursue his love for flowers; but even this indulgence was clogged with the regulation that he should be attended by members of the national guard. At first the escort was small, and courteously did the young prince invite his guards to enter, and graciously did he distribute flowers amongst them; sometimes saying to them, "I would give you a great many more, but mamma is so fond of them." But the guard being gradually increased, he could no longer do the honours of his little domain to all, and once he apologised to those who were pressing round the palisades—"I am sorry, gentlemen, that my garden is too small to permit of my having the pleasure of seeing you all in it."

One day a poor woman made her way into the garden, and presented him a petition. "My prince," said she, "if you can obtain this favour for me, I shall be as happy as a queen." The child took the paper, and with a look of deep sadness exclaimed, "Happy as a queen! you say; I know one queen who does nothing but weep all day long."

V.

GLOOMY FOREBODINGS—IMPRISONMENT.

The years 1790 and 1791 were passed by the royal family in a state of constant apprehension. Clamoured against by all, and in constant danger of assassination, the king appears to have sunk into a state of gloomy despondency, from which neither the smiles of his wife nor the sallies of little Louis could raise him. For some months he scarcely spoke a word. The queen spent much of her time in tears. Recommended by a few attached partisans, as well as by his own fears, he made an attempt to leave the kingdom with his family, but, as every one knows, they were stopped at Varennes before they reached the frontiers, and brought back

to Paris. In their return they were under the charge of Barnave, one of the deputies appointed by the Assembly to attend the royal prisoners. At the time it was customary for the revolutionists to wear buttons on which was the device, "To live free, or die." Observing words to that effect on the button of M. Barnave, the dauphin said, "Mamma, what does that mean —*to live free?*" "My child," replied the queen, "it is to go where you please." "Ah, mamma," replied the child quickly, "then we are not free!"

This attempt at flight considerably aggravated the condition of the royal family, who were now more carefully watched than ever; the king and queen living almost continually under the eyes of sentinels, and all their correspondence watched. These things preyed on the mind of Marie Antoinette, and began to give her the appearance of premature old age.

"Mamma," said the dauphin one day shortly after the return of the family to the Tuileries, "how white your hair has grown!" "Hush, my dear child," replied the queen; "let us not think of such trifles when we have greater sorrows, those of poor papa, to distress us." It is true the queen's beautiful hair had grown white from the effect of grief. In a single night it had become as white as that of a woman of seventy, yet she was only about half that age. The Princess de Lamballe having asked for a lock of her whitened hair, she had a small quantity set in a ring and presented to her, with the inscription, *Bleached by sorrow.*

On the 20th of June 1792, a lawless Parisian rabble forced the Tuileries, and rushed like demoniacs from room to room in search of the king and queen, who, though sufficiently alarmed, did not quail before this barbarous torrent. Placing themselves in a recess, with two or three attendants, they awaited what might be their fate. The queen placed the dauphin before her on a table. When the tumultuous procession advanced, a person of coarse appearance gave the king a red cap, which he put on his head, and a similar emblem was drawn over the head of little Louis, almost burying the whole of his face. The horde passed in files before the table, carrying symbols of the most horrid barbarity. There was one representing a gibbet, to which a dirty doll was suspended, with an inscription signifying that it was Marie Antoinette. Another was a board, to which a bullock's heart was fastened, with the words inscribed, "Heart of Louis XVI."

By the interference of several deputies, no bloody deed was committed on this occasion. The result was very different on the ensuing 10th of August, when the palace of the Tuileries was attacked and captured after a gallant and ineffectual defence by the Swiss guards, all of whom, to the number of eight hundred, were barbarously put to death. It would be too painful, even if it were necessary, to describe this terrible massacre. The poor son of Louis XVI., no longer heir to a throne, for the monarchy

was abolished, shared all the perils of that day, evincing a degree of courage beyond his age. When the wainscotting of a secret passage in which the family had taken refuge appeared to be giving way under the repeated blows of the mob, and when the queen with suspended breath was listening to each stroke of the axe, the boy, gliding from the terror-relaxed hold of his mother, fell on his knees, and putting up his little hands, piously exclaimed, "Oh God, save mamma!—thou art able to do everything. Oh send away these men!—a poor child is praying for his mother! Oh thou good God, wilt thou not hear him?" As if in answer to this artless prayer, the noise suddenly ceased, and an announcement was made that the people demanded to see the queen—a fruitless interview, though affording a respite at the moment.

The result is well known. Louis XVI., the queen, the dauphin and his sister, with Madame Elizabeth, the sister of the king, took refuge in the Assembly, whence, after a lengthened debate, they were transferred to confinement in the Feuillans; from this place of detention they were soon taken to the Temple.

VI.

THE TEMPLE.

The Temple owes its name to the Templars, a military order of priests, who in the twelfth century devoted themselves to the recovery of the Holy Temple at Jerusalem from the Saracens. In 1250 they founded this, the principal house of their order, and retained possession of it for 160 years. Like the other ancient fortresses, it was surrounded by high and turreted battlements, in the middle of which rose a square tower, the walls of which were nine feet in thickness, and which was flanked by four other round towers. The church, of rudely Gothic construction, was built on the model of that of St John at Jerusalem.

Within a court-yard in this gloomy edifice, as well as in the park at Versailles and on the terrace of the Tuileries, Louis-Charles was indulged with a small garden, a plot where the flowers might indeed want the sunshine, but still to him they were flowers—he still had a garden to cultivate. The large square tower was the prison of the royal family: there for many months, to the very day of his death, Louis XVI., whose possession of all the virtues which constitute a good father, a good head of a family, is not denied even by his enemies, devoted himself to the education of his son. It was his delight to develop and cultivate that youthful and naturally quick and powerful intellect. Often did his mirthful sallies, his playful wit, beguile the anxious parents of a smile.

Every morning the king rose at six o'clock, and prepared the lessons he intended giving to his son; at ten, the captives

assembled in the queen's apartment, and study began. Very sweet were these hours to the poor prisoners, and whilst the lesson lasted, each seemed to forget past greatness, and ceased to anticipate future perils; but too often, alas! these calm domestic scenes were interrupted by clamorous shouts, nay, even death-screams, from without, which too plainly told the royal victims that the forfeiture of liberty and a crown was no security for life being spared.

It was in such hours as these that the courage of Louis XVI. seemed to grow with the danger—that courage which consists in calm endurance. As soon as each new cause for alarm had ceased, he endeavoured to lure his startled little circle into forgetfulness of it by some question to the prince—at times it might be a riddle, an enigma; and his ingenious guesses often succeeded in checking the tears of the fond mother and aunt.

"Louis," asked the king on one of these occasions, "what is that which is white and black, weighs not an ounce, travels night and day like the wind, and tells a thousand things without speaking?" "It must be a horse," answered the dauphin; "it surely is a horse. A horse may be white and black, and a horse runs races, and a horse does not speak." "So far so good, my boy; but a horse weighs somewhat more than an ounce, and I never heard of his telling any news." "Ah! now papa, I have it; it is a newspaper," and the young prince's merry peal of laughter almost met a response from the sorrowful little group. "Another question for you," said the king. "Who is she, the most beautiful, the best, the noblest——" "Who but mamma," quickly interrupted the dauphin, throwing himself into the queen's arms. "You did not give me time to finish, Louis," pursued his father; "I ask you who is the most beautiful, the best, the noblest, and who yet repels the greater part of mankind?" "It is Truth, papa; but to tell you the truth, I did not guess it myself; my sister whispered it to me."

In such little exercises of ingenuity, and at times in playing a geographical game invented by the king, were the boy's hours of recreation passed. This game consisted in drawing out of a little bag the names of towns, which were then traced out upon the map and marked by counters, and the game was won by whichever player told most of the historical events occurring in the places the names of which they had drawn.

Thus the autumn of 1792 passed and winter came on without bringing any alleviation of the condition of the prisoners. One evening, after the candles were lighted, when the family were arranged round the table in their sitting apartment, the dauphin, with the inquisitiveness of youth, asked his father what book it was he was now reading and studying so carefully. "It is the history of an unfortunate king, Charles the First of England," answered Louis. "How was he unfortunate, dear papa? Did his people put him in prison, as yours have done?" "Yes,

my dear child, there is much resemblance in our lives, as I fear there will be in our fate"—here the queen uttered a deep sigh, and looked with agony towards her husband—"but you shall read the memoirs of Charles when you are old enough to comprehend his history: it is too intricate and difficult for a boy. See, here is a book which I have sent for to amuse you, and I think you will like it better than the very melancholy memoirs of Charles the First." "Thank you, dear papa. Oh! I see it is full of stories; shall I read one aloud?" "Certainly, if you please: take that pretty one near the beginning called Arthur; it teaches a fine lesson to boys in adversity." The dauphin read as follows:—

"A poor labourer, named Bernard, had six young children, and found himself much at a loss to maintain them; to add to his misfortune, an unfavourable season much increased the price of bread. Bernard worked day and night, yet, in spite of his labours, could not possibly earn enough of money to provide food for six hungry children. He was reduced to extremity. Calling therefore one day his little family together, with tears in his eyes he said to them, 'My dear children, bread is become so dear that, with all my labour, I am not able to earn sufficient for your subsistence. This piece of bread in my hand must be paid for with the wages of my whole day's labour, and therefore you must be content to share with me the little that I have been able to earn. There certainly will not be sufficient to satisfy you all; but at least there will be enough to prevent your perishing with hunger.' The poor man could say no more: he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and wept; his children wept also, and each one said within himself, 'Oh Lord, come to our assistance, unfortunate infants that we are!—help our dear father, and suffer us not to perish for want!' Bernard divided the bread into seven equal shares; he kept one for himself, and distributed the rest amongst his children. But one of them, named Arthur, refused his share, and said, 'I cannot eat anything, father; I find myself sick. Do you take my part, or divide it amongst the rest.' 'My poor child! what is the matter with you?' said Bernard, taking him up in his arms. 'I am sick,' answered Arthur, 'very sick.' Bernard carried him to bed, and the next morning he went to a physician, and besought him for charity to come and see his sick child. The physician, who was a man of great humanity, went to Bernard's house, though he was very sure of not being paid for his visits. He approached Arthur's bed, felt his pulse, but could not thereby discover any symptoms of illness. He was going to prescribe a cordial draught, but Arthur said, 'Do not order anything for me, sir; I could take nothing that you should prescribe for me.'

The physician asked him the reason for refusing the medicine, but the child tried to evade the question. He then accused him of being obstinate, and said he should inform his father. This distressed Arthur greatly, and, no longer able to conceal his

emotions, he said he would explain everything to him if no one were present.

The children were now ordered to withdraw, and then Arthur continued—'Alas! sir, in this hard season my father can scarcely earn us every day a loaf of coarse bread. He divides it amongst us. Each of us can have but a small part, and he will hardly take any for himself. It makes me unhappy to see my little brothers and sisters suffer hunger. I am the eldest, and have more strength than they; I like better, therefore, not to eat any, that they may divide my share amongst them. This is the reason why I pretended that I was sick; but I intreat you not to let my father know this!'

The medical attendant was affected, and said, 'But, my dear little friend, are you not hungry?' 'Yes, sir, I am hungry; but that does not give me so much pain as to see my family suffer.'

'But you will soon die if you take no nourishment.'

'I am sensible of that,' replied Arthur, 'but I shall die contented. My father will have one mouth less to feed; and I pray God to give bread to my little brothers and sisters when I am gone.'

The humane physician was melted with pity and admiration on hearing the generous child speak thus. Taking him up in his arms, he clasped him to his heart, and said, 'No, my dear little friend, you shall not die! God, who is the father of us all, will take care of you and of your family.' He hastened to his own house, and ordering one of his servants to take a quantity of provisions of all sorts, returned with him immediately to Arthur and his famished little brothers. He made them all sit down at table, and eat heartily until they were satisfied. It was a delightful sight for the good physician to behold the joy of those innocent creatures. On his departure he bid Arthur not to be under any concern, for that he would provide for their necessities; which promise he faithfully observed, and furnished them every day with a plentiful subsistence. Other charitable persons also, to whom he related the circumstance, imitated his generosity. Some sent them provisions, some money, and others clothes and linen, so that in a short time this little family became possessed of plenty.

As soon as Bernard's landlord was informed of what the generous little Arthur had suffered for his father and brothers, he sent for Bernard, and addressed him thus: 'You have an admirable son; permit me to be his father also. I will employ you on my farm; and Arthur, with all your other children, shall be put to school at my expense.' Bernard returned to his house transported with joy, and, throwing himself upon his knees, blessed God for having given him so worthy a child."

As the winter of 1792–3 advanced, the situation of the royal family in the Temple became more painful. It was resolved

to suppress certain indulgences which they had hitherto enjoyed. Their food was to be more plain and less abundant, they were to eat off pewter instead of silver, tallow candles were to be substituted for wax, and their servants were to be reduced in number. None of these attendants, however, were to enter their apartments; and their meals were to be introduced to them by means of a turning-box. The carrying of these pitiful arrangements into execution was confided to a municipal officer named Hebert. This man had originally been check-taker at the door of a theatre, from which he was expelled for having embezzled the receipts. He was now the editor of a foul and slanderous print, and by the most odious arts as an ultra revolutionist, had attained considerable power. A ruling passion with him seems to have been the vilifying and tormenting the royal family, and pursuing them individually to destruction. Empowered by the Convention, he repaired to the Temple; and not satisfied with taking away the most trifling articles to which the royal family attached a value, he deprived Madame Elizabeth of eighty louis which she had received from Madame de Lamballe. No man, observes M. Thiers, is more dangerous, more cruel, than the man without acquirements, without education, clothed with a recent authority; if, above all, he possess a base nature, and leap all at once from the mud of his condition into power, he is as mean as he is atrocious.

Rendered in every respect uncomfortable in circumstances by the miserable devices of this wretch, and agitated by the rumours which daily reached them, the royal family looked with apprehension to the future. Never had the dauphin seen so many tears; his most playful sallies could not extort a solitary smile. They did not tell him of the impending misfortune, nor could he have suspected it while gazing on the calm and firm countenance of his father. The poor child in his simplicity thought, and indeed said, "They will not do any harm to papa; for papa never did them any harm." The 20th of January 1793 came, and sentence of death was passed on Louis XVI. When it was announced to him, he asked to see his family. This request was granted. The interview took place at eight o'clock in the evening. The queen, holding the dauphin by the hand, Madame Elizabeth, and Marie Thérèse, rushed sobbing into the arms of Louis XVI. During the first moments it was but a scene of confusion and despair. At length tears ceased to flow, the conversation became more calm, and the king tried to console his heart-broken family. While the dauphin stood between his father's knees gazing on his face, scarcely conscious of the full extent of the loss he was so soon to sustain, the public criers suddenly proclaimed under the tower the sentence of death, and the hour for the execution. The half-distracted boy tore himself from his father's arms, rushed from the apartment, and endeavoured to force his way through the guards. "Where are you going so fast?" asked

one of them, rudely repelling the poor child. "To speak to the people, gentlemen; to implore them not to kill papa. Oh, do let me pass!" All was in vain, and Louis-Charles had to retrace his steps, crying, "Papa, papa; oh do not kill papa!" as if his heart were like to burst.

The king led his family to entertain the hope of a last interview in the morning; but on consideration he thought it better that such should not take place. At an early hour, the roll of the drums announced that the unfortunate husband and father was led out to execution. The particulars of that dreadful event are too painful to be minutely dwelt upon. At the scaffold he addressed a few words to the people, saying in a firm voice that he died innocent of the crimes imputed to him; that he forgave the authors of his death, and prayed that his blood might not fall on France. He would have continued, but the drums were instantly ordered to beat, and their rolling drowned the voice of the king. In a few moments all was over. As soon as the deed was perpetrated, furious wretches dipped their pikes and their handkerchiefs in the blood, spread themselves throughout Paris, and with shouts even went to the gates of the Temple to display that brutal and factious joy which the rabble manifests at the birth, the accession, and the fall of princes.*

Such was the fate of the unfortunate Louis XVI., a man of almost unexampled benevolence of disposition, who ever endeavoured to act on his favourite maxim, that "kings exist only to make nations happy by their government, and virtuous by their example." Now called on to expiate the political errors of his dissolute predecessors, an angry word never escaped him in the depth of his misfortunes. In his will, written December 25, 1792, he says—"I forgive, from my whole heart, those who have conducted themselves towards me as enemies, without my giving them the least cause, and I pray God to forgive them. And I exhort my son, if he should ever have the misfortune to reign, to forget all hatred and enmity, and especially my misfortunes and sufferings. I recommend to him always to consider that it is the duty of man to devote himself entirely to the happiness of his fellow-men; that he will promote the happiness of his subjects only when he governs according to the laws; and that the king can make the laws respected, and attain his object, only when he possesses the necessary authority." In the same spirit, on the day before his condemnation, he sent to his faithful servants, who were ready to risk all for him, this message—"I should never forgive you if a single drop of blood were shed on my account. I refused to suffer any to be shed when, perhaps, it might have preserved to me my crown and my life; but I do not repent: no, I do not repent."

* Thiers.

VII.

SEPARATION OF THE YOUNG KING FROM HIS FAMILY.

Marie Antoinette was now a widow, and her children orphans. The prince was acknowledged throughout Europe to be king, under the title of Louis XVII. But, alas! this honour only aggravated the sufferings of this unfortunate child. A short time after the execution of her husband, the queen was forcibly separated from her son. The scene of her parting with her dear boy, for whose sake alone she had consented to endure the burden of existence, was so touching, so heart-rending, that the very jailers who witnessed it could not refrain from tears.

The revolutionary tribunal, which had no little difficulty in finding pleas against Louis XVI. and his queen, was greatly embarrassed in its treatment of their infant son. Only eight years of age, he was too young to be either tried or guillotined. Not that the wish was wanting to put him to death along with the other members of his family; but the spectacle of a child under the hands of the executioner might have formed a somewhat dangerous provocative to public indignation. There was *one* thing, therefore, which the monsters who assumed the character of judges in that dreadful period durst not do: they durst not openly put an innocent and fair-haired child to a bloody death. Undetermined as to what should be done with this youthful descendant of a hundred kings, they readily yielded to the request of Hebert, who proposed that it would be highly expedient for the nation to give Louis Capet, as he called him, a sound *sans-culotte* education; that he should receive thorough notions of liberty and equality, and be at the same time taught a handicraft, whereby he might gain an honest livelihood. The means of instruction, he said, were already at hand. Simon, a shoemaker and a good Jacobin, was quite the man to undertake this weighty charge. Hebert's proposal met with a ready assent, and the young prince was consigned to Simon and his wife, both of whom went to reside in the Temple, for the purpose of conducting their new duties.

From anything which can be gathered from history, it does not appear that Simon was to be in any respect accountable for his treatment of the poor boy handed over to his care; and from his conduct, it might reasonably be inferred, that the greater his cruelty, the greater would be his merit in the eyes of the Convention. The most correct mode of describing Simon would be to speak of him as an utter blackguard, a man lost to all sense of decency—ignorant, brutal, and habitually intemperate. Torn from the arms of his mother, and committed to the charge of such a personage, the youthful king was made to drain even to the dregs the martyr's bitter cup.

The whole course of life of Louis-Charles was now altered. Simon hated books, and tore and trampled in pieces those of his prisoner, substituting for them, as his only recreation, the perusal of a placard entitled the Rights of Man. Simon hated exercise, and therefore would not permit the young king to walk any more in the garden attached to the prison. Simon hated birds, and therefore took away from his little captive two tame canaries which his aunt, Madame Elizabeth, had reared for him. Simon hated religion, and therefore expressly forbade his young charge ever to say his prayers; and one night having surprised the child kneeling with uplifted hands beside his flock-bed, he flew at him, crying, "What are you about there, Capet; tell me or I will be the death of you?" The child confessed that he was repeating a little prayer which his mamma had taught him. Simon instantly seized the child by the arm, and flung him into a dark dungeon, where for several days he was allowed only bread and water.

But there was one thing which Simon did not hate, and that was—drink; and whenever he sat down to it, he used to hold out his glass, crying, "Here, Capet, wine here; hand me some wine, I say." Hard was it for the child to brook such an office to such a being; but the slightest murmur was so severely punished, that he was obliged to submit to be a servant to Simon, and to learn the duties of his new situation from the cruelties of this tyrannical supporter of equality and the rights of man. Nor was his merry moods less trying to the little sufferer; for then he began to sing, and as he would not sing alone, and as he knew only those horrible choruses howled around the guillotine, the child had to choose between joining in them and being severely beaten; and often did he suffer himself to be felled to the earth sooner than comply. Not even at night had he respite from his tormentor. Several times he was awakened by this Simon calling out, "Capet, are you asleep? Where are you? Come here till I look at you." The poor little victim used to start from his sleep, jump out of bed, and run almost naked to his tyrant, who suffered him to approach till near enough to be kicked back to bed.

The wife of Simon, however, at times felt some touch of pity for the sufferings of the unhappy child, and tried, without the knowledge of her husband, to procure him some indulgences. She once ventured to remonstrate with his terrible jailer, representing to him the cruelty of not giving the little Capet a single plaything. "You are quite right," answered Simon; "children ought to be amused; he shall have a plaything to-morrow."

On the morrow he brought him a little model of a guillotine: the child, in horror, hid his face in his hands, crying, "I will die rather than touch it." Simon rushed upon him, poker in hand; and had it not been for the interposition of M. Naudin, the surgeon, who came in at that moment to see Simon's wife, who was ill, the helpless victim would for ever have escaped the brutal

rage of his tormentor, who, however, when the surgeon had left, handed to the boy, as if shamed into indulgence, two pears in addition to his usual scanty supper. The child took them, and laid them aside for a purpose not to be discovered by such a mind as that of Simon, and began to eat his bread, which he held in one hand, while with the other he added another storey to the card-edifice he was raising. Seeing the caution with which the young prisoner was placing each card, Simon bent over the table and blew upon the castle, which instantly fell.

"Eh, Capet, what do you say to my breath?" said he, with a savage laugh.

"I say that the breath of God is more mighty still," answered the child.

VIII.

MORE PRISON SCENES.

The next day the surgeon repeated his visit: but let us for a moment try to realise the scene which the prisoner's apartment presented. It was one of two compartments, the first of which served as an antechamber, communicating with the next by an aperture in the partition; its only furniture a stove. In the second, which was lighted by a window secured with thick iron bars, were a large table, a small square one, some straw chairs, and two beds without curtains, in one of which lay the sick wife of Simon.

Several men were smoking and drinking round the larger table, and were already intoxicated. A poor little child, pale and haggard, was seated near the window at the smallest table. With his weak emaciated hands he was building a castle of cards, but his tearful eyes hardly followed the movement of each card as it rose or fell. His pallid countenance had but one expression, that of sorrow, and at times terror. Alas! who could have recognised in this miserable little creature the once charming child—so gay, so mirthful, so delicately neat, so graceful? Not only had his mourning, which he had worn since his father's death, been taken off him, but his hair, his beautiful fair hair, whose clustering curls had been so often fondly stroked and carefully arranged by a mother's hand, had fallen under the pitiless scissors of the woman who deemed she was thus depriving him of the last remaining relic of royalty. A woollen shirt, a coat and trousers of coarse red cloth, had replaced the silk and velvet, the cambric and lace, of days gone by.

"Well, Citizen Naudin," said one of the municipals, as the surgeon, with an involuntary stolen glance towards the place where the young king was seated, approached the sick woman's bed—"Well, Citizen Naudin, any news to-day?"

"You might have learned that from the cannonading," replied the doctor.

"Ah, citizen, a republic is a fine thing—always something stirring," said Simon, now so drunk as to be scarcely able to stand. "Apropos—is there any news of the ex-queen, the she-wolf?"

"She was removed from the Temple to the Conciergerie the 2d of this month," was the answer.

The name of his mother having instantly brought the child to Simon's side in the hope of hearing something of her fate, he said to him, "Do you remember your mother, Capet?"

"Remember her!" exclaimed he, tears springing to his eyes—"remember her! I see her now: I have her before me yet, my poor mother. I hear her saying, as they were tearing me from her arms, 'Forget not, my child, forget not a mother who loves you better than life. Be prudent, gentle, and virtuous.' Simon," continued the child of Marie Antoinette, the hot tears falling from his eyes—"Simon, you may beat me, you may kick me; I will do anything you wish; I will love you, if you will only speak to me of my mother. You never speak to me of her."

"I would desire nothing better, Capet," answered Simon; "and as a beginning I will sing you a song that the Sans-Culottes have just made upon her." Then, with a hoarse discordant voice, he began to roar out a couplet, every word of which was a vile slander upon the unhappy queen. The poor child recoiled with horror. But holding him fast by the coat, Simon continued—"What! you little cub, you ask me news of your mother, and now you refuse to listen. You shall not only listen, but sing too."

"Never; no, never. You shall kill me first," said the child, struggling to escape from his grasp.

"Well, if you will not sing, you shall join in a toast. Citizens, fill your glasses; it must be a bumper;" and as he spoke he filled his own glass and those of his companions. "The republic for ever!"

"The republic for ever!" shouted every voice but that of the child, who was now weeping bitterly.

"Capet," said Simon, the moment he observed his silence; "Capet, cry 'the republic for ever.' Come, let us have it."

"No," said the child in a low but firm tone.

"Oh, if you please, Capet." Louis made no answer.

"I command you, Capet." The same silence on the part of the boy.

"Will you obey, wolf-cub?" cried Simon, in a paroxysm of fury. "If you do not instantly cry 'the republic for ever,' I will knock you down, Capet; I will knock you down."

Without appearing the least intimidated by Simon's preparing to suit the action to the word, the young victim dried his tears, and gazing calmly and steadfastly upon his persecutor, said, "You may do what you please, sir; but never will I utter those words." Immediately a piercing cry re-echoed through the

vaults of the dungeon. Simon had seized the unhappy child by the hair, and was holding him up by it, crying, "Miserable viper, I know not what hinders me from dashing you against the wall!"

"Scoundrel! what are you about?" cried Monsieur Naudin, indignantly; and once more rescuing the child from him, he placed him gently on his chair, whispering in his ear some little soothing and caressing words. "Sir," said the child, "you showed yesterday also much kind interest in me, and I was thankful. Will you do me the favour to accept those two pears? They were given me for my supper last night. I have no other way of showing that I am not ungrateful to you." Deeply affected, Monsieur Naudin took the fruit; and as he respectfully kissed the hand of the little prisoner, his tears fell upon it.

"The citizen Naudin must always have his joke," said Simon, sullenly. "I meant the child no harm."

But neither suffering nor constant intercourse with these rude men had as yet had power to alter the noble disposition of the child.

"If the Vendéans were to set you at liberty," asked Simon one day, "what would you do?"

"I would pardon you," was the instant reply.

Could the most determined party-spirit—that spirit which has been well termed "a species of mental vitriol which men keep to let fly at others; but which, in the meantime, injures and corrodes the mind that harbours it"—could the most determined party-spirit behold this poor child, and hinder its tears from falling?

IX.

MARIE ANTOINETTE—THE SIGNATURE.

The queen survived her husband nine months, and they were months of the deepest sorrow. Separated from her son in the Temple, and afterwards conveyed to the Conciergerie, a prison of meaner pretensions, she there was made to endure the greatest indignities. Lodged in an apartment unwholesome from its dampness and impure odours, she was waited on by a spy—a man of horrible countenance, and hollow sepulchral voice. This wretch, whose name was Barassin, was a robber and murderer by profession. Such was the attendant chosen of the queen of France. A few days before her trial he was removed, and a gendarme placed in her chamber, who watched over her night and day, and from whom she was not separated, even when in bed, but by a ragged curtain. In this melancholy abode Marie Antoinette had no other dress than an old black gown, stockings with holes, which she was forced to mend frequently, and she was utterly destitute of shoes.

To relieve the difficulty of substantiating charges against the

queen at her trial, Hebert conceived the infamous idea of wringing from her son revelations which would criminate his mother. As the boy was too young to admit of his appearing as a witness before the tribunal, and as it would have been impossible to make him charge his mother with imaginary crimes while in possession of his senses, it was resolved by Hebert and Simon to induce him to drink by a show of kindness, and to effect their purpose when he should become intoxicated. This diabolical scheme was forthwith put in execution. A deposition full of the most revolting confessions and accusations was carefully prepared and brought to the Temple. All that was necessary to complete it as an instrument to be laid before the tribunal, was the signature of the little captive king.

On the morning of the 5th of October 1793, Simon and Hebert, with two municipal officers, were breakfasting together in the prison in the company of the prince, from whose thick and rapid utterance, unusual loquacity, and flushed features, it was easy to perceive they had succeeded in intoxicating him. When it was thought he was sufficiently stupified by liquor, Simon opened a large paper, and giving him a pen dipped in ink, he said—"Come, Capet, my boy; let us see whether you can write. Just try if you can put your name at the bottom of this paper."

"Let me read it first," replied the child, speaking quite thick and hardly able to lift his head.

"Sign it first and read it after; but you must have a little more to drink. Here, take this one glass of Malaga."

"You make me drink too much, Simon," said he, putting up his hand to his burning brow; "it disagrees with me, and besides I do not like wine—you know I do not."

"It is well to be accustomed to everything. Come, my boy, this one little glass of wine, and then you can write your name."

"I would rather do it than drink any more," replied the child, taking the pen and writing Louis-Charles of France at the bottom of the sheet that lay open before him; then letting his head fall heavily on the table, he was carried to bed by Simon, where he lay for some hours in a heavy slumber.

Fortified by the instrument so basely fabricated and subscribed, the revolutionary tribunal proceeded to try Marie Antoinette. The accusations were so odious that the Jacobin audience, bad as it was, was disgusted. Urged to answer if she had not attempted to pollute the mind of her son, the queen said with extraordinary emotion, "I thought that human nature would excuse me from answering such an imputation; but I appeal from it to the heart of every mother present." This noble and simple reply affected all who heard it. To the general charges of interfering in political affairs, she showed that there was no precise fact against her, and that, as the wife of Louis XVI., she was not answerable for any acts of his reign. All was unavailing; it had been determined to put her to death, and she was accordingly condemned.

Being taken back to prison, she there passed in tolerable composure the night preceding her execution, and on the morning of the following day, October 16, she was conducted to the scaffold. Her long hair, now white as snow, she had cut off with her own hands. She was dressed in white; and though depressed with a thousand conflicting emotions, she had an air which still commanded the admiration of all who beheld her; and she ascended the scaffold with a step as firm and dignified as if she had been about to take her place on a throne by the side of her husband. With the same nobility of soul did this much injured woman submit herself to the hands of the executioner and endure the stroke which deprived her of existence.

The intelligence of the condemnation of his mother was not communicated to Louis-Charles, nor did he know of her death till some hours after it had taken place. On the morning of the execution he rose earlier than usual, for, depressed with melancholy, he had spent a wretched night; and dressing himself, he sat down to wait the entrance of his keeper, who was later than usual at his post. Simon at last appeared with breakfast. As the door opened to admit him, the boy perceived a Savoyard with his back to the door smoking; and at the moment Simon called to the man, "Citizen, will you help me to put this room in order?"

"Willingly, citizen, I was looking for a job," said the man with an air of affected indifference; and taking the offered broom, he began to sweep.

"Simon," said the prisoner to his jailer, "I cannot eat any breakfast; I am not hungry."

There seemed to be something extraordinary about Simon himself this day; a half-expression of remorse seemed to have taken place of the usually unvarying harshness of his countenance, and he carefully avoided meeting the restless glance of his victim.

"What is the matter with you?" asked Simon in a more softened tone than he had ever yet been heard to use. "Are you ill this morning?"

"No," said the young king, "but I have had such a horrid dream; it is the second time I have dreamt it. The night before they took me from my mother, I dreamt that I was in the midst of a troop of wild beasts which wanted to tear me to pieces. I dreamt it again last night."

"Oh, you must not mind dreams," replied Simon.

"That may be; but, Simon, pray listen to me. I am so frightened—I know not why—but I am terrified; take me to your shop, teach me to make shoes, I will pass for your son; for I know," continued he, in a timid faltering voice, "oh, I *know* they will not spare me any more than my poor father. They will kill me."

Simon made no answer but went out abruptly, slamming the door after him.

As Simon closed the door, Louis dragged his failing limbs to his usual seat in the window. The poor child already felt the symptoms of the malady which carried him off. He now perceived that the man introduced by Simon, instead of sweeping, was from time to time gazing at him, and manifestly with tears in his eyes.

"You weep as you look at me," said he, making an effort to go to him, but again falling back upon his seat—"you weep. Who can you be? No one here has any pity for me."

"A friend," replied the man in the low tones of caution.

"And are you come to tell me of my mother? Oh where is she? What is become of her?"

"Unhappy prince!" said the pretended Savoyard with gasping sobs.

"Oh speak, sir, speak! Is she ill?"

"They have killed her," said the man.

"My mother!—killed her!" repeated the child with a cry of agony.

"Hush, hush, sir. This morning at half-past four."

"As they did my father, upon the guillotine—as they did my father?"

And as the tears of the man prevented his reply, the poor child went on—"She so good, so good! Oh, my God, have pity on me! But of what did they accuse her?—what could they lay to her charge? She who did nothing but good to every one. Mother! mother!"

"They condemned her partly upon your testimony, sir; upon what you told of her."

"I—I—accuse my mother!—I who would lay down my life sooner than a hair of her head should be touched. Believe me, sir, you are mistaken."

"Calm yourself, and listen to me," replied the stranger. "Some members of your family yet remain, and you may ruin them as you did your mother; nay, you may destroy yourself. Doubtless some insidious questions have been answered by you imprudently; and upon words uttered by you, it may be at random, they have founded a charge against the queen of having plotted with some of the municipal officers against the constitution, and of carrying on a correspondence with foreign states. On this charge she was condemned, sir."

The young king, who had almost held his breath as if the more distinctly to hear these killing words, now said, in a tone which despair rendered calm, "I am a wretch; I have murdered my mother. Never again shall a single word pass these guilty lips." So saying, he seated himself in his usual place at the little table under the window, and from that time till the end of eighteen months, and then only a few hours before his death, opened not his lips to utter a word.

X.

FATE OF THE REMAINING MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY.

When Marie Antoinette had been conducted from the Temple to the Conciergerie, she left in that prison, beside her son, her sister-in-law Madame Elizabeth, and her daughter Marie Thérèse. Before proceeding farther with the history of the little captive king, let us say a few words of these ladies his relations.

Madame Elizabeth, whose whole life was an example of the tenderest affection, gentleness, and female dignity, remained in a cell in the Temple till the 9th of May 1794. On the evening of that day she was transferred to the Conciergerie, charged with the offence of corresponding with her brothers. The next evening she was carried before the revolutionary tribunal, and when asked her name and rank, she replied with dignity, "I am Elizabeth of France, and the aunt of your king." This bold answer filled the judges with astonishment, and interrupted the trial. Twenty-four other victims were sentenced with her; but she was reduced to the horrible necessity of witnessing the execution of all her companions. She met death with calmness and submission; not a complaint escaped her against her judges and executioners. Without being handsome, Elizabeth was pleasing and lively. Her hair was of a chestnut colour, her blue eyes bore a trace of melancholy, her mouth was delicate, her teeth beautiful, and her complexion of a dazzling whiteness. She was modest, and almost timid in the midst of splendour and greatness, but courageous in adversity, pious and virtuous, and her character was spotless.

The fate of Marie Thérèse, the daughter of Louis XVI., was less cruel than that of her parents, her aunt, or her brother. She remained in confinement in the Temple till December 1795; never, however, being allowed to share the sorrows of poor Louis-Charles, and remaining in a state of constant apprehension. Undetermined what to do with the princess, the revolutionary government at length, at the above period, consented to exchange her for certain deputies whom General Dumouriez had surrendered to the Austrians. She was accordingly sent out of France, and was carried to Vienna, where she resided with her uncle (afterwards Louis XVIII.), by whom she was married to the Duke d'Angouleme. She lived to return to France at the restoration.

The revolutionary tribunals, which destroyed every one claiming relationship with royalty that fell within their grasp, did not even refrain from taking the lives of servants and instructors of royal personages. Among the number of blameless and defenceless women who perished in this dreadful storm, was Madame de Soulanges, the abbess of Royal Lieu, who had been an instructress to the aunts of Louis XVI. This excellent woman

and her numerous sisterhood were led to the scaffold on the same day. While leaving the prison, they all chanted a hymn upon the fatal car. When they arrived at the place of execution, they did not interrupt their strains. One head fell, and ceased to join its voice with the celestial chorus; but the strain continued. The abbess suffered last; and her single voice, with increased tone, still raised the devout versicle. It ceased at once —it was the silence of death!

XI.

EFFECTS OF PROLONGED CAPTIVITY.

From some cause not recorded in the history of the revolution, Simon was dismissed by the municipal authorities from his office of tutor to the young king; but the change does not seem to have led to any improved treatment of the little prisoner. Hebert, likewise, was no more seen in the Temple: he had, like most of the revolutionary leaders, taken his turn under the guillotine, and received the punishment due to his manifold outrages on society.

About thirteen months after the visit of the Savoyard, three persons presented themselves at the Temple prison, as visitors from the committee of public health, to verify statements which the municipal officers had deemed it their duty to make to it of the rapid progress of the disease of Louis XVII. The boy was in his usual place at his usual employment of building card-houses, his once expressive countenance now one dull blank. Even the heavy tread of the gentlemen as they approached him did not seem to excite his attention; nor did the sight of such unusual visitors arouse him from his apathy. Monsieur Harmand, advancing before his companions, approached the prisoner. "Sir," said he, taking off his hat as he stood before the innocent victim, "the government, informed of the bad state of your health, of your refusal to take exercise, to use any remedies, or receive the visits of a physician, and to answer any questions, nay, even to speak, has commissioned us to ascertain whether this is really the case. In the name of the government, we now renew the offer of a physician. We are authorised to permit your extending your walks, to allow you any amusement or relaxation you desire. Allow me to press upon you the acceptance of these indulgences. I await respectfully your reply."

At the commencement of this address the unhappy child raised his eyes to the speaker, and seemed to listen with great attention; but this was all—Monsieur Harmand did not obtain a single word in reply.

"Perhaps I have not sufficiently explained myself, sir; have not made myself understood by you? I have the honour of asking you if you would like playthings of any description—birds, a dog, a horse, one or two companions of your own age, to be first submitted to you for approval? Perhaps you would like to

go now and then into the garden or on the ramparts? Do you care to have sweetmeats or cakes, a new dress, a watch and chain? You have only to say what you wish."

The enumeration of all these things, usually the objects of childish desire, did not excite the slightest sensation. The prince's countenance wore a look of utter indifference to all that was offered, and when the speaker ceased, there succeeded an expression of such sad, such melancholy resignation, that Monsieur Harmand turned away to hide his emotion.

"I believe, sir," said one of the jailers, "that it is useless for you to talk to the child. I have now been nearly thirteen months here, and I have not yet heard him utter a word. Simon the cobbler, whose place I took, told me that he had never spoken since he made him sign some paper against his mother."

This account, so simple yet so touching, went to the very hearts of the deputies of the commune. A child not yet nine years old forming and keeping a resolution of never again speaking, because a word of his had given a pretext to the murderers of his mother! At this moment the young prince's dinner was brought up, and on its appearance the visitors could scarcely repress an exclamation of indignant surprise. For the delicately-reared son of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, for the child of royalty, the heir of France, was served up for dinner —"A brown earthenware porringer, containing a black broth covered with lentiles; a dish of the same ware, with a small piece of black coarse salt beef; and a second dish, on which were six half-burned chestnuts; one plate and no knife completed the dinner-service."

Involuntarily they turned to look at the child; his face expressed "What matters it! Take your victim." Was this resignation, or was it utter hopelessness? How could he have hoped for anything from the murderers of his mother? Alas! had he hoped for anything at their hands, he would have been disappointed. The representations of the visitors were disregarded. His allowance of fresh air was diminished, his window was narrowed, the iron bars were made closer, and washing, both of his person and his clothes, was thrown altogether upon himself. The door of his prison was, as it were, sealed, and it was through a narrow wicket that the pitcher of water, too heavy for his weak arms, was handed to him, with the sordid provision barely sufficient for the day. Not having strength enough to move his bed, having no one to look after his sheets and blankets, now nearly in rags, he at length was reduced to the extreme of wretchedness.

Condemned to solitude—for though two guards kept watch at the door, yet they never spoke to him—his intellect was at last impaired, and his body bent as if under the burden of life; all moral sense became obtuse, and so rapidly did his disorder now gain ground, that the tardy aid of two physicians, sent by the municipal authorities, was utterly ineffectual to arrest its

progress. One of them could not restrain his indignation when he saw the state of the poor victim, and as he was audibly and in no measured terms giving vent to it, the prince beckoned him to approach his bed. "Speak low, sir," said he, breaking a silence which he had persevered in for eighteen months; "I pray, speak low, lest my sister should hear you, and I should be so sorry that she should know I am ill, it would grieve her so much."

XII.

DEATH OF THE LITTLE CAPTIVE KING.

We have been telling no imaginary tale. The sufferings of Louis XVII. in his foul prison require no picturesque embellishment. Yet the mind of the compassionate reader may well be excused for doubting the truthfulness of these melancholy details, and will naturally inquire if no effort was made to rescue the unfortunate prisoner from his oppressors—if no humane hand interfered to point out his condition to the people. Nothing of this kind appears to have been done. A nation assuming itself to be the greatest, the most civilised, and the most polite, quailed under the despotism of a set of wretches elevated to a power which they disgraced. As M. Thiers forcibly observes, "People dared no longer express any opinion. A hundred thousand arrests and some hundreds of condemnations rendered imprisonment and the scaffold ever present to the minds of twenty-five millions of French." And thus the fate of poor Louis-Charles, if it did not escape notice, at least encountered no censure.

The visit of the physician, to which we have alluded, took place only after the reign of terror had subsided, and the nation had resumed something like its senses. But this resumption of order came too late to save the little captive king. The physician, on seeing his deplorable condition, had him instantly removed into an apartment, the windows of which opened on the garden; and observing that the free current of air seemed to revive him for the moment, he said in a cheerful tone, "You will soon be able to walk and play about the garden."

"I!" said the prince, raising his head a little; "I shall never go anywhere but to my mother, and she is not on earth."

"You must hope the best, sir," said the physician soothingly.

The child's only answer was a smile; but what a tale of withered hopes, of buried joys, of protracted suffering, was in that smile!

On the 8th of June 1795, about two o'clock, he made signs to those about him to open the window. They obeyed, and with a last effort he raised his eyes to heaven, as if seeking some one there, softly whispered "Mother!" and died.

Thus expired Louis XVII. at the early age of ten years and two months. A more gentle soul never ascended to the bosom of its Creator.