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LAST DAYS OF

MARIE ANTOINETTE



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OF
MARIE ANTOINETTE.

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Portrait of the artist's mother, Mrs. Anne (née) Smith, 1850.

LAST DAYS
OF
MARIE ANTOINETTE.

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH.

BY
LORD RONALD GOWER.

WITH PORTRAIT AND FACSIMILES.



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“ Shipwreck'd upon a kingdom, where no pity,
No friends, no hope, no kindred weep for me—
Almost no grave allowed me ; like the lily,
That once was mistress of the field and flourished,
I'll hang my head and perish.”

YASU
ROH. GORHAT GHA. LU
YTBVHU



PREFACE.



THERE is nothing new relating to the last days of Marie Antoinette in the following sketch. At one time I had intended writing the whole story of her life; but this I have relinquished.

The Queen's life becomes chiefly interesting as it approaches its end, and is chiefly remarkable by showing how a woman, whose

early years were trifled thoughtlessly away, and who in later life, most unfortunately for her family, herself, and her adopted country, mixed herself in politics, where women are ever mischievous, was raised through suffering to an heroic level.

As the clouds of adversity gathered around, Marie Antoinette displayed a patience and a courage in unparalleled sufferings such as few saints and martyrs have equalled.

The pure ore of her nature was but hidden under the dross of worldliness ; and the scorching fire of suffering revealed one of the tenderest hearts and one of the bravest natures that history records. To this is owing, I believe, the universal interest felt in her life and in her misfortunes.

Among a crowd of others, my authorities for the following pages have been Campardon's "Marie Antoinette à la Conciergerie" and Saint Amand's work on the same subject.



LAST DAYS
OF
MARIE ANTOINETTE.

ON the 2d of August 1793, the widow of Louis XVI., Queen of France and Navarre, and Archduchess of Austria, the once brilliant sovereign of Versailles, now a prisoner, torn from her children and treated like a common felon, was removed from the prison of the Temple to that of the Conciergerie, there to linger until her release from human barbarity on the 16th of October.

I propose writing an account of those last seventy-six days of a life once so bright, now brought to the lowest depth of moral and physical suffering.

The Conciergerie is one of the most curious and interesting monuments of ancient Paris. A fortress in the days of Eude, Count of Paris, who here defied the Normans, it was enlarged by Robert the Pious, and from his time to that of Charles the Wise was the principal dwelling-place of the French kings. Later occupied by the Parliament, it became transformed into a State prison, although a portion of the building was still reserved for the use of the Parliament, the State Exchequer, and other judiciary bodies.

Its splendid groined stone hall, recently restored, dates from the reign of St. Louis, as does also the adjoining Sainte Chapelle, one of the gems of mediæval ecclesiastical architecture, which in our days almost miraculously escaped uninjured the petroleum-fed flames of the Commune, which destroyed a portion of the prison.

In one of the vast halls of this building, when occupied by the Parliament, Louis XIV. entered during a sitting, booted and spurred, and declared that he was the State; and in this same hall, in 1793, on the 10th of March, the Revolutionary Tribunal held its first sitting. It was a strange fate that this building, once the dwelling-place of the sovereigns of

the House of Capet, when holding their state in the capital, should see a captive within its walls the widow of their descendant,—the “widow Capet,” as the Jacobins described her in their blood-stained edicts.

One can form no idea by seeing the Conciergerie, even that portion of it where prisoners are still kept, in its present trim and well-kept state, of the appearance of the building during the Revolution.

Beugnot has given us his experiences of it in his Memoirs. “The staircases,” he writes, “of the palace (prison) were crowded with women, who appeared to be waiting there for some attractive show. The show was always ready at hand in the cart that waited to

carry away the unfortunate victims to the guillotine. When I arrived, all these people rose together as in an amphitheatre, yelling with savage delight, showing the most fiendish joy at every fresh arrival. In that short space which I had to pass in order to enter the prison, I received such a welcome that I could judge of the reception that awaited me when I should have to leave."

Beugnot thus describes what a night passed in the Conciergerie was like, and one may believe him when he says that those who have not passed through such an ordeal cannot know its terror.

"From hour to hour the chimes beat slowly out these long hours of suffering; the watch-

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dogs respond with long-drawn-out howls; the jailers charged with the different death-warrants (*actes d'accusation*) take these from cell to cell till far into the night, and awake every prisoner by their menacing and insulting voices. Every one believes that his last hour has arrived; thus these death-sentences, destined for from sixty to eighty people daily, are so distributed that six hundred are kept in perpetual alarm."

Another writer, M. de Beaulieu, has also written of his experiences in this prison.

He says that when the river rises, the lower portion of the prison gets flooded, and that the whole place soaks with damp. The water runs down the walls; the air is almost un-

breathable, so tainted is it with the horrible emanations that come from the miserable crowds of prisoners huddled together. "It seemed," he adds, "as if the most pestilential of all the prisons had been purposely selected for that of the Queen." To such a place and to such a situation had been brought one who formerly reigned at Versailles, at Fontainebleau, at Compiègne and St. Cloud.

But as Marie Antoinette enters this dismal place, and till she leaves it for the scaffold, she is, "although unqueened, yet like a queen and daughter to a king."

Her appearance at this time one can gather from the portrait by Kocharsko, of

which there are several repetitions. The original I believe to be the one in the collection of the Prince d'Arenberg at Brussels. A photograph of this portrait appears at the commencement of these notes.

The face is still "majestic though in ruin," and shows the almost haughty mien which never quite left the daughter of the Cæsars; the proud arch of the eyebrow, the aquiline nose, and the marked prominence of the lower lip, that conspicuous feature in all the House of Hapsburg. Over her fast whitening hair the Queen wears the common widow's cap of that day, what we call a mob-cap, with its black ribbon tied in a loose knot below the kerchief, which, kept by a single pin, crosses

her chest and shoulders. There is no more pathetic portrait than this.

The Polish artist may have made a sketch for this likeness while—as he is traditionally said to have been—employed about the Queen as one of the gendarmes set to watch her; but, as the evidence in Michonis' case proves, an artist was introduced into the Queen's prison. At any rate, it was painted by one who had opportunity of not only studying the Queen's features, but of portraying her expression;—features and expression which neither imprisonment nor suffering could degrade or alter.

On the 1st of August the Convention registered an order that “Marie Antoinette

be sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal. She will be immediately transferred to the Conciergerie."

On the night following, or rather in the early morning of the following day, the Queen, who was still with her daughter, Madame Royale, and her sister-in-law, Madame Elizabeth, in the Temple, was awoke by the commissioners at two in the morning.

In her short account of the days of her imprisonment Madame Royale writes as follows: "My mother listened to the reading of the order for her removal without saying one word, nor did she display any emotion. My aunt and I begged to be allowed to accompany her, but were refused this privilege.

While she made up a packet of her clothes, the municipal guards kept close beside her, nor would allow her even to change her dress in private. They ordered her to empty out her pockets, searched her, and took away all that she had in them, although there was nothing of any consequence to take. They made a parcel of the things they found, which they said would be sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal."

What they took from the Queen was a small packet in which was some of her husband's and children's hair, a little register on which she taught her son arithmetic, a pocket-book in which she had written the address of her children's doctor, miniatures

of Madame de Lamballe and two old friends of her youth, the Princesses of Hesse and of Mecklenburg, and two printed prayers. These commissioners were good enough to allow the Queen to keep her handkerchief, and also her smelling-bottle. After taking a tender farewell of her daughter, and telling her to regard Madame Elizabeth as a second mother, and after a few whispered words to the latter, the Queen tore herself from the room, "without again looking at us," adds her daughter, "for fear of losing her self-control."

At the foot of the staircase of the tower she had to wait while the municipal guards made out a *procès-verbal* of her discharge from

the Temple. In going out, she struck her head against the upper part of the door, not seeing how low it was. On being asked if she had hurt herself, she answered, "No; nothing can hurt me now."

Madame Royale was not an authoress, but perhaps the very simplicity of her narrative, the uncoloured description of this scene, in which the long agony of the Queen may be said to commence, is more touching than had she written of it at greater length and with more effusion.

He who can read the daughter's account of this supreme parting and not feel touched at it, must have something very hard in the place where his heart should be.

Outside the gate of the Temple a closed carriage was waiting, which the Queen entered, accompanied by Michonis, one of the municipals, and two gendarmes. It was three o'clock in the morning when the carriage drew up at the gate of the Queen's new prison.

Within the Conciergerie the wife of the jailer, Richard, and her servant were sitting up, expecting the arrival of the Queen—Madame Richard's, and especially Rosalie Lamorlière's, names should be remembered, as from them the last acts of kindness and sympathy were shown to one whom the whole world seemed to have deserted.

During the first portion of her imprisonment in the Conciergerie, Marie Antoinette

occupied a room called the Chamber of the Council, where, before the Revolution, the magistrates were wont to meet on certain days of the year to hear the complaints of the prisoners. This room had lately been tenanted by General de Custines. The Queen found a number of gendarmes drawn up at the door of her new prison, and within several of the Revolutionary Tribunal were gathered to see their new victim. The ceremony of the prisoner's registration having been finished, these left, leaving the Queen alone with Madame Richard and Rosalie. The latter has left a record of the Queen's imprisonment, which has been considered truthful by all those who have written on

the subject. At first, says Rosalie, the Queen seemed surprised at the bareness of her new prison. She was suffering much from the heat, her face bathed with perspiration.

After hanging up her watch to a nail on the wall, she commenced to take off her things. Rosalie, who offered to assist her, was thanked by the Queen, who said to her that since she had been in prison she was used to do for herself. Her manner, Rosalie adds, was completely simple and kind.

Just outside the Queen's prison was a wine-shop, to which the prisoners flocked, shouting their ribald songs within a few feet of where the Queen was obliged to sit during those long August days. She was in the worst quarter of

the Conciergerie, where the lowest scum of the non-political prisoners are kept. She was not even allowed the dignity of solitude in her confinement, and was obliged to be within ear-shot of the profanities and obscenities of the lowest rabble in the world. Two gendarmes occupied a portion of the room, and an old woman of eighty was placed near her. She helped her to patch up her scanty wardrobe, but she was soon replaced by another woman, named Harel, whom the Queen suspected of being a spy, and to whom, in consequence, she hardly ever spoke. The night of her arrival at the Conciergerie the Queen had not so much as a change of linen. For days she begged to be allowed some, but it was

not until the tenth day that her prayer was granted, when Michonis went to the Temple and brought back with him a parcel of linen and some clothes; among others, a white gown, which the Queen wore on the day of her execution. On seeing the care with which these clothes had been selected, the Queen said to Rosalie that she knew she owed them to "my poor sister Elizabeth."

De Beaulieu, whom we have already quoted, writes thus: "Among the prisoners was a convict of the name of Barrasin, a most forbidding-looking fellow, who helped to make up the Queen's prison." Knowing this, Beaulieu inquired of him how the Queen was treated. "Like any one else," was the answer; and on

his asking Barrasin how the Queen passed her time, "Oh, the Capet mends her stockings."

"What sort of a bed has she got?"

"A straw mattress, like your own," said the convict.

"How is she dressed?"

"She wears a black gown, which is all torn and in holes, and she looks in it like *une Margot*."

Little by little everything was taken from the poor Queen. The souvenirs of her happy past life, to which she clung, being all that were left her of former days, were ruthlessly taken; first her watch, a gift of her mother's, and which had never left her since she left Vienna,—the watch which had counted the happy hours of

her youth and womanhood was taken from her. She wept bitterly, Rosalie says, at having to part with it, as if it had been a friend.

In the diary of Marie Antoinette's daughter, Madame Royale, she mentions that her mother was accustomed to drink only water, not that of the Seine, which made her ill, but from the Ville d'Avray. She had obtained it daily at the Temple, but it was not allowed her in the Conciergerie.

The Queen sent to get her knitting (*tricot*) from the Temple, where she had been making a pair of socks for the Dauphin, or, as they called him now, Louis XVII. "We sent," writes the Princess, "everything we could find in the shape of cotton and worsted, knowing how

fond my mother was of all kinds of work. Formerly she was always so engaged, except when obliged to hold her court (*aux heures de représentation*). She had worked an immense quantity of tapestry for furniture, and had even made a carpet."

So she and Madame Elizabeth packed up all these things, fondly hoping they would be given the Queen. But she was not allowed any of them, "for fear," adds the Princess, "that she would injure herself with the needles."

Unable to obtain her work things and without any knitting-needles, Marie Antoinette, according to Rosalie, managed to pick out some threads from an old piece of wall covering,

which oddly enough was ornamented with the royal badge of the fleur-de-lys, and with these threads and a pair of toothpicks for needles, and resting the work on her knee as a work-frame, was enabled to make some garters. ¶ On arriving at the Conciergerie the Queen had but one cap, and this in daily use began to get shabby. Madame Richard was, however, able to get her another. "I have nothing worth giving her," she said one day to Rosalie, "but take this," giving Rosalie a piece of lawn that she found she could spare from one of those poor widow's head-dresses.

One day, kindly intending, Madame Richard brought into the Queen's prison her youngest child, a chubby pretty boy of about eight years

old—the Dauphin's age. The Queen took him in her arms and burst into bitter tears. Her poor boy was never out of the Queen's mind night or day. Of all her many tortures, that of knowing that he was ill-treated and in the wretch Simon's hands was the most fearful.

More than one attempt had been made to induce the Queen to escape from the Temple, but as long as the King, and, after the King's death, her children remained with her, she always refused to leave them. But now, alone, and with the shadow of the guillotine creeping ever nearer, the solitary Queen appears to have been willing to escape. A determined attempt was made at the beginning of September to get her out

of the Conciergerie ; an attempt only resulting in failure. From a clove having been employed in this conspiracy, it is known as that of the clove-pink—" La conspiration de l'œillet." The following is a translation of the *procès-verbal*, taken from M. Campardon's work, "Marie Antoinette à la Conciergerie :"—

"No. 1.—Report made by the Citizen Gilbert, gendarme of the widow Capet. Dedicated to Citizen Demesnil, Lieutenant-Colonel of the Gendarmerie, 3d September 1793.

"In my difficult position, I should be wanting in my duty in not informing you of the risk run by introducing near the

widow Capet suspicious people ; and in order that I and my companions should not be compromised, the following statement is the truth relating to this affair. The last time but one that the Citizen Michonis came, he brought with him an individual, at seeing whom the widow Capet was visibly agitated. She declared him to be a *ci-devant* knight of St. Louis, and that she trembled lest he should be discovered. She also said that he had given her a pink containing a note, and that he would return on the following Friday. Also, that while the maid of the widow Capet was playing with me at cards, she pricked a note with a pin, which she bade me give to the knight of St. Louis.

Not wishing to have to reproach myself or neglect my duties, I took it at once to the jailer, to whose wife I gave the paper, and made the same reports as here stated.”

On the strength of this denunciation the Queen underwent an examination by some members of the Revolutionary Tribunal on the 3d of September. This examination began with the following questions and replies :—

Q. Are you the person who is called the widow Capet ?

A. I am.

Q. Do you see any one where you are placed ?

A. Only those people who are placed about me, and the officials who have come with persons whom I do not know.

Q. Have you not seen lately a *ci-devant* knight of St. Louis?

A. It is possible, so many persons come.

Q. Do you not know the names of some of those who have come with the officials?

A. I do not remember the names of any.

Q. Among those who have come into your room, did you not recognise any one?

A. No.

Q. Did not some one recognise you lately?

A. I cannot remember.

Q. Did not a man give you a pink?

A. There are some of those flowers in my room.

Q. Did you not receive a letter?

A. How could I receive one with the people in the room, and the woman who always watches from the window?

Q. Would it not have been possible to have given you a pink containing a letter?

A. I doubt it, as the woman would have noticed it, and she said nothing.

Q. Have you not written anything lately?

A. I have no materials for writing.

And so on for many pages. But the fact was, the poor Queen had not only received a letter, but had also answered it by pricking

some words with a pin or needle on a small strip of paper. She can hardly be blamed for denying a fact which, were it revealed—and she knew not of Gilbert's having denounced her—would not only condemn her, but the devoted man who had attempted her deliverance, and of whose safety she could not then have known.

Although De Rougeville escaped the guillotine, he fell under the bullets of the Bonapartists in 1814, having been convicted of another Legitimist plot.

Alexandre Dumas has, in one of his most stirring romances, celebrated De Rougeville's courage, but has changed that name to that of the Chevalier de la Maison Rouge.

Towards the close of her examination, the Queen, who seems to have regained her lofty spirit, on being asked whether she was not interested in the success of the enemy's armies, replied, "I interest myself in the success of those of my son's nation; when one is a mother, that is the dearest interest."

Being asked what was her son's nationality, she replied, "Can you doubt it? Is he not French?"

"Your son," they argued, "being only a private individual, has been obliged to relinquish all the vain prerogatives that formerly were attached to the title of king."

"There is no prouder one," the Queen

answered, "than that of desiring the happiness of France."

"Then you are doubtless much pleased that neither kings nor royalty now exist."

"All that we wish," she replied to this sneer, "is that France should be great and happy."

When asked if she agreed with the opinions of her husband, she said with firmness, "Yes. I have always fulfilled my duty. If," she added, "France is to be happy with a king, then I desire it should be so with my son, and I regard those mine enemies who wish evil to my children."

Interrogations followed. Marie Bault, who had waited on the Queen, denied that the

stranger (De Rougeville) had offered a flower or spoken to the Queen ; nor had she seen her write with a needle or otherwise. Michonis (the municipal guard) also underwent an examination ; but little came of it. He was, however, imprisoned on suspicion, and on the 23d of May 1794 executed with fifty-four others, including Cécile Renault, suspected of intending to assassinate Robespierre. An allusion is made to Michonis having introduced a painter into the Queen's presence ; this was doubtless Kocharsko, whose portrait of the Queen has been already referred to. Gilbert, the gendarme who had betrayed the unfortunate confidence the Queen had placed in him, gave evidence to the same effect as

that in his letter. He added to this the extraordinary statement, which he asserted the Queen had made him, that she not only showed him the answer to De Rougeville's note, but the paper on which she had pricked the answer. "You see," he said the Queen remarked, "I can write without a pen!" Always imprudent, the unfortunate Queen seems to have quite forgotten the extreme peril of taking such a man as this gendarme appears to have been into her confidence; she suffered terribly for this, as she had done for all her other imprudences. Others were examined, but nothing could be proved as long as the principal agent, De Rougeville, was at liberty,

and, fortunately for him, he managed to elude all pursuit. Whether or not it was owing to being aware of this, on her second examination by the commissioners the Queen acknowledged having received a letter. On being asked what that note contained, she said, "Only a few vague sentences. 'What do you intend doing? I have escaped from prison miraculously. I will come on Friday.'" There was also an offer of money in it, and she added that she had no intention of accepting any. On being pressed to tell what she had written on the slip of paper with the needle, she said, "I tried to mark, 'I am closely watched. I do not speak or write.'" On being shown the paper, she

recognised it. They asked what had passed between her and De Rougeville. "He asked me," she replied, "if my heart failed me; and I said, 'It never fails me, but it is profoundly afflicted.'" In an interesting little book by the Comte de Reiset, "*Lettres inédites de Marie Antoinette*," a reproduction of the Queen's needle-pricked note is given. It reads thus: "Je me fie a vous, je viendrai," after the line to which she confessed having written to the commissioners.

How and in what manner De Rougeville intended releasing the Queen from the Conciergerie will never be known. There are various suppositions—one, the least impro-

bable, being that, having gained over Michonis and the gendarmes, he would be enabled, by a forged order from the Municipality instructing Michonis to take the Queen back to the Temple, to put her in a carriage, in which, protected by a mounted body of Royalists, they would make their way to the frontier.

Alluding to this attempt, Madame Royale writes, in her account of her family's imprisonment, that she had learnt since the death of the Queen that attempts had been made to get her out of the Conciergerie. "I have been assured," writes the Princess, "that the gendarmes who watched her and the wife of the doorkeeper had been gained

over by some of our friends; that she had seen several people devoted to her in her prison, amongst others a priest, who had administered the sacraments to her, which she had received with deep piety. The chance of escape was missed on one occasion, as she had been told to speak to the second guard, and by mistake she spoke to the first. Another time, she had got out of the room, and had already passed through the corridor, when she was stopped by a gendarme, and obliged to return to her room, although he had been gained over. A great many persons were interested in my mother's fate; and indeed, except the vilest, of whom also there were many, it

was impossible to be with her for however short a time without being filled for her with respect, so much goodness was mixed with the dignity of her manner. At the time these things happened we knew no details, but we only heard that my mother had seen a knight of St. Louis, who had given her a pink which contained a note."

In the Baron de Klinckowstoem's work, "Le Comte de Fersen et la Cour de France," this affair is told as follows:—

De Rougeville knew Madame Dutilleul, an American (this must be an error on Fersen's part, as Madame Dutilleul's maiden name was Sophie Lebon, a native of Paris), and they formed a project to save the Queen. They

gained over Fontanis, an honest man, a timber merchant, and Michonis. Michonis would not accept any money, but paid the others. One day De Rougeville accompanied Michonis to the prison. The Queen rose and said, "Oh, it is you, Monsieur Michonis," and on seeing M. de Rougeville became greatly agitated, and almost fainted, which surprised the gendarmes. He made a sign to her to reassure herself, and told her to take some pinks, where a letter was concealed. She did not dare to do so, and he dropt them. The Queen then sent for Michonis, and while he spoke to the gendarmes, she said to De Rougeville that he was running too much risk, and he said that she should be saved,

and that he would bring her money to gain over the gendarmes. She then said to him, "If I appear weak and broken, this," placing her hand on her heart, "is not so." She asked him whether her trial would soon come on. He reassured her. She said to him, "Look at me and at my bed, and tell my relations and my friends, if you can escape, the condition you have seen me in." They then left. The doorkeeper and his wife had been gained. The plan was that Michonis, who had brought the Queen from the Temple to the Conciergerie, should go at night at ten o'clock, and remove the Queen by order of the Municipality to the Temple, as it were, and thus get her away. But one of the gendarmes, who apparently

had not been gained, opposed her, and prevented the Queen from leaving the prison. And so ended this disastrous attempt. Its only consequence was to hasten her trial, and to enhance the horrors of her confinement by removing her to a far worse dungeon than the prison in which she had passed the first month of her imprisonment. All, even the devotion of her friends, seemed but to conspire to add greater sufferings to the unfortunate Queen.

On the 11th of September, Marie Antoinette was transferred from the prison-room she had occupied since the 2d of August into the dark and narrow underground cell still shown to visitors interested in her tragic life.

But there have been many alterations made there since the days of the Terror.

Passing through the courtyard of the Conciergerie, a vast hall is entered, lately restored; this the body-guard of St. Louis are said to have occupied. At the end of this vaulted hall, on the left, some steps are descended; turning to the right, a dark passage is reached; at the end of this, on the left, is the room occupied by the gendarmes during the imprisonment of the Queen—now transformed into a bathroom for the use of prisoners—and next to it is the Queen's prison. The opening between these two rooms has been closed. A heavily barred door, by which the Queen's prison is now entered, is not in its original

position, as it formerly was in the room of the gendarmes ; now, as has already been said, it is in the prison bathroom.

Formerly there was no ingress to the Queen's cell but through this room, the doorway, where it now is, having been walled up. The window has also been altered, having been enlarged in the reign of Louis XVIII. The pictures, mere daubs, that now hang on the prison-wall, one representing the separation of the Royal Family on the eve of the King's execution, the other the Queen taking the sacrament in prison—an occurrence which probably did not take place—date also from that reign. The crucifix is said to have belonged to the Queen; but

this, too, is improbable, as, had she possessed one, it would have undoubtedly been taken from her. This is placed on the wall above a tablet and an altar; these also date from the Restoration. The only portions of this cell that exist now as when the Queen was confined in it are the bricks with which the floor is tiled, the ceiling, and the walls.

The opening communicating with the adjoining prison, in which Robespierre is supposed to have passed a few hours before his execution, has also been made since the time of the Queen's imprisonment; it is now used as the Sacristy of the Chapel. A large vaulted chamber beyond, famous as being the room

in which the Girondins passed their last night together, is now the Chapel, and Mass is celebrated weekly here before the prisoners.

Nothing much more gloomy or wretched than this new place of captivity into which the Queen was placed can well be imagined ; but in order to render it still more so, the Queen's jailers had the heavily barred window, by which some light struggled into the cell from the courtyard outside, where the female prisoners came to wash their linen, covered half way up with a screen of sheet iron, and the upper portion wired over. The prison measured seven feet in depth by sixteen in length ; but the Queen was only allowed a portion of this space. The furni-

ture of the prison consisted of a little truckle-bed, a washhand basin, a caned chair, a little wooden table, with a stool of coarse woollen work, and two of the chairs used in the prison. This, and a paper box in which the Queen kept her dresses, her caps, her kerchiefs, and her linen, was all that the little maid could procure for her ; but that little was as gratefully received by the prisoner as if it had been of much value. Up to this time the Queen appears still to have had some faint hopes of her life being spared, probably as that of a hostage ; and according to Rosalie Lamorlière, she had said to her that if she were to leave the Conciergerie, she would take her with her as her maid.

But after the affair of the pink and the change to so infinitely worse a prison, and the rigorous watch now set over her, Marie Antoinette's heart must have failed within her as far as any earthly hope was concerned; but her unshakeable courage, as she had said to De Rougeville, never failed; and although the accumulated sufferings and privations that were now added to her **mental** tortures daily increased, she never **showed** anything but a patience that, **if it had not** been supported by something unearthly, would be unaccountable.

It must not be lost sight of that the Queen was naturally of an imperious and somewhat easily roused temper, and this was one of

the many causes that made her unpopular even in her bright days, although no one was sooner appeased, or more anxious to atone for any hasty word that might have fallen from her. The Prince de Ligne, in an unpublished account of the Queen, gives the following little anecdote to prove this trait in her character.

One day, wanting some article of dress or ~~toilette~~, she rang for her attendants, and on ~~their~~ not being able to find what the Queen wanted, she said pettishly, "How terrible it is not to be able to find what one wants!" And on the Prince de Ligne remarking that she seemed much annoyed about such a trifle and angry at so small a cause, she summoned

her maids, and on their appearance said, in order to make up for her former petulance, "You see how well I am served; they have all come together;" much to the delight of them all.

A trifling incident, but it shows the character of Marie Antoinette, and it is therefore worth recording. But now, in these last days of her life, when surrounded by every aggravation that could wound a proud spirit, treated like the worst of offenders, insulted as mother, wife, queen, and woman, she never seems to have as much as said one word that could be construed into petulance, or given one angry look.

As her sufferings increased, so did her

patience; and if she had committed imprudences and faults, these were a thousand-fold atoned for by a constancy in trial that is not easy to match out of Divine Writ.

For the details of her last days on earth one is obliged to trust the accounts left us by her jailers or their relatives. What seems to me somewhat suspicious in these memoirs is that **they** are far too well composed to have been **written** by those whose names they bear. **Doubtless** Rosalie Lamorlière and Madame Bault **were** kind-hearted and sympathetic creatures, but it is scarcely probable that they should have written high-flowing accounts of their prisoner, compared to which the diary of the Queen's daughter's imprisonment by herself

reads as the writing of a schoolgirl, but is all the more to be trusted for its very simplicity. Probably, as has often happened with the memoirs of Rosalie and the others relating to the Queen's last days, some author of the day got hold of the rough account written by them of the Queen's imprisonment, or got the details by word of mouth, and then polishing the account, gave it its present shape." The wife of the new jailer that guarded the Queen in her new prison—Dame Bault—has left an account of these days, named "Récit exact des derniers moments de la captivité de la Reine, depuis la 11 Septembre 1793 jusqu'au 16 Octobre. By the Dame Bault, widow of her last porter."

But whether this memoir is strictly accurate or not, it is the only one that gives any details of the last days of the Queen's life, and has been trusted as an authority by all the French authors who have written of that time. Bault—or Le Beau, as Rosalie writes it—the Queen's new jailer, was informed by the Tribunal that his head would be forfeited if the Queen escaped; so it is not to be wondered at that, although he seems to have sympathised with the captive, his watch over her was a rigorous one. No more flowers, of which the Queen was always passionately fond, were now allowed to be introduced into her cell—flowers, that, of all the beautiful things of Nature, had alone given a little charm and solace to the

prisoner. Even her rings were taken from her—her wedding-ring and two set with diamonds, which Rosalie observed she used to change from one hand to the other—those hands still so white and beautiful. Marie Antoinette, who, even when at Versailles, hated having nothing to occupy herself with, and disliked the tedious court ceremonies for debarring her from her music, her books, and her embroidery, was now reduced to work a kind of garter with threads taken from her bedding, and not being allowed any knitting-needles, used a pair of tooth-picks. When finished, the Queen dropped this garter with a significant look when Bault entered the prison. It reached—thanks to one of her loyalest followers, Mons. Hue, a faithful

servant of Louis XVI.—its destination, for he gave it to the Queen's daughter when he accompanied her to Vienna two years later. The Queen had not been so fortunate with another little relic that she hoped her child would receive. This consisted of a pair of gloves and a lock of her hair, which she had slipped into Bault's hand ; but the action was observed by one of the gendarmes, and the little parcel was confiscated.

There was not a moment that the Queen could be out of sight of her gendarmes ; a little screen four feet high was the only separation between the space in which she changed her dress and those men. Imagine the misery of this state for a woman so delicately nurtured,

so luxuriously brought up, accustomed not only to the most refined manner of life, but to that of a court which had never been, and never can be, exceeded in all that tended to make existence—if mere external respect and deference can promote happiness—a living pageant and a realised dream. Imagine this change for a woman not only accustomed to soft living, but for nearly twenty years treated as half divine, having a household of over four hundred persons at her command, and who, although she always seemed to love to leave the glare and splendour and pomp of representation for the quiet of her own friends, and seemed only really happy with them and her children, yet could

dazzle those accustomed to the greatest courts by the magnificence of her state, and win the admiration and homage of foreigners, who, prepared to criticise, were carried away by so much beauty, grace, and charm.

Alas! she whom Edmund Burke had seen "glittering like the morning star, full of life and splendour and joy," was hurled low indeed. But to me Marie Antoinette is a far nobler figure as I can see her in her last prison, with her widow's cap over her almost white hair, her frayed and patched black gown, and the wretched truckle-bed that stands against the damp stone wall of her prison, than when in the heyday of her youth and beauty at Versailles, the cynosure of all that is highest

and gayest in that huge palace, or when playing the part of the miller's wife in her court gardens at Trianon. Then she was but a brilliant queen and attractive woman, with most of the faults of her sex; but at the Conciergerie she may claim in history to hold a place with the noblest of human kind that have gone through great trials with added lustre to their names,—of those who have attained a more excellent renown, and who have come out of “great tribulation” with the stains of their poor humanities and weaknesses washed for ever away.

Rosalie, the faithful maid, was still in attendance on the Queen, although Michonis, owing to the conspiracy of the pink, had been

removed. Bault, the new jailer, appears to have been a well-meaning man, touched with the sorrows of the august victim he had in charge, but not daring to show his feelings. He appears to have been distressed when, on offering to do up the Queen's hair for her, she gave him one of her majestic looks, and said she would prefer doing that herself. Formerly a matter of immense time and trouble, the Queen's hair was now soon arranged. She divided it in the middle and raised it on the sides, and probably—thanks to Rosalie—had some perfumed powder, which she would sprinkle on it whenever aware that she would have to appear before her judges and the public. The poor woman, with a last sad touch

of the wish to please, which never left her even in the last bitter days, would take extra pains to appear as becoming as her poor means could afford.

Bault managed to arrange that the Queen should have better food than the ordinary of the prisoners, as had been ordered by the judges. He said that, being responsible for the life of the Queen, he would take charge of all the viands that entered her cell. By this means he could occasionally procure her such little luxuries as Madame Bault could cater for in the markets, where she was known to some of the market-women; and it is not a little touching to hear that these good souls would keep their best chicken and ripest fruits,

thrusting a peach or a melon into her willing hands, with "Take it for our good Queen," as they called her; and would smuggle them into the basket of Dame Bault, with the tears in their eyes. I never pass a Paris market, and see the good-natured-looking "ladies of the hall," as I believe they still call themselves, without recalling the good feeling that some of their class showed to the poor Queen when even to allude to her with sympathy might bring them to the scaffold. Rosalie, who still waited on her mistress, brought in her dinner, which consisted of some soup and chicken or veal on alternate days, with a dish of vegetables. The plates and dishes were of pewter. Formerly the Queen only drank

water. Rosalie mentions that once crossing the prison-yard with a half-emptied glass of water, she was accosted by a M. De Saint Léger, also a prisoner, and, as it seems, a devoted Royalist; for, hearing that the Queen had drank out of the glass, he took off his hat and drank the remainder. Very French and very pretty, and one hopes that the Queen may have heard of it from Rosalie. On another occasion, while Rosalie was brushing a pair of the Queen's shoes, some of the imprisoned Royalists, who were looking through the bars which separated them from the courtyard, asked her to come near them in order that they might touch the Queen's shoes. They not only did so, but kissed them with deep respect

as they passed them from one to the other. There was indeed no loyalty lacking here in the Conciergerie, but it came too late.

The damp of the Queen's underground prison was such that her black gown began to fall into rags. She had another one, a white one, but this she only wore during her trial and on the day of her death. Rosalie patched up the decaying dress as well as she could, and the pieces that had fallen from it she gave to some who asked for them as relics of the prisoner. The few other clothes were in a deplorable state and required constant repair. The Queen was only permitted three shirts, one ornamented with lace; but the Revolutionary Tribunal decided that but one of

these should be given the Queen, and worn ten days before another was allowed her ; even her handkerchiefs were only allowed one by one, and a strict account was kept of every article as it came from, or entered the prison.

The Queen herself kept a list of her linen, marking it down with a pin on the wall. Rosalie adds that she had also scratched some other things on the wall ; but after her death these were all painted over with a thick coat of whitewash.

Not being allowed a chest of drawers, she placed her clothes in a paper box that Rosalie brought her, which she received, says Rosalie, as if it had been the most beautiful piece of furniture in the world.

Rosalie also procured her a little looking-glass, which she had bought for twenty-five sous on the Quays, a little hand-glass bordered with red, with little Chinese figures painted on the sides. This too seemed much to please the Queen; and doubtless it gave her more satisfaction than had done all the miles of mirrors at Versailles.

With the month of October the cold weather had set in, and the Queen's sufferings were aggravated by this new trial, against which, as the cell had no means of being warmed, there was no remedy. The only thing Rosalie could do was to take the Queen's night-dress, and, after warming it, bring it back to the prisoner ere

she went to what rest she could obtain in her wretched cell. No light was allowed her, only the dim reflection of an oil-lamp that flickered in the yard outside the grated window.

In spite of all the precautions that had been taken by her jailers to make escape impossible, the Queen was constantly intruded on by these men, at night as well as during the day. One day they scolded Bault for having placed by the side of the bed against the wall a piece of old tapestry that protected the bed from the dank stones; they wished it removed, and it was only by Bault's presence of mind in telling them that he had placed the tapestry there in

order that any sound from the adjoining cell should be deadened that they allowed it to remain.

The Queen having asked for a covering of cotton stuff, Bault took this message to Fouquier - Tinville, the public prosecutor, who demanded savagely how he dared prefer such a request, and, foaming with rage, told Bault that he deserved to be guillotined.

Some Sisters of Mercy—and never did they better deserve that blessed name—were, however, able to send the Queen some thick woollen stockings.

No wonder that among such miseries the Queen's health gave way. The cold and

damp of the prison brought on severe rheumatism, and her eyesight, never strong, became seriously affected; one of her eyes, in fact, appears to have been destroyed; and there is little doubt that had the trial and condemnation been postponed for a few more weeks, the unspeakable sufferings of Marie Antoinette would have closed within the walls of the Conciergerie.

Bault's widow bears testimony, in her memoir, to the wondrous endurance of the Queen. She writes:—"I have seen the model of resignation the most religious and of constancy the most heroic, and it must not be lost sight of that the Queen of France was doomed to drink to the very dregs the bitter

cup of sorrow ; and my everlasting regret will be to have been unable to do more to assuage her sufferings." Very noble sentiments, but hardly the expression one would expect from the wife of a jailer.

Through the Baults the Queen occasionally had news of her family in the Temple ; but there could be no alleviation for the poor mother if she were told how it fared with her beloved son.

One alleviation—the greatest for a captive after the consciousness of being innocent of crimes for which he suffers wrongfully—that of reading, the Queen obtained through the attention of her jailer, who got her a few books ; but we are only told the name of

one, and that was a translation of our Captain Cook's travels. Anything that could have taken her mind off, even for a few moments, the sufferings she endured must have been an immense solace, and the stirring adventures of Cook may have done this for her.

One day the Queen called Rosalie's attention to the upper windows of an adjoining house occupied by some religious order, and to the figure of a sister praying. "Look how fervently she prays," said the Queen; and, as M. De Saint Amand says in his interesting book, "*La Dernière Année de Marie Antoinette*," "She may well be supposed to have been praying for the captive at her feet."

Early in October the Conciergerie—ever emptying its prisoners for the guillotine and receiving fresh batches—witnessed the arrival of some with whom the Queen's history is closely connected. The first of these was the Duke of Orleans, the implacable enemy of Marie Antoinette, whose courage on the way to death was the only respectable thing in his life; the other, the ill-starred, mischievous, but, on the whole, well-intentioned party of men known as the Girondins, who soon experienced the effect of destroying an old form of constitution without having given time to a new one to be formed,—were now under the same roof as the Queen, and within a few hours shared the same fate.

One of these, Valazé—who disappointed the guillotine by killing himself in prison—wrote to his wife on the 7th of October. In his letter he says the thing of all others that most impresses him, and to which he cannot get used, is that he is so near the widow Capet, and that the same bolts and bars confine them; “as if,” he says, “to show, as it were, by this neighbourhood a sort of complicity between them. This of all things is perhaps the most extraordinary in my destiny.”

As early as the 1st of August, Barère had from the Tribune of the Convention clamoured that the Queen should appear before the Revolutionary Tribunal; but what made this difficult was that the case against

the Queen was not such as could ensure her condemnation, and every means was put into practice to get evidence against her. At length a diabolical idea occurred to Hébert,—no other than, by bringing a revolting charge against Marie Antoinette, to destroy any sympathy that might still be felt for her among the public, and thus more easily to condemn her in the face of the world. But the monstrous charge served only to prove the utter depravity of the then rulers of France, and enabled the Queen, in a moment and for ever, to vindicate herself, and not herself only, but humanity at large, against a calumny that seemed to breathe of the lowest hell.

Early in October Fouquier wrote the following letter to the President of the Convention :—

“ *5th Oct.*—Citizen President,—I have the honour of informing the Convention that the decree rendered by it on the 3d of this month, to the effect that the Revolutionary Tribunal would immediately without delay occupy itself with the judgment of the widow Capet, reached me last night ; but until now no papers relative to Marie Antoinette have reached me, so that, with all the desire that the Tribunal has of executing the decrees of the Convention, it finds itself unable to carry out the decree as long as the papers are not forthcoming.”

As De Saint Amand writes, the condemnation to death of the Queen is not so odious as the interrogatories made to the royal children and Madame Elizabeth. Those who wish to read these infamous charges will find them in Mons. Campardon's work, "Marie Antoinette à la Conciergerie." It is enough to say that those who have the misfortune to know what the accusations were will know how incapable such a mother as Marie Antoinette, and such a saint-like woman as Madame Elizabeth were of even thinking of such deeds; and to those who still are fortunate enough not to know the depravity of human nature, nothing farther need be said, except what relates to the course of the trial.

The unfortunate Dauphin was first examined. Utterly demoralised by Simon's treatment of him, he appears to have said whatever the three scoundrels of the Revolutionary Tribunal, David, Pache, and Chaumette, made him; the declaration which the poor little fellow signed is in existence, and it is easy to see that the child was either too weak or too dormant to do more than make a few vague marks.

His sister (Madame Royale) was next called before these men. Of this interview she writes the following account:—"When the commissioners arrived at the door of the prison, my aunt only opened the door when she had finished dressing. Pache asked me

to come below. My aunt wished to follow me, but was not allowed. She asked if I should return. Chaumette reassured her, saying, 'You may rely on the word of a good republican; she will return.' I overheard my aunt, who was trembling all over, and went downstairs. I was greatly embarrassed. It was the first time that I had been alone with men; I had no idea what they wanted with me; but I recommended myself to God. When I went into my brother's room" (the Dauphin, or Louis XVII.) "I kissed him; but I was taken from him, and told to go into the next room. Chaumette then asked me a number of questions of vile accusations against my mother and my aunt. I was completely overcome,

with such a horror, and so indignant, that, in spite of all the fear I felt, I could not help saying how infamous I thought it. . . . In spite of my tears they pressed me to answer. They were things which I did not understand ; but what I understood was so horrible that I cried with indignation. I had always heard my parents say that it would be preferable to die than to be the cause of anyone's ruin. At length my interrogatory finished at three o'clock ; it had commenced at twelve. I begged Chaumette to allow me to join my brother. 'I can do nothing,' he said."

Madame Elizabeth was next examined. "They asked her," says her niece in her memoir, "the same questions as they had put

to me, and about those people whom they had asked me about. She denied having carried on any correspondence with the outer world, and answered with intense indignation the horrors about which they questioned her. At four o'clock she returned upstairs. Her examination had only lasted one hour; mine had lasted three. This was owing to the deputies perceiving that they could not intimidate her, as they had hoped to do with one of my age" (the Princess was then aged fifteen); "but the life I had been leading during the last four years, and the example given by my parents, had given me greater strength of soul."

Five days after this infamous attempt to

force from the lips of the Queen's children and her sister-in-law confessions of crimes against Marie Antoinette, which only the imagination of such creatures as those who formed the Revolutionary Tribunal were capable of suggesting, the Queen's trial commenced.

The trial, if such a monstrous farce as this mock trial of the Queen, who had been condemned by her judges long before, and whose long-tried endurance they tried in every way to shake, began at six in the evening in the great chamber above the guardroom of the old palace. Danton, who was to beg God and men pardon for the act, had instituted the tribunal before which the Queen and he himself were both

doomed to appear,—a tribunal that, between its creation on the 10th of March 1793 and the 27th July of the following year, sent 2669 victims to the guillotine. The great hall was plunged in almost total darkness. Only two candles were lighted ; these were placed on a desk at which the registrar of the tribunal, Fabricius, sat. The Queen, dressed in her widow's cap and her black gown, sat on a stool in front of the public prosecutor, Fouquier-Tinville, a man who even at that time was notorious as being amongst the most inhuman of the monsters who then governed revolutionary France. His appearance has been described by Charles Mouselet in his "Histoire Anecdotique du Tribunal

Révolutionnaire :”—“ He had a round-shaped head, with thick black hair, a narrow brow, a coarse and pock-marked complexion, with a hard and defiant expression. It was difficult to meet his eyes, so savage was his look. When he spoke he lowered his brow, and his black eyebrows met. His voice was harsh and imperious ; at first merely brutal and coarse, he became more insolent and violent. He seemed intoxicated, maddened with the sight of blood, as people become with the smell of powder ; but his intoxication was ferocious, without pity, and every victim seemed to be his personal enemy.”

The tribunal which judged the Queen was composed of a president and four judges, the

public prosecutor, the chief registrar, and fifteen jurymen. The President's name was Herman, formerly a judge of the Pas-de-Calais; Coffinhul, Maire, Douzé-Verteuil, and Deliège, the judges; the registrar, whose real name was Pâris, had, in consequence of that being the name of the person who killed Michel Lepelletier, altered it into the more classical and sounding one of Fabricius. The witnesses, over forty in number, consisted of all classes. They appear to have been selected as much as possible from among those who were known or thought to be the enemies of the Queen.

Fouquier-Tinville had himself drawn out at great length the act of accusation against the prisoner, which the Queen's counsel, Chau-

veau-Lagarde, did not exaggerate when he characterised it as "l'œuvre d'enfer." In it the Queen is compared to Messalina, Brune-haultt, Frédégonde, and the Medici. He declared that since her arrival in France she had been the curse and leech of the French nation ; that she had maintained a secret correspondence with the man known as the King of Bohemia and of Hungary ; that her aim was the ruin of the country ; that by her instigation, and in concert with the brothers of Louis Capet and the infamous Calonne, formerly Minister of Finance, she had lavished the wealth of the country, the spoils of the sweat of the people, in maintaining her criminal expenditure and in paying the agents of her treasonable in-

trigues ; that she had sent millions out of the country to the Emperor, in order to maintain the war against the Republic, and that she had thus exhausted the revenues of the country. Farther, that since the commencement of the Revolution she had not ceased an instant from maintaining a treasonable correspondence with the enemy, and by every means in her power aided and abetted a counter-revolution. He then went back to the celebrated affair of the Gardes du Corps at Versailles in 1789 at great length, and also to the flight of Varennes ; accused her of the loss of life on the 17th July 1792 at the Champ de Mars, and declared that it is owing to her that the massacres occurred at Nancy and elsewhere.

But it is needless to follow at greater length this endless series of accusations, which seem more as if they came from the disordered brain of a homicidal maniac than the accusations of a man in his senses. Indeed, one can only believe that some of the writings and actions of the actors in the year of terror 1793 were owing to a state of madness. It is said, and on good authority, that Fouquier-Tinville latterly confessed to being pursued by horrible visions, and said that he distinctly saw the spirits of those he had sent to death menacing him, not in his dreams, like Richard III., but in broad daylight.

In his charge he also referred to the horrors of which the Queen had been accused when

in the Temple, and if regret could find a place in such a nature at having gone so far, the manner in which the Queen met this hideous calumny must have told even on Fouquier-Tinville. When Robespierre heard what a sensation the sublime manner in which the Queen had met that charge had made, and the effect it had on the audience, he, being then at dinner, broke his plate with rage, and cursed the folly of Hébert and Tinville in preferring it.

The first day's trial seems to have been unimportant. The Queen, on being asked her name, replied, " Marie Antoinette de Lorraine d'Autriche, aged thirty-eight, widow of the King of France." As M. De Saint Amand remarks,

she was not so old as she said, as only on the 2d of November would she enter her thirty-ninth year.

Q. You had, before the Revolution, political relations with the King of Bohemia and Hungary, which relations were opposed to the interests of France ?

A. The King of Bohemia being my brother, I had no other but friendly intelligence with him, and not political. If they had been the latter, they would but have benefited France, to which country my marriage had allied me.

Q. Not content with ruining the finances of France for your pleasures and intrigues, in concert with infamous Ministers, you sent out

of the country which nourished you millions to the Emperor ?

A. Never! I know this accusation has often been brought against me. I loved my husband too well to dilapidate his country. My brother had no need of French money; and by the ties which held me to France I could not have given him any.

Q. It is you who taught Louis Capet the profound art of dissimulation, wherewith he too long deceived the good French people, who could not imagine such depths of perfidy possible ?

A. Yes. The people have been deceived, and most cruelly, but neither by my husband nor by me.

Q. You have never ceased for an instant to wish to destroy liberty; on any terms you wished to govern, and to reascend the throne over the corpses of the patriots?

A. We had no need to remount the throne; we were on it. We never wished anything but the happiness of France; that she might be happy, this was all we desired.

Q. What interest do you attach to the aims of the Republic?

A. The happiness of France is what I desire above all things.

Q. Do you think that kings are necessary to ensure the happiness of nations?

A. An individual cannot decide such a question.

Q. You doubtless regret that your son has lost a throne, on which he might have been seated, if it had not been that the people, enlightened as to their rights, had broken it?

A. I should never regret anything for my son, as long as my country is happy.

Two names that will be remembered as long as any of the actors of this tragedy now appear,—Tronson-Ducoudray and Chauveau-Lagarde. The latter has left an account of his interview with the Queen, whose honourable mission, with Ducoudray, was to appear as her defender. Lagarde was out of Paris on the 15th of October when a message reached him to present himself at the Con-

ciergerie. He was told at the same time that the trial would be resumed at eight o'clock on the morning following. He lost not a moment in presenting himself before his client.

“No one,” he writes in his account of Marie Antoinette’s trial,—“no one who can put himself into my place, and, forcing himself in such a spot, can but imagine what my feelings were on seeing the august prisoner, widow of the pious descendant of St. Louis, daughter of the Emperor of Germany, a Queen who, by her grace and goodness, had been the joy of the most brilliant court in Europe, and who had once been the idol of the French nation.

“On approaching the Queen, my knees

trembled, my eyes filled with tears. I was far more embarrassed than if I had been presented to the Queen and seen her in the midst of her court, surrounded by all the pomp of power. She received me with so serene a majesty that I was soon reassured. I read with her the act of accusation. On reading this infernal work, I alone was overcome. The Queen with perfect self-possession spoke to me about it. She noticed that the gendarme could overhear her, but, saying that this was of no consequence, she continued her conversation with the same calm."

After inspecting the papers regarding the Queen and the heads of accusations brought against her, he found it impossible to arrange

a defence during the short interval allowed him. He returned to the Queen, and informed her that it was absolutely necessary to obtain a delay in order that he should prepare the defence. "To whom will you apply," asked the Queen, "for this delay?" When he said, "To the National Convention," the Queen at first positively refused, so great was her detestation of that body, which had ordered the execution of her husband. But Chauveau-Lagarde declared it must be done; that it behoved him and his colleague not to omit any circumstance that could be of use to their cause; that without a thorough examination of all the accusations brought against her they

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would fail in their duty ; that it was not necessary for the Queen to frame under her own name the demand to the Convention, but to address, in the name of her advocates, a plea against a precipitancy of action which was an outrage to the name of justice. They had not only, he urged, to defend the Queen, but also the widow of Louis XVI., the mother of that monarch's children, and the sister whose name had been placed with hers in the accusation. The Queen, till then inflexible, now gave way to his entreaties ; and herself wrote a letter to the Assembly, in the name of her defenders, claiming a delay for them. The letter was as follows :—

“ Citizen President,—The Citizens Tronson and Chauveau, whom the Tribunal have given me as defenders, call my attention to the fact that they have only to-day been told of their mission, and in so short a time it is impossible for them to examine the charges, or even to go through them. I owe it to my children to omit no way of entirely justifying myself of these charges. My defenders ask for a delay of three days; I trust that the Convention will accord this to them.”

This letter, when it reached the hands of Fouquier-Tinville, went no farther; no notice was taken of it, and on the following morn-

ing (15th October) the Queen's trial was resumed.

On her second examination the Queen was allowed a chair. She wore the same dress as when she first appeared before her judges, and during the long day and far into the next night maintained the composure which had struck even those who most hated her. At times she seemed unconscious of the scene enacted around her, and her fingers were observed to run on the arms of the chair as if she were playing on a pianoforte.

Poor Rosalie seems to have been much distressed at the Queen having been taken from her prison at eight in the morning without having had any kind of food, and

it was not till four in the afternoon that she managed to obtain some broth for her. But Rosalie had not the satisfaction of being allowed to take it herself to the Queen ; and she indignantly tells how one of the commissaries of police snatched the plate from her hands and gave it to an overdressed woman who was by him, who had expressed a desire to see the prisoner, and who took it hence, after having spilled half its contents.

The hall was densely crowded. Among the mob that came in order to enjoy the spectacle of the poor woman, once their Queen, being for hours browbeaten by Fouquier-Tinville, may have been a few sympathisers, a few still loyal at heart, and with deepest

sympathy for her to whom they were unable even to show a sign of pity or respect. Some arrests were made by one of the inspectors of prisons, who had distinguished himself in the human butcheries of September; but only once did the crowd, for one instant roused by the noble dignity of the prisoner and the atrocious charge preferred against her, show any feeling in her favour.

The Queen, emaciated and pale as death, took her seat, after being told by the President that she might seat herself. The act of accusation was read, and the witnesses appeared. Of these there were forty-one—men of all sorts and conditions. Among them was an ex-admiral and general, Charles

Henri d'Estaing, ex-Marquis Latour du Pin, ex-Mayor of Paris, Jean Sylvain Bailly (all these three doomed to the guillotine), merchants and gendarmes, a doctor, an artist, servants and jailers. Among the forty-and-one, Simon, the jailer of the Dauphin; Lecointre, who was a national guard at Versailles in the days of October; and Hébert, the notorious editor of the "Père Duchesne," were specially selected as known enemies of the prisoner; and a woman named Reiné Millot, formerly a servant in the royal family, who declared that the Queen had sent two hundred million francs to Vienna. These were ready to swear anything, however improbable, however atrocious, against the Queen.

As might have been expected, such men as Bailly, D'Estaing, Latour du Pin, and Bernier, the doctor of the Queen's children, treated the august captive with respect. They knew that this conduct would but ensure their own death-warrants; and even Manuel, formerly one of the chiefs of the commune, now appeared touched by so much misery so nobly endured.

All through the long hours of that awful day the different witnesses were questioned and cross-questioned. She saw again faces familiar to her in the past years—faces that must have recalled Versailles and the Tuileries; and with what feelings of horror must she have recognised her son's jailer and persecutor among that crowd of witnesses!

When Hébert's time arrived, and the charges relative to the conduct of the Queen with her son were again alluded to, the Queen deigned no reply. Seeing this, one of the jurors called the attention of the President to her silence. One can imagine what a hush must at that moment have fallen on that great crowd, eager to know what the Queen would answer to such an infamy. But Marie Antoinette was equal, aye, more than equal, to the occasion. She rose from her chair, and with a majestic voice exclaimed, "If I have not answered, it is because Nature herself refuses to answer such an accusation made to a mother. I appeal to all that may be present." A thrill ran through the vast hall

—a thrill that has not ceased to be felt by all who can enter into what the feelings of that mother were at such a moment. No wonder that, later in the day, a rumour got abroad that, after all, the Queen would be spared—would be transported, but not executed, and that Rosalie heard it said that the Queen had answered like an angel.

Throughout the trial there does not seem to have been amongst the crowd any strong expression of feeling either against or for the Queen; but they frequently called on her to rise, so that she should be better seen than when seated; and once at this demand she had said, “When will the people be tired of my sufferings?”

Although none of the witnesses could bring any proof of the things some alleged against her, such as that she had intrigued with some of the municipals when in the Temple, as Simon swore ; or that she had, as Tissot averred (the editor of a sheet only second in sanguinary abominations to that of the *Père Duchesne*), given bonds which he declared he had seen signed by her to obtain money out of the public treasury, none of these were produced ; nor could the letter which Didier Journeil swore he had seen, in which the Queen asked if the Swiss guard were to be trusted, and if they would be prepared to act when the time came. Although none of these accusations could be in any way

proved, it was clear that the Queen was prejudged long before she appeared before the Revolutionary bar, and that Fouquier-Tinville had already her death-warrant in his pocket ready to sign.

The Queen was asked the most trivial questions as well as the most outrageously absurd.

“Did you not,” the President asks her, “abuse your influence over your husband in order to get funds out of the public treasury?”

“Never,” replies the Queen.

Q. Where, then, did you obtain all the money with which you built and furnished the Little Trianon, where you gave fêtes of which you were always the goddess?

A. It was from a fund that had been made specially for that purpose.

Q. Was it not at the Little Trianon that you became first acquainted with the La-motte?

A. I never even saw her.

Q. Was she not your victim in the famous case about the diamond necklace?

A. She could not have been, for I did not know her.

Q. You then persist in saying that you did not know her?

A. My place is not to deny; it is only the truth I have told, and intend to tell.

Q. Did you not oblige the Ministers of

Finance to deliver up to her funds ; and on some of them refusing, did you not threaten them with your displeasure ?

A. Never.

Q. Did you not ask Vergennes to send six millions to the King of Bohemia and Hungary ?

A. No.

She is then accused of having been taken into the confidence of the King, through a letter written to a Minister, regarding the plan of a campaign, with the intention, probably understood, of inciting a civil war. The Queen had never heard of such a letter. However, the President again told her that it was notorious that her influence over the

King was such as to make him do as she wished ; and this charge, which to us seems not at all an unnatural one, knowing how very weak and wavering a man was poor Louis, appeared a capital crime to those who had a few months ago sentenced the King to death, as being the cause of the internecine war and for corresponding with the enemy.

Even the Queen's family name was brought against her as a proof of crime. President Herman declared that as the Queen gave her name as that of Marie Antoinette de Lorraine d'Autriche, it follows that she intended seizing Lorraine and transferring it to Germany.

“Did you not,” he asks, “conceive such a project at the time of your marriage?”

On the Queen denying this absurd charge, the President remarked that she called herself by the name of that province. He then changed his ground, and demanded why the Queen had treated her son (Louis XVII.) in such a way that it was evident she looked on him as the successor of his father on the throne.

The Queen simply answered this by saying her son was too young to talk to on the subject; that he sat at the end of the table at meals, and that she waited on him herself when he required it.

At four o'clock the sitting was suspended

for an hour. It was not till then that the Queen, who must have been half dead with fatigue and thirst, got some broth, carried to her, as I have already said, not by Rosalie, but by the hands of a stranger. That there was risk in showing even so small an attention to the prisoner is shown in the case of the gendarme de Busne, who had, when no one else dared, brought her a glass of water. For this action, or for having offered her his arm when, half blind as she had become, the Queen could scarcely see her way along the darkening corridors of the prison, he was cashiered and imprisoned.

At the end of the examination of the forty-one witnesses, the President asked the

Queen if she had anything to say for her defence.

“Yesterday,” answered she, “I did not know the name of my witnesses, and did not know what they would charge me with. Not one of them has brought any single proof against me. I end by saying, that, being the wife of Louis XVI., I had to conform to his wishes.”

Fouquier-Tinville then launched out in a tirade against the Queen, who had been, he declared, the cause of all the misfortunes of the country.

It was midnight when the President informed the Queen’s defenders that in a quarter of an hour the hearing of the witnesses would

end, and that they had to be ready with their defence. A quarter of an hour was given to the two advocates to answer the host of statements that had been deposed to during the last twelve hours against her. They were merely listened to as a mere matter of form, Tinville being impatient to close this lugubrious farce of a trial.

When they had finished, Herman, the President, summed up in a virulent diatribe, in which he said that at length a great example, a great act of justice, was given to the universe. "At length," he said, "equality triumphs. A woman that had been surrounded by all that was most brilliant,

all that the pride of kings and the servility of slaves could invent, now occupies in the face of the people's tribunal the same position as any other malefactor. In this matter not single actions or crimes has been submitted to your conscience and your enlightenment. You have to judge the entire life of the accused since she seated herself by the side of the last King of the French. If one could have done so, we should have called before the jury the shades of our brothers massacred at Nancy, in the Champ de Mars, in the frontier, in the Vendée, at Marseilles, at Lyons, and at Toulon, destroyed in consequence of the infernal machinations of this modern Medicis." In conclusion he said,

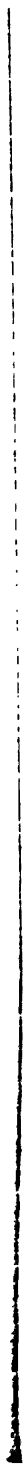
“As I have already stated, it is the entire nation who accuse Antoinette; all the political events that have occurred during the last five years are due to her, and arraign her. The following are the questions which the tribunal submits to you,”—addressing the jury :—“ 1st, Has it been proved that intrigues have been carried on between foreign powers and other external enemies of the republic; and if so, have those intrigues afforded them help and money which has enabled them to invade the French territory and facilitated the progress of their arms? 2nd, Has Marie Antoinette of Austria, widow of Louis Capet, been found guilty of co-operating with such manœuvres, and carried on intelligence with

the enemy? 3rd, Has it been shown that a conspiracy has existed inciting a civil war in the interior of the republic? 4th, Has Marie Antoinette been found guilty of abetting such a conspiracy?"

After being out of court an hour, the jury returned into the audience chamber. The chief juryman gave an affirmative answer to all the four counts of the indictment.

The Queen, who had left the hall at the same time as the jury, was now led in again. The President read the declaration of the jury aloud. Fouquier-Tinville then announced that, in conformity with the two rules laid down by the application of criminal law, Marie Antoinette is sentenced to death; her goods,

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if any, to be confiscated to the Republic ; and that the just judgment be carried out within twenty-four hours in the Square of the Revolution. Herman inquired if the accused had any observation to make regarding the application of the law as invoked by the public prosecutor. For answer the Queen merely shook her head. The sentence of death was then delivered.

It was ten minutes past four in the morning of the 16th of October. The Queen had, with hardly an interval, endured this trial more than twenty hours.

The Queen appeared the calmest and the least excited person in court ; she displayed no sign of emotion. Rising from her seat, she

walked away calmly and serenely, leaving her judges — or rather murderers — without one look of reproach or a shade of anger. But on nearing the portion of the hall where, beyond the barriers, the mob was collected, she raised somewhat her noble head. There does not seem to have been any demonstration here, amidst the people who loved to jeer and mock the condemned as they were led back to prison, in the short interval that was left them still between time and eternity. It may well be that the long patience of the Queen, her simple deportment, and yet the stately appearance of the woman, checked any such show of feeling even among the mob, eager to behold suffering and to feast their

eyes on the last moments of the victims of the Revolution.

A great French painter has left a picture of this scene. The Queen faces the spectator as she walks along the side of the barriers, above which the mixed crowd are eagerly scanning her ; behind follow the gendarmes with shouldered muskets ; beyond, under the dim light of a lamp, appear the faces of the judges—a lurid background. Delaroche has introduced the thin handsome face of a youth, who seems to feel the iniquity of the transaction keenly : we recognise the features of Bonaparte. Next to the almost angelic sublimity of the figure of the Queen, the most touching thing in the picture is the

face of a young girl, who gazes with a look of ineffable pity through her tears at the Queen as she walks by.

Very truly has Sainte-Beuve written of this trial of Marie Antoinette. "I do not believe," he says, "that a monument of more atrocious stupidity, of greater ignominy for our species, can exist than this trial of Marie Antoinette, such as it can be read in the 29th volume of Parliamentary History of the French Revolution. Most of the Queen's answers have been altered or suppressed, but, as in all iniquitous trials, the very text of the accusations tell against the assassins. When one reflects that a century which considered itself enlightened and of the most refined civilisation, ends with

public acts of such barbarity, one begins to doubt of human nature itself, and to fear that the brute which is always in human nature has the ascendancy."

In the accounts of the last hours of the Queen there are some discrepancies. Though De Goncourt, for instance, in his admirable life of Marie Antoinette, says, that after her condemnation Marie Antoinette was not led back to the prison she had occupied since the 11th of September, but to the condemned cell, a prison constructed in one of the angles of the outer ward, Saint Amand and others state, on the other hand, that the prisoner passed the few hours left her before execution in her old prison; and this seems to me, from several

circumstances, more probable than the former version. Nor does Rosalie Lamorlière refer to the Queen having been removed to another prison after the trial, which she would doubtless have done had it taken place.

But one alteration the Queen must have noticed on her return to prison; this was, that the gendarme de Busne, who had shown enough compassion to bring her a glass of water when she complained of thirst, and who, when, half blind and weak from the long fast and the accumulated misery she had endured, and almost falling, on coming to the steps which lead down to the corridor, let fall that piteous complaint, "I can go no farther; I

cannot see," had given her his arm, was no longer there to assist her.

In those last hours it seems that the guard over the Queen was a little relaxed. She was allowed for the first time a light, and the turn-key was allowed to bring her writing materials. It was then that she wrote that letter to her sister-in-law, Madame Elizabeth, which is the noblest memento to her memory. It must have been broad daylight before she could have finished that letter—the light of her last day in this troublesome world.

To have been able, after all she had gone through, to write that noble letter, so firm even in its writing, so divine in its forgiveness of her enemies, so tender in its allusions and its

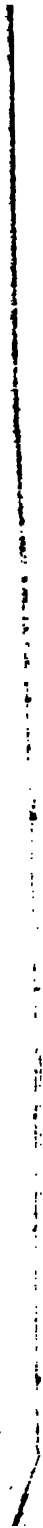
affection for her loved ones, proves, if farther proof were necessary, what a glorious character was that of the Queen—a character and nature which had come out so nobly from the fierce fire of suffering and trial such as few human beings can have known or conceived.

The letter, which it is almost a sacrilege to attempt to translate, is as follows:—

“ 16th October, half-past four o'clock of the morning.—It is to you, my sister, that I write for the last time. I have been condemned—not to a shameful death, it is only such to criminals,* but to rejoin your brother. Innocent like

* The Queen must have had Corneille's fine line in her mind—“Le crime fait la honte, et non l'échafaud”—when she wrote this passage.

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him, I hope to show the same firmness as he in the last moments. I am calm, as one is when one's conscience has nothing to reproach one with. I feel a profound regret to leave my poor children; you know I lived but for them. And for you, my good and tender sister—you, who by your friendship have sacrificed everything in order to remain with us, in what a situation do I leave you! I have learnt in the course of the trial that my daughter has been separated from you. Alas! poor child! I dare not write to her; she would not receive my letter. I do not know even if this will reach you. Receive for them both, by this, my benediction. I hope that one day, when they will be older, that they will be again

united with you, to enjoy your tender care. May they both think of what I have never ceased to instil into them, that high principle, and the exact performance of duty, are the most important things in life; that affection and mutual trust will ensure its happiness; that my daughter may feel at her present age that she must ever be ready to help her brother by advice, which the larger experience she possesses and her affection may dictate. May my son, for his part, render every attention to his sister, every service that affection can prompt. May they mutually feel that, in whatever position they may find themselves, that their only happiness can be in mutual affection. May

they take example by us. How often in our misfortunes has our affection been our consolation ! When one is happy, one's happiness is doubled by sharing it with a friend ; and where can one find a friend more tender, more true, than in one's own family ? May my son never, never forget the last words of his father, which I now repeat expressly to him : ' That he must never seek to revenge our death.' I have to speak to you of a subject very painful to my heart. I know how much trouble this child must have caused you ; forgive him, my dear sister ; think of his age, and how easy it is to get a child to say what one wants, and even what he himself cannot understand. A day will come, I hope, when he will feel all the more all he

owes to your tenderness for both of us. It still remains for me to confide to you my last thoughts. I had wished to write them at the beginning of the trial; but besides my not being allowed to write, the proceedings have been so rapid that I should not even have had time enough. I die in the Catholic apostolic and Roman religion, that of my fathers, in which I have been brought up, and which I have always professed; having no spiritual consolation to expect, not knowing whether there still exist here any priests of that religion; and even if there were, the place where I am would expose them too much if they were to come here. I sincerely demand pardon of God of all the faults I may have committed.

I hope that in His goodness He will deign to receive my last prayers, as well as those which I have made for a long while, that He will deign to receive my soul in His mercy and goodness. I ask pardon of all I know, and of you, my sister, in particular, for all the trouble that, without meaning, I may have caused them. I forgive my enemies all the harm they have done me. I bid farewell to my aunts and all my brothers and sisters.

“I had friends ; the idea of being for ever separated from them and their sorrows is one of the greatest regrets that I carry away with me in my death. May they learn, at least, that until my last moment I thought of them.

“Adieu, my good and tender sister; may this letter reach you! Think always of me: I kiss you with my whole heart, as well as those poor dear children. My God! how agonising it is to leave them for ever! Adieu, adieu! I will now only occupy myself with my spiritual duties. As my actions are not free, they may perhaps bring me a priest; but I here protest that I will not say a word to him, and that I will treat him as a perfect stranger.”

This letter never reached its destination. Bault gave it into the charge of Fouquier-Tinville, who kept it. When he was arrested after the “9th Thermidor,” this letter was seized with his other papers. On it may be

seen Fouquier - Tinville's signature, as well as those of the commissioners, Lecointre, Legot, and Massieu. In 1816 the letter was first made public. An ex-Conventionist, Courtois, gave it to some person unknown, who presented it to Louis XVIII. It is now carefully preserved in a cabinet in the archives of the city of Paris, where I was permitted, through the courtesy of the officials, to have a photograph taken of it.

In the expiatory chapel to the memory of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette in Paris, at the base of the monument to the Queen this letter has been engraved in the marble. Never, indeed, has a more touching last will and testament been handed down to posterity.

The letter ends somewhat abruptly, and it has been conjectured that the Queen was interrupted before she had finished her letter ; but as it is, nothing more is needed. The allusion made to the probable visit of a priest, and to her intention of treating him as an absolute stranger, refers to the probability of one of the priests who had sworn fidelity to the constitution being sent to her. It is difficult now to realise the horror which these Revolutionist priests inspired among Roman Catholics during the days of the Revolution. It was with the greatest difficulty that Louis XVI. was forced to give way regarding the rights of the priesthood ; and the Queen had a perfect horror of these men,

who had, as she considered, become traitors to God and to their religion.

In Madame Royale's memoir allusion is made to the supposed visit of a priest, by whom the sacraments were administered to the Queen; but I think this is a case of the wish having been father to the thought; and neither Rosalie Lamorlière nor the wife of Bault alludes to such an occurrence, which, had it taken place, they would most probably have done. I believe the only priest who saw the Queen was one named Girard, the curé of the Church of Saint-Landry, who entered her prison at half-past seven on the day of her death. He asked her whether she would confess herself to him. She asked

him who he was. He replied, "A curé of Paris." "There are few such," said the Queen. He then asked the Queen if he should accompany her to the scaffold. "As you please," she answered; but she preferred making her peace with God alone to confessing to a man whom she considered a renegade and a perjured servant of her Lord.

After writing her letter, the Queen lay down on her bed, where, coming into the prison, Rosalie found her. She complained of suffering from cold, and had covered her feet with her pillow. An officer of the gendarmerie was seated in a corner of the room when Rosalie entered. The Queen,

whose face was turned to the wall, was crying silently, and had probably not slept. Rosalie asked her if she would have any food. "Bring me a little broth," she answered; but was only able to swallow a few spoonfuls.

At eight o'clock, after the priest had seen Marie Antoinette, Rosalie returned to the Queen to help her to change her dress. The Queen with her own hands laid out her shirt, and the white gown she had kept for this her last appearance in public. The gendarme, who never let his prisoner out of sight for an instant, approached the two women—the Queen, who had stooped behind the low screen, so as to be as much hidden as

possible, and Rosalie, who stood in front of her. Seeing this, Marie Antoinette implored him, while hastily crossing her shawl over her shoulders, with extreme gentleness, to be allowed to change her clothes without his watching her. "I cannot consent to that," was the brutal answer; "my orders are to watch all your movements." The Queen sighed, and, with as much secrecy as was possible, changed her dress, removing the black gown she had worn during the trial, and replacing it with the white one, tying the muslin (fichu) shawl behind her, after crossing it below her neck, and was now ready for death.

Rosalie, who dared not even bid the

Queen farewell, now left her, retiring to her room, where we can well believe that "she wept bitterly." There was enough, surely, to make the very stones cry out and weep.

Between that hour—soon after eight—and ten the Queen was engaged in prayer.

At ten the turnkey Larivière entered the prison; he was the son of the old woman who had waited on the Queen when she first came to the Conciergerie. He said that Bault had told him to go to the Queen, and to wait there for him. The Queen asked him to thank his mother for the trouble she had taken when with her, and to pray for her.

Another gendarme had meanwhile entered the prison, and soon after the judges entered with the registrar, Fabricius. The Queen, who had been on her knees by her truckle-bed, now rose to receive them. Hébert addressed her first. "Listen," said he, "to your sentence." All four took off their hats, which appears to have struck the others as a peculiar mark of respect;—of respect, I take it, to the Tribunal, and not intended as a mark of respect to the Queen, although Bault's wife remarks that they seemed struck by the majestic appearance of the Queen.

"It is unnecessary," said Marie Antoinette, "to read it; I know but too well the sentence."

One of the judges said, "That is of no consequence; it has to be read to you a second time."

The Queen said no more, and the sentence was read.

While this was going on, the executioner, Sanson, a youth of gigantic stature, entered. He approached the Queen and said, "Give me your hands."

The Queen for the moment appeared to lose her self-control and started back. "Will my hands be tied? The King's were not." (Here the poor Queen made a mistake, as Louis's hands were fastened, but not till he had reached the scaffold.)

"Do your duty!" said the judges to

Sanson; and those fair white hands were roughly and "too tightly" (*trop fort*) bound by a cord behind her back.

To revert for a moment to the costume the Queen wore at her execution. Besides the gown and shawl, both of which were white, she had placed a small linen cap on her head, but had removed the black widow's crape bands that till that day had gone around it, and, falling at the sides, were attached by a loose knot over her breast. This detail is not as trivial as it may seem, for it shows how much the poor woman must have realised her last moments, and had so prepared her head-dress that in a moment she could remove her cap and

be ready for the fatal blow. On her feet were a pair of high-heeled shoes, which she had taken great care of. The shape of these high-heeled shoes was called "*à la St. Huberty.*" Whether or not she herself had cut her hair before Sanson appeared, as some think (the De Goncourts, among others, state this as being the case in their history of her last moments), or whether, which I think far more probable, seeing that no scissors or other implement whereby she could have cut her hair with her own hands was allowed her, her hair was cut by the executioner—which is the view taken by Mons. de Saint Amand—it was the "*dernière toilette,*" as the French

style this last preparation of the victim for the scaffold. According to Madame Bault's account, the Queen's hair was cut by Sanson after he had tied her arms,—arms "that were not born for bondage,"—behind her back. The Queen, looking back, could see him placing the shorn tresses in his pocket. "This I saw," adds Madame Bault, "and I would I had never seen that sight,"—a sight which, she might well say, she "could never forget."

There seems some reason to believe that even at this last hour an attempt would still be made to rescue the Queen. Some scheme of delivering the Queen on her way to the Place de la Révolution appears to

have been concocted, but, like all the attempts made to save her, it only ended disastrously. Two people were arrested by the police—a woman named Fournier and a young wigmaker, Basset by name. They were both executed. A strange circumstance was, that immediately after the Queen's execution a man named Maingot was found beneath the guillotine dipping his handkerchief in the Queen's blood. He had a pink in his mouth, which some have thought was a rallying-badge, and possibly he was connected with De Rougeville and his friends. The authorities, however, had taken every precaution to make even the most determined attempt at a rescue impossible. As early as five that morning nearly all the troops

in Paris were under arms; the roll of the drum was heard through all the sections; the streets along which lay the route of the Queen's passage were lined with troops, of whom, at seven o'clock, thirty thousand were afoot. The bridges were guarded with cannon, the gunners standing by ready with lighted matches; artillery were also placed on the principal open places and points of junction. At ten o'clock no carriage was allowed in any of the streets that lie between the Conciergerie and the Place de la Révolution; and all Paris was patrolled. All this military display, which sounds as if an enemy's army were at the very gates of Paris, had been brought out merely to see a woman die! The

whole town seemed to be in the streets that morning. It was thickest in front of the Conciergerie, before the yard through which the prisoner would pass. Before those beautiful iron gates, on which the royal arms of France and the golden lilies are conspicuous, every window near had its group of spectators; the very house-tops were covered with the people. The crowd was immense here, but in the vast space around the guillotine it was still greater. The terraces of the Tuileries gardens were crowded—so were the Champs Elysées; and wherever a glimpse of the guillotine could be obtained, there the people waited. Every window along the Rue St. Honoré held spectators, although the people had been warned not to appear at their windows.

Eleven o'clock strikes. The wretched open cart, with its single horse, its plank the only seat, without even the luxury of straw, has been already driven into the yard of the prison. In fifteen minutes more there is a stir among the people ; all eyes are now fixed on the barred gates on the right at the end of the courtyard, and the Queen ascends the prison steps.

On seeing the cart she made an involuntary pause, expecting that she would have had a covered carriage to go in, as had been allowed the King ; but the Revolution since the 21st of January had gone on apace, and no more exception would be made for her than for the other victims of its judgments. The people seemed to approve of the Queen's hands being

tied behind her, and Sanson make a point of displaying the cords. Still, with proud step and undaunted mien, Marie Antoinette advances. In a moment more she reaches the steps placed against the back of the cart, and at first seats herself with her face to the horse. Sanson has placed his hand beneath her elbow to help her up those unsteady steps; she thanks him with a look, and gets in alone. Seeing she has placed herself facing the horse, he tells her to alter her position, and she now seats herself with her back to the horse. Girard the priest, in laic dress, sits next her; Sanson is behind the Queen. Both he and his assistant have their three-cornered hats under their arms. "On that occasion," as De

Goncourt remarks, "the only people who behaved with decency were the executioners."

The *via dolorosa* of the Queen was a long one—the distance not great; but in order to make Marie Antoinette, as one of the Jacobins said, "drink long of death," the carriage was made to go at a foot's pace. During the first part of the road traversed the mob appear to have been too much amazed on seeing this white-robed figure, so simple and yet so grand in its forlornness—a woman whom many of them had only beheld formerly through the windows of a gilded coach led by eight horses and surrounded by a brilliant body-guard of cavalry—now in this miserable cart which slowly jolted over the rough pavement, with the public exe-

cutioner holding her imprisoned hands, to do more than stare, and not till the procession had got as far down as the Church of Saint-Roch did the insults begin. Near this place a scoundrel named Grammont, formerly an actor, with the recommendation of having assisted at the massacre of the loyalist prisoners at Orleans and Versailles—he is reported to have drunk wine out of the freshly-cleaved skull of one of the unfortunate people he had murdered—led the way, prancing on horseback, and inciting the mob to insult the Queen. Grammont had taken the pains to place some of the lowest of the rabble at various points of vantage, and when the Queen was led slowly by them, these wretches, who had been liberally

supplied by Grammont with spirits, yelled and shouted and mouthed at her. Grammont, with his sword drawn, cursed the crowd for not being more violent. That Marie Antoinette expected a terrible ordeal ere death released her is shown by her having asked one of the gendarmes in her prison whether he thought she would be allowed to reach the scaffold without being torn to pieces on the way. The man did his best to reassure her.

The line of this death-drive — this slow agony of an unfortunate woman—can still be followed. Crossing the Pont-au-Change, the quay is followed as far as the Louvre; then passing along the Rue-du-Roule, the long winding street of Saint-Honoré is reached.

It is there, in the narrowest part, by the Church of Saint-Roch, as it still exists, that the best idea of what this sight must have been on that day can be judged, for most of the houses are older than the first Revolution. It was from a window of one of the houses in this street the painter David drew a terrible outline of the Queen seated in the cart. David's participation in some of the bloodiest scenes of that time will render his memory ever odious. He seems, from personal spite, to have taken an intense dislike to the poor Queen, who was not an admirer of his severe and hard manner, and he lost no opportunity of revenging himself. He was one of the infamous inquisitors who examined

the royal children on the charges invented by Hébert, and one must regret that no worse fate befell him than exile when the Bourbons were restored. Although a cruel and vindictive caricature, there is enough in the hasty outline sketch David made at that moment to give one an idea of how the Queen appeared. She is described by eye-witnesses as being pale as death, with only a hectic flush at her cheek-bones, the eyes injected with blood, probably caused by so many sleepless nights and intense suffering.

Only once during that long road to death did the Queen display any emotion. A little child held up by its mother in front of the Church of the Oratory kissed its little hand

to the Queen, who burst into tears. Her own child, her little Dauphin, must have then been uppermost in her heart.

Owing to the difficulty the Queen had to keep her place on the narrow plank on which she sat, her head seemed strained and rigid, but her eyes followed the crowd, and even seemed attracted by the tricolour flags that were displayed from out the windows and in the balconies. Some suppose that she had been told to look at a certain house, in which a priest not *assérmenté* would be placed, and from which he would give her his benediction. But this seems to me one of the legends that were invented by those anxious to make believe that the last

offices of the Roman Church were, even in so distant a manner, accorded her. The different inscriptions on the buildings, too, attracted her attention. The oft-repeated "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité," so veritably carried out by that Government, must have seemed strange to one who had known the real meaning of that lying phrase. On passing, the Palais Royal—now called "Palais Egalité"—arrests her attention. To please the mob, several halts were made, so as to enable the crowd to insult her. "Messalina," "Frédégonde," are the terms in which the street-viragos hail her. Before the Jacobin Club, which bore the inscription "Depot of Republican arms to destroy

tyrants," a long halt was made, and the cries and howlings of the mob rend the air. At the corner of the Rue Royale, near Robespierre's house, a triple rank of national guards were stationed.

At length, after an hour of this torment, the Place de la Révolution was reached, and with it the term of the Queen's sufferings. Passing between the noble buildings of the "Garde Meuble" and the Admiralty, the cart turned to the left, and when half across the Square the guillotine is reached. When Louis XVI. was executed, that instrument stood between where now rises the Luxor obelisk and the Rue Royale; but for the Queen the place has been changed, and the

hideous narrow blood-coloured beams stand between that spot and the gardens of the Tuileries in the centre. Where formerly had stood the equestrian statue of Louis XV. now stood a huge plaster monument of Liberty. Troops surround the guillotine, the crowd is dense all around, and even among the branches of the autumnal-tinted chestnut trees of the royal gardens are many people.

With one last look at the great dome of the palace, and after a short prayer, the Queen rapidly mounted the scaffold steps ; she does this without assistance, and with extraordinary firmness.

She appears to have spoken but once—a few words of apology to Sanson, on whose

foot she had trod. Even in death her natural courtesy could not desert her. She then, with a movement of her head, threw off her cap, and is prepared for the fatal stroke.

A little after twelve, and her sufferings were at length finished.

That night the following entry was written by the gravedigger Toly, belonging to the cemetery of the Madeleine and of the Ville d'Evêque :—

For the bier of the Widow Capet, . 6 livres.
For the grave and the gravediggers, . 25 „

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