

out a sign ; as the house-cricket might still chirp in the pealing of a Trump of Doom. "Monsieur," said some Master of Ceremonies (one hopes it might be De Brézé), as Lafayette, in these fearful moments, was rushing towards the inner Royal Apartments, "*Monsieur, le Roi vous accorde les grandes entrées,*"—not finding it convenient to refuse them !⁴

CHAPTER XI.

FROM VERSAILLES.

HOWEVER, the Paris National Guard, wholly under arms, has cleared the Palace, and even occupies the nearer external spaces ; extruding miscellaneous Patriotism, for most part, into the Grand Court, or even into the Forecourt.

The Bodyguards, you can observe, have now of a verity 'hoisted the National Cockade : ' for they step forward to the windows or balconies, hat aloft in hand, on each hat a huge tricolor ; and fling over their bandoleers in sign of surrender ; and shout *Vive la Nation*. To which how can the generous heart respond but with, *Vive le Roi ; vivent les Gardes-du-Corps ?* His Majesty himself has appeared with Lafayette on the balcony, and again appears : *Vive le Roi* greets him from all throats ; but also from some one throat is heard, "*Le Roi à Paris, The King to Paris !*"

Her Majesty too, on demand, shows herself, though there is peril in it : she steps out on the balcony, with her little boy and girl. "No children, *Point d'enfans !*" cry the voices. She gently pushes back her children ; and stands alone, her hands serenely crossed on her breast : "Should I die," she had said, "I will do it." Such serenity of heroism has its effect. Lafayette, with ready wit, in his highflown chivalrous way, takes that fair queenly hand, and, reverently kneeling, kisses it : thereupon the people do shout *Vive la Reine*. Nevertheless, poor Weber 'saw' (or even thought he saw ; for hardly the third part of poor Weber's experiences, in such hysterical days, will stand scrutiny) 'one of these brigands level his musket at her

⁴ Toulangeon, i. App. 120.

Majesty,'—with or without intention to shoot; for another of the brigands 'angrily struck it down.'

So that all, and the Queen herself, nay the very Captain of the Bodyguards, have grown National! The very Captain of the Bodyguards steps out now with Lafayette. On the hat of the repentant man is an enormous tricolor; large as a soup-platter or sunflower; visible to the utmost Forecourt. He takes the National Oath with a loud voice, elevating his hat; at which sight all the army raise their bonnets on their bayonets, with shouts. Sweet is reconciliation to the heart of man. Lafayette has sworn Flandre; he swears the remaining Bodyguards, down in the Marble Court; the people clasp them in their arms:—O my brothers, why would ye force us to slay you? Behold, there is joy over you, as over returning prodigal sons!—The poor Bodyguards, now National and tricolor, exchange bonnets, exchange arms; there shall be peace and fraternity. And still "*Vive le Roi*;" and also "*Le Roi à Paris*," not now from one throat, but from all throats as one, for it is the heart's wish of all mortals.

Yes, *The King to Paris*: what else? Ministers may consult, and National Deputies wag their heads: but there is now no other possibility. You have forced him to go willingly. "At one o'clock!" Lafayette gives audible assurance to that purpose; and universal Insurrection, with immeasurable shout, and a discharge of all the fire-arms, clear and rusty, great and small, that it has, returns him acceptance. What a sound; heard for leagues: a doom-peal!—That sound too rolls away; into the Silence of Ages. And the Château of Versailles stands ever since vacant, hushed-still; its spacious Courts grassgrown, responsive to the hoe of the weeder. Times and generations roll on, in their confused Gulf-current; and buildings, like builders, have their destiny.

Till one o'clock, then, there will be three parties, National Assembly, National Rascality, National Royalty, all busy enough. Rascality rejoices; women trim themselves with tricolor. Nay motherly Paris has sent her Avengers sufficient 'cartloads of loaves;' which are shouted over, which are gratefully consumed. The Avengers, in return, are searching for grain-stores; loading them in fifty wagons; that so a National King, probable

harbinger of all blessings, may be the evident bringer of plenty, for one.

And thus has Sansculottism made prisoner its King; *revoking* his parole. The Monarchy has fallen; and not so much as honourably: no, ignominiously; with struggle, indeed, oft-repeated; but then with unwise struggle; wasting its strength in fits and paroxysms; at every new paroxysm foiled more pitifully than before. Thus Broglie's whiff of grapeshot, which might have been something, has dwindled to the pot-valour of an Opera Repast, and *O Richard, O mon Roi*. Which, again, we shall see dwindle to a Favras Conspiracy, a thing to be settled by the hanging of one Chevalier.

Poor Monarchy! But what save foulest defeat can await that man, who wills, and yet wills not? Apparently the King either has a right, assertible as such to the death, before God and man; or else he has no right. Apparently, the one or the other; could he but know which! May Heaven pity him! Were Louis wise, he would this day abdicate.—Is it not strange so few Kings abdicate; and none yet heard of has been known to commit suicide? Fritz the First, of Prussia, alone tried it; and they cut the rope.¹

As for the National Assembly, which decrees this morning that it 'is inseparable from his Majesty,' and will follow him to Paris, there may one thing be noted: its extreme want of bodily health. After the Fourteenth of July there was a certain sickliness observable among honourable Members; so many demanding passports, on account of infirm health. But now, for these following days, there is a perfect murrain: President Mounier, Lally Tollendal, Clermont Tonnerre, and all Constitutional Two-Chamber Royalists needing change of air; as most No-Chamber Royalists had formerly done.

For, in truth, it is the *second Emigration* this that has now come; most extensive among Commons Deputies, Noblesse, Clergy: so that 'to Switzerland alone there go sixty thousand.' They will return in the day of accounts! Yes, and have hot welcome.—But Emigration on Emigration is the peculiarity of

¹ Calumnious rumour, current long since, in loose vehicles (*Edinburgh Review* on *Mémoires de Bastille*, for example), concerning Friedrich Wilhelm and his ways, then so mysterious and miraculous to many;—not the least truth in it! (*Note of 1868.*)

October 6th.

France. One Emigration follows another ; grounded on reasonable fear, unreasonable hope, largely also on childish pet. The highflyers have gone first, now the lower flyers ; and ever the lower will go, down to the crawlers. Whereby, however, cannot our National Assembly so much the more commodiously make the Constitution ; your Two-Chamber Anglomaniacs being all safe, distant on foreign shores ? Abbé Maury is seized and sent back again : he, tough as tanned leather, with eloquent Captain Cazalès and some others, will stand it out for another year.

But here, meanwhile, the question arises : Was Philippe d'Orléans seen, this day, 'in the Bois de Boulogne, in gray surtout ;' waiting under the wet sere foliage, what the day might bring forth ? Alas, yes, the Eidolon of him was,—in Weber's and other such brains. The Châtelet shall make large inquisition into the matter, examining a hundred and seventy witnesses, and Deputy Chabroud publish his Report ; but disclose nothing *farther*.² What, then, has caused these two unparalleled October Days ? For surely such dramatic exhibition never yet enacted itself without Dramatist and Machinist. Wooden Punch emerges not, with his domestic sorrows, into the light of day, unless the wire be pulled : how can human mobs ? Was it not D'Orléans, then, and Laclos, Marquis Sillery, Mirabeau and the sons of confusion ; hoping to drive the King to Metz, and gather the spoil ? Nay was it not, quite contrariwise, the Œil-de-Bœuf, Bodyguard Colonel de Guiche, Minister Saint-Priest and high-flying Loyalists ; hoping also to drive him to Metz, and try it by the sword of civil war ? Good Marquis Toulougeon, the Historian and Deputy, feels constrained to admit that it was *both*.³

Alas, my Friends, credulous incredulity is a strange matter. But when a whole Nation is smitten with Suspicion, and sees a dramatic miracle in the very operation of the gastric juices, what help is there ? Such Nation is already a mere hypochondriac bundle of diseases ; as good as changed into glass ; atrabiliar, decadent ; and will suffer crises. Is not Suspicion itself the one thing to be suspected, as Montaigne feared only fear ?

Now, however, the short hour has struck. His Majesty is

² *Rapport de Chabroud* (*Moniteur*, du 31 Decembre 1789).

³ Toulougeon, i. 150.

in his carriage, with his Queen, sister Elizabeth and two royal children. Not for another hour can the infinite Procession get marshalled and under way. The weather is dim drizzling; the mind confused; the noise great.

Processional marches not a few our world has seen; Roman triumphs and ovations, Cabiric cymbal-beatings, Royal progresses, Irish funerals; but this of the French Monarchy marching to its bed remained to be seen. Miles long, and of breadth losing itself in vagueness, for all the neighbouring country crowds to see. Slow; stagnating along, like shoreless Lake, yet with a noise like Niagara, like Babel and Bedlam. A splashing and a tramping; a hurraing, uproaring, musket-volleying;—the truest segment of Chaos seen in these latter Ages! Till slowly it disembogue itself, in the thickening dusk, into expectant Paris, through a double row of faces all the way from Passy to the Hôtel-de-Ville.

Consider this: Vanguard of National troops; with trains of artillery; of pikemen and pikewomen, mounted on cannons, on carts, hackney-coaches, or on foot;—tripudiating, in tricolor ribbons from head to heel; loaves stuck on the points of bayonets, green boughs stuck in gun-barrels.⁴ Next, as main-march, 'fifty cart-loads of corn,' which have been lent, for peace, from the stores of Versailles. Behind which follow stragglers of the Garde-du-Corps; all humiliated, in Grenadier bonnets. Close on these comes the Royal Carriage; come Royal Carriages: for there are a Hundred National Deputies too, among whom sits Mirabeau,—his remarks not given. Then finally, pellmell, as rear-guard, Flandre, Swiss, Hundred Swiss, other Bodyguards, Brigands, whosoever cannot get before. Between and among all which masses flows without limit Saint-Antoine and the Menadic Cohort. Menadic especially about the Royal Carriage; tripudiating there, covered with tricolor; singing 'allusive songs;' pointing with one hand to the Royal Carriage, which the allusions hit, and pointing to the Provision-wagons with the other hand, and these words: "Courage, Friends! We shall not want bread now; we are bringing you the Baker, the Bakeress and Baker's-boy (*le Boulanger, la Boulangère et le petit Mitron*)."⁵

⁴ Mercier, *Nouveau Paris*, iii. 21.

⁵ Toulangeon, i. 134-161; *Deux Amis*, iii. c. 9; &c. &c.

The wet day draggles the tricolor, but the joy is unextinguishable. Is not all well now? "*Ah, Madame, notre bonne Reine,*" said some of these Strong-women some days hence, "Ah, Madame, our good Queen, don't be a traitor any more (*ne soyez plus traître*), and we will all love you!" Poor Weber went splashing along, close by the Royal Carriage, with the tear in his eye: 'their Majesties did me the honour,' or I thought they did it, 'to testify, from time to time, by shrugging 'of the shoulders, by looks directed to Heaven, the emotions 'they felt.' Thus, like frail cockle, floats the royal Life-boat, helmless, on black deluges of Rascality.

Mercier, in his loose way, estimates the Procession and assistants at two hundred thousand. He says it was one boundless inarticulate Haha;—*transcendent* World-Laughter; comparable to the Saturnalia of the Ancients. Why not? Here too, as we said, is Human Nature once more human; shudder at it whose is of shuddering humour; yet, behold, it is human. It has 'swallowed all formulas;' it tripudiates even so. For which reason they that collect Vases and Antiques, with figures of Dancing Bacchantes 'in wild and all-but impossible positions,' may look with some interest on it.

Thus, however, has the slow-moving Chaos, or modern Saturnalia of the Ancients, reached the Barrier; and must halt, to be harangued by Mayor Bailly. Thereafter it has to lumber along, between the double row of faces, in the transcendent heaven-lashing Haha; two hours longer, towards the Hôtel-de-Ville. Then again to be harangued there, by several persons; by Moreau de Saint-Méry among others; Moreau of the Three-thousand orders, now National Deputy for St. Domingo. To all which poor Louis, 'who seemed to experience a slight emotion' on entering this Townhall, can answer only that he "comes with pleasure, with confidence among his people." Mayor Bailly, in reporting it, forgets 'confidence:' and the poor Queen says eagerly: "Add, with confidence."—"Messieurs," rejoins Mayor Bailly, "you are happier than if I had not forgotten."

Finally, the King is shown on an upper balcony, by torchlight, with a huge tricolor in his hat: 'and all the people,' says Weber, 'grasped one another's hand;'—thinking *now* surely the New Era was born. Hardly till eleven at night can Royalty

get to its vacant, long-deserted Palace of the Tuileries ; to lodge there, somewhat in strolling-player fashion. It is Tuesday the 6th of October 1789.

Poor Louis has Two other Paris Processions to make : one ludicrous-ignominious like this ; the other not ludicrous nor ignominious, but serious, nay sublime.

END OF VOL. I.



