

Book II. Regicide.

Chapter 1. The Deliberative.

France therefore has done two things very completely: she has hurled back her Cimmerian Invaders far over the marches; and likewise she has shattered her own internal Social Constitution, even to the minutest fibre of it, into wreck and dissolution. Utterly it is all altered: from King down to Parish Constable, all Authorities, Magistrates, Judges, persons that bore rule, have had, on the sudden, to alter themselves, so far as needful; or else, on the sudden, and not without violence, to be altered: a Patriot 'Executive Council of Ministers,' with a Patriot Danton in it, and then a whole Nation and National Convention, have taken care of that. Not a Parish Constable, in the furthest hamlet, who has said *De Par le Roi*, and shewn loyalty, but must retire, making way for a new improved Parish Constable who can say *De par la Republique*.

It is a change such as History must beg her readers to imagine, undescribed. An instantaneous change of the whole body-politic, the soul-politic being all changed; such a change as few bodies, politic or other, can experience in this world. Say perhaps, such as poor Nymph Semele's body did experience, when she would needs, with woman's humour, see her Olympian Jove as very Jove;—and so stood, poor Nymph, this moment Semele, next moment not Semele, but Flame and a Statue of red-hot Ashes! France has looked upon Democracy; seen it face to face.—The Cimmerian Invaders will rally, in humbler temper, with better or worse luck: the wreck and dissolution must reshape itself into a social Arrangement as it can and may. But as for this National Convention, which is to settle every thing, if it do, as Deputy Paine and France generally expects, get all finished 'in a few months,' we shall call it a most deft Convention.

In truth, it is very singular to see how this mercurial French People plunges suddenly from *Vive le Roi* to *Vive la Republique*; and goes simmering and dancing; shaking off daily (*so to speak*), and trampling into the dust, its old social garnitures, ways of thinking, rules of existing; and cheerfully dances towards the Ruleless, Unknown, with such hope in its heart, and nothing but Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood in its mouth. Is it two centuries, or is it only two years, since all France roared simultaneously to the welkin, bursting forth into sound and smoke at its Feast of Pikes, "Live the Restorer of French Liberty?" Three short years ago there was still Versailles and an *Oeil-de-Boeuf*: now there is that watched Circuit of the Temple, girt with dragon-eyed Municipals, where, as in its final limbo, Royalty lies extinct. In the year 1789, Constituent Deputy Barrere 'wept,' in his Break-of-Day Newspaper, at sight of a reconciled King Louis; and now in 1792, Convention Deputy Barrere, perfectly tearless, may be considering, whether the reconciled King Louis shall be guillotined or not.

Old garnitures and social vestures drop off (*we say*) so fast, being indeed quite decayed, and are trodden under the National dance. And the new vestures, where are they; the new modes and rules? Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: not vestures but the wish for vestures! The Nation is for the present, figuratively speaking, naked! It has no rule or vesture; but is naked,—a Sansculottic Nation.

So far, therefore, in such manner have our Patriot Brissots, Guadets triumphed. Vergniaud's Ezekiel-visions of the fall of thrones and crowns, which he spake hypothetically and prophetically in the Spring of the year, have suddenly come to fulfilment in the Autumn. Our eloquent Patriots of the

Legislative, like strong Conjurors, by the word of their mouth, have swept Royalism with its old modes and formulas to the winds; and shall now govern a France free of formulas. Free of formulas! And yet man lives not except with formulas; with customs, ways of doing and living: no text truer than this; which will hold true from the Tea-table and Tailor's shopboard up to the High Senate-houses, Solemn Temples; nay through all provinces of Mind and Imagination, onwards to the outmost confines of articulate Being,—*Ubi homines sunt modi sunt!* There are modes wherever there are men. It is the deepest law of man's nature; whereby man is a craftsman and 'tool-using animal;' not the slave of Impulse, Chance, and Brute Nature, but in some measure their lord. Twenty-five millions of men, suddenly stript bare of their modi, and dancing them down in that manner, are a terrible thing to govern!

Eloquent Patriots of the Legislative, meanwhile, have precisely this problem to solve. Under the name and nickname of 'statesmen, *hommes d'etat*,' of 'moderate-men, moderantins,' of Brissotins, Rolandins, finally of Girondins, they shall become world-famous in solving it. For the Twenty-five millions are Gallic effervescent too;—filled both with hope of the unutterable, of universal Fraternity and Golden Age; and with terror of the unutterable, Cimmerian Europe all rallying on us. It is a problem like few. Truly, if man, as the Philosophers brag, did to any extent look before and after, what, one may ask, in many cases would become of him? What, in this case, would become of these Seven Hundred and Forty-nine men? The Convention, seeing clearly before and after, were a paralysed Convention. Seeing clearly to the length of its own nose, it is not paralysed.

To the Convention itself neither the work nor the method of doing it is doubtful: To make the Constitution; to defend the Republic till that be made. Speedily enough, accordingly, there has been a 'Committee of the Constitution' got together. Sieyes, Old-Constituent, Constitution-builder by trade; Condorcet, fit for better things; Deputy Paine, foreign Benefactor of the Species, with that 'red carbuncled face, and the black beaming eyes;' Herault de Sechelles, Ex-Parlementeer, one of the handsomest men in France: these, with inferior guild-brethren, are girt cheerfully to the work; will once more 'make the Constitution;' let us hope, more effectually than last time. For that the Constitution can be made, who doubts,—unless the Gospel of Jean Jacques came into the world in vain? True, our last Constitution did tumble within the year, so lamentably. But what then, except sort the rubbish and boulders, and build them up again better? 'Widen your basis,' for one thing,—to Universal Suffrage, if need be; exclude rotten materials, Royalism and such like, for another thing. And in brief, build, O unspeakable Sieyes and Company, unwearied! Frequent perilous downrushing of scaffolding and rubble-work, be that an irritation, no discouragement. Start ye always again, clearing aside the wreck; if with broken limbs, yet with whole hearts; and build, we say, in the name of Heaven,—till either the work do stand; or else mankind abandon it, and the Constitution-builders be paid off, with laughter and tears! One good time, in the course of Eternity, it was appointed that this of Social Contract too should try itself out. And so the Committee of Constitution shall toil: with hope and faith;—with no disturbance from any reader of these pages.

To make the Constitution, then, and return home joyfully in a few months: this is the prophecy our National Convention gives of itself; by this scientific program shall its operations and events go on. But from the best scientific program, in such a case, to the actual fulfilment, what a difference! Every reunion of men, is it not, as we often say, a reunion of incalculable Influences; every unit of it a microcosm of Influences;—of which how shall Science calculate or prophesy! Science, which cannot, with all its calculuses, differential, integral, and of variations, calculate the Problem of Three gravitating Bodies, ought to hold her peace here, and say only: In this National Convention there are Seven Hundred and Forty-nine very singular Bodies, that gravitate and do much else;—who, probably

in an amazing manner, will work the appointment of Heaven.

Of National Assemblages, Parliaments, Congresses, which have long sat; which are of saturnine temperament; above all, which are not 'dreadfully in earnest,' something may be computed or conjectured: yet even these are a kind of Mystery in progress,—whereby we see the Journalist Reporter find livelihood: even these jolt madly out of the ruts, from time to time. How much more a poor National Convention, of French vehemence; urged on at such velocity; without routine, without rut, track or landmark; and dreadfully in earnest every man of them! It is a Parliament literally such as there was never elsewhere in the world. Themselves are new, unarranged; they are the Heart and presiding centre of a France fallen wholly into maddest disarrangement. From all cities, hamlets, from the utmost ends of this France with its Twenty-five million vehement souls, thick-streaming influences storm in on that same Heart, in the Salle de Manège, and storm out again: such fiery venous-arterial circulation is the function of that Heart. Seven Hundred and Forty-nine human individuals, we say, never sat together on Earth, under more original circumstances. Common individuals most of them, or not far from common; yet in virtue of the position they occupied, so notable. How, in this wild piping of the whirlwind of human passions, with death, victory, terror, valour, and all height and all depth pealing and piping, these men, left to their own guidance, will speak and act?

Readers know well that this French National Convention (*quite contrary to its own Program*) became the astonishment and horror of mankind; a kind of Apocalyptic Convention, or black Dream become real; concerning which History seldom speaks except in the way of interjection: how it covered France with woe, delusion, and delirium; and from its bosom there went forth Death on the pale Horse. To hate this poor National Convention is easy; to praise and love it has not been found impossible. It is, as we say, a Parliament in the most original circumstances. To us, in these pages, be it as a fuliginous fiery mystery, where Upper has met Nether, and in such alternate glare and blackness of darkness poor bedazzled mortals know not which is Upper, which is Nether; but rage and plunge distractedly, as mortals, in that case, will do. A Convention which has to consume itself, suicidally; and become dead ashes—with its World! Behoves us, not to enter exploratively its dim embroiled deeps; yet to stand with unwavering eyes, looking how it welters; what notable phases and occurrences it will successively throw up.

One general superficial circumstance we remark with praise: the force of Politeness. To such depth has the sense of civilisation penetrated man's life; no Drouet, no Legendre, in the maddest tug of war, can altogether shake it off. Debates of Senates dreadfully in earnest are seldom given frankly to the world; else perhaps they would surprise it. Did not the Grand Monarque himself once chase his Louvois with a pair of brandished tongs? But reading long volumes of these Convention Debates, all in a foam with furious earnestness, earnest many times to the extent of life and death, one is struck rather with the degree of continence they manifest in speech; and how in such wild ebullition, there is still a kind of polite rule struggling for mastery, and the forms of social life never altogether disappear. These men, though they menace with clenched right-hands, do not clench one another by the collar; they draw no daggers, except for oratorical purposes, and this not often: profane swearing is almost unknown, though the Reports are frank enough; we find only one or two oaths, oaths by Marat, reported in all.

For the rest, that there is 'effervescence' who doubts? Effervescence enough; Decrees passed by acclamation to-day, repealed by vociferation to-morrow; temper fitful, most rotatory changeful, always headlong! The 'voice of the orator is covered with rumours;' a hundred 'honourable Members rush with menaces towards the Left side of the Hall;' President has 'broken three bells in succession,'—claps on his hat, as signal that the country is near ruined. A fiercely effervescent Old-Gallic Assemblée!—Ah,

how the loud sick sounds of Debate, and of Life, which is a debate, sink silent one after another: so loud now, and in a little while so low! Brennus, and those antique Gael Captains, in their way to Rome, to Galatia, and such places, whither they were in the habit of marching in the most fiery manner, had Debates as effervescent, doubt it not; though no Moniteur has reported them. They scolded in Celtic Welsh, those Brennuses; neither were they Sansculotte; nay rather breeches (*braccae*, say of felt or rough-leather) were the only thing they had; being, as Livy testifies, naked down to the haunches:—and, see, it is the same sort of work and of men still, now when they have got coats, and speak nasally a kind of broken Latin! But on the whole does not TIME envelop this present National Convention; as it did those Brennuses, and ancient August Senates in felt breeches? Time surely; and also Eternity. Dim dusk of Time,—or noon which will be dusk; and then there is night, and silence; and Time with all its sick noises is swallowed in the still sea. Pity thy brother, O Son of Adam! The angriest frothy jargon that he utters, is it not properly the whimpering of an infant which cannot speak what ails it, but is in distress clearly, in the inwards of it; and so must squall and whimper continually, till its Mother take it, and it get—to sleep!

This Convention is not four days old, and the melodious Meliboean stanzas that shook down Royalty are still fresh in our ear, when there bursts out a new diapason,—unhappily, of Discord, this time. For speech has been made of a thing difficult to speak of well: the September Massacres. How deal with these September Massacres; with the Paris Commune that presided over them? A Paris Commune hateful-terrible; before which the poor effete Legislative had to quail, and sit quiet. And now if a young omnipotent Convention will not so quail and sit, what steps shall it take? Have a Departmental Guard in its pay, answer the Girondins, and Friends of Order! A Guard of National Volunteers, missioned from all the Eighty-three or Eighty-five Departments, for that express end; these will keep Septemberers, tumultuous Communes in a due state of submissiveness, the Convention in a due state of sovereignty. So have the Friends of Order answered, sitting in Committee, and reporting; and even a Decree has been passed of the required tenour. Nay certain Departments, as the Var or Marseilles, in mere expectation and assurance of a Decree, have their contingent of Volunteers already on march: brave Marseillaise, foremost on the Tenth of August, will not be hindmost here; 'fathers gave their sons a musket and twenty-five louis,' says Barbaroux, 'and bade them march.'

Can any thing be properer? A Republic that will found itself on justice must needs investigate September Massacres; a Convention calling itself National, ought it not to be guarded by a National force?—Alas, Reader, it seems so to the eye: and yet there is much to be said and argued. Thou beholdest here the small beginning of a Controversy, which mere logic will not settle. Two small well-springs, September, Departmental Guard, or rather at bottom they are but one and the same small well-spring; which will swell and widen into waters of bitterness; all manner of subsidiary streams and brooks of bitterness flowing in, from this side and that; till it become a wide river of bitterness, of rage and separation,—which can subside only into the Catacombs. This Departmental Guard, decreed by overwhelming majorities, and then repealed for peace's sake, and not to insult Paris, is again decreed more than once; nay it is partially executed, and the very men that are to be of it are seen visibly parading the Paris streets,—shouting once, being overtaken with liquor: "A bas Marat, Down with Marat!" (*Hist. Parl. xx. 184.*) Nevertheless, decreed never so often, it is repealed just as often; and continues, for some seven months, an angry noisy Hypothesis only: a fair Possibility struggling to become a Reality, but which shall never be one; which, after endless struggling, shall, in February next, sink into sad rest,—dragging much along with it. So singular are the ways of men and honourable Members.

But on this fourth day of the Convention's existence, as we said, which is the 25th of September 1792, there comes Committee Report on that Decree of the Departmental Guard, and speech of repealing it; there come denunciations of anarchy, of a Dictatorship,—which let the incorruptible Robespierre consider: there come denunciations of a certain Journal de la Republique, once called Ami du Peuple; and so thereupon there comes, visibly stepping up, visibly standing aloft on the Tribune, ready to speak, the Bodily Spectrum of People's-Friend Marat! Shriek, ye Seven Hundred and Forty-nine; it is verily Marat, he and not another. Marat is no phantasm of the brain, or mere lying impress of Printer's Types; but a thing material, of joint and sinew, and a certain small stature: ye behold him there, in his blackness in his dingy squalor, a living fraction of Chaos and Old Night; visibly incarnate, desirous to speak. "It appears," says Marat to the shrieking Assembly, "that a great many persons here are enemies of mine." "All! All!" shriek hundreds of voices: enough to drown any People's-Friend. But Marat will not drown: he speaks and croaks explanation; croaks with such reasonableness, air of sincerity, that repentant pity smothers anger, and the shrieks subside or even become applauses. For this Convention is unfortunately the crankiest of machines: it shall be pointing eastward, with stiff violence, this moment; and then do but touch some spring dexterously, the whole machine, clattering and jerking seven-hundred-fold, will whirl with huge crash, and, next moment, is pointing westward! Thus Marat, absolved and applauded, victorious in this turn of fence, is, as the Debate goes on, prickt at again by some dexterous Girondin; and then and shrieks rise anew, and Decree of Accusation is on the point of passing; till the dingy People's-Friend bobs aloft once more; croaks once more persuasive stillness, and the Decree of Accusation sinks, Whereupon he draws forth—a Pistol; and setting it to his Head, the seat of such thought and prophecy, says: "If they had passed their Accusation Decree, he, the People's-Friend, would have blown his brains out." A People's Friend has that faculty in him. For the rest, as to this of the two hundred and sixty thousand Aristocrat Heads, Marat candidly says, "C'est la mon avis, such is my opinion." Also it is not indisputable: "No power on Earth can prevent me from seeing into traitors, and unmasking them,"—by my superior originality of mind? (*Moniteur Newspaper, Nos. 271, 280, 294, Annee premiere; Moore's Journal, ii. 21, 157, &c. which, however, may perhaps, as in similar cases, be only a copy of the Newspaper.*) An honourable member like this Friend of the People few terrestrial Parliaments have had.

We observe, however, that this first onslaught by the Friends of Order, as sharp and prompt as it was, has failed. For neither can Robespierre, summoned out by talk of Dictatorship, and greeted with the like rumour on shewing himself, be thrown into Prison, into Accusation;—not though Barbarous openly bear testimony against him, and sign it on paper. With such sanctified meekness does the Incorruptible lift his seagreen cheek to the smiter; lift his thin voice, and with jesuitic dexterity plead, and prosper: asking at last, in a prosperous manner: "But what witnesses has the Citoyen Barbaroux to support his testimony?" "Moi!" cries hot Rebecqui, standing up, striking his breast with both hands, and answering, "Me!" (*Moniteur, ut supra; Seance du 25 Septembre.*) Nevertheless the Seagreen pleads again, and makes it good: the long hurlyburly, 'personal merely,' while so much public matter lies fallow, has ended in the order of the day. O Friends of the Gironde, why will you occupy our august sessions with mere paltry Personalities, while the grand Nationality lies in such a state?—The Gironde has touched, this day, on the foul black-spot of its fair Convention Domain; has trodden on it, and yet not trodden it down. Alas, it is a well-spring, as we said, this black-spot; and will not tread down!

Chapter 2. The Executive.

May we not conjecture therefore that round this grand enterprise of Making the Constitution there will, as heretofore, very strange embroilments gather, and questions and interests complicate themselves; so that after a few or even several months, the Convention will not have settled every thing? Alas, a whole tide of questions comes rolling, boiling; growing ever wider, without end! Among which, apart from this question of September and Anarchy, let us notice those, which emerge oftener than the others, and promise to become Leading Questions: of the Armies; of the Subsistences; thirdly, of the Dethroned King.

As to the Armies, Public Defence must evidently be put on a proper footing; for Europe seems coalising itself again; one is apprehensive even England will join it. Happily Dumouriez prospers in the North;—nay what if he should prove too prosperous, and become Liberticide, Murderer of Freedom!—Dumouriez prospers, through this winter season; yet not without lamentable complaints. Sleek Pache, the Swiss Schoolmaster, he that sat frugal in his Alley, the wonder of neighbours, has got lately—whither thinks the Reader? To be Minister of war! Madame Roland, struck with his sleek ways, recommended him to her Husband as Clerk: the sleek Clerk had no need of salary, being of true Patriotic temper; he would come with a bit of bread in his pocket, to save dinner and time; and, munching incidentally, do three men's work in a day, punctual, silent, frugal,—the sleek Tartuffe that he was. Wherefore Roland, in the late Overturn, recommended him to be War-Minister. And now, it would seem, he is secretly undermining Roland; playing into the hands of your hotter Jacobins and September Commune; and cannot, like strict Roland, be the Veto des Coquins! (*Madame Roland, Memoires, ii. 237, &c.*)

How the sleek Pache might mine and undermine, one knows not well; this however one does know: that his War-Office has become a den of thieves and confusion, such as all men shudder to behold. That the Citizen Hassenfratz, as Head-Clerk, sits there in bonnet rouge, in rapine, in violence, and some Mathematical calculation; a most insolent, red-nightcapped man. That Pache munches his pocket-loaf, amid head-clerks and sub-clerks, and has spent all the War-Estimates: that Furnishers scour in gigs, over all districts of France, and drive bargains;—and lastly that the Army gets next to no furniture. No shoes, though it is winter; no clothes; some have not even arms: 'In the Army of the South,' complains an honourable Member, 'there are thirty thousand pairs of breeches wanting,'—a most scandalous want.

Roland's strict soul is sick to see the course things take: but what can he do? Keep his own Department strict; rebuke, and repress wheresoever possible; at lowest, complain. He can complain in Letter after Letter, to a National Convention, to France, to Posterity, the Universe; grow ever more querulous indignant;—till at last may he not grow wearisome? For is not this continual text of his, at bottom a rather barren one: How astonishing that in a time of Revolt and abrogation of all Law but Cannon Law, there should be such Unlawfulness? Intrepid Veto-of-Scoundrels, narrow-faithful, respectable, methodic man, work thou in that manner, since happily it is thy manner, and wear thyself away; though ineffectual, not profitless in it—then nor now!—The brave Dame Roland, bravest of all French women, begins to have misgivings: the figure of Danton has too much of the 'Sardanapalus character,' at a Republican Rolandin Dinner-table: Clootz, Speaker of Mankind, prosed sad stuff about a Universal Republic, or union of all Peoples and Kindreds in one and the same Fraternal Bond; of which Bond, how it is to be tied, one unhappily sees not.

It is also an indisputable, unaccountable or accountable fact that Grains are becoming scarcer and scarcer. Riots for grain, tumultuous Assemblages demanding to have the price of grain fixed abound far and near. The Mayor of Paris and other poor Mayors are like to have their difficulties. Petion was

re-elected Mayor of Paris; but has declined; being now a Convention Legislator. Wise surely to decline: for, besides this of Grains and all the rest, there is in these times an Improvised insurrectionary Commune passing into an Elected legal one; getting their accounts settled,—not without irritancy! Petion has declined: nevertheless many do covet and canvass. After months of scrutinising, balloting, arguing and jargoning, one Doctor Chambon gets the post of honour: who will not long keep it; but be, as we shall see, literally crushed out of it. (*Dictionnaire des Hommes Marquans, para Chambon.*)

Think also if the private Sansculotte has not his difficulties, in a time of dearth! Bread, according to the People's-Friend, may be some 'six sous per pound, a day's wages some fifteen;' and grim winter here. How the Poor Man continues living, and so seldom starves, by miracle! Happily, in these days, he can enlist, and have himself shot by the Austrians, in an unusually satisfactory manner: for the Rights of Man.—But Commandant Santerre, in this so straitened condition of the flour-market, and state of Equality and Liberty, proposes, through the Newspapers, two remedies, or at least palliatives: First, that all classes of men should live, two days of the week, on potatoes; then second, that every man should hang his dog. Hereby, as the Commandant thinks, the saving, which indeed he computes to so many sacks, would be very considerable. A cheerfuller form of inventive-stupidity than Commandant Santerre's dwells in no human soul. Inventive-stupidity, imbedded in health, courage and good-nature: much to be commended. "My whole strength," he tells the Convention once, "is, day and night, at the service of my fellow-Citizens: if they find me worthless, they will dismiss me; I will return and brew beer." (*Moniteur in Hist. Parl. xx. 412.*)

Or figure what correspondences a poor Roland, Minister of the Interior, must have, on this of Grains alone! Free-trade in Grain, impossibility to fix the Prices of Grain; on the other hand, clamour and necessity to fix them: Political Economy lecturing from the Home Office, with demonstration clear as Scripture;—ineffectual for the empty National Stomach. The Mayor of Chartres, like to be eaten himself, cries to the Convention: the Convention sends honourable Members in Deputation; who endeavour to feed the multitude by miraculous spiritual methods; but cannot. The multitude, in spite of all Eloquence, come bellowing round; will have the Grain-Prices fixed, and at a moderate elevation; or else—the honourable Deputies hanged on the spot! The honourable Deputies, reporting this business, admit that, on the edge of horrid death, they did fix, or affect to fix the Price of Grain: for which, be it also noted, the Convention, a Convention that will not be trifled with, sees good to reprimand them. (*Hist. Parl. xx. 431-440.*)

But as to the origin of these Grain Riots, is it not most probably your secret Royalists again? Glimpses of Priests were discernible in this of Chartres,—to the eye of Patriotism. Or indeed may not 'the root of it all lie in the Temple Prison, in the heart of a perjured King,' well as we guard him? (*Ibid. 409.*) Unhappy perjured King!—And so there shall be Baker's Queues, by and by, more sharp-tempered than ever: on every Baker's door-rabbit an iron ring, and coil of rope; whereon, with firm grip, on this side and that, we form our Queue: but mischievous deceitful persons cut the rope, and our Queue becomes a ravelment; wherefore the coil must be made of iron chain. (*Mercier, Nouveau Paris.*) Also there shall be Prices of Grain well fixed; but then no grain purchasable by them: bread not to be had except by Ticket from the Mayor, few ounces per mouth daily; after long swaying, with firm grip, on the chain of the Queue. And Hunger shall stalk direful; and Wrath and Suspicion, whetted to the Preternatural pitch, shall stalk;—as those other preternatural 'shapes of Gods in their wrathfulness' were discerned stalking, 'in glare and gloom of that fire-ocean,' when Troy Town fell!—

Chapter 3. Discrowned.

But the question more pressing than all on the Legislator, as yet, is this third: What shall be done with King Louis?

King Louis, now King and Majesty to his own family alone, in their own Prison Apartment alone, has been Louis Capet and the Traitor Veto with the rest of France. Shut in his Circuit of the Temple, he has heard and seen the loud whirl of things; yells of September Massacres, Brunswick war-thunders dying off in disaster and discomfiture; he passive, a spectator merely;—waiting whither it would please to whirl with him. From the neighbouring windows, the curious, not without pity, might see him walk daily, at a certain hour, in the Temple Garden, with his Queen, Sister and two Children, all that now belongs to him in this Earth. (*Moore, i. 123; ii. 224, &c.*) Quietly he walks and waits; for he is not of lively feelings, and is of a devout heart. The wearied Irresolute has, at least, no need of resolving now. His daily meals, lessons to his Son, daily walk in the Garden, daily game at ombre or drafts, fill up the day: the morrow will provide for itself.

The morrow indeed; and yet How? Louis asks, How? France, with perhaps still more solicitude, asks, How? A King dethroned by insurrection is verily not easy to dispose of. Keep him prisoner, he is a secret centre for the Disaffected, for endless plots, attempts and hopes of theirs. Banish him, he is an open centre for them; his royal war-standard, with what of divinity it has, unrolls itself, summoning the world. Put him to death? A cruel questionable extremity that too: and yet the likeliest in these extreme circumstances, of insurrectionary men, whose own life and death lies staked: accordingly it is said, from the last step of the throne to the first of the scaffold there is short distance.

But, on the whole, we will remark here that this business of Louis looks altogether different now, as seen over Seas and at the distance of forty-four years, than it looked then, in France, and struggling, confused all round one! For indeed it is a most lying thing that same Past Tense always: so beautiful, sad, almost Elysian-sacred, 'in the moonlight of Memory,' it seems; and seems only. For observe: always, one most important element is surreptitiously (*we not noticing it*) withdrawn from the Past Time: the haggard element of Fear! Not there does Fear dwell, nor Uncertainty, nor Anxiety; but it dwells here; haunting us, tracking us; running like an accursed ground-discord through all the music-tones of our Existence;—making the Tense a mere Present one! Just so is it with this of Louis. Why smite the fallen? asks Magnanimity, out of danger now. He is fallen so low this once-high man; no criminal nor traitor, how far from it; but the unhappiest of Human Solecisms: whom if abstract Justice had to pronounce upon, she might well become concrete Pity, and pronounce only sobs and dismissal!

So argues retrospective Magnanimity: but Pusillanimity, present, prospective? Reader, thou hast never lived, for months, under the rustle of Prussian gallows-ropes; never wert thou portion of a National Sahara-waltz, Twenty-five millions running distracted to fight Brunswick! Knights Errant themselves, when they conquered Giants, usually slew the Giants: quarter was only for other Knights Errant, who knew courtesy and the laws of battle. The French Nation, in simultaneous, desperate dead-pull, and as if by miracle of madness, has pulled down the most dread Goliath, huge with the growth of ten centuries; and cannot believe, though his giant bulk, covering acres, lies prostrate, bound with peg and packthread, that he will not rise again, man-devouring; that the victory is not partly a dream. Terror has its scepticism; miraculous victory its rage of vengeance. Then as to criminality, is the prostrated Giant, who will devour us if he rise, an innocent Giant? Curate Gregoire, who indeed is now Constitutional Bishop Gregoire, asserts, in the heat of eloquence, that Kingship by the very nature of it is a crime capital; that Kings' Houses are as wild-beasts' dens. (*Moniteur, Seance du 21 Septembre, Annee 1er, 1792.*) Lastly consider this: that there is on record a Trial of Charles First! This printed Trial of Charles First is sold and read every where at present: (*Moore's Journal, ii. 165.*)—Quelle spectacle! Thus did

the English People judge their Tyrant, and become the first of Free Peoples: which feat, by the grace of Destiny, may not France now rival? Scepticism of terror, rage of miraculous victory, sublime spectacle to the universe,—all things point one fatal way.

Such leading questions, and their endless incidental ones: of September Anarchists and Departmental Guard; of Grain Riots, plaintiff Interior Ministers; of Armies, Hassenfratz dilapidations; and what is to be done with Louis,—beleaguer and embroil this Convention; which would so gladly make the Constitution rather. All which questions too, as we often urge of such things, are in growth; they grow in every French head; and can be seen growing also, very curiously, in this mighty welter of Parliamentary Debate, of Public Business which the Convention has to do. A question emerges, so small at first; is put off, submerged; but always re-emerges bigger than before. It is a curious, indeed an indescribable sort of growth which such things have.

We perceive, however, both by its frequent re-emergence and by its rapid enlargement of bulk, that this Question of King Louis will take the lead of all the rest. And truly, in that case, it will take the lead in a much deeper sense. For as Aaron's Rod swallowed all the other Serpents; so will the Foremost Question, whichever may get foremost, absorb all other questions and interests; and from it and the decision of it will they all, so to speak, be born, or new-born, and have shape, physiognomy and destiny corresponding. It was appointed of Fate that, in this wide-weltering, strangely growing, monstrous stupendous imbroglio of Convention Business, the grand First-Parent of all the questions, controversies, measures and enterprises which were to be evolved there to the world's astonishment, should be this Question of King Louis.

Chapter 4. The Loser Pays.

The Sixth of November, 1792, was a great day for the Republic: outwardly, over the Frontiers; inwardly, in the Salle de Manege.

Outwardly: for Dumouriez, overrunning the Netherlands, did, on that day, come in contact with Saxe-Teschen and the Austrians; Dumouriez wide-winged, they wide-winged; at and around the village of Jemappes, near Mons. And fire-hail is whistling far and wide there, the great guns playing, and the small; so many green Heights getting fringed and maned with red Fire. And Dumouriez is swept back on this wing, and swept back on that, and is like to be swept back utterly; when he rushes up in person, the prompt Polymetis; speaks a prompt word or two; and then, with clear tenor-pipe, 'uplifts the Hymn of the Marseillaise, entonna la Marseillaise,' (*Dumouriez, Memoires, iii. 174.*) ten thousand tenor or bass pipes joining; or say, some Forty Thousand in all; for every heart leaps at the sound: and so with rhythmic march-melody, waxing ever quicker, to double and to treble quick, they rally, they advance, they rush, death-defying, man-devouring; carry batteries, redoutes, whatsoever is to be carried; and, like the fire-whirlwind, sweep all manner of Austrians from the scene of action. Thus, through the hands of Dumouriez, may Rouget de Lille, in figurative speech, be said to have gained, miraculously, like another Orpheus, by his Marseillaise fiddle-strings (*fidibus canoris*) a Victory of Jemappes; and conquered the Low Countries.

Young General Egalite, it would seem, shone brave among the bravest on this occasion. Doubtless a brave Egalite;—whom however does not Dumouriez rather talk of oftener than need were? The Mother Society has her own thoughts. As for the Elder Egalite he flies low at this time; appears in the Convention for some half-hour daily, with rubicund, pre-occupied, or impressive quasi-contemptuous

countenance; and then takes himself away. (*Moore, ii. 148.*) The Netherlands are conquered, at least overrun. Jacobin missionaries, your Prolys, Pereiras, follow in the train of the Armies; also Convention Commissioners, melting church-plate, revolutionising and remodelling—among whom Danton, in brief space, does immensities of business; not neglecting his own wages and trade-profits, it is thought. Hassenfratz dilapidates at home; Dumouriez grumbles and they dilapidate abroad: within the walls there is sinning, and without the walls there is sinning.

But in the Hall of the Convention, at the same hour with this victory of Jemappes, there went another thing forward: Report, of great length, from the proper appointed Committee, on the Crimes of Louis. The Galleries listen breathless; take comfort, ye Galleries: Deputy Valaze, Reporter on this occasion, thinks Louis very criminal; and that, if convenient, he should be tried;—poor Girondin Valaze, who may be tried himself, one day! Comfortable so far. Nay here comes a second Committee-reporter, Deputy Mailhe, with a Legal Argument, very prosy to read now, very refreshing to hear then, That, by the Law of the Country, Louis Capet was only called Inviolable by a figure of rhetoric; but at bottom was perfectly violable, triable; that he can, and even should be tried. This Question of Louis, emerging so often as an angry confused possibility, and submerging again, has emerged now in an articulate shape.

Patriotism growls indignant joy. The so-called reign of Equality is not to be a mere name, then, but a thing! Try Louis Capet? scornfully ejaculates Patriotism: Mean criminals go to the gallows for a purse cut; and this chief criminal, guilty of a France cut; of a France slashed asunder with Clotho-scissors and Civil war; with his victims 'twelve hundred on the Tenth of August alone' lying low in the Catacombs, fattening the passes of Argonne Wood, of Valmy and far Fields; he, such chief criminal, shall not even come to the bar?—For, alas, O Patriotism! add we, it was from of old said, The loser pays! It is he who has to pay all scores, run up by whomsoever; on him must all breakages and charges fall; and the twelve hundred on the Tenth of August are not rebel traitors, but victims and martyrs: such is the law of quarrel.

Patriotism, nothing doubting, watches over this Question of the Trial, now happily emerged in an articulate shape; and will see it to maturity, if the gods permit. With a keen solicitude Patriotism watches; getting ever keener, at every new difficulty, as Girondins and false brothers interpose delays; till it get a keenness as of fixed-idea, and will have this Trial and no earthly thing instead of it,—if Equality be not a name. Love of Equality; then scepticism of terror, rage of victory, sublime spectacle of the universe: all these things are strong.

But indeed this Question of the Trial, is it not to all persons a most grave one; filling with dubiety many a Legislative head! Regicide? asks the Gironde Respectability: To kill a king, and become the horror of respectable nations and persons? But then also, to save a king; to lose one's footing with the decided Patriot; and undecided Patriot, though never so respectable, being mere hypothetic froth and no footing?—The dilemma presses sore; and between the horns of it you wriggle round and round. Decision is nowhere, save in the Mother Society and her Sons. These have decided, and go forward: the others wriggle round uneasily within their dilemma-horns, and make way nowhither.

Chapter 5. Stretching of Formulas.

But how this Question of the Trial grew laboriously, through the weeks of gestation, now that it has been articulated or conceived, were superfluous to trace here. It emerged and submerged among the

infinite of questions and embroilments. The Veto of Scoundrels writes plaintive Letters as to Anarchy; 'concealed Royalists,' aided by Hunger, produce Riots about Grain. Alas, it is but a week ago, these Girondins made a new fierce onslaught on the September Massacres!

For, one day, among the last of October, Robespierre, being summoned to the tribune by some new hint of that old calumny of the Dictatorship, was speaking and pleading there, with more and more comfort to himself; till, rising high in heart, he cried out valiantly: Is there any man here that dare specifically accuse me? "Moi!" exclaimed one. Pause of deep silence: a lean angry little Figure, with broad bald brow, strode swiftly towards the tribune, taking papers from its pocket: "I accuse thee, Robespierre,"—I, Jean Baptiste Louvet! The Seagreen became tallow-green; shrinking to a corner of the tribune: Danton cried, "Speak, Robespierre, there are many good citizens that listen;" but the tongue refused its office. And so Louvet, with a shrill tone, read and recited crime after crime: dictatorial temper, exclusive popularity, bullying at elections, mob-retinue, September Massacres;—till all the Convention shrieked again, and had almost indicted the Incorruptible there on the spot. Never did the Incorruptible run such a risk. Louvet, to his dying day, will regret that the Gironde did not take a bolder attitude, and extinguish him there and then.

Not so, however: the Incorruptible, about to be indicted in this sudden manner, could not be refused a week of delay. That week, he is not idle; nor is the Mother Society idle,—fierce-tremulous for her chosen son. He is ready at the day with his written Speech; smooth as a Jesuit Doctor's; and convinces some. And now? Why, now lazy Vergniaud does not rise with Demosthenic thunder; poor Louvet, unprepared, can do little or nothing: Barrere proposes that these comparatively despicable 'personalities' be dismissed by order of the day! Order of the day it accordingly is. Barbaroux cannot even get a hearing; not though he rush down to the Bar, and demand to be heard there as a petitioner. (*Louvet, Memoires* (Paris, 1823) p. 52; *Moniteur* (Seances du 29 Octobre, 5 Novembre, 1792); *Moore* (ii. 178), &c.) The convention, eager for public business (*with that first articulate emergence of the Trial just coming on*), dismisses these comparative miseres and despicabilities: splenetic Louvet must digest his spleen, regretfully for ever: Robespierre, dear to Patriotism, is dearer for the dangers he has run.

This is the second grand attempt by our Girondin Friends of Order, to extinguish that black-spot in their domain; and we see they have made it far blacker and wider than before! Anarchy, September Massacre: it is a thing that lies hideous in the general imagination; very detestable to the undecided Patriot, of Respectability: a thing to be harped on as often as need is. Harp on it, denounce it, trample it, ye Girondin Patriots:—and yet behold, the black-spot will not trample down; it will only, as we say, trample blacker and wider: fools, it is no black-spot of the surface, but a well-spring of the deep! Consider rightly, it is the apex of the everlasting Abyss, this black-spot, looking up as water through thin ice;—say, as the region of Nether Darkness through your thin film of Gironde Regulation and Respectability; trample it not, lest the film break, and then—!

The truth is, if our Gironde Friends had an understanding of it, where were French Patriotism, with all its eloquence, at this moment, had not that same great Nether Deep, of Bedlam, Fanaticism and Popular wrath and madness, risen unfathomable on the Tenth of August? French Patriotism were an eloquent Reminiscence; swinging on Prussian gibbets. Nay, where, in few months, were it still, should the same great Nether Deep subside?—Nay, as readers of Newspapers pretend to recollect, this hatefulness of the September Massacre is itself partly an after-thought: readers of Newspapers can quote Gorsas and various Brissotins approving of the September Massacre, at the time it happened; and calling it a salutary vengeance! (*See Hist. Parl. xvii. 401; Newspapers by Gorsas and others, cited*

ibid. 428.) So that the real grief, after all, were not so much righteous horror, as grief that one's own power was departing? Unhappy Girondins!

In the Jacobin Society, therefore, the decided Patriot complains that here are men who with their private ambitions and animosities, will ruin Liberty, Equality, and Brotherhood, all three: they check the spirit of Patriotism, throw stumbling-blocks in its way; and instead of pushing on, all shoulders at the wheel, will stand idle there, spitefully clamouring what foul ruts there are, what rude jolts we give! To which the Jacobin Society answers with angry roar;—with angry shriek, for there are Citoyennes too, thick crowded in the galleries here. Citoyennes who bring their seam with them, or their knitting-needles; and shriek or knit as the case needs; famed Tricoteuses, Patriot Knitters;—Mere Duchesse, or the like Deborah and Mother of the Faubourgs, giving the keynote. It is a changed Jacobin Society; and a still changing. Where Mother Duchess now sits, authentic Duchesses have sat. High-rouged dames went once in jewels and spangles; now, instead of jewels, you may take the knitting-needles and leave the rouge: the rouge will gradually give place to natural brown, clean washed or even unwashed; and Demoiselle Theroigne herself get scandalously fustigated. Strange enough: it is the same tribune raised in mid-air, where a high Mirabeau, a high Barnave and Aristocrat Lameths once thundered: whom gradually your Brissots, Guadets, Vergniauds, a hotter style of Patriots in bonnet rouge, did displace; red heat, as one may say, superseding light. And now your Brissots in turn, and Brissotins, Rolandins, Girondins, are becoming supernumerary; must desert the sittings, or be expelled: the light of the Mighty Mother is burning not red but blue!—Provincial Daughter-Societies loudly disapprove these things; loudly demand the swift reinstatement of such eloquent Girondins, the swift 'erasure of Marat, radiation de Marat.' The Mother Society, so far as natural reason can predict, seems ruining herself. Nevertheless she has, at all crises, seemed so; she has a preternatural life in her, and will not ruin.

But, in a fortnight more, this great Question of the Trial, while the fit Committee is assiduously but silently working on it, receives an unexpected stimulus. Our readers remember poor Louis's turn for smithwork: how, in old happier days, a certain Sieur Gamain of Versailles was wont to come over, and instruct him in lock-making;—often scolding him, they say for his numbness. By whom, nevertheless, the royal Apprentice had learned something of that craft. Hapless Apprentice; perfidious Master-Smith! For now, on this 20th of November 1792, dingy Smith Gamain comes over to the Paris Municipality, over to Minister Roland, with hints that he, Smith Gamain, knows a thing; that, in May last, when traitorous Correspondence was so brisk, he and the royal Apprentice fabricated an 'Iron Press, Armoire de Fer,' cunningly inserting the same in a wall of the royal chamber in the Tuileries; invisible under the wainscot; where doubtless it still sticks! Perfidious Gamain, attended by the proper Authorities, finds the wainscot panel which none else can find; wrenches it up; discloses the Iron Press,—full of Letters and Papers! Roland clutches them out; conveys them over in towels to the fit assiduous Committee, which sits hard by. In towels, we say, and without notarial inventory; an oversight on the part of Roland.

Here, however, are Letters enough: which disclose to a demonstration the Correspondence of a traitorous self-preserving Court; and this not with Traitors only, but even with Patriots, so-called! Barnave's treason, of Correspondence with the Queen, and friendly advice to her, ever since that Varennes Business, is hereby manifest: how happy that we have him, this Barnave, lying safe in the Prison of Grenoble, since September last, for he had long been suspect! Talleyrand's treason, many a man's treason, if not manifest hereby, is next to it. Mirabeau's treason: wherefore his Bust in the Hall of the Convention 'is veiled with gauze,' till we ascertain. Alas, it is too ascertainable! His Bust in the Hall of the Jacobins, denounced by Robespierre from the tribune in mid-air, is not veiled, it is instantly

broken to sherds; a Patriot mounting swiftly with a ladder, and shivering it down on the floor;—it and others: amid shouts. (*Journal des Debats des Jacobins in Hist. Parl. xxii. 296.*) Such is their recompense and amount of wages, at this date: on the principle of supply and demand! Smith Gamain, inadequately recompensed for the present, comes, some fifteen months after, with a humble Petition; setting forth that no sooner was that important Iron Press finished off by him, than (*as he now bethinks himself*) Louis gave him a large glass of wine. Which large glass of wine did produce in the stomach of Sieur Gamain the terriblest effects, evidently tending towards death, and was then brought up by an emetic; but has, notwithstanding, entirely ruined the constitution of Sieur Gamain; so that he cannot work for his family (*as he now bethinks himself*). The recompense of which is 'Pension of Twelve Hundred Francs,' and 'honourable mention.' So different is the ratio of demand and supply at different times.

Thus, amid obstructions and stimulating furtherances, has the Question of the Trial to grow; emerging and submerging; fostered by solicitous Patriotism. Of the Orations that were spoken on it, of the painfully devised Forms of Process for managing it, the Law Arguments to prove it lawful, and all the infinite floods of Juridical and other ingenuity and oratory, be no syllable reported in this History. Lawyer ingenuity is good: but what can it profit here? If the truth must be spoken, O august Senators, the only Law in this case is: *Vae victis*, the loser pays! Seldom did Robespierre say a wiser word than the hint he gave to that effect, in his oration, that it was needless to speak of Law, that here, if never elsewhere, our Right was Might. An oration admired almost to ecstasy by the Jacobin Patriot: who shall say that Robespierre is not a thorough-going man; bold in Logic at least? To the like effect, or still more plainly, spake young Saint-Just, the black-haired, mild-toned youth. Danton is on mission, in the Netherlands, during this preliminary work. The rest, far as one reads, welter amid Law of Nations, Social Contract, Juristics, Syllogistics; to us barren as the East wind. In fact, what can be more unprofitable than the sight of Seven Hundred and Forty-nine ingenious men, struggling with their whole force and industry, for a long course of weeks, to do at bottom this: To stretch out the old Formula and Law Phraseology, so that it may cover the new, contradictory, entirely uncoverable Thing? Whereby the poor Formula does but crack, and one's honesty along with it! The thing that is palpably hot, burning, wilt thou prove it, by syllogism, to be a freezing-mixture? This of stretching out Formulas till they crack is, especially in times of swift change, one of the sorrowfullest tasks poor Humanity has.

Chapter 6. At The Bar.

Meanwhile, in a space of some five weeks, we have got to another emerging of the Trial, and a more practical one than ever.

On Tuesday, eleventh of December, the King's Trial has emerged, very decidedly: into the streets of Paris; in the shape of that green Carriage of Mayor Chambon, within which sits the King himself, with attendants, on his way to the Convention Hall! Attended, in that green Carriage, by Mayors Chambon, Procureurs Chaumette; and outside of it by Commandants Santerre, with cannon, cavalry and double row of infantry; all Sections under arms, strong Patrols scouring all streets; so fares he, slowly through the dull drizzling weather: and about two o'clock we behold him, 'in walnut-coloured great-coat, redingote noisette,' descending through the Place Vendome, towards that Salle de Manege; to be indicted, and judicially interrogated. The mysterious Temple Circuit has given up its secret; which now, in this walnut-coloured coat, men behold with eyes. The same bodily Louis who was once Louis the Desired, fares there: hapless King, he is getting now towards port; his deplorable farings and

voyagings draw to a close. What duty remains to him henceforth, that of placidly enduring, he is fit to do.

The singular Procession fares on; in silence, says Prudhomme, or amid growlings of the Marseillaise Hymn; in silence, ushers itself into the Hall of the Convention, Santerre holding Louis's arm with his hand. Louis looks round him, with composed air, to see what kind of Convention and Parliament it is. Much changed indeed:—since February gone two years, when our Constituent, then busy, spread fleur-de-lys velvet for us; and we came over to say a kind word here, and they all started up swearing Fidelity; and all France started up swearing, and made it a Feast of Pikes; which has ended in this! Barrere, who once 'wept' looking up from his Editor's-Desk, looks down now from his President's-Chair, with a list of Fifty-seven Questions; and says, dry-eyed: "Louis, you may sit down." Louis sits down: it is the very seat, they say, same timber and stuffing, from which he accepted the Constitution, amid dancing and illumination, autumn gone a year. So much woodwork remains identical; so much else is not identical. Louis sits and listens, with a composed look and mind.

Of the Fifty-seven Questions we shall not give so much as one. They are questions captiously embracing all the main Documents seized on the Tenth of August, or found lately in the Iron Press; embracing all the main incidents of the Revolution History; and they ask, in substance, this: Louis, who wert King, art thou not guilty to a certain extent, by act and written document, of trying to continue King? Neither in the Answers is there much notable. Mere quiet negations, for most part; an accused man standing on the simple basis of No: I do not recognise that document; I did not do that act; or did it according to the law that then was. Whereupon the Fifty-seven Questions, and Documents to the number of a Hundred and Sixty-two, being exhausted in this manner, Barrere finishes, after some three hours, with his: "Louis, I invite you to withdraw."

Louis withdraws, under Municipal escort, into a neighbouring Committee-room; having first, in leaving the bar, demanded to have Legal Counsel. He declines refreshment, in this Committee-room, then, seeing Chaumette busy with a small loaf which a grenadier had divided with him, says, he will take a bit of bread. It is five o'clock; and he had breakfasted but slightly in a morning of such drumming and alarm. Chaumette breaks his half-loaf: the King eats of the crust; mounts the green Carriage, eating; asks now what he shall do with the crumb? Chaumette's clerk takes it from him; flings it out into the street. Louis says, It is pity to fling out bread, in a time of dearth. "My grandmother," remarks Chaumette, "used to say to me, Little boy, never waste a crumb of bread, you cannot make one." "Monsieur Chaumette," answers Louis, "your grandmother seems to have been a sensible woman." (*Prudhomme's Newspaper in Hist. Parl. xxi. 314.*) Poor innocent mortal: so quietly he waits the drawing of the lot;—fit to do this at least well; Passivity alone, without Activity, sufficing for it! He talks once of travelling over France by and by, to have a geographical and topographical view of it; being from of old fond of geography.—The Temple Circuit again receives him, closes on him; gazing Paris may retire to its hearths and coffee-houses, to its clubs and theatres: the damp Darkness has sunk, and with it the drumming and patrolling of this strange Day.

Louis is now separated from his Queen and Family; given up to his simple reflections and resources. Dull lie these stone walls round him; of his loved ones none with him. In this state of 'uncertainty,' providing for the worst, he writes his Will: a Paper which can still be read; full of placidity, simplicity, pious sweetness. The Convention, after debate, has granted him Legal Counsel, of his own choosing. Advocate Target feels himself 'too old,' being turned of fifty-four; and declines. He had gained great honour once, defending Rohan the Necklace-Cardinal; but will gain none here. Advocate Tronchet, some ten years older, does not decline. Nay behold, good old Malesherbes steps forward voluntarily; to

the last of his fields, the good old hero! He is grey with seventy years: he says, 'I was twice called to the Council of him who was my Master, when all the world coveted that honour; and I owe him the same service now, when it has become one which many reckon dangerous.' These two, with a younger Deseze, whom they will select for pleading, are busy over that Fifty-and-sevenfold Indictment, over the Hundred and Sixty-two Documents; Louis aiding them as he can.

A great Thing is now therefore in open progress; all men, in all lands, watching it. By what Forms and Methods shall the Convention acquit itself, in such manner that there rest not on it even the suspicion of blame? Difficult that will be! The Convention, really much at a loss, discusses and deliberates. All day from morning to night, day after day, the Tribune drones with oratory on this matter; one must stretch the old Formula to cover the new Thing. The Patriots of the Mountain, whetted ever keener, clamour for despatch above all; the only good Form will be a swift one. Nevertheless the Convention deliberates; the Tribune drones,—drowned indeed in tenor, and even in treble, from time to time; the whole Hall shrilling up round it into pretty frequent wrath and provocation. It has droned and shrilled wellnigh a fortnight, before we can decide, this shrillness getting ever shriller, That on Wednesday 26th of December, Louis shall appear, and plead. His Advocates complain that it is fatally soon; which they well might as Advocates: but without remedy; to Patriotism it seems endlessly late.

On Wednesday, therefore, at the cold dark hour of eight in the morning, all Senators are at their post. Indeed they warm the cold hour, as we find, by a violent effervescence, such as is too common now; some Louvet or Buzot attacking some Tallien, Chabot; and so the whole Mountain effervescing against the whole Gironde. Scarcely is this done, at nine, when Louis and his three Advocates, escorted by the clang of arms and Santerre's National force, enter the Hall.

Deseze unfolds his papers; honourably fulfilling his perilous office, pleads for the space of three hours. An honourable Pleading, 'composed almost overnight,' courageous yet discreet; not without ingenuity, and soft pathetic eloquence: Louis fell on his neck, when they had withdrawn, and said with tears, *Mon pauvre Deseze*. Louis himself, before withdrawing, had added a few words, "perhaps the last he would utter to them:" how it pained his heart, above all things, to be held guilty of that bloodshed on the Tenth of August; or of ever shedding or wishing to shed French blood. So saying, he withdrew from that Hall;—having indeed finished his work there. Many are the strange errands he has had thither; but this strange one is the last.

And now, why will the Convention loiter? Here is the Indictment and Evidence; here is the Pleading: does not the rest follow of itself? The Mountain, and Patriotism in general, clamours still louder for despatch; for Permanent-session, till the task be done. Nevertheless a doubting, apprehensive Convention decides that it will still deliberate first; that all Members, who desire it, shall have leave to speak.—To your desks, therefore, ye eloquent Members! Down with your thoughts, your echoes and hearsays of thoughts: now is the time to shew oneself; France and the Universe listens! Members are not wanting: Oration spoken Pamphlet follows spoken Pamphlet, with what eloquence it can: President's List swells ever higher with names claiming to speak; from day to day, all days and all hours, the constant Tribune drones;—shrill Galleries supplying, very variably, the tenor and treble. It were a dull tune otherwise.

The Patriots, in Mountain and Galleries, or taking counsel nightly in Section-house, in Mother Society, amid their shrill Tricoteuses, have to watch lynx-eyed; to give voice when needful; occasionally very loud. Deputy Thuriot, he who was Advocate Thuriot, who was Elector Thuriot, and from the top of the

Bastille, saw Saint-Antoine rising like the ocean; this Thuriot can stretch a Formula as heartily as most men. Cruel Billaud is not silent, if you incite him. Nor is cruel Jean-Bon silent; a kind of Jesuit he too;—write him not, as the Dictionaries too often do, Jambon, which signifies mere Ham.

But, on the whole, let no man conceive it possible that Louis is not guilty. The only question for a reasonable man is, or was: Can the Convention judge Louis? Or must it be the whole People: in Primary Assembly, and with delay? Always delay, ye Girondins, false hommes d'etat! so bellows Patriotism, its patience almost failing.—But indeed, if we consider it, what shall these poor Girondins do? Speak their convictions that Louis is a Prisoner of War; and cannot be put to death without injustice, solecism, peril? Speak such conviction; and lose utterly your footing with the decided Patriot? Nay properly it is not even a conviction, but a conjecture and dim puzzle. How many poor Girondins are sure of but one thing: That a man and Girondin ought to have footing somewhere, and to stand firmly on it; keeping well with the Respectable Classes! This is what conviction and assurance of faith they have. They must wriggle painfully between their dilemma-horns. (*See Extracts from their Newspapers, in Hist. Parl. xxi. 1-38, &c.*)

Nor is France idle, nor Europe. It is a Heart this Convention, as we said, which sends out influences, and receives them. A King's Execution, call it Martyrdom, call it Punishment, were an influence! Two notable influences this Convention has already sent forth, over all Nations; much to its own detriment. On the 19th of November, it emitted a Decree, and has since confirmed and unfolded the details of it. That any Nation which might see good to shake off the fetters of Despotism was thereby, so to speak, the Sister of France, and should have help and countenance. A Decree much noised of by Diplomats, Editors, International Lawyers; such a Decree as no living Fetter of Despotism, nor Person in Authority anywhere, can approve of! It was Deputy Chambon the Girondin who propounded this Decree;—at bottom perhaps as a flourish of rhetoric.

The second influence we speak of had a still poorer origin: in the restless loud-rattling slightly-furnished head of one Jacob Dupont from the Loire country. The Convention is speculating on a plan of National Education: Deputy Dupont in his speech says, "I am free to avow, M. le President, that I for my part am an Atheist," (*Moniteur, Seance du 14 Decembre 1792.*)—thinking the world might like to know that. The French world received it without commentary; or with no audible commentary, so loud was France otherwise. The Foreign world received it with confutation, with horror and astonishment; (*Mrs. Hannah More, Letter to Jacob Dupont* (London, 1793); &c. &c.) a most miserable influence this! And now if to these two were added a third influence, and sent pulsing abroad over all the Earth: that of Regicide?

Foreign Courts interfere in this Trial of Louis; Spain, England: not to be listened to; though they come, as it were, at least Spain comes, with the olive-branch in one hand, and the sword without scabbard in the other. But at home too, from out of this circumambient Paris and France, what influences come thick-pulsing! Petitions flow in; pleading for equal justice, in a reign of so-called Equality. The living Patriot pleads;—O ye National Deputies, do not the dead Patriots plead? The Twelve Hundred that lie in cold obstruction, do not they plead; and petition, in Death's dumb-show, from their narrow house there, more eloquently than speech? Crippled Patriots hop on crutches round the Salle de Manège, demanding justice. The Wounded of the Tenth of August, the Widows and Orphans of the Killed petition in a body; and hop and defile, eloquently mute, through the Hall: one wounded Patriot, unable to hop, is borne on his bed thither, and passes shoulder-high, in the horizontal posture. (*Hist. Parl. xxii. 131; Moore, &c.*) The Convention Tribune, which has paused at such sight, commences again,—droning mere Juristic Oratory. But out of doors Paris is piping ever higher. Bull-voiced St.

Huruge is heard; and the hysteric eloquence of Mother Duchesse: 'Varlet, Apostle of Liberty,' with pike and red cap, flies hastily, carrying his oratorical folding-stool. Justice on the Traitor! cries all the Patriot world. Consider also this other cry, heard loud on the streets: "Give us Bread, or else kill us!" Bread and Equality; Justice on the Traitor, that we may have Bread!

The Limited or undecided Patriot is set against the Decided. Mayor Chambon heard of dreadful rioting at the Theatre de la Nation: it had come to rioting, and even to fist-work, between the Decided and the Undecided, touching a new Drama called *Ami des Lois* (*Friend of the Laws*). One of the poorest Dramas ever written; but which had didactic applications in it; wherefore powdered wigs of Friends of Order and black hair of Jacobin heads are flying there; and Mayor Chambon hastens with Santerre, in hopes to quell it. Far from quelling it, our poor Mayor gets so 'squeezed,' says the Report, and likewise so blamed and bullied, say we,—that he, with regret, quits the brief Mayoralty altogether, 'his lungs being affected.' This miserable *Amis des Lois* is debated of in the Convention itself; so violent, mutually-enraged, are the Limited Patriots and the Unlimited. (*Hist. Parl. xxiii. 31, 48, &c.*)

Between which two classes, are not Aristocrats enough, and Crypto-Aristocrats, busy? Spies running over from London with important Packets; spies pretending to run! One of these latter, Viard was the name of him, pretended to accuse Roland, and even the Wife of Roland; to the joy of Chabot and the Mountain. But the Wife of Roland came, being summoned, on the instant, to the Convention Hall; came, in her high clearness; and, with few clear words, dissipated this Viard into despicability and air; all Friends of Order applauding. (*Moniteur, Seance du 7 Decembre 1792.*) So, with Theatre-riots, and 'Bread, or else kill us;' with Rage, Hunger, preternatural Suspicion, does this wild Paris pipe. Roland grows ever more querulous, in his Messages and Letters; rising almost to the hysterical pitch. Marat, whom no power on Earth can prevent seeing into traitors and Rolands, takes to bed for three days; almost dead, the invaluable People's-Friend, with heartbreak, with fever and headache: 'O, Peuple babillard, si tu savais agir, People of Babblers, if thou couldst but act!'

To crown all, victorious Dumouriez, in these New-year's days, is arrived in Paris;—one fears, for no good. He pretends to be complaining of Minister Pache, and Hassenfratz dilapidations; to be concerting measures for the spring campaign: one finds him much in the company of the Girondins. Plotting with them against Jacobinism, against Equality, and the Punishment of Louis! We have Letters of his to the Convention itself. Will he act the old Lafayette part, this new victorious General? Let him withdraw again; not undenounced. (*Dumouriez, Memoires, iii. c. 4.*)

And still, in the Convention Tribune, it drones continually, mere Juristic Eloquence, and Hypothesis without Action; and there are still fifties on the President's List. Nay these Gironde Presidents give their own party preference: we suspect they play foul with the List; men of the Mountain cannot be heard. And still it drones, all through December into January and a New year; and there is no end! Paris pipes round it; multitudinous; ever higher, to the note of the whirlwind. Paris will 'bring cannon from Saint-Denis;' there is talk of 'shutting the Barriers,'—to Roland's horror.

Whereupon, behold, the Convention Tribune suddenly ceases droning: we cut short, be on the List who likes; and make end. On Tuesday next, the Fifteenth of January 1793, it shall go to the Vote, name by name; and, one way or other, this great game play itself out!

Chapter 7. The Three Votings.

Is Louis Capet guilty of conspiring against Liberty? Shall our Sentence be itself final, or need ratifying by Appeal to the People? If guilty, what Punishment? This is the form agreed to, after uproar and 'several hours of tumultuous indecision:' these are the Three successive Questions, whereon the Convention shall now pronounce. Paris floods round their Hall; multitudinous, many sounding. Europe and all Nations listen for their answer. Deputy after Deputy shall answer to his name: Guilty or Not guilty?

As to the Guilt, there is, as above hinted, no doubt in the mind of Patriot man. Overwhelming majority pronounces Guilt; the unanimous Convention votes for Guilt, only some feeble twenty-eight voting not Innocence, but refusing to vote at all. Neither does the Second Question prove doubtful, whatever the Girondins might calculate. Would not Appeal to the People be another name for civil war? Majority of two to one answers that there shall be no Appeal: this also is settled. Loud Patriotism, now at ten o'clock, may hush itself for the night; and retire to its bed not without hope. Tuesday has gone well. On the morrow comes, What Punishment? On the morrow is the tug of war.

Consider therefore if, on this Wednesday morning, there is an affluence of Patriotism; if Paris stands a-tiptoe, and all Deputies are at their post! Seven Hundred and Forty-nine honourable Deputies; only some twenty absent on mission, Duchatel and some seven others absent by sickness. Meanwhile expectant Patriotism and Paris standing a-tiptoe, have need of patience. For this Wednesday again passes in debate and effervescence; Girondins proposing that a 'majority of three-fourths' shall be required; Patriots fiercely resisting them. Danton, who has just got back from mission in the Netherlands, does obtain 'order of the day' on this Girondin proposal; nay he obtains further that we decide sans desespérer, in Permanent-session, till we have done.

And so, finally, at eight in the evening this Third stupendous Voting, by roll-call or appel nominal, does begin. What Punishment? Girondins undecided, Patriots decided, men afraid of Royalty, men afraid of Anarchy, must answer here and now. Infinite Patriotism, dusky in the lamp-light, floods all corridors, crowds all galleries, sternly waiting to hear. Shrill-sounding Ushers summon you by Name and Department; you must rise to the Tribune and say.

Eye-witnesses have represented this scene of the Third Voting, and of the votings that grew out of it; a scene protracted, like to be endless, lasting, with few brief intervals, from Wednesday till Sunday morning,—as one of the strangest seen in the Revolution. Long night wears itself into day, morning's paleness is spread over all faces; and again the wintry shadows sink, and the dim lamps are lit: but through day and night and the vicissitude of hours, Member after Member is mounting continually those Tribune-steps; pausing aloft there, in the clearer upper light, to speak his Fate-word; then diving down into the dusk and throng again. Like Phantoms in the hour of midnight; most spectral, pandemonial! Never did President Vergniaud, or any terrestrial President, superintend the like. A King's Life, and so much else that depends thereon, hangs trembling in the balance. Man after man mounts; the buzz hushes itself till he have spoken: Death; Banishment: Imprisonment till the Peace. Many say, Death; with what cautious well-studied phrases and paragraphs they could devise, of explanation, of enforcement, of faint recommendation to mercy. Many too say, Banishment; something short of Death. The balance trembles, none can yet guess whitherward. Whereat anxious Patriotism bellows; irrepressible by Ushers.

The poor Girondins, many of them, under such fierce bellowing of Patriotism, say Death; justifying, motivant, that most miserable word of theirs by some brief casuistry and jesuitry. Vergniaud himself

says, Death; justifying by jesuitry. Rich Lepelletier Saint-Fargeau had been of the Noblesse, and then of the Patriot Left Side, in the Constituent; and had argued and reported, there and elsewhere, not a little, against Capital Punishment: nevertheless he now says, Death; a word which may cost him dear. Manuel did surely rank with the Decided in August last; but he has been sinking and backsliding ever since September, and the scenes of September. In this Convention, above all, no word he could speak would find favour; he says now, Banishment; and in mute wrath quits the place for ever,—much hustled in the corridors. Philippe Egalite votes in his soul and conscience, Death, at the sound of which, and of whom, even Patriotism shakes its head; and there runs a groan and shudder through this Hall of Doom. Robespierre's vote cannot be doubtful; his speech is long. Men see the figure of shrill Sieyes ascend; hardly pausing, passing merely, this figure says, "La Mort sans phrase, Death without phrases;" and fares onward and downward. Most spectral, pandemonial!

And yet if the Reader fancy it of a funereal, sorrowful or even grave character, he is far mistaken. 'The Ushers in the Mountain quarter,' says Mercier, 'had become as Box-openers at the Opera;' opening and shutting of Galleries for privileged persons, for 'd'Orleans Egalite's mistresses,' or other high-dizened women of condition, rustling with laces and tricolor. Gallant Deputies pass and repass thitherward, treating them with ices, refreshments and small-talk; the high-dizened heads beck responsive; some have their card and pin, pricking down the Ayes and Noes, as at a game of Rouge-et-Noir. Further aloft reigns Mere Duchesse with her unrouged Amazons; she cannot be prevented making long Hahas, when the vote is not La Mort. In these Galleries there is refection, drinking of wine and brandy 'as in open tavern, en pleine tabagie.' Betting goes on in all coffeehouses of the neighbourhood. But within doors, fatigue, impatience, uttermost weariness sits now on all visages; lighted up only from time to time, by turns of the game. Members have fallen asleep; Ushers come and awaken them to vote: other Members calculate whether they shall not have time to run and dine. Figures rise, like phantoms, pale in the dusky lamp-light; utter from this Tribune, only one word: Death. 'Tout est optique,' says Mercier, 'the world is all an optical shadow.' (*Mercier, Nouveau Paris*, vi. 156-59; *Montgaillard*, iii. 348-87; *Moore, &c.*) Deep in the Thursday night, when the Voting is done, and Secretaries are summing it up, sick Duchatel, more spectral than another, comes borne on a chair, wrapt in blankets, 'in nightgown and nightcap,' to vote for Mercy: one vote it is thought may turn the scale.

Ah no! In profoundest silence, President Vergniaud, with a voice full of sorrow, has to say: "I declare, in the name of the Convention, that the Punishment it pronounces on Louis Capet is that of Death." Death by a small majority of Fifty-three. Nay, if we deduct from the one side, and add to the other, a certain Twenty-six, who said Death but coupled some faintest ineffectual surmise of mercy with it, the majority will be but One.

Death is the sentence: but its execution? It is not executed yet! Scarcely is the vote declared when Louis's Three Advocates enter; with Protest in his name, with demand for Delay, for Appeal to the People. For this do Deseze and Tronchet plead, with brief eloquence: brave old Malesherbes pleads for it with eloquent want of eloquence, in broken sentences, in embarrassment and sobs; that brave time-honoured face, with its grey strength, its broad sagacity and honesty, is mastered with emotion, melts into dumb tears. (*Moniteur in Hist. Parl.* xxiii. 210. See *Boissy d'Anglas, Vie de Malesherbes*, ii. 139.)—They reject the Appeal to the People; that having been already settled. But as to the Delay, what they call Sursis, it shall be considered; shall be voted for to-morrow: at present we adjourn. Whereupon Patriotism 'hisses' from the Mountain: but a 'tyrannical majority' has so decided, and adjourns.

There is still this fourth Vote then, growls indignant Patriotism:—this vote, and who knows what other votes, and adjournments of voting; and the whole matter still hovering hypothetical! And at every new vote those Jesuit Girondins, even they who voted for Death, would so fain find a loophole! Patriotism must watch and rage. Tyrannical adjournments there have been; one, and now another at midnight on plea of fatigue,—all Friday wasted in hesitation and higgling; in re-counting of the votes, which are found correct as they stood! Patriotism bays fiercer than ever; Patriotism, by long-watching, has become red-eyed, almost rabid.

"Delay: yes or no?" men do vote it finally, all Saturday, all day and night. Men's nerves are worn out, men's hearts are desperate; now it shall end. Vergniaud, spite of the baying, ventures to say Yes, Delay; though he had voted Death. Philippe Egalite says, in his soul and conscience, No. The next Member mounting: "Since Philippe says No, I for my part say Yes, *Moi je dis Oui.*" The balance still trembles. Till finally, at three o'clock on Sunday morning, we have: No Delay, by a majority of Seventy; Death within four-and-twenty hours!

Garat Minister of Justice has to go to the Temple, with this stern message: he ejaculates repeatedly, "Quelle commission affreuse, What a frightful function!" (*Biographie des Ministres*, p. 157.) Louis begs for a Confessor; for yet three days of life, to prepare himself to die. The Confessor is granted; the three days and all respite are refused.

There is no deliverance, then? Thick stone walls answer, None—Has King Louis no friends? Men of action, of courage grown desperate, in this his extreme need? King Louis's friends are feeble and far. Not even a voice in the coffeehouses rises for him. At Meot the Restaurateur's no Captain Dampmartin now dines; or sees death-doing whiskerandoes on furlough exhibit daggers of improved structure! Meot's gallant Royalists on furlough are far across the Marches; they are wandering distracted over the world: or their bones lie whitening Argonne Wood. Only some weak Priests 'leave Pamphlets on all the bournestones,' this night, calling for a rescue; calling for the pious women to rise; or are taken distributing Pamphlets, and sent to prison. (*See Prudhomme's Newspaper, Revolutions de Paris in Hist. Parl. xxiii. 318.*)

Nay there is one death-doer, of the ancient Meot sort, who, with effort, has done even less and worse: slain a Deputy, and set all the Patriotism of Paris on edge! It was five on Saturday evening when Lepelletier St. Fargeau, having given his vote, No Delay, ran over to Fevrier's in the Palais Royal to snatch a morsel of dinner. He had dined, and was paying. A thickset man 'with black hair and blue beard,' in a loose kind of frock, stepped up to him; it was, as Fevrier and the bystanders bethought them, one Paris of the old King's-Guard. "Are you Lepelletier?" asks he.—"Yes."—"You voted in the King's Business?"—"I voted Death."—"Scelerat, take that!" cries Paris, flashing out a sabre from under his frock, and plunging it deep in Lepelletier's side. Fevrier clutches him; but he breaks off; is gone.

The voter Lepelletier lies dead; he has expired in great pain, at one in the morning;—two hours before that Vote of no Delay was fully summed up! Guardsman Paris is flying over France; cannot be taken; will be found some months after, self-shot in a remote inn. (*Hist. Parl. xxiii. 275, 318; Felix Lepelletier, Vie de Michel Lepelletier son Frere*, p. 61. &c. *Felix, with due love of the miraculous, will have it that the Suicide in the inn was not Paris, but some double-ganger of his.*)—Robespierre sees reason to think that Prince d'Artois himself is privately in Town; that the Convention will be butchered in the lump. Patriotism sounds mere wail and vengeance: Santerre doubles and trebles all his patrols. Pity is lost in rage and fear; the Convention has refused the three days of life and all respite.

Chapter 8. Place de la Revolution.

To this conclusion, then, hast thou come, O hapless, Louis! The Son of Sixty Kings is to die on the Scaffold by form of law. Under Sixty Kings this same form of Law, form of Society, has been fashioning itself together, these thousand years; and has become, one way and other, a most strange Machine. Surely, if needful, it is also frightful this Machine; dead, blind; not what it should be; which, with swift stroke, or by cold slow torture, has wasted the lives and souls of innumerable men. And behold now a King himself, or say rather Kinghood in his person, is to expire here in cruel tortures;—like a Phalaris shut in the belly of his own red-heated Brazen Bull! It is ever so; and thou shouldst know it, O haughty tyrannous man: injustice breeds injustice; curses and falsehoods do verily 'return always home,' wide as they may wander. Innocent Louis bears the sins of many generations: he too experiences that man's tribunal is not in this Earth; that if he had no Higher one, it were not well with him.

A King dying by such violence appeals impressively to the imagination; as the like must do, and ought to do. And yet at bottom it is not the King dying, but the Man! Kingship is a coat; the grand loss is of the skin. The man from whom you take his Life, to him can the whole combined world do more? Lally went on his hurdle, his mouth filled with a gag. Miserablest mortals, doomed for picking pockets, have a whole five-act Tragedy in them, in that dumb pain, as they go to the gallows, unregarded; they consume the cup of trembling down to the lees. For Kings and for Beggars, for the justly doomed and the unjustly, it is a hard thing to die. Pity them all: thy utmost pity with all aids and appliances and throne-and-scaffold contrasts, how far short is it of the thing pitied!

A Confessor has come; Abbe Edgeworth, of Irish extraction, whom the King knew by good report, has come promptly on this solemn mission. Leave the Earth alone, then, thou hapless King; it with its malice will go its way, thou also canst go thine. A hard scene yet remains: the parting with our loved ones. Kind hearts, environed in the same grim peril with us; to be left here! Let the Reader look with the eyes of Valet Clery, through these glass-doors, where also the Municipality watches; and see the cruellest of scenes:

'At half-past eight, the door of the ante-room opened: the Queen appeared first, leading her Son by the hand; then Madame Royale and Madame Elizabeth: they all flung themselves into the arms of the King. Silence reigned for some minutes; interrupted only by sobs. The Queen made a movement to lead his Majesty towards the inner room, where M. Edgeworth was waiting unknown to them: "No," said the King, "let us go into the dining-room, it is there only that I can see you." They entered there; I shut the door of it, which was of glass. The King sat down, the Queen on his left hand, Madame Elizabeth on his right, Madame Royale almost in front; the young Prince remained standing between his Father's legs. They all leaned towards him, and often held him embraced. This scene of woe lasted an hour and three-quarters; during which we could hear nothing; we could see only that always when the King spoke, the sobbings of the Princesses redoubled, continued for some minutes; and that then the King began again to speak.' (*Clery's Narrative* (London, 1798), *cited in Weber*, iii. 312.)—And so our meetings and our partings do now end! The sorrows we gave each other; the poor joys we faithfully shared, and all our lovings and our sufferings, and confused toilings under the earthly Sun, are over. Thou good soul, I shall never, never through all ages of Time, see thee any more!—NEVER! O Reader, knowest thou that hard word?

For nearly two hours this agony lasts; then they tear themselves asunder. "Promise that you will see us on the morrow." He promises:—Ah yes, yes; yet once; and go now, ye loved ones; cry to God for yourselves and me!—It was a hard scene, but it is over. He will not see them on the morrow. The Queen in passing through the ante-room glanced at the Cerberus Municipals; and with woman's vehemence, said through her tears, "Vous etes tous des scelerats."

King Louis slept sound, till five in the morning, when Clery, as he had been ordered, awoke him. Clery dressed his hair. While this went forward, Louis took a ring from his watch, and kept trying it on his finger; it was his wedding-ring, which he is now to return to the Queen as a mute farewell. At half-past six, he took the Sacrament; and continued in devotion, and conference with Abbe Edgeworth. He will not see his Family: it were too hard to bear.

At eight, the Municipals enter: the King gives them his Will and messages and effects; which they, at first, brutally refuse to take charge of: he gives them a roll of gold pieces, a hundred and twenty-five louis; these are to be returned to Malesherbes, who had lent them. At nine, Santerre says the hour is come. The King begs yet to retire for three minutes. At the end of three minutes, Santerre again says the hour is come. 'Stamping on the ground with his right foot, Louis answers: "Partons, let us go."—How the rolling of those drums comes in, through the Temple bastions and bulwarks, on the heart of a queenly wife; soon to be a widow! He is gone, then, and has not seen us? A Queen weeps bitterly; a King's Sister and Children. Over all these Four does Death also hover: all shall perish miserably save one; she, as Duchesse d'Angouleme, will live,—not happily.

At the Temple Gate were some faint cries, perhaps from voices of pitiful women: "Grace! Grace!" Through the rest of the streets there is silence as of the grave. No man not armed is allowed to be there: the armed, did any even pity, dare not express it, each man overawed by all his neighbours. All windows are down, none seen looking through them. All shops are shut. No wheel-carriage rolls this morning, in these streets but one only. Eighty thousand armed men stand ranked, like armed statues of men; cannons bristle, cannoners with match burning, but no word or movement: it is as a city enchanted into silence and stone; one carriage with its escort, slowly rumbling, is the only sound. Louis reads, in his Book of Devotion, the Prayers of the Dying: clatter of this death-march falls sharp on the ear, in the great silence; but the thought would fain struggle heavenward, and forget the Earth.

As the clocks strike ten, behold the Place de la Revolution, once Place de Louis Quinze: the Guillotine, mounted near the old Pedestal where once stood the Statue of that Louis! Far round, all bristles with cannons and armed men: spectators crowding in the rear; d'Orleans Egalite there in cabriolet. Swift messengers, hoquetons, speed to the Townhall, every three minutes: near by is the Convention sitting,—vengeful for Lepelletier. Heedless of all, Louis reads his Prayers of the Dying; not till five minutes yet has he finished; then the Carriage opens. What temper he is in? Ten different witnesses will give ten different accounts of it. He is in the collision of all tempers; arrived now at the black Mahlstrom and descent of Death: in sorrow, in indignation, in resignation struggling to be resigned. "Take care of M. Edgeworth," he straitly charges the Lieutenant who is sitting with them: then they two descend.

The drums are beating: "Taisez-vous, Silence!" he cries 'in a terrible voice, d'une voix terrible.' He mounts the scaffold, not without delay; he is in puce coat, breeches of grey, white stockings. He strips off the coat; stands disclosed in a sleeve-waistcoat of white flannel. The Executioners approach to bind him: he spurns, resists; Abbe Edgeworth has to remind him how the Saviour, in whom men trust,

submitted to be bound. His hands are tied, his head bare; the fatal moment is come. He advances to the edge of the Scaffold, 'his face very red,' and says: "Frenchmen, I die innocent: it is from the Scaffold and near appearing before God that I tell you so. I pardon my enemies; I desire that France—" A General on horseback, Santerre or another, prances out with uplifted hand: "Tambours!" The drums drown the voice. "Executioners do your duty!" The Executioners, desperate lest themselves be murdered (*for Santerre and his Armed Ranks will strike, if they do not*), seize the hapless Louis: six of them desperate, him singly desperate, struggling there; and bind him to their plank. Abbe Edgeworth, stooping, bespeaks him: "Son of Saint Louis, ascend to Heaven." The Axe clanks down; a King's Life is shorn away. It is Monday the 21st of January 1793. He was aged Thirty-eight years four months and twenty-eight days. (*Newspapers, Municipal Records, &c. &c. in Hist. Parl. xxiii. 298-349*) Deux Amis (*ix. 369-373*), Mercier (*Nouveau Paris, iii. 3-8.*)

Executioner Samson shews the Head: fierce shout of Vive la Republique rises, and swells; caps raised on bayonets, hats waving: students of the College of Four Nations take it up, on the far Quais; fling it over Paris. Orleans drives off in his cabriolet; the Townhall Councillors rub their hands, saying, "It is done, It is done." There is dipping of handkerchiefs, of pike-points in the blood. Headsman Samson, though he afterwards denied it, (*His Letter in the Newspapers, Hist. Parl. ubi supra.*) sells locks of the hair: fractions of the puce coat are long after worn in rings. (*Forster's Briefwechsel, i. 473.*)—And so, in some half-hour it is done; and the multitude has all departed. Pastrycooks, coffee-sellers, milkmen sing out their trivial quotidian cries: the world wags on, as if this were a common day. In the coffeehouses that evening, says Prudhomme, Patriot shook hands with Patriot in a more cordial manner than usual. Not till some days after, according to Mercier, did public men see what a grave thing it was.

A grave thing it indisputably is; and will have consequences. On the morrow morning, Roland, so long steeped to the lips in disgust and chagrin, sends in his demission. His accounts lie all ready, correct in black-on-white to the uttermost farthing: these he wants but to have audited, that he might retire to remote obscurity to the country and his books. They will never be audited those accounts; he will never get retired thither.

It was on Tuesday that Roland demitted. On Thursday comes Lepelletier St. Fargeau's Funeral, and passage to the Pantheon of Great Men. Notable as the wild pageant of a winter day. The Body is borne aloft, half-bare; the winding sheet disclosing the death-wound: sabre and bloody clothes parade themselves; a 'lugubrious music' wailing harsh naeniae. Oak-crowns shower down from windows; President Vergniaud walks there, with Convention, with Jacobin Society, and all Patriots of every colour, all mourning brotherlike.

Notable also for another thing, this Burial of Lepelletier: it was the last act these men ever did with concert! All Parties and figures of Opinion, that agitate this distracted France and its Convention, now stand, as it were, face to face, and dagger to dagger; the King's Life, round which they all struck and battled, being hurled down. Dumouriez, conquering Holland, growls ominous discontent, at the head of Armies. Men say Dumouriez will have a King; that young d'Orleans Egalite shall be his King. Deputy Fauchet, in the Journal des Amis, curses his day, more bitterly than Job did; invokes the poniards of Regicides, of 'Arras Vipers' or Robespierres, of Pluto Dantons, of horrid Butchers Legendre and Simulacra d'Herbois, to send him swiftly to another world than theirs. (*Hist. Parl. ubi supra.*) This is Te-Deum Fauchet, of the Bastille Victory, of the Cercle Social. Sharp was the death-hail rattling round one's Flag-of-truce, on that Bastille day: but it was soft to such wreckage of high Hope as this; one's New Golden Era going down in leaden dross, and sulphurous black of the

Everlasting Darkness!

At home this Killing of a King has divided all friends; and abroad it has united all enemies. Fraternity of Peoples, Revolutionary Propagandism; Atheism, Regicide; total destruction of social order in this world! All Kings, and lovers of Kings, and haters of Anarchy, rank in coalition; as in a war for life. England signifies to Citizen Chauvelin, the Ambassador or rather Ambassador's-Cloak, that he must quit the country in eight days. Ambassador's-Cloak and Ambassador, Chauvelin and Talleyrand, depart accordingly. (*Annual Register of 1793*, pp. 114-128.) Talleyrand, implicated in that Iron Press of the Tuileries, thinks it safest to make for America.

England has cast out the Embassy: England declares war,—being shocked principally, it would seem, at the condition of the River Scheldt. Spain declares war; being shocked principally at some other thing; which doubtless the Manifesto indicates. (23d March, *Annual Register*, p. 161.) Nay we find it was not England that declared war first, or Spain first; but that France herself declared war first on both of them; (1st February; 7th March, *Moniteur of these dates*.)—a point of immense Parliamentary and Journalistic interest in those days, but which has become of no interest whatever in these. They all declare war. The sword is drawn, the scabbard thrown away. It is even as Danton said, in one of his all-too gigantic figures: "The coalised Kings threaten us; we hurl at their feet, as gage of battle, the Head of a King."

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