

JEANNE LOUISE CAMPAN

MEMOIRS OF THE COURT
OF MARIE ANTOINETTE,
QUEEN OF FRANCE,
VOLUME 6

Jeanne Louise Henriette Campan

**Memoirs of the Court of
Marie Antoinette, Queen
of France, Volume 6**

«Public Domain»

Campan J.

Memoirs of the Court of Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, Volume 6
/ J. Campan — «Public Domain»,

Содержание

CHAPTER V	5
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	14

Mme. Campan

Memoirs of the Court of Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, Volume 6 / Being the Historic Memoirs of Madam Campan, First Lady in Waiting to the Queen

CHAPTER V

In the beginning of the spring of 1791, the King, tired of remaining at the Tuileries, wished to return to St. Cloud. His whole household had already gone, and his dinner was prepared there. He got into his carriage at one; the guard mutinied, shut the gates, and declared they would not let him pass. This event certainly proceeded from some suspicion of a plan to escape. Two persons who drew near the King's carriage were very ill treated. My father-in-law was violently laid hold of by the guards, who took his sword from him. The King and his family were obliged to alight and return to their apartments.

They did not much regret this outrage in their hearts; they saw in it a justification, even in the eyes of the people, of their intention to leave Paris.

So early as the month of March in the same year, the Queen began to busy herself in preparing for her departure. I spent that month with her, and executed a great number of secret orders which she gave me respecting the intended event. It was with uneasiness that I saw her occupied with cares which seemed to me useless, and even dangerous, and I remarked to her that the Queen of France would find linen and gowns everywhere. My observations were made in vain; she determined to have a complete wardrobe with her at Brussels, as well for her children as herself. I went out alone and almost disguised to purchase the articles necessary and have them made up.

I ordered six chemises at the shop of one seamstress, six at that of another, gowns, combing cloths, etc. My sister had a complete set of clothes made for Madame, by the measure of her eldest daughter, and I ordered clothes for the Dauphin from those of my son. I filled a trunk with these things, and addressed them, by the Queen's orders, to one of her women, my aunt, Madame Cardon, —a widow living at Arras, by virtue of an unlimited leave of absence,—in order that she might be ready to start for Brussels, or any other place, as soon as she should be directed to do so. This lady had landed property in Austrian Flanders, and could at any time quit Arras unobserved.

The Queen was to take only her first woman in attendance with her from Paris. She apprised me that if I should not be on duty at the moment of departure, she would make arrangements for my joining her. She determined also to take her travelling dressing-case. She consulted me on her idea of sending it off, under pretence of making a present of it to the Archduchess Christina, Gouvernante of the Netherlands. I ventured to oppose this plan strongly, and observed that, amidst so many people who watched her slightest actions, there would be found a sufficient number sharp-sighted enough to discover that it was only a pretext for sending away the property in question before her own departure; she persisted in her intention, and all I could arrange was that the dressing-case should not be removed from her apartment, and that M. de charge d'affaires from the Court of Vienna during the absence of the Comte de Mercy, should come and ask her, at her toilet, before all her people, to order one exactly like her own for Madame the Gouvernante of the Netherlands. The Queen, therefore, commanded me before the charge d'affaires to order the article in question. This occasioned only an expense of five hundred louis, and appeared calculated to lull suspicion completely.

About the middle of May, 1791, a month after the Queen had ordered me to bespeak the dressing-case, she asked me whether it would soon be finished. I sent for the ivory-turner who had it in hand. He could not complete it for six weeks. I informed the Queen of this, and she told me she should not be able to wait for it, as she was to set out in the course of June. She added that, as she had ordered her sister's dressing-case in the presence of all her attendants, she had taken a sufficient precaution, especially by saying that her sister was out of patience at not receiving it, and that therefore her own must be emptied and cleaned, and taken to the charge d'affaires, who would send it off. I executed this order without any appearance of mystery. I desired the wardrobe woman to take out of the dressing-case all that it contained, because that intended for the Archduchess could not be finished for some time; and to take great care to leave no remains of the perfumes which might not suit that Princess.

The woman in question executed her commission punctually; but, on the evening of that very day, the 15th of May, 1791, she informed M. Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, that preparations were making at the Queen's residence for a departure; and that the dressing-case was already sent off, under pretence of its being presented to the Archduchess Christina.

[After the return from Varennes M. Bailly put this woman's deposition into the Queen's hands. —MADAME CAMPAN.]

It was necessary, likewise, to send off all the diamonds belonging to the Queen. Her Majesty shut herself up with me in a closet in the entresol, looking into the garden of the Tuileries, and we packed all the diamonds, rubies, and pearls she possessed in a small chest. The cases containing these ornaments, being altogether of considerable bulk, had been deposited, ever since the 6th of October, 1789, with the valet de chambre who had the care of the Queen's jewels. That faithful servant, himself detecting the use that was to be made of the valuables, destroyed all the boxes, which were, as usual, covered with red morocco, marked with the cipher and arms of France. It would have been impossible for him to hide them from the eyes of the popular inquisitors during the domiciliary visits in January, 1793, and the discovery might have formed a ground of accusation against the Queen.

I had but a few articles to place in the box when the Queen was compelled to desist from packing it, being obliged to go down to cards, which began at seven precisely. She therefore desired me to leave all the diamonds upon the sofa, persuaded that, as she took the key of her closet herself, and there was a sentinel under the window, no danger was to be apprehended for that night, and she reckoned upon returning very early next day to finish the work.

The same woman who had given information of the sending away of the dressing-case was also deputed by the Queen to take care of her more private rooms. No other servant was permitted to enter them; she renewed the flowers, swept the carpets, etc. The Queen received back the key, when the woman had finished putting them in order, from her own hands; but, desirous of doing her duty well, and sometimes having the key in her possession for a few minutes only, she had probably on that account ordered one without the Queen's knowledge. It is impossible not to believe this, since the despatch of the diamonds was the subject of a second accusation which the Queen heard of after the return from Varennes. She made a formal declaration that her Majesty, with the assistance of Madame Campan, had packed up all her jewelry some time before the departure; that she was certain of it, as she had found the diamonds, and the cotton which served to wrap them, scattered upon the sofa in the Queen's closet in the 'entresol'; and most assuredly she could only have seen these preparations in the interval between seven in the evening and seven in the morning. The Queen having met me next day at the time appointed, the box was handed over to Leonard, her Majesty's hairdresser,—[This unfortunate man, after having emigrated for some time, returned to France, and perished upon the scaffold.—NOTE BY EDITOR]—who left the country with the Duc de Choiseul. The box remained a long time at Brussels, and at length got into the hands of Madame la Duchesse d'Angouleme, being delivered to her by the Emperor on her arrival at Vienna.

In order not to leave out any of the Queen's diamonds, I requested the first tirewoman to give me the body of the full dress, and all the assortment which served for the stomacher of the full dress on days of state, articles which always remained at the wardrobe.

The superintendent and the dame d'honneur being absent, the first tirewoman required me to sign a receipt, the terms of which she dictated, and which acquitted her of all responsibility for these diamonds. She had the prudence to burn this document on the 10th of August, 1792.—[The date of the sack of the Tuileries and slaughter of the Swiss Guard]—The Queen having determined, upon the arrest at Varennes, not to have her diamonds brought back to France, was often anxious about them during the year which elapsed between that period and the 10th of August, and dreaded above all things that such a secret should be discovered.

In consequence of a decree of the Assembly, which deprived the King of the custody of the Crown diamonds, the Queen had at this time already given up those which she generally used.

She preferred the twelve brilliants called Hazarins, from the name of the Cardinal who had enriched the treasury with them, a few rose-cut diamonds, and the Sanci. She determined to deliver, with her own hands, the box containing them to the commissioner nominated by the National Assembly to place them with the Crown diamonds. After giving them to him, she offered him a row of pearls of great beauty, saying to him that it had been brought into France by Anne of Austria; that it was invaluable, on account of its rarity; that, having been appropriated by that Princess to the use of the Queens and Dauphinesses, Louis XV. had placed it in her hands on her arrival in France; but that she considered it national property. "That is an open question, Madame," said the commissary. "Monsieur," replied the Queen, "it is one for me to decide, and is now settled."

My father-in-law, who was dying of the grief he felt for the misfortunes of his master and mistress, strongly interested and occupied the thoughts of the Queen. He had been saved from the fury of the populace in the courtyard of the Tuileries.

On the day on which the King was compelled by an insurrection to give up a journey to St. Cloud, her Majesty looked upon this trusty servant as inevitably lost, if, on going away, she should leave him in the apartment he occupied in the Tuileries. Prompted by her apprehensions, she ordered M. Vicq-d'Azyr, her physician, to recommend him the waters of Mont d'Or in Auvergne, and to persuade him to set off at the latter end of May. At the moment of my going away the Queen assured me that the grand project would be executed between the 15th and the 20th of June; that as it was not my month to be on duty, Madame Thibaut would take the journey; but that she had many directions to give me before I went. She then desired me to write to my aunt, Madame Cardon, who was by that time in possession of the clothes which I had ordered, that as soon as she should receive a letter from M. Augur, the date of which should be accompanied with a B, an L, or an M, she was to proceed with her property to Brussels, Luxembourg, or Montmedy. She desired me to explain the meaning of these three letters clearly to my sister, and to leave them with her in writing, in order that at the moment of my going away she might be able to take my place in writing to Arras.

The Queen had a more delicate commission for me; it was to select from among my acquaintance a prudent person of obscure rank, wholly devoted to the interests of the Court, who would be willing to receive a portfolio which she was to give up only to me, or some one furnished with a note from the Queen. She added that she would not travel with this portfolio, and that it was of the utmost importance that my opinion of the fidelity of the person to whom it was to be entrusted should be well founded. I proposed to her Madame Vallayer Coster, a painter of the Academy, and an amiable and worthy artist, whom I had known from my infancy. She lived in the galleries of the Louvre. The choice seemed a good one. The Queen remembered that she had made her marriage possible by giving her a place in the financial offices, and added that gratitude ought sometimes to be reckoned on. She then pointed out to me the valet belonging to her toilet, whom I was to take with me, to show him the residence of Madame Coster, so that he might not mistake it when he should take the portfolio to her. The day before her departure the Queen particularly recommended me to

proceed to Lyons and the frontiers as soon as she should have started. She advised me to take with me a confidential person, fit to remain with M. Campan when I should leave him, and assured me that she would give orders to M. – to set off as soon as she should be known to be at the frontiers in order to protect me in going out. She condescended to add that, having a long journey to make in foreign countries, she determined to give me three hundred louis.

I bathed the Queen's hands with tears at the moment of this sorrowful separation; and, having money at my disposal, I declined accepting her gold. I did not dread the road I had to travel in order to rejoin her; all my apprehension was that by treachery or miscalculation a scheme, the safety of which was not sufficiently clear to me, should fail. I could answer for all those who belonged to the service immediately about the Queen's person, and I was right; but her wardrobe woman gave me well-founded reason for alarm. I mentioned to the Queen many revolutionary remarks which this woman had made to me a few days before. Her office was directly under the control of the first *femme de chambre*, yet she had refused to obey the directions I gave her, talking insolently to me about "hierarchy overturned, equality among men," of course more especially among persons holding offices at Court; and this jargon, at that time in the mouths of all the partisans of the Revolution, was terminated by an observation which frightened me. "You know many important secrets, madame," said this woman to me, "and I have guessed quite as many. I am not a fool; I see all that is going forward here in consequence of the bad advice given to the King and Queen; I could frustrate it all if I chose." This argument, in which I had been promptly silenced, left me pale and trembling. Unfortunately, as I began my narrative to the Queen with particulars of this woman's refusal to obey me,—and sovereigns are all their lives importuned with complaints upon the rights of places,—she believed that my own dissatisfaction had much to do with the step I was taking; and she did not sufficiently fear the woman. Her office, although a very inferior one, brought her in nearly fifteen thousand francs a year. Still young, tolerably handsome, with comfortable apartments in the *entresols* of the Tuileries, she saw a great deal of company, and in the evening had assemblies, consisting of deputies of the revolutionary party. M. de Gouvion, major-general of the National Guard, passed almost every day with her; and it is to be presumed that she had long worked for the party in opposition to the Court. The Queen asked her for the key of a door which led to the principal vestibule of the Tuileries, telling her she wished to have a similar one, that she might not be under the necessity of going out through the pavilion of Flora. M. de Gouvion and M. de La Fayette would, of course, be apprised of this circumstance, and well-informed persons have assured me that on the very night of the Queen's departure this wretched woman had a spy with her, who saw the royal family set off.

As soon as I had executed all the Queen's orders, on the 30th of May, 1791, I set out for Auvergne, and was settled in the gloomy narrow valley of Mont d'Or, when, about four in the afternoon of the 25th of June, I heard the beat of a drum to call the inhabitants of the hamlet together. When it had ceased I heard a hairdresser from Bresse proclaim in the provincial dialect of Auvergne: "The King and Queen were taking flight in order to ruin France, but I come to tell you that they are stopped, and are well guarded by a hundred thousand men under arms." I still ventured to hope that he was repeating only a false report, but he went on: "The Queen," with her well-known haughtiness, lifted up the veil which covered her face, and said to the citizens who were upbraiding the King, "Well, since you recognise your sovereign, respect him." Upon hearing these expressions, which the Jacobin club of Clermont could not have invented, I exclaimed, "The news is true!"

I immediately learnt that, a courier being come from Paris to Clermont, the 'procureur' of the commune had sent off messengers to the chief places of the canton; these again sent couriers to the districts, and the districts in like manner informed the villages and hamlets which they contained. It was through this ramification, arising from the establishment of clubs, that the afflicting intelligence of the misfortune of my sovereigns reached me in the wildest part of France, and in the midst of the snows by which we were environed.

On the 28th I received a note written in a hand which I recognised as that of M. Diet,—[This officer was slain in the Queen's chamber on the 10th of August]—usher of the Queen's chamber, but dictated by her Majesty. It contained these words: "I am this moment arrived; I have just got into my bath; I and my family exist, that is all. I have suffered much. Do not return to Paris until I desire you. Take good care of my poor Campan, soothe his sorrow. Look for happier times." This note was for greater safety addressed to my father-in-law's valet-de-chambre. What were my feelings on perceiving that after the most distressing crisis we were among the first objects of the kindness of that unfortunate Princess!

M. Campan having been unable to benefit by the waters of Mont d'Or, and the first popular effervescence having subsided, I thought I might return to Clermont. The committee of surveillance, or that of general safety, had resolved to arrest me there; but the Abbe Louis, formerly a parliamentary counsellor, and then a member of the Constituent Assembly, was kind enough to affirm that I was in Auvergne solely for the purpose of attending my father-in-law, who was extremely ill. The precautions relative to my absence from Paris were limited to placing us under the surveillance of the 'procureur' of the commune, who was at the same time president of the Jacobin club; but he was also a physician of repute, and without having any doubt that he had received secret orders relative to me, I thought it would favour the chances of our safety if I selected him to attend my patient. I paid him according to the rate given to the best Paris physicians, and I requested him to visit us every morning and every evening. I took the precaution to subscribe to no other newspaper than the *Moniteur*. Doctor Monestier (for that was the physician's name) frequently took upon himself to read it to us. Whenever he thought proper to speak of the King and Queen in the insulting and brutal terms at that time unfortunately adopted throughout France, I used to stop him and say, coolly, "Monsieur, you are here in company with the servants of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette. Whatever may be the wrongs with which the nation believes it has to reproach them, our principles forbid our losing sight of the respect due to them from us." Notwithstanding that he was an inveterate patriot, he felt the force of this remark, and even procured the revocation of a second order for our arrest, becoming responsible for us to the committee of the Assembly, and to the Jacobin society.

The two chief women about the Dauphin, who had accompanied the Queen to Varennes, Diet, her usher, and Camot, her garcon de toilette,—the women on account of the journey, and the men in consequence of the denunciation of the woman belonging to the wardrobe,—were sent to the prisons of the Abbaye. After my departure the garcon de toilette whom I had taken to Madame Vallayer Coster's was sent there with the portfolio she had agreed to receive. This commission could not escape the detestable spy upon the Queen. She gave information that a portfolio had been carried out on the evening of the departure, adding that the King had placed it upon the Queen's easy-chair, that the garcon de toilette wrapped it up in a napkin and took it under his arm, and that she did not know where he had carried it. The man, who was remarkable for his fidelity, underwent three examinations without making the slightest disclosure. M. Diet, a man of good family, a servant on whom the Queen placed particular reliance, likewise experienced the severest treatment. At length, after a lapse of three weeks, the Queen succeeded in obtaining the release of her servants.

The Queen, about the 15th of August, had me informed by letter that I might come back to Paris without being under any apprehension of arrest there, and that she greatly desired my return. I brought my father-in-law back in a dying state, and on the day preceding that of the acceptance of the constitutional act, I informed the Queen that he was no more. "The loss of Lassonne and Campan," said she, as she applied her handkerchief to her streaming eyes, "has taught me how valuable such subjects are to their masters. I shall never find their equals."

I resumed my functions about the Queen on the 1st of September, 1791. She was unable then to converse with me on all the lamentable events which had occurred since the time of my leaving her, having on guard near her an officer whom she dreaded more than all the others. She merely told me that I should have some secret services to perform for her, and that she would not create uneasiness

by long conversations with me, my return being a subject of suspicion. But next day the Queen, well knowing the discretion of the officer who was to be on guard that night, had my bed placed very near hers, and having obtained the favour of having the door shut, when I was in bed she began the narrative of the journey, and the unfortunate arrest at Varennes. I asked her permission to put on my gown, and kneeling by her bedside I remained until three o'clock in the morning, listening with the liveliest and most sorrowful interest to the account I am about to repeat, and of which I have seen various details, of tolerable exactness, in papers of the time.

The King entrusted Count Fersen with all the preparations for departure. The carriage was ordered by him; the passport, in the name of Madame de Korf, was procured through his connection with that lady, who was a foreigner. And lastly, he himself drove the royal family, as their coachman, as far as Bondy, where the travellers got into their berlin. Madame Brunier and Madame Neuville, the first women of Madame and the Dauphin, there joined the principal carriage. They were in a cabriolet. Monsieur and Madame set out from the Luxembourg and took another road. They as well as the King were recognised by the master of the last post in France, but this man, devoting himself to the fortunes of the Prince, left the French territory, and drove them himself as postilion. Madame Thibaut, the Queen's first woman, reached Brussels without the slightest difficulty. Madame Cardon, from Arras, met with no hindrance; and Leonard, the Queen's hairdresser, passed through Varennes a few hours before the royal family. Fate had reserved all its obstacles for the unfortunate monarch.

Nothing worthy of notice occurred in the beginning of the journey. The travellers were detained a short time, about twelve leagues from Paris, by some repairs which the carriage required. The King chose to walk up one of the hills, and these two circumstances caused a delay of three hours, precisely at the time when it was intended that the berlin should have been met, just before reaching Varennes, by the detachment commanded by M. de Goguelat. This detachment was punctually stationed upon the spot fixed on, with orders to wait there for the arrival of certain treasure, which it was to escort; but the peasantry of the neighbourhood, alarmed at the sight of this body of troops, came armed with staves, and asked several questions, which manifested their anxiety. M. de Goguelat, fearful of causing a riot, and not finding the carriage arrive as he expected, divided his men into two companies, and unfortunately made them leave the highway in order to return to Varennes by two cross roads. The King looked out of the carriage at Ste. Menehould, and asked several questions concerning the road. Drouet, the post-master, struck by the resemblance of Louis to the impression of his head upon the assignats, drew near the carriage, felt convinced that he recognised the Queen also, and that the remainder of the travellers consisted of the royal family and their suite, mounted his horse, reached Varennes by cross roads before the royal fugitives, and gave the alarm.—[Varennes lies between Verdun and Montmedy, and not far from the French frontier.]

The Queen began to feel all the agonies of terror; they were augmented by the voice of a person unknown, who, passing close to the carriage in full gallop, cried out, bending towards the window without slackening his speed, "You are recognised!" They arrived with beating hearts at the gates of Varennes without meeting one of the horsemen by whom they were to have been escorted into the place. They were ignorant where to find their relays, and some minutes were lost in waiting, to no purpose. The cabriolet had preceded them, and the two ladies in attendance found the bridge already blocked up with old carts and lumber. The town guards were all under arms. The King at last entered Varennes. M. de Goguelat had arrived there with his detachment. He came up to the King and asked him if he chose to effect a passage by force! What an unlucky question to put to Louis XVI., who from the very beginning of the Revolution had shown in every crisis the fear he entertained of giving the least order which might cause an effusion of blood! "Would it be a brisk action?" said the King. "It is impossible that it should be otherwise, Sire," replied the aide-de-camp. Louis XVI. was unwilling to expose his family. They therefore went to the house of a grocer, Mayor of Varennes. The King began to speak, and gave a summary of his intentions in departing, analogous to the declaration he had made at Paris. He spoke with warmth and affability, and endeavoured to

demonstrate to the people around him that he had only put himself, by the step he had taken, into a fit situation to treat with the Assembly, and to sanction with freedom the constitution which he would maintain, though many of its articles were incompatible with the dignity of the throne, and the force by which it was necessary that the sovereign should be surrounded. Nothing could be more affecting, added the Queen, than this moment, in which the King felt bound to communicate to the very humblest class of his subjects his principles, his wishes for the happiness of his people, and the motives which had determined him to depart.

Whilst the King was speaking to this mayor, whose name was Sauce, the Queen, seated at the farther end of the shop, among parcels of soap and candles, endeavoured to make Madame Sauce understand that if she would prevail upon her husband to make use of his municipal authority to cover the flight of the King and his family, she would have the glory of having contributed to restore tranquillity to France. This woman was moved; she could not, without streaming eyes, see herself thus solicited by her Queen; but she could not be got to say anything more than, "Bon Dieu, Madame, it would be the destruction of M. Sauce; I love my King, but I love my husband too, you must know, and he would be answerable, you see." Whilst this strange scene was passing in the shop, the people, hearing that the King was arrested, kept pouring in from all parts. M. de Goguelat, making a last effort, demanded of the dragoons whether they would protect the departure of the King; they replied only by murmurs, dropping the points of their swords. Some person unknown fired a pistol at M. de Goguelat; he was slightly wounded by the ball. M. Romeuf, aide-de-camp to M. de La Fayette, arrived at that moment. He had been chosen, after the 6th of October, 1789, by the commander of the Parisian guard to be in constant attendance about the Queen. She reproached him bitterly with the object of his mission. "If you wish to make your name remarkable, monsieur," said the Queen to him, "you have chosen strange and odious means, which will produce the most fatal consequences." This officer wished to hasten their departure. The Queen, still cherishing the hope of seeing M. de Bouille arrive with a sufficient force to extricate the King from his critical situation, prolonged her stay at Varennes by every means in her power.

The Dauphin's first woman pretended to be taken ill with a violent colic, and threw herself upon a bed, in the hope of aiding the designs of her superiors; she went and implored for assistance. The Queen understood her perfectly well, and refused to leave one who had devoted herself to follow them in such a state of suffering. But no delay in departing was allowed. The three Body Guards (Valory, Du Moustier, and Malden) were gagged and fastened upon the seat of the carriage. A horde of National Guards, animated with fury and the barbarous joy with which their fatal triumph inspired them, surrounded the carriage of the royal family.

The three commissioners sent by the Assembly to meet the King, MM. de Latour-Maubourg, Barnave, and Potion, joined them in the environs of Epernay. The two last mentioned got into the King's carriage. The Queen astonished me by the favourable opinion she had formed of Barnave. When I quitted Paris a great many persons spoke of him only with horror. She told me he was much altered, that he was full of talent and noble feeling. "A feeling of pride which I cannot much blame in a young man belonging to the Tiers Etat," she said, "made him applaud everything which smoothed the road to rank and fame for that class in which he was born. And if we get the power in our own hands again, Barnave's pardon is already written on our hearts." The Queen added, that she had not the same feeling towards those nobles who had joined the revolutionary party, who had always received marks of favour, often to the injury of those beneath them in rank, and who, born to be the safeguard of the monarchy, could never be pardoned for having deserted it. She then told me that Barnave's conduct upon the road was perfectly correct, while Potion's republican rudeness was disgusting; that the latter ate and drank in the King's berlin in a slovenly manner, throwing the bones of the fowls out through the window at the risk of sending them even into the King's face; lifting up his glass, when Madame Elisabeth poured him out wine, to show her that there was enough, without saying a word; that this offensive behaviour must have been intentional, because the man was not

without education; and that Barnave was hurt at it. On being pressed by the Queen to take something, "Madame," replied Barnave, "on so solemn an occasion the deputies of the National Assembly ought to occupy your Majesties solely about their mission, and by no means about their wants." In short, his respectful delicacy, his considerate attentions, and all that he said, gained the esteem not only of the Queen, but of Madame Elisabeth also.

The King began to talk to Petion about the situation of France, and the motives of his conduct, which were founded upon the necessity of giving to the executive power a strength necessary for its action, for the good even of the constitutional act, since France could not be a republic. "Not yet, 'tis true," replied Petion, "because the French are not ripe enough for that." This audacious and cruel answer silenced the King, who said no more until his arrival at Paris. Petion held the little Dauphin upon his knees, and amused himself with curling the beautiful light hair of the interesting child round his fingers; and, as he spoke with much gesticulation, he pulled his locks hard enough to make the Dauphin cry out. "Give me my son," said the Queen to him; "he is accustomed to tenderness and delicacy, which render him little fit for such familiarity."

The Chevalier de Dampierre was killed near the King's carriage upon leaving Varennes. A poor village cure, some leagues from the place where the crime was committed, was imprudent enough to draw near to speak to the King; the cannibals who surrounded the carriage rushed upon him. "Tigers," exclaimed Barnave, "have you ceased to be Frenchmen? Nation of brave men, are you become a set of assassins?" These words alone saved the cure, who was already upon the ground, from certain death. Barnave, as he spoke to them, threw himself almost out of the coach window, and Madame Elisabeth, affected by this noble burst of feeling, held him by the skirt of his coat. The Queen, while speaking of this event, said that on the most momentous occasions whimsical contrasts always struck her, and that even at such a moment the pious Elisabeth holding Barnave by the flap of his coat was a ludicrous sight.

The deputy was astonished in another way. Madame Elisabeth's comments upon the state of France, her mild and persuasive eloquence, and the ease and simplicity with which she talked to him, yet without sacrificing her dignity in the slightest degree, appeared to him unique, and his heart, which was doubtless inclined to right principles though he had followed the wrong path, was overcome by admiration. The conduct of the two deputies convinced the Queen of the total separation between the republican and constitutional parties. At the inns where she alighted she had some private conversation with Barnave. The latter said a great deal about the errors committed by the royalists during the Revolution, adding that he had found the interest of the Court so feebly and so badly defended that he had been frequently tempted to go and offer it, in himself, an aspiring champion, who knew the spirit of the age and nation. The Queen asked him what was the weapon he would have recommended her to use.

"Popularity, Madame."

"And how could I use that," replied her Majesty, "of which I have been deprived?"

"Ah! Madame, it was much more easy for you to regain it, than for me to acquire it."

The Queen mainly attributed the arrest at Varennes to M. de Goguelat; she said he calculated the time that would be spent in the journey erroneously. He performed that from Montmedy to Paris before taking the King's last orders, alone in a post-chaise, and he founded all his calculations upon the time he spent thus. The trial has been made since, and it was found that a light carriage without any courier was nearly three hours less in running the distance than a heavy carriage preceded by a courier.

The Queen also blamed him for having quitted the high-road at Pont-de-Sommeville, where the carriage was to meet the forty hussars commanded by him. She thought that he ought to have dispersed the very small number of people at Varennes, and not have asked the hussars whether they were for the King or the nation; that, particularly, he ought to have avoided taking the King's orders,

as he was previously aware of the reply M. d'Inisdal had received when it was proposed to carry off the King.

After all that the Queen had said to me respecting the mistakes made by M. de Goguelat, I thought him of course disgraced. What was my surprise when, having been set at liberty after the amnesty which followed the acceptance of the constitution, he presented himself to the Queen, and was received with the greatest kindness! She said he had done what he could, and that his zeal ought to form an excuse for all the rest.

[Full details of the preparations for the flight to Varennes will be found in "Le Comte de Fersen et La Cour de France," Paris, Didot et Cie, 1878 (a review of which was given in the Quarterly Review for July, 1880), and in the "Memoirs of the Marquis de Bouille", London, Cadell and Davis, 1797; Count Fersen being the person who planned the actual escape, and De Bouille being in command of the army which was to receive the King. The plan was excellent, and would certainly have succeeded, if it had not been for the royal family themselves. Marie Antoinette, it will have been seen by Madame Campan's account, nearly wrecked the plan from inability to do without a large dressing or travelling case. The King did a more fatal thing. De Bouille had pointed out the necessity for having in the King's carriage an officer knowing the route, and able to show himself to give all directions, and a proper person had been provided. The King, however, objected, as "he could not have the Marquis d'Agoult in the same carriage with himself; the governess of the royal children, who was to accompany them, having refused to abandon her privilege of constantly remaining with her charge." See "De Bouille," pp. 307 and 334. Thus, when Louis was recognised at the window of the carriage by Drouet, he was lost by the very danger that had been foreseen, and this wretched piece of etiquette led to his death.]

When the royal family was brought back from Varennes to the Tuileries, the Queen's attendants found the greatest difficulty in making their way to her apartments; everything had been arranged so that the wardrobe woman, who had acted as spy, should have the service; and she was to be assisted in it only by her sister and her sister's daughter.

M. de Gouvion, M. de La Fayette's aide-de-camp, had this woman's portrait placed at the foot of the staircase which led to the Queen's apartments, in order that the sentinel should not permit any other women to make their way in. As soon as the Queen was informed of this contemptible precaution, she told the King of it, who sent to ascertain the fact. His Majesty then called for M. de La Fayette, claimed freedom in his household, and particularly in that of the Queen, and ordered him to send a woman in, whom no one but himself could confide out of the palace. M. de La Fayette was obliged to comply.

On the day when the return of the royal family was expected, there were no carriages in motion in the streets of Paris. Five or six of the Queen's women, after being refused admittance at all the other gates, went with one of my sisters to that of the Feuillans, insisting that the sentinel should admit them. The poissardes attacked them for their boldness in resisting the order excluding them. One of them seized my sister by the arm, calling her the slave of the Austrian. "Hear me," said my sister to her, "I have been attached to the Queen ever since I was fifteen years of age; she gave me my marriage portion; I served her when she was powerful and happy. She is now unfortunate. Ought I to abandon her?"—"She is right," cried the poissardes; "she ought not to abandon her mistress; let us make an entry for them." They instantly surrounded the sentinel, forced the passage, and introduced the Queen's women, accompanying them to the terrace of the Feuillans. One of these furies, whom the slightest impulse would have driven to tear my sister to pieces, taking her under her protection, gave her advice by which she might reach the palace in safety. "But of all things, my dear friend," said she to her, "pull off that green ribbon sash; it is the color of that D'Artois, whom we will never forgive."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.