

The Online Library of Liberty

A Project Of Liberty Fund, Inc.

Gouverneur Morris, *The Diary and Letters of
Gouverneur Morris, vol. 1* [1888]



The Online Library Of Liberty

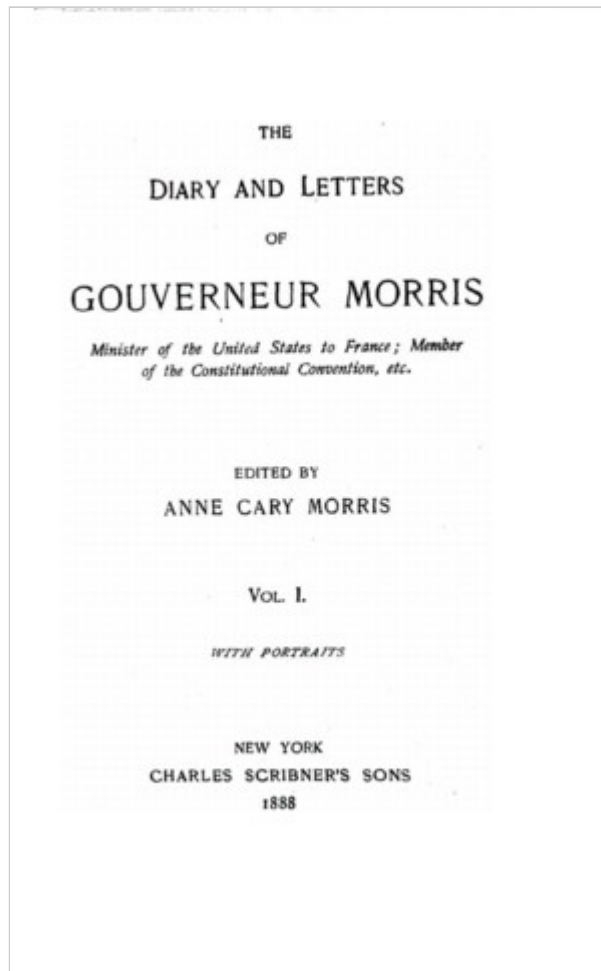
This E-Book (PDF format) is published by Liberty Fund, Inc., a private, non-profit, educational foundation established in 1960 to encourage study of the ideal of a society of free and responsible individuals. 2010 was the 50th anniversary year of the founding of Liberty Fund.

It is part of the Online Library of Liberty web site <http://oll.libertyfund.org>, which was established in 2004 in order to further the educational goals of Liberty Fund, Inc. To find out more about the author or title, to use the site's powerful search engine, to see other titles in other formats (HTML, facsimile PDF), or to make use of the hundreds of essays, educational aids, and study guides, please visit the OLL web site. This title is also part of the Portable Library of Liberty DVD which contains over 1,000 books and quotes about liberty and power, and is available free of charge upon request.

The cuneiform inscription that appears in the logo and serves as a design element in all Liberty Fund books and web sites is the earliest-known written appearance of the word “freedom” (amagi), or “liberty.” It is taken from a clay document written about 2300 B.C. in the Sumerian city-state of Lagash, in present day Iraq.

To find out more about Liberty Fund, Inc., or the Online Library of Liberty Project, please contact the Director at oll@libertyfund.org.

LIBERTY FUND, INC.
8335 Allison Pointe Trail, Suite 300
Indianapolis, Indiana 46250-1684



Edition Used:

The Diary and Letters of Gouverneur Morris, Minister of the United States to France; Member of the Constitutional Convention, ed. Anne Cary Morris (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1888). 2 vols. Vol. 1.

Author: [Gouverneur Morris](#)

Editor: [Anne Cary Morris](#)

About This Title:

Volume 1 of a two volume diary which Morris kept while he was Minister to France for the new American Republic from 1792-94. It provides much detail about the social life and political turmoil of Paris during a critical phase of the French Revolution.

About Liberty Fund:

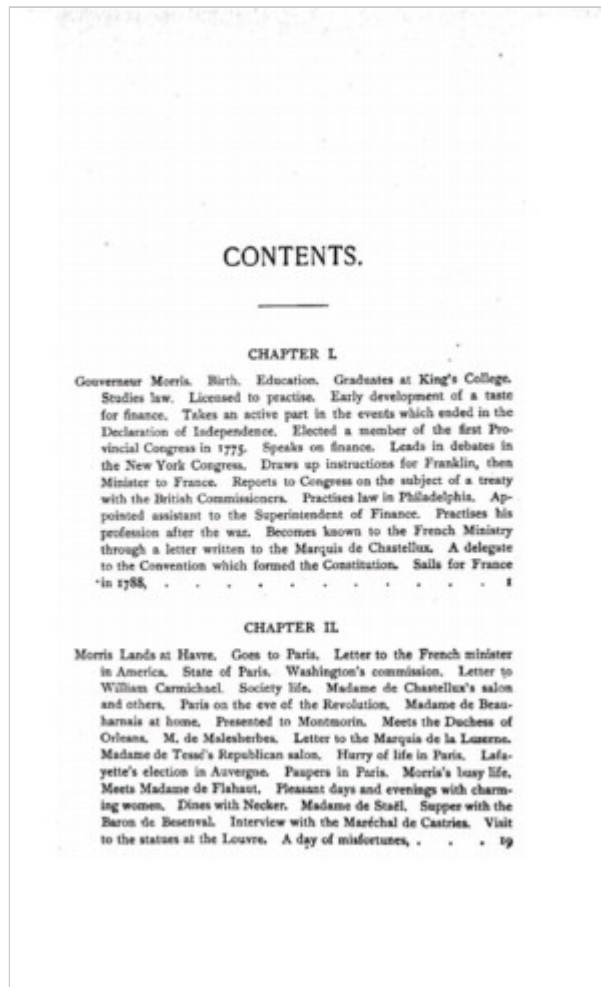
Liberty Fund, Inc. is a private, educational foundation established to encourage the study of the ideal of a society of free and responsible individuals.

Copyright Information:

The text is in the public domain.

Fair Use Statement:

This material is put online to further the educational goals of Liberty Fund, Inc. Unless otherwise stated in the Copyright Information section above, this material may be used freely for educational and academic purposes. It may not be used in any way for profit.



CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I

Gouverneur Morris. Birth. Education. Graduates at King's College. Studies law. Licensed to practise. Early development of a taste for finance. Takes an active part in the events which ended in the Declaration of Independence. Elected a member of the first Provincial Congress in 1775. Speaks on finance. Leads in debates in the New York Congress. Draws up instructions for Franklin, then Minister to France. Reports to Congress on the subject of a treaty with the British Commissioners. Practises law in Philadelphia. Appointed assistant to the Superintendent of Finance. Practises his profession after the war. Becomes known to the French Ministry through a letter written to the Marquis de Castellux. A delegate to the Convention which formed the Constitution. Sails for France in 1788. 1

CHAPTER II

Morris Lands at Havre. Goes to Paris. Letter to the French minister in America. State of Paris. Washington's commission. Letter to William Carmichael. Society life. Madame de Castellux's salon and others. Paris on the eve of the Revolution. Madame de Beaumais at home. Presented to Montmorin. Meets the Duchess of Orleans. M. de Malesherbes. Letter to the Marquis de la Luzerne. Madame de Tessa's Republican salon. Hurry of life in Paris. Lafayette's election in Auvergne. Passers in Paris. Morris's lousy life. Meets Madame de Flahaut. Pleasant days and evenings with charming women. Dines with Necker. Madame de Staël. Supper with the Baron de Besenval. Interview with the Maréchal de Castries. Visit to the statues at the Louvre. A day of misfortunes. . . . 19

Table Of Contents

- [Preface](#)
- [The Diary and Letters of Gouverneur Morris](#)
- [Chapter I.](#)
- [Chapter II.](#)
- [Chapter III.](#)
- [Chapter IV.](#)
- [Chapter V.](#)
- [Chapter VI.](#)
- [Chapter VII.](#)
- [Chapter VIII.](#)
- [Chapter IX.](#)
- [Chapter X.](#)
- [Chapter XI.](#)
- [Chapter XII.](#)
- [Chapter XIII.](#)
- [Chapter XIV.](#)
- [Chapter XV.](#)
- [Chapter XVI.](#)
- [Chapter XVII.](#)
- [Chapter XVIII.](#)
- [Chapter XIX.](#)
- [Chapter XX.](#)
- [Chapter XXI.](#)
- [Chapter XXII.](#)
- [Chapter XXIII.](#)
- [Chapter XXIV.](#)
- [Chapter XXV.](#)
- [Chapter XXVI.](#)



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

PREFACE

The desire which has been repeatedly expressed by persons cognizant of its existence, that the important and interesting manuscript left by Gouverneur Morris should be brought to light—the portion buried in Mr. Jared Sparks’s history as well as the large and more piquant part excluded therefrom—induced me to undertake the work of editing the diary and letters of my grandfather.

The chief object I had in view was to put in such a form as might prove attractive to the public his letters and the notes which he daily jotted down during that most momentous epoch of modern history—the period of the Revolution in France.

With no political principles to advance or maintain, and with no hero of romance or of the sword upon whose merits to descant, my effort was simply to cull, from a voluminous manuscript, all the varied and striking incidents in the world of politics in the cabinet, and of society in the boudoir and salon; and, by the light of the keen delineations of character, so full of the *verve* and essence of the moment, therein contained, to bring into strong relief the motives and actions of men and women.

Americans will doubtless accord a ready sympathy to a man who was truly an American, and at a time when thus to proclaim his principles attested an independence careless of unpopularity. Possibly, too, our kindred over seas may find something of interest in the career of one who, though a rebel against England, spent the best years of his life assisting in the formation of a government under which the poor of the earth might find an asylum, and whose views were consistently “favorable to the peace and happiness of mankind.”

Anne Cary Morris.

Old Morrisania, October, 1888.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

THE DIARY AND LETTERS OF GOUVERNEUR MORRIS

THE DIARY AND LETTERS OF GOUVERNEUR MORRIS

CHAPTER I.

Gouverneur Morris. Birth. Education. Graduates at King's College. Studies law. Licensed to practise. Early development of a taste for finance. Takes an active part in the events which ended in the Declaration of Independence. Elected a member of the first Provincial Congress in 1775. Speaks on finance. Leads in debates in the New York Congress. Draws up instructions for Franklin, then Minister to France. Reports to Congress on the subject of a treaty with the British Commissioners. Practises law in Philadelphia. Appointed assistant to the Superintendent of Finance. Practises his profession after the war. Becomes known to the French Ministry through a letter written to the Marquis de Chastellux. A delegate to the Convention which formed the Constitution. Sails for France in 1788.

Gouverneur Morris was born at Morrisania—to quote the record made by his father in the family Bible—“On the 31 of January about half an hour after one of the Clock in the morning, in the year 1752, according to the alteration of the style, by act of Parliament, and was christened the 4 of May 1754, and given his mother's name.” Gouverneur's father probably discovered signs of unusual promise in the boy; for in his will, which is dated November 19, 1760, is the following request: “It is my desire that my son, Gouverneur Morris, may have the best education that is to be had in England or America.” Lewis Morris died when his son was twelve years old, and the care of his education, in consequence, devolved upon his mother. Great pains were taken that his training should be of a kind to fit him for any career that might open for him.

When quite a child he was placed in the family of Monsieur Tetar, at New Rochelle; and here he laid the foundation of a thorough knowledge of the French language, which, in after life, he spoke and wrote with much fluency and correctness. In 1768 Morris graduated at King's College (now Columbia), and immediately after graduating he studied law in the office of William Smith, afterwards Chief Justice of the Province of New York, but better known as Colonial historian of the State.

The bar was undoubtedly the profession where the qualities of Morris's mind, his vigorous and penetrating intelligence, were most likely to excel. His elocution was animated and persuasive, his voice sonorous and pleasing, his figure tall and exceedingly graceful; all the attributes of an orator seemed to have fallen to his share.

Ambitious to excel, full of hope, with perfect confidence in his own powers, and therefore entire self-possession, it was possible for him to say, with all sincerity, that in his intercourse with men he never knew the sensations of fear, embarrassment, or inferiority.

Licensed to practise as an attorney-at-law full three months before he was twenty, in 1771, his ambition was to make for himself a distinguished position at the Colonial bar. Two years before this a series of anonymous articles on finance, occasioned by a plan proposed in the Assembly of New York to issue paper money, appeared in a newspaper. They all attracted much attention—but particularly one deprecating the evil of a paper currency as mischievous in its effects and wrong in principle, and only a means of postponing the day of payment, which should be met by substantial funds, collected from the province.

His studies completed and his admission to the bar secured, Morris's thoughts and desires turned toward Europe and foreign travel. "To rub off in the gay circles of foreign life a few of those many barbarisms which characterize a provincial education; to form some acquaintances that may hereafter be of service to me, to model myself after some persons who cut a figure in the law," were some of the reasons he gave his friend William Smith for wishing to go abroad. In further excuse of the scheme he says: "I have somehow or other been so hurried through the different scenes of childhood and youth, that I have still some time left to pause before I tread the great stage of life, and you know how much our conduct there depends upon the mode of our education. It is needless to add that my inclinations have taken part in the debate." His friend evidently saw serious difficulties in the way—principally pecuniary, for he told him that his mother must give up much before he could have his wish, and advised him, even when the guineas lay at his feet, to "think! think! think!" The voyage was abandoned for the time, and for the next three years Morris applied himself closely to his profession.

These were stirring times, the colonies and the mother country were disputing, a rupture was imminent, the port of Boston was already closed. His aristocratic relations, rather than, as is generally supposed, his Tory antecedents, led him to advocate a reconciliation rather than a break with the mother country, and in June, 1775, when this question occupied a large share of the attention of the Provincial Congress of New York, he was made a member of a committee to draft a plan to settle all difficulties with Great Britain. In a paper written in 1774 he says: "Taxation is the chief bar, and a safe compact seems in my poor opinion to be now tendered—internal taxation to be left with ourselves. Reunion between the two countries is essential to both—I say *essential*. It is for the interest of all men to seek reunion with the parent State. The spirit of the English constitution has yet a little influence left, and but a little. The remains of it will give the wealthy people a superiority this time, but would they secure it, they must banish all schoolmasters, and confine all knowledge to themselves. This cannot be—the mob begin to think—the gentry begin to fear this—their committee will be appointed—they will deceive the people and again forfeit a share of their confidence. And if these are instances of what with one side is policy, with the other perfidy, farewell aristocracy. I see, and I see it with fear and

trembling, that if the disputes with Britain continue, we shall be under the worst of all possible dominions—the dominion of a riotous mob!”

When the crisis finally came, Morris, illustrating the justice of Madison’s subsequent eulogy of him, namely, that “to the brilliancy of his genius was added what is too rare, a candid surrender of his opinions, when the lights of discussion satisfied him,” came promptly forward to aid his country in the struggle, and from that moment he was to be found among the patriots who were bravest and most constant. He was already an expert in finance, and at once rendered most efficient service in drawing up a plan to raise money for the expenses of the army, and other military operations. This subject was one of the first and most important which occupied the attention of the members of the first Provincial Congress of New York, to which he was elected a member in 1775. The extent of his knowledge of this exceedingly intricate subject surprised his fellow-workers on the committee, and when the report was read, before a large audience of interested persons, he spoke with a remarkable force and eloquence. His dignity and persuasive manner strongly appealed to the sympathy of his audience, and the young orator of twenty-three carried off the honors of the day. The report as it came from his pen was forwarded to the Continental Congress and adopted without amendment or change.

Matters had by this time come to such a pass, between England and her colonies, that in May of this year, 1776, the Continental Congress recommended to the various assemblies and conventions of the colonies, the adoption of such regular constitutions and forms of government as might best suit their several needs. In the third New York Congress, then assembled, Morris took the lead in the debates relative to the adoption of a new form of government. The Tory element in the Congress still feared to take any decided step that might show absolute disloyalty to the King. And among the many wealthy families owning large estates and with Tory proclivities, there was still a hope of at least a patched-up reconciliation with Great Britain. Up to this time, indeed, the question of independence had seemed scarcely a serious one. But Morris earnestly favored in the Congress the formation of a new government. He believed that the time had come to take such a step; that the dignity of a free people had been outraged by the oppressions of England; that to submit longer would be a crime against justice and a mockery of liberty. Fragments of a speech made by him during the course of the debates still exist, in which he touched upon the already hackneyed theme of reconciliation as the phantom which had long deluded the fancy of his associates in the Congress. “A connection with Great Britain cannot exist, and independence is absolutely necessary. . . . We run a hazard in one path I confess, but then we are infallibly ruined if we pursue the other. . . . Some, nay many, persons in America dislike the word Independence; for my own part I see no reason why Congress is not full as good a word as States-General—or Parliament; and it is a mighty easy matter to please people when a single sound will effect it. . . . It is quite a hackneyed topic boldly insisted on, though very lightly assumed, that the instant an American independence is declared we shall have all the powers of Europe on our backs. Experience, sir, has taught those powers and will teach them more clearly every day, that an American war is tedious, expensive, uncertain, and ruinous. Nations do not make war without some view. Should they be able to conquer America, it would cost them more to maintain such conquest, than the fee simple of

the country is worth.” He made a strong appeal for the political liberty of the country, which he thought might be secured by the simplest contrivance imaginable—“dividing the country into small districts, the annual election of members to Congress, and every member incapacitated from serving more than one year out of three. Why should we hesitate? Have you the least hope in treaty? Will you trust the Commissioners? Trust crocodiles, trust the hungry wolf in your flock or a rattlesnake near your bosom, you may yet be something wise. But trust the King, his Ministers, his Commissioners, it is madness in the extreme. Why will you trust them? Why force yourself to make a daily resort to arms? Is this miserable country to be plunged in an endless war? Must each revolving year come heavy laden with those dismal scenes which we have already witnessed? If so, farewell liberty, farewell virtue, farewell happiness!”

With the crisis in the affairs of the colonies in 1776, public sentiment in New York underwent a change, and five days after the Declaration of Independence the Congress of that Colony declared their intention to support that independence at all risks. When the Constitution of the State of New York was made, in August, 1776, Morris labored to introduce into it an article prohibiting domestic slavery, but he was not successful. A letter to his mother in this year expressed the deep feeling with which the prospect of the war filled him. “What may be the event of the present war,” he says, “it is not in man to determine. Great revolutions of empire are seldom achieved without much human calamity, but the worst which can happen is to fall on the last bleak mountain of America, and he who dies there, in defense of the injured rights of mankind, is happier than his conqueror, more beloved by mankind, more applauded by his own heart.”

After the new Constitution of New York had been adopted, Morris was elected a delegate to the Continental Congress, but owing to the critical state of affairs in his own State he was unable to attend. In October he was elected a second time. He had been in public life for nearly three years and had established a reputation for talents of no ordinary kind. Congress honored him the day he presented his credentials by appointing him one of a committee of five of great importance. The army with Washington at Valley Forge were discouraged and demoralized by the terrible winter, and there, in concert with the general-in-chief, a plan was prepared to reorganize the army, clothe and feed them, and regulate the medical department. Approved and adopted by Congress, the effects of the plan were soon manifest. During this winter which Morris spent at Valley Forge he formed a life-long and intimate friendship with Washington. After the occupation of New York by the British, he had been entirely cut off from his home at Morrisania; and the strong Tory proclivities of his friends subjected him to suspicion on the part of certain mischief-making persons. Mr. Jay wrote to him from Philadelphia; “Your enemies talk much of your Tory connections. Take care, do not unnecessarily expose yourself to calumny and perhaps indignity.” In reply Morris says, “As to the malevolence of individuals, it is what I have to expect, and is by no means a matter of surprise. But by laboring in the public service, so as to gain the applause of those whose applause is worth gaining I will have my revenge.” It was whispered abroad by his enemies that Morris’s letters to his mother, which had to pass through the British lines before they reached her, contained matter other than that intended for her and to the advantage of the enemy.

A curious history is told of a letter written to Mr. Morris, in 1775, by his brother-in-law in London, expressing his interest in Morris's career, bidding him deserve well of his country, and endeavor to insure peace and preserve good order. "The most vigorous preparations," he continued, warningly, "are making to carry on the war. The nation is united, although the pulse does not beat so high as if they were waging war against a foreign enemy." Detained at New York because addressed to a rebel, then sent to Halifax, the letter was thence despatched to New York by a vessel which was lost off the coast of New Jersey. The mail-bag drifted on the coast, and the letter found its way to Burlington, N. J. Morris heard of its existence and asked for it, but a mystery surrounded it, and its contents had something suspicious about them in the opinion of those who had read it. Eventually it was forwarded to Morris by the President of Pennsylvania, who had been prejudiced after reading it, although, during the three years that it had been drifting about, all Morris's energies had been given to resisting Great Britain and making the government secure. The letter is still preserved at Morrisania.

His letters to his mother were few and unimportant. In 1778 he wrote to her that since he had left Morrisania he had never heard directly from her, and "never had the satisfaction of knowing that of the many letters I have written, you have ever received one. It would give me infinite pleasure," he adds, "to hear of my friends, yourself in particular. But since it is my lot to know no more than the burthen of general report I must be contented. I received great pain from being informed that you are distressed on my account. Be of good cheer I pray you, I have all that happiness which flows from conscious rectitude. I would it were in my power to solace and comfort your declining years. The duty I owe to a tender parent demands this of me; but a higher duty has bound me to the service of my fellow creatures. The natural indolence of my disposition, has unfitted me for the paths of ambition, and the early possession of power has taught me how little it deserves to be prized. Whenever the present storm subsides I shall rush with eagerness into the bosom of private life, but while my country calls for the exertion of that little share of abilities which it has pleased God to bestow on me, I hold it my indispensable duty to give myself to her. I know that for such sentiments, which are not fashionable among the folks you see, I am called a rebel. I hope that your maternal tenderness may not lead you to wish that I would resign these sentiments. Let me entreat you, be not concerned on my account; I shall again see you—perhaps the time is not far off. Hope the best. Adieu."

Three years after this Mrs. Morris was dangerously ill. He earnestly desired to go to her, and she as earnestly desired to see her only son. But public opinion of both friends and foes was so strong against his making the visit that it was never made. Indeed, in order that his motives for contemplating this visit might be publicly known, he published a letter in the *Freeman's Journal* in which he plainly stated what may be called his "position" in these difficult circumstances, as follows: "In the year 1776 I left *all* for the sake of those principles which have justified and supported the revolution. This sacrifice was made without hesitation or regret, but it gave me real concern to leave an aged parent at the mercy of the enemy. It is true, I was for some time honored by my countrymen beyond my desert and beyond my ambition. When our prospects were very gloomy, I was deeply engaged in public business of an intricate nature, and placed in a variety of arduous and critical situations. I have

thought much, labored much, suffered much. In return I have been censured, reproached, slandered, goaded by abuse, blackened by calumny, and oppressed by public opinion. I have declined many pressing solicitations to visit my mother within the enemy's lines. But when a violent disease endangered her life, and I learnt of her anxiety to see me before her eyes were closed forever, I promised to go. The necessary passport of the British general was obtained, but not the permission of the President and Council of the State of Pennsylvania. But since my intentions are disagreeable to you, I will persist no longer. Having already devoted the better part of my life to your service, I will now sacrifice my feelings to your inclinations." After an absence of seven years, and only when peace was concluded, did Morris return to his mother, and his home. He reached Morrisania in time to help his mother prepare her claim of the estate for damages done there-to by the British army. Besides the large number of animals taken for food, timber had been cut on four hundred and seventy acres of woodland for ship-building, artillery, and firewood. The claim amounted to £8,000, but it was not paid during Mrs. Morris's life-time.

In October, 1778, Morris was intrusted with the task of drawing up the first instructions ever sent to an American minister. Dr. Franklin was then at the Court of Versailles. When the report of the American Commissioners abroad came in 1778, Morris was elected chairman of a committee of five to consider and report upon the so-called conciliatory propositions of Lord North offering to abandon the vexed point of taxation and to send commissioners to treat with the Americans. Morris drew up the report which declared that the United States could not treat with any commissioners from Great Britain unless British fleets and armies should be withdrawn and the independence of the United States acknowledged. This report, the most important during the war, was unanimously adopted by the Continental Congress and became the basis of the peace. As the time approached for the expiration of his term in Congress, rumors reached him that a scheme had been set on foot to defeat his re-election, principally on the ground that he had neglected the interests of his State for those of the general Government. He was advised to make a visit to the State legislature and attend to his interests there. This he did, but too late; he lost his election.

It is much to be regretted that he has left no record of his relations with the Government during these years, but from the multiplicity of his labors it seems remarkable that he could have found time to devote to the necessary practice of his profession. Years afterward, when applied to for some written account of the events of the Revolution in which he personally took part, he says: "I have no notes or memorandum of what passed during the war. I led then the most laborious life which can be imagined. This you will readily suppose to have been the case when I was engaged with my departed friend Robert Morris, in the office of finance, but what you will not so readily suppose is, that I was still more harassed while a member of Congress. Not to mention the attendance from 11 to 4 in the house, which was common to all, and the appointments to committees, of which I had a full share, I was at the same time Chairman, and of course did the business, of the Standing Committees; viz., on the commissary's, quartermaster's, and medical Departments. You must not imagine that the members of these committees took any share or burden of the affairs. Necessity, preserving the democratical forms, assumed the monarchical

substance of business. The Chairman received and answered all letters and other applications, took every step which he deemed essential, prepared reports, gave orders, and the like, and merely took the members of a committee into a chamber and for form's sake made the needful communications, and received their approbation which was given of course. I was moreover obliged to labor occasionally in my own profession as my wages were insufficient for my support. I would not trouble you, my dear sir, with this abstract of my situation, if it did not appear necessary to show you why, having so many near relations of my own blood in our armies, I kept no note of their services. Nay I could not furnish any tolerable memorandum of my own existence during that eventful period of American history."

After five years of active work in public affairs, Morris could not entirely dissociate himself from the great events of the day, and although, when he lost his election to Congress, he became a citizen of Philadelphia and settled down to the practice of his profession, his mind was still actively interested in the deplorable financial condition of the country, and he found time to write a series of essays in the *Pennsylvania Packet*, signed "An American." In these essays he discusses the currency, the coinage, the undesirability of a compulsory fixed value for paper money, and the banks of America; and it would be difficult to find a more comprehensive view of the financial proceedings of the old Congress, and the effects of the paper currency, than these essays contain.

In Philadelphia in May, 1780, while trying to control a pair of runaway horses, Morris was thrown from his phaëton, dislocated his ankle, and fractured the bones of his left leg. The two physicians who were called to him recommended an immediate amputation as the only means of saving his life, and, although this must have been a painful alternative for so young a man to contemplate, he submitted to the decree of the doctors with philosophy and even cheerfulness, and to the operation with extreme fortitude. The leg was taken off below the knee, and the operation has been cited by physicians knowing the particulars as most unskilful and hasty. The day after it took place a friend called upon him, full of sympathy and prepared to offer all the possible consolation on an event so melancholy. He painted in vivid words the good effect that such a trial should produce on his character and moral temperament, enlarging on the many temptations and pleasures of life into which young men are apt to be led, and of the diminished inducement Morris would now have to indulge in the enjoyment of such pleasures. "My good sir," replied Mr. Morris, "you argue the matter so handsomely and point out so clearly the advantages of being without legs, that I am almost tempted to part with the other." Morris seems to have felt the force of his friend's arguments in regard to the balancing effect on his character of the loss of a portion of his person, for to another friend, also deeply sympathetic and full of regret that he should have met with so grave a misfortune, he remarked: "Sir, the loss is much less than you imagine; I shall doubtless be a *steadier* man with one leg than with two." For the remainder of his life he wore a wooden leg, of primitive simplicity, not much more than a rough oak stick with a wooden knob on the end of it.

This simple contrivance, however, suited him better than any of more elaborate construction which he afterwards tried in Paris and London. Owing to this accident, when he was presented at Court at Paris he asked to be allowed to appear without a

sword, and, though a serious departure from court etiquette, the favor was granted. During one of the years of his ministry in Paris, when carriages were abolished as being aristocratic, and the chances were against the escape of any person discovered driving in one, Morris, who seems always to have defied the mob though by no means averse to saving his life, drove through the streets followed by hoots and cries of, "An aristocrat," and, quietly opening the door of his carriage, thrust out his wooden leg, and said: "An aristocrat! yes, truly, who lost his leg in the cause of American liberty;" whereat followed great applause from the mob.

When Robert Morris was made Superintendent of Finance, and Congress provided for an Assistant Superintendent, knowing intimately the character and abilities of his friend Gouverneur Morris, he at once made choice of him to fill the position. Together they labored to establish public credit and confidence, and with the small sum of four hundred thousand dollars they established, and Congress incorporated, the "Bank of North America." Gouverneur Morris says, in a letter to a friend not long before his death: "The first bank in this country was *planned* by your humble servant."

The serious charge was made against Morris, during the years of his connection with the Finance Department, that he was a monarchist and had advocated using the army to establish such a form of government. In a letter to General Nathaniel Greene, in 1781, he says: "Experience must at last induce the people of America if the war continues to entrust proper powers to the American Sovereign, having compelled that Sovereign reluctantly to relinquish the administration and entrust to their ministers the care of this immense republic. I say if the war continues or does not continue, I have no hope that the Government will acquire force; and I will go further, I have no hope that our Union can subsist except in the form of an absolute monarchy, and this does not seem to consist with the taste and temper of the people. From the same attachment to the happiness of mankind, which prompted my first efforts in this revolution, I am now induced to wish that Congress may be possessed of much more authority than has hitherto been delegated to them." He feared war between the States, "for near neighbors are very rarely good neighbors," and advocated a centralization of power; but his actions, as well as writings, are his best vindication from any wish to form a monarchy in America. His creed was rather to form the government to suit the condition, character, manners, and habits of the people. In France this opinion led him to take the monarchical view, firmly believing that a republican form of government would not suit the French character.

After the war was over, Morris retired from the position of Assistant to the Superintendent of the Finances of the United States and again betook himself to the practice of the law, intending to settle at New York; but various ties of business kept him in Philadelphia and more or less associated with Robert Morris, sometimes acting as his agent, sometimes on his own account. Together they devised plans and projects, new adventures of many kinds which promised success and pecuniary advancement. As early as 1782 Congress had instructed Robert Morris to report on the foreign coin then circulating in the United States. A letter with a full exposition of the subject was sent to Congress, officially signed by Robert Morris, but written, as Mr. Jefferson said, by the Assistant Superintendent of Finance. The most interesting part of this report was a new plan for an American coinage, which originated with Gouverneur

Morris, and which was, in fact, the basis of the system now in use. In 1784 it is worth noting that Morris became known to the French Ministry through two letters written to the Marquis de Chastellux in regard to the commercial relations between France and the United States, but particularly the West India trade. M. de Chastellux says: "Your letters have been communicated to M. le Maréchal de Castries, Minister of Marine, who is delighted with them; he told me that he had seen nothing superior or more full of powerful thought on the subject of government and politics."

In 1786 his mother, who had been an invalid for several years, died. By his father's will the estate of Morrisania, after the death of Mrs. Morris, devolved upon the second son, Staats Long Morris, who had married in England the Duchess of Gordon, and was a general in the British army. Lewis, the eldest son, had received his portion before his father's death, and, under his father's will General Morris, when he should become possessed of the property, was to pay a legacy of £7,000 to the other children. Of this sum £2,000 were to come to Gouverneur. General Morris was quite willing to part with Morrisania, never intending to live there, and Gouverneur determined to make the purchase. By the aid of loans and accommodations he became possessed of this estate and part of the general's lands in New Jersey. Commercial adventures, large shipments of tobacco to France, and other undertakings had already laid the foundation of a fortune.

In 1787, as a delegate from Pennsylvania, of which State he was, after a seven years' residence, considered a citizen, Morris took his seat in the Convention assembled for the great task of framing the Federal Constitution. But here again he made no notes, and left no account of his personal action in the Convention. In a letter to Colonel Pickering, written two years before his death, he says: "While I sat in the Convention my mind was too much occupied with the interests of our country to keep notes of what we had done; my faculties were on the stretch to further our business, remove impediments, obviate objections and conciliate jarring opinions." President Madison, in a letter to Jared Sparks, bears testimony to his endeavor to preserve harmony, and to his active and able assistance in that difficult and momentous work. "He certainly," says Madison, "did not incline to the democratic side, but contended for a senate elected for life," the suffrage to be given only to freeholders, and property to be represented. He vigorously opposed slavery, moved to insert the word "free" before "inhabitants," and denounced the slave system as a "nefarious institution, the curse of Heaven on all the states in which it prevails," boldly asserting that he never would concur in upholding the institution. In the same letter Madison says: "The finish given to the style and arrangement of the constitution fairly belongs to the pen of Mr. Morris. A better choice could not have been made, as the performance of the task proved. The talents and taste of the author were stamped on the face of it." Morris speaks in a manly way of the Constitution in a letter to a gentleman in France: "You will, ere this," said he, "have seen the Constitution proposed for the United States. I have many reasons to believe that it was the work of plain, honest men, and such I think it will appear. Faulty it must be, for what is perfect? Should it take effect, the affairs of this country will put on a much better aspect than they have yet worn, and America will soon be as much respected abroad as she has for some time past been disregarded."

During the winter of 1787 Morris was in Virginia superintending the mercantile affairs in which he and Robert Morris were jointly interested. It was necessary to have an agent on the spot who understood the business, to manage the shipment of tobacco to France, for which large contracts had been taken by the farmers-general. In November, 1788, Morris determined to take his "departure from Philadelphia for the Kingdom of France," he wrote to General Washington, who supplied him with letters of introduction to many persons, giving him also several commissions to execute for himself. Among them was one to purchase in Paris a gold watch for his own use. "Not a small, trifling nor a finical, ornamental one, but a watch well executed in point of workmanship, large, flat, and with a plain, handsome key," were the instructions. Morris sailed from Philadelphia in the ship *Henrietta*, and passed the Capes of Delaware on the 18th of December, 1788.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER II.

Morris Lands at Havre. Goes to Paris. Letter to the French minister in America. State of Paris. Washington's commission. Letter to William Carmichael. Society life. Madame de Chastellux's salon and others. Paris on the eve of the Revolution. Madame de Beauharnais at home. Presented to Montmorin. Meets the Duchess of Orleans. M. de Malesherbes. Letter to the Marquis de la Luzerne. Madame de Tessé's Republican salon. Hurry of life in Paris. Lafayette's election in Auvergne. Paupers in Paris. Morris's busy life. Meets Madame de Flahaut. Pleasant days and evenings with charming women. Dines with Necker. Madame de Staël, Supper with the Baron de Besenval. Interview with the Maréchal de Castries. Visit to the statues at the Louvre. A day of Misfortunes.

On Tuesday, the 27th of January, 1789, after a tempestuous voyage of forty days, the Henrietta entered the port of Havre. After landing, Morris at once sought out the persons who were engaged with Robert Morris in the tobacco and flour contracts, and the business he had undertaken for his friend was pushed forward with all the energy which was one of his strongest characteristics. Part of his work during the few days he spent at Havre was investigating the chances for speculation in wheat, of which there was, at the moment, he wrote, "an actual scarcity and a still greater expected." He immediately conceived and communicated to William Constable & Co., of New York, with whom he was in special partnership, a plan "for purchasing all the wheat on Hudson's river," and entered into arrangements by which it should reach France at the moment of the greatest demand—"thereby raising the price on the other side of the Atlantic." By the 3d of February he was in Paris, and settled at the Hôtel Richelieu, Rue de Richelieu. In his early letters and diary he says nothing whatever of his impressions of Paris—his entire attention and time were given to finding out from the firms of Le Normand and Bourdieu the reason of their failure to accept large consignments of tobacco for which they had contracted, and why his friend should be placed in a "situation unexampled for a man of his property."

His first allusion to Paris and public affairs in France is in a letter to the Comte de Moustier,* then in America, in which he speaks of the cordial reception the count's letters had procured him.

"The more I see of Paris," he wrote, "the more sensible I am of your sacrifice in leaving it to traverse a great ocean, and establish yourself with a people as yet too new to relish that society which forms here the delight of life. For devoting thus to the public service both your time and enjoyments, you have as yet been poorly recompensed. Your nation is now in a most important crisis, and the question, Shall we have a *constitution* or shall *will* continue to be law? employs every mind and agitates every heart in France. Even voluptuousness itself arises from its couch of roses and looks anxiously abroad, at the busy scene to which nothing can now be indifferent. Your nobles, your clergy, your people, are all in motion for the elections. A spirit which has lain dormant for generations starts up and stares about ignorant of the means of obtaining, but ardently desirous to possess the object, consequently

active, energetic, easily led, but, alas, easily, too easily, misled. Such is the instinctive love of freedom which now boils in the bosom of your country, that respect for his sovereign, which forms the distinctive mark of a Frenchman, stimulates and fortifies on the present occasion those sentiments which have hitherto been deemed most hostile to monarchy. For Louis the Sixteenth has himself proclaimed from the throne, a wish that every barrier should be thrown down which time or accident may have opposed to the general felicity of his people. It would be presumptuous in me even to guess at the effect of such causes, operating on materials and institutions of which I confess to you the most profound ignorance.

“I feel that I have already gone too far in attempting to describe what I think I have perceived. But before I quit the subject I must express the wish, the ardent wish, that this great ferment may terminate not only to the good but to the glory of France. On the scenes which her great theatre now displays, the eyes of the universe are fixed with anxiety. The national honor is deeply interested in a successful issue. Indulge me also, I pray, in conveying the opinion that until that issue is known, every arrangement both foreign and domestic must feel a panic. Horace tells us that in crossing the sea we change our climate not our souls. I can say what he could not; that I find on this side the Atlantic a strong resemblance to what I left on the other—a nation which exists in hopes, prospects, and expectations—the reverence for ancient establishments gone, existing forms shaken to the foundation, and a new order of things about to take place, in which, perhaps even to the very names, all former institutions will be disregarded.

“To judge of the present turmoil I can give you no better standard than by telling you, what is seriously true, that when I took up the pen it was to give you news of your friends, and to describe the impression made on my mind by the objects which necessarily present themselves in this great capital, I will not say of France, but of Europe. And have I done it? Yes, for the one great object in which all are engaged has swallowed up, like the rod of Aaron in Egypt, every other enchantment by which France was fascinated.”

It must have been a curious and melancholy spectacle which Paris presented to a thoughtful man and a foreigner; one, too, just from a society very new and decidedly affected by the Quaker element. The convulsion which was already shaking society to its foundation everywhere disturbed the atmosphere. Intrigues, social and political, were rife; the Court was sinking in a quicksand of pleasure. The king struggled, in a feeble way, to raise the moral standard, but not to any extent could he purify the Court, and only for the moment could he pacify the indignant and starving multitude who clamored outside the palace-gates. Fatigued with pleasure, bored with everything, the young men recklessly accumulated debts, solely, it would seem, in the hope of amusing themselves. But Paris was gay, full of men and things to interest and amuse. Philosophers, patriots, men of letters, rioters, beautiful women, clever and witty, leaders of society and politics, were all there. Everything, nearly, could be found in Paris, “but scavengers and lamps,” as Arthur Young said. The streets were narrow and without foot-pavements; they were dirty and crowded. “To walk through them was toil and fatigue to a man and an impossibility to a well-dressed woman,” says Young again. One-horse cabriolets abounded, driven recklessly by young men of

fashion, endangering life and limb. Persons of moderate means, unable to own carriages, were forced by the mud and filth to dress in black, with black stockings. This circumstance alone marked strongly the line between the man of fortune and the man without. Public opinion had somewhat modified the dress of the ladies, and the enormously high structure which had been supposed to adorn the female head during the Regency changed, in 1780, to a low coiffure, started by the queen, and called the “coiffure à l’enfant.” Four years later the chapeau “à la caisse d’escompte, chapeau sans fond comme cette caisse,”* came into fashion. Having lost the elevated head-dress, than which nothing could be more grotesque, the dress-makers proceeded to deform nature in another way, and the enormous *poches* came into vogue which made a woman look like a “Hottentot Venus”† destroying nature’s form. Extremely high heels, much rouge, and many *mouches* were supposed to heighten their beauty. The men, sword at the side, hat under the arm, with very trim, high-heel shoes, braided or embroidered coats, powdered hair caught together at the back in a small bag, called a *bourse*, and with two watch-chains, on the ends of which hung a vast number of charms, or *breloques*, were to be seen in the street carrying themselves with much stiffness and pride. This bearing, however, changed speedily on entering the antechamber. “A marvellous suppleness attacked their backs, a complacent smile succeeded the severe one, their conversation was full of adulation and baseness.”* By the year 1791 the seriousness, not to say the terrors of the Revolution, had eradicated much of this nonsense; etiquette and ceremonial lost their power; the women abandoned high heels and powder, and the men put their hats on their heads, gave up powder, wore their hair naturally, and only carried swords in defence of their country. Even the form of ending a letter changed, with the levelling influence of the times, from the very adulatory and elaborate method to simple “salutations amicales” or “assurances d’estime;” “le respect” was reserved for women of high position and old people.‡

In strong contrast to the mincing fine gentleman, picking his way through the mire and filth of the streets, was the pauper element. This was enormously represented—a stormy, riotous mob, ready for anything, and employing their time begging and singing rhymes in honor of the third estate. From the Palais Royal newspapers advocating the rights of the third party literally flowed, and found a large reading-public ready to receive them. In the month of June pamphlets were in all hands; “even lackeys are poring over them at the gates of hotels.”‡ “A little later, every hour produced something new. Thirteen came out to-day, sixteen yesterday, and ninety last week.”§

These tracts were spread through the provinces: and nearly all of them, teeming with levelling and seditious principles, advocated liberty, and violence against the nobles and clergy. Only two or three pamphlets on the other side had merit enough to be known.

As early as February, 1789, Necker avowed that “obedience is not to be found anywhere, and that even the troops are not to be relied on.” This state of things in Paris ushered in the meeting of the States-General, called, after the lapse of one hundred and sixty years, to work seemingly impossible reforms, and to frame a constitution under which France should be free and happy.

The commission with which General Washington had intrusted Morris was his first care, and he at once applied for information to Mr. Jefferson, then American Minister at Versailles; and in a letter to Washington he tells him this, and that the man who had made Madison's watch was a rogue, and recommended him to another, namely, Romilly. "But as it might happen that this also was a rogue, I inquired at a very honest man's shop, not a watchmaker, and he recommended Gregson. A gentleman with me assured me that Gregson was a rogue, and both of them agreed that Romilly is of the old school, and he and his watches out of fashion. And to say *that* of a man in Paris is like saying he is an ordinary man among the Friends of Philadelphia. I found at last that M. L'Épine is at the head of his profession here, and, in consequence, asks more for his work than anybody else. I therefore waited on M. L'Épine and agreed with him for two watches exactly alike, one of which will be for you and the other for me."

Turning to public affairs, he continues: "Our new Constitution has greatly raised our reputation in Europe, but your appointment and acceptance would go far to fix the general opinion of the fact. By the bye, in the melancholy situation to which the poor King of England has been reduced, there were, I am told, (in relation to you) some whimsical circumstances. His first outset was to seize Mr. Pitt by the collar and with outrageous language addressed to the Rebel General, had nearly strangled him before he could get help. Afterwards the Defender of the Faith, in one of his caprices, conceived himself to be no less a personage than George Washington at the head of the American Army. This shows that you have done something or other which sticks most terribly in his stomach. And the Prince of Wales I am told intends, (no doubt from filial piety and respect) to be very good friends with the country and the man who have turned his father's head."

His next letter was addressed to Mr. Carmichael, the American minister at Madrid and an old friend. He expresses his attachment to him and desire to fly to him, if he were not restrained by important objects, to be attended to at once. He says: "You intimate a desire to know my situation and intentions. For the former it is simply this: by acquiring property I have placed myself in the common situation of desiring more,—but with the same frankness with which I avow that desire, let me assure you that the thirst for riches has never yet vitiated my palate. I wish not to accumulate, but to enjoy. And age has pointed out a different path towards enjoyment from that which delighted my youthful footsteps. In a word, I wish to possess what I possess in peace, and for that purpose I want lively property. Various means are before me. You speak of becoming an American farmer, in the last result and as a last resource. I have ever viewed it as my great *desideratum*. But let it for both of us be *otium cum dignitate*. And to this end it is essential to possess a moderate share of fortune's favors. As soon as I can I shall proceed to Holland. But I contemplate a return to this capital as speedily as possible, and from hence I wish to go to Madrid. You will calculate, however, that as the most important scene enacted for many years on the European theatre, will in the next months be displayed at this place, I, in common with all others, have curiosity to see it. You must also consider that I have motives stronger than curiosity, for until the States-General shall have decided on the important objects for which they are convened, this government can take no solid arrangement for anything. Lafayette is out of town. He is gone to Auvergne to get himself elected either for the Noblesse or the Tiers État. I hope the former, for he would otherwise (in

my opinion) be too desperately estranged from his own class. As he did not communicate to me his hesitation, I presume that he had determined, for he made some important communications just before his departure. Apropos—a term which my Lord Chesterfield well observes all generally use to bring in what is not at all to the purpose—apropos, then, I have here the strangest employment imaginable. A republican, and just, as it were, emerged from that assembly which has formed one of the most republican of all republican constitutions, I preach incessantly respect for the Prince, attention to the rights of the nobility, and moderation, not only in the object but also in the pursuit of it. All this, you will say, is none of my business, but I consider France as the natural ally of my country—and of course that we are interested in her prosperity. Besides, (to say the truth) I love France, and as I believe the King to be an honest and good man I sincerely wish him well—and the more so as I am persuaded that he earnestly desires the felicity of his people.”

Letters to prominent people gave Morris at once an entrée into the different sets of society, and invitations to breakfasts, dinners, and suppers were not wanting. On one occasion only he mentioned not being perfectly master of French, which he had not spoken since his school-days, but it was not long before he acquired an uncommon facility both in writing and speaking it. One day which he mentions seems more than full. It began with a breakfast at M. le Normand’s, where they discussed the tobacco subject, so deeply interesting to the speculator as well as the smoker. The same day he dined with Madame Dumolley, who included in her society the extremely noisy element, the men who came on foot, and without the adornments of dress. Her Monday entertainments, and small intrigues were to her the sole end and aim of the week; she lived for them, and the guests who were the special favorites of the moment. Madame Dumolley had a pleasant face and an agreeable varnish of politeness; and this, added to the fact that she never failed to include a more or less vigorous love-making episode in her pursuit after happiness, rendered her salon attractive. She evidently exhibited a taste for horticulture, for Morris promised to send to America for seeds and plants for her. Later in the evening, after the play, a supper was to be partaken of with Madame de la Caze, at whose house he met a large party, absorbed in quinzé. Here, he says: “M. de Bersheni, for want of something else to do, asks me many questions about America, in a manner which shows he cares little for the information. By way of giving him some adequate idea of our people, when he mentioned the necessity of fleets and armies to secure us against invasion, I tell him that nothing would be more difficult than to subdue a nation every individual of which, in the pride of freedom, thinks himself a king. ‘And if, sir, you should look down on him, would say, “I am a man. Are you anything more?”’ ‘All this is very well; but there must be a difference of ranks, and I should say to one of these people, “You, sir, who are equal to a king, make me a pair of shoes.”’ ‘Our citizens, sir, have a manner of thinking peculiar to themselves. This shoemaker would reply, “Sir, I am very glad of the opportunity to make you a pair of shoes. It is my duty to make shoes. I love to do my duty.”’ This manner of thinking and speaking, however, is too masculine for the climate I am in.”

Most of the mornings were passed in receiving visits and writing—not only keeping up a correspondence, daily accumulating, but in copying all his own letters into books and generally sending duplicates of them to America besides. A letter to Robert

Morris (March 2d) requested him to send Madame Dumolley's seeds, and begged his attention to another object, which was to "obtain for me an account of the American tonnage—that is, the number of tons of the vessels of U. S. I want this for the Maréchal de Castries. This nobleman was so kind as to seek an acquaintance with me in consequence of some letters I had written to the late Marquis de Chastellux and which he had translated and shown to several persons. The last of these letters occupied him in the illness which proved fatal, about three months ago. I forget the contents but in my rash manner I had, it seems, given opinions about the situation and affairs of this country which (luckily) proved to be just. Shortly after my arrival here I received a message from Madame de Chastellux desiring a visit to the wife of my late friend, and speedily, as she was on the point of lying in. I waited upon her, and two days after received an intimation from M. de Castries that as he was already acquainted with me through the letters above mentioned he wished for an interview, etc. In consequence I waited on him. He has since asked me to dinner, and promised to present me to M. Necker, to whom I have not yet delivered your letter. It is thought that M. de Castries will again be made Minister of the Marine. He both expects and wishes for it, and he is an intimate friend of M. Necker who, as I have already told you, holds fast to the farmers-general. But what is of more consequence in my eyes than situation or connection, they are men of honor and rectitude."

The Maréchal de Chastellux served under Rochambeau in the War for American Independence, in 1780. Madame de Chastellux, an extremely charming and accomplished Irishwoman, lady in waiting to the Duchess of Orleans* and her confidential friend and companion, drew round her those immediately connected with the Court. It was in her salon, very shortly after his arrival in Paris, that Morris met the Duchess of Orleans, the beautiful and charming daughter of the Duc de Penthièvre, whose love-marriage with the Duc de Chartres, who became the Duc d'Orléans and, later, the notorious Philippe Égalité, had been happy until about this time, when the duke's irregularities rendered her life sad and uncertain. With her Morris formed a sincere and lasting friendship. Here also he met the Comtesse de Ségur, who told him at the first meeting that she was afraid that he "might not arrive before she left the room." Among the six or seven grand salons of Paris, that of Madame de Ségur *mère*, the natural daughter of the Regent, had for years occupied a conspicuous place; and she, notwithstanding her age, retained all her vivacity, charming young and old alike with her memories and tales of the Regent's time and of her own eventful life. Her daughter-in-law, the Maréchale de Ségur, who always aided her in doing the honors, added to the attraction of the salon by her gentle grace and charming manner. With these queens of the salon to instruct him, it was not long before Morris, being an apt scholar, found himself fully initiated into the mysteries of coquetry; for these seductive court ladies never feared to follow their flattering words with the "look, manner, and tone of voice perfectly in unison with the sentiment." But Morris was wary of such flatteries, though admitting that "a pleasing error might be preferable to a disagreeable truth." In March he wrote to Washington, and expressed his unbounded surprise at "the astonishing spectacle" which, he said, "this country presents to one who has collected his ideas from books and information half a dozen years old. Everything is *à l'anglaise*, and the desire to imitate the English prevails alike in the cut of a coat, and the form of a constitution. Like the English, too, all are

engaged in parliamenteering, and when we consider how novel this last business must be, I assure you their progress is far from contemptible.”

On Tuesday (March 3d), the salon of Madame la Comtesse de Beauharnais was opened to him, by an invitation of a week's standing, to dine at three o'clock. Setting off in great haste, to be punctual, and arriving at a quarter past the hour, he found in the drawing-room “some dirty linen and no fire.” While the waiting-woman takes away one, a valet lights up the other. Three small sticks in a deep heap of ashes give no great expectation of heat. By the smoke, however, all doubts are removed respecting the existence of fire. To expel the smoke a window is opened, and the day being cold I have the benefit of as fresh air as can reasonably be expected in so large a city. Towards 4 o'clock the guests begin to assemble, and I begin to suspect that as madame is a poetess, I shall have the honor to dine with that excellent part of the species who devote themselves to the Muses. In effect, the gentlemen begin to compliment their respective works, and as regular hours cannot be expected in a house where the mistress is occupied more with the intellectual than the material world, I have the delightful prospect of a continuance of the scene. Towards five, madame steps in to announce dinner, and the hungry poets advance to the charge. As they bring good appetites they have certainly reason to praise the feast, and I console myself in the persuasion that for this day at least I shall escape indigestion. A very narrow escape, too, for some rancid butter of which the cook had been very liberal, puts me in bodily fear. If the repast is not abundant we have at least the consolation that there is no lack of conversation. Not being perfectly master of the language, most of the jests escape me; as for the rest of the company, each being employed either in saying a good thing, or studying one to say, 'tis no wonder if he cannot find time to explain that of his neighbor. They all agree that we live in an age alike deficient in justice and in taste. Each finds in the fate of his own works numerous instances to justify the censure. They tell me, to my great surprise, that the public now condemn theatrical compositions before they have heard the first recitals, and to remove my doubts, the comtesse is so kind as to assure me that this rash decision has been made on one of her own pieces. In pitying modern degeneracy, we rise from the table. I take my leave immediately after the coffee, which by no means dishonors the precedent repast, and madame informs me that on Tuesdays and Thursdays she is always at home, and will always be glad to see me. While I stammer out some return to the compliment, my heart, convinced of my unworthiness to partake of such Attic entertainment, makes me promise never again to occupy the place, from which, perhaps, I had excluded a worthier personage.”

On the 5th of March Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Morris went, together to Versailles, the latter to be presented to the Comte de Montmorin,* then Minister of Foreign Affairs, and to deliver his letters to him. He found him civil, but in a polite way he rather intimated that “he had already more trouble than he desires with strangers. Thence to the Comte de Caluzem, who receives me with a degree of hauteur I never before experienced. On reading my letters of introduction from his brother the Marquis, his features and manner are at once softened into affability, and the gout in one foot takes the blame of the precedent looks, which I believe had produced something correspondent in my features. I render the visit as short as possible, and wait on the Comte d'Angivilliers, whose politeness compensates in a great degree for the

ministerial atmosphere I have just now breathed. In spite of predetermination, my visit is too long, and thus by being troublesome I pay a compliment, whose value he cannot be sensible of. This visit, short as it is, and the first I ever made to a court, has convinced me that I am not formed to succeed there. Return to Paris and dine with Madame de Tessé—republicans of the first feather. The countess, who is a very sensible woman, has formed her ideas of government in a manner not suited, I think, either to the situation, the circumstances, or the disposition of France, and there are many such.”

The evening of this rather eventful day was passed in the salon of Madame de Chastellux, where the Duchess of Orleans was also whiling away an hour. “Madame de Chastellux presents me to her Highness, informing me that she had the goodness to permit of my reception. In the course of the visit, her Royal Highness has the condescension to speak to one who is only a human being. My morning’s course has taught me the value of a few words uttered in a gentle tone from such a character.”

The reckless driving in the streets of Paris—a peculiarity remarked to-day by visitors to the French capital— Morris rather humorously ridicules in the following lines, entitled “Paris:”

“A coachman driving furious on,
For here, to fly is quite the *ton*,
Thro’ the thick vapors of the night,
Sees by a glimmering lamp’s dim light,
Some creature struggling in the street,
Which soon beneath his horses feet
Is trod, and there in anguish feels
The crushing of the chariot wheels.
‘Villain!’ exclaims the aged count,
‘Stop! ho! the guard; *bougez*, dismount.
The law, *pardieu*, shall have its course.’
(*Au Commissaire*.) ‘He has killed my horse.’
‘*Seigneur*,’ replies the poor cocher,
‘*Moi*, humbly I your pardon pray.
Had I supposed a *horse* lay there
I would have taken better care.
But by St. Jacques declare I can
I thought ‘twas nothing but a *man!*’”

A dinner was given to Morris on the 7th of March by the Baron de Montvoissieu “at the request of M. de Malesherbes,* who is there—a pleasant, respectable old man, whose daughter, Madame de Montvoissieu, has five fine children. It has the effect of rendering her happy. At least she has more the appearance than any other woman I have seen here. M. l’Évêque d’Arras tells me our new Constitution is the best that has ever yet been found, but has some faults which arise from our imitation of the English.”

M. de Malesherbes quite captivated Morris, who spoke enthusiastically of him in a letter to the Marquis de la Luzerne, then ambassador at London. "I am in love," he wrote, "with one of your family, and this is not singular, for everyone else has the same passion, though not perhaps in so great a degree. I am sure you will not accuse me of want of taste, when I tell you that the person in question is M. de Malesherbes. He has so much goodness and so much serenity that it is impossible not to feel a very sincere affection for him. I must tell you how glad I should have been to have met you here, where there are a thousand things in which a stranger has need of advice, but although I much regret your absence, yet I have too much affection for you to wish you here. France seems to be in a situation which, terminate as it may with respect to public affairs, cannot fail eventually to produce dissensions in private circles. . . . Stay where you are a little while, and when you come back you will hardly know your country. As yet the spectacles hold some share in the conversation, but I hear as much politics among the ladies of Paris as ever you did among those of Philadelphia. Republicanism is absolutely a moral influenza, from which neither titles, places, nor even the diadem can guard their possessor. If when the States-General assemble their debates should be published, the Lord preserve us from a hot summer."

Mr. Jefferson, the American minister, was just on the eve of departure for America, and no one had as yet been appointed in his place. "The Comte de Puisignieu," Morris says, "tells me that I must stay in France to fill Jefferson's place, by which I understand a wish to discover if I have any views and expectations. I assure him with great truth that I have no desire to be in that place even if it were vacant." It was not long after the evening spent in Madame de Tessé's republican salon that Morris was told by Madame de Lafayette that she considered him an aristocrat, and in consequence of his conversation with Madame de Tessé—that enthusiast who had worked for years to make a constitution for France, and was ready to shed her last drop of blood if perchance she might see it accepted; and it was doubtless not a little surprising to Morris to discover that "his ideas were too moderate for that company."

Another surprise seems to have been the cold, uncomfortable weather which he found, instead of the "smiling European spring about which," he says, "so much has been said and sung." "To-day the face of the country is that of January, all white," he mentions in his diary, "and from present appearances one would hardly expect the genial spring ever to come."

The hurry of life in Paris evidently troubled him, for in a letter to his brother (March 11th) he says:

"I have one great objection to Paris, which is that I have not a moment's time. The amusements I cannot partake of because my business in the morning and my engagements till midnight keep me in a perpetual hurry. I have seen enough to convince me that a man might in this city be incessantly employed for forty years and grow old without knowing what he had been about. This is a charming circumstance for those who, having nothing to do, would otherwise be obliged to study how best to kill old time, and who waste their hours in constant complaints that the days of man are short and few."

During the spring the affairs of a certain Mr. Nesbitt, who seemed to be in a chronic state of hiding from his creditors, gave Morris more or less trouble, and no small share of amusement, owing to various contretemps, while seeking the presence of certain ministers “with whom,” he said, “I am utterly unacquainted.” One encounter he particularly mentioned, where he was to go to Versailles and call upon M. DeVille Delville, and where “I am to make the modest request that he will grant me the favor to stop the usual course of law and justice.”

A letter from Count Dillon* was to open the way to an interview with the Minister. But it is best to let Morris tell his own experience of approaching so high a personage. “Arrived at Versailles,” he says, “the coachman sets me down at the door of M. de Puisegur, Minister at War. After waiting for my turn I address the Minister by asking if he is M. DeVille Delville, to whom I have the honor of addressing myself. He informs me of my mistake, and as he is a man of the sword and not of the robe, this mistake is not a small one.” Finally, when M. Delville is found and appealed to for help he refuses to understand reason; and the next morning the unfortunate Mr. Nesbitt woke Morris at any early hour, by rushing into his chamber to escape from the officer. “I get up,” Morris says, “and endeavor to persuade this latter to go away; but it will not do. He has already sent for the commissary and the guard. Presently they arrive in their respective uniforms, and as the door is kept bolted a locksmith is also sent for. He comes, and before the application of his tools I inform Mr. Nesbitt of what has passed, and he comes out. He contends that they cannot take him, because he has not been duly summoned. But the officer produces a certificate that *he has*. And although this is certainly false, yet justice must believe its own instruments. He sets off for the bureau and I go and make interest for his release. Nesbitt is nevertheless dragged to l’Hôtel de Force and detained there sometime. “I go to the Comte de Puisignieu to supper. Hear that Lafayette is like to lose his election in Auvergne—a circumstance which gives great pleasure, I find, to some persons here. His conduct is much disapproved of, as indeed is naturally to be expected, by all those attached to the order of nobility. I believe he has mixed a little too deep, for I am very much mistaken if he is not, without knowing it himself, a much greater aristocrat than those of the party opposed to him. In effect, as the constitution of this country must inevitably undergo some change which will lessen the monarchical power, it is clear that unless the nobles acquire a constitutional sanction to some of their privileges, it will be in the power of the ministry afterwards to confound them entirely with the people, (according to the strange doctrine supported by the Duke of Orleans) and the result must be either a tyranny of one in the first instance or as a consequence of the anarchy which would result from giving the wretched constitution of the Pennsylvania legislature to the Kingdom of France.”

As to the distress among the paupers of Paris during this spring, Morris, who fearlessly and harmlessly walked or drove through every part of the town, observing closely as he went, wrote to his brother, General Morris, then in England, as follows:

“I believe your apprehensions of the sufferings of people here from cold are not unfounded. But they have in that respect an advantage which you did not think of; viz., that they are stowed so close, and in such little cabins, that if they live through the first few months they have an atmosphere of their own about them. In effect, none

of the beggars I have seen complain to me of cold. They all ask for the means to get a morsel of bread, and show by their countenance that by bread they mean wine. And if the vintners were to interpret this last word, the poor devils would find that it means a very different kind of liquor. Among the objects which present themselves, doubtless some are deserving of charity, but these are scarcely to be noticed in the crowd of pretenders. However, they get from me all my small change, and I must confess, to my shame, that I give rather for peace' sake than through benevolence. The rascals have, I suppose, found out by studying human nature that each man loves himself better than his neighbor, and therefore make it his interest to give. The rich, in return, as patrons of industry, are vastly inattentive to these importunities, and by withholding their alms try to make it the interest of the others to work rather than to beg. The effects of habit on each are wonderful. Not long since I saw a gentleman of my acquaintance weep at an air of an opera, who had heard a beggar clatter his crutches in pursuit of him for the length of a street without turning round to look at him. 'Tis true there is a difference in the music.

“You are right in your idea that our contest has given a confused notion of liberty to this country, but there are many persons here whose views are very clear and distinct. It is highly probable that a constitution will be established, as free as is consistent with their manners and situation; in which case the King will gain more abroad than he loses at home, if, indeed, it can be called a loss to part with the power of doing mischief and retain only the power of doing good. If the indisposition of the King of England should keep their politics a little more at home, the nation will be much happier. That preponderance which Britain had gained during the peace, from the circumstances in which other nations found themselves, and which has led to a very dictatorial conduct that by those same circumstances became successful, would, I fear, have soon set the world again on fire, and it is ten to one that her own feathers would have been singed in the general combustion.”

“At supper to-night [March 17th] in the salon of the Baron de Besenval,”* the diary mentions, “M. le Comte de Puisignieu, who has an estate in St. Dominique, asks me to speak to M. de Malesherbes on the commerce of the Islands. This apropos of the letter written some years before on this subject to the Marquis de Chastellux. I tell him that I have no wit to talk with their ministers on public affairs, but if he chooses to ask my ideas it will be my duty to give them, after his very particular attention to me. In effect, I had rather leave our affairs in the hands of our Minister, and give *him* my ideas.”

From this time Morris became deeply engaged in large affairs of public interest to America and France. In a long conversation on the 18th of March with William Short, Secretary of the United States Legation under Jefferson, speculations in American bonds and the purchase of the debt of the United States to France, were discussed at length, and Morris expressed himself willing to take an interest for himself and his friends, in speculations of this kind “which are well founded—provided always there be nothing in them prejudicial to the United States or inconsistent with personal honor or integrity.” Dining with M. de Malesherbes the evening of this same day, he hinted to him “the idea of supplying the garrison in the French Islands from America and of furnishing salt beef to the fleet.” Certainly Morris found no difficulty in filling the

days with work and society duties, if paying thirteen calls on various ladies, besides having long conversations on the Nesbitt affair with Parker, on the purchase of the debt to France with M. Le Coulteux* the banker, a pleasant hour of gossip with Madame de Chastellux, and ending the day with a supper at Madame de Corney's, "when we have some good music," meant anything.

"Colonel Laumoy breakfasts with me to-day," he says in his diary for March 21st, and we go together to Versailles, invite ourselves to dine with the Count d'Angivilliers, and look at the apartments in the Castle of Versailles. This is an immense monument of the vanity and folly of Louis Fourteenth. We see neither the King nor the Queen, but as we come not to look for them this is no misfortune. Like the other hangers on of the Court, we desire not them, but theirs—with this difference, however, that we mean to gratify curiosity, not cupidity. The King is well lodged—the Queen's apartments I cannot see because Her Majesty is there, but it is ten to one that I should like her better than any other part of the furniture. Her picture, however, by Madame Lebrun, will do as well, and perhaps better, for it is very beautiful, doubtless as much so as the original."

It was at Versailles in the salon of Madame Cabanis, wife of the celebrated physiologist and physician, Pierre Jean George Cabanis, the personal friend of Mirabeau, and the *ami de la maison* of Condorcet, that Morris first met Madame de Flahaut, the romance writer, the friend of Montesquiou and of the Bishop of Autun. She was at this time in the glory of her youth and attractions, with possibly a touch of sadness about her and certainly a rare sympathy, which, added to her thoroughly trained mind, with its decidedly philosophical cast, gave her an uncommon power over men. Hers had been a strange life. Married at fifteen to the Comte de Flahaut, then quite fifty—who had denied himself no excess of dissipation—she found herself coldly neglected. The Abbé Périgord, who had performed the marriage ceremony for her, became her friend, companion, and instructor—for to him she owed the opening and training of her intellect—and he became also the father of her only child, who was named Charles, after the abbé. But to return to the diary. "Madame de Flahaut," Morris says, "entered the room with her sister Madame d'Angivilliers, the wife of M. Bellarderie d'Angivilliers, Director-General of the Navy. She speaks English and is a pleasing woman; if I might judge from appearances, not a sworn enemy to intrigue." Madame Adèle de Flahaut, during the dark days of the Revolution, received many substantial proofs of friendship from Morris. She was destined to fly for her life and to be made a widow by the guillotine in 1793.

Those were pleasant days and evenings in the grand salons of the Palais Royal, and the lesser ones of Paris generally, before the Terror came. A change had undoubtedly come since the time of Louis ???. There was no longer dancing, and fewer love-making couples scattered about the room; large groups of people came together for more general conversation. The gaming table was always to be found, where one woman and an abbé tried their luck with the dice-box; while someone reading a book by the window was not an uncommon sight. "The society was there," Goncourt says, "but not the pleasure of the salons of the time of Louis Fifteenth." But the ladies had not, as yet, lost their spirits by reason of the sorrows that came later, and their natural grace of manner and mind lent a charm to their conversation that nothing else could

give. Morris surely counted himself born under a fortunate star to be the favored guest of such as they. In the boudoir of the lovely Madame de Duras-Dufurt, the friend of Madame de Staël and an authoress, he was one evening wholly charmed by the surroundings. "For the first time," he says, "I have an idea of the music which may be drawn from the harp. In the boudoir of madame, adjoining the salon, I have the pleasure to sit for an hour *alone* by a light exactly resembling twilight, the temperature of the air brought to perfect mildness—and the sweetest sounds. Later in the evening came a change of scene, and a bishop from Languedoc makes tea and the ladies who choose it stand round and take each their dish. This would seem strange in America, and yet it is by no means more so than the Chevalier de Louis who begged alms of me this morning after introducing himself by his own letter." Going to Madame de Chastellux's one evening (March 25th) Morris found himself among the noblesse, and in a few moments after the Duchess of Orleans appeared. "The duchess," he says, "is affable and handsome enough to punish the duke for his irregularities. Madame de Ségur goes away early, as the company seem determined to increase. The widow of the late Duke of Orleans comes in, and at going away, according to custom, kisses the duchess. I observe that the ladies of Paris are very fond of each other, which gives room to some observations from her Royal Highness on the person who has just quitted the room, which show that the kiss does not always betoken great affection. In going away she is pleased to say that she is glad to have met me, and I believe her. The reason is that I dropped some expressions and sentiments a little rough, and which were agreeable because they contrast with the palling polish she constantly meets with everywhere. Hence I conclude that the less I have the honor of such good company the better, for when the novelty ceases all is over, and I shall probably be worse than insipid. Everybody complains of the weather and yet the weather don't mend. It could not be worse if we praised it."

The diary notes that "on Friday [March 27th] the Maréchal de Castries calls and takes me to dine with M. and Madame Necker.* In the salon we find Madame de Staël. She seems to be a woman of sense and somewhat masculine in her character, but has very much the appearance of a chambermaid. A little before dinner M. Necker enters. He has the look and manner of the counting-house, and, being dressed in embroidered velvet, he contrasts strongly with his habiliments. His bow, his address, etc., say, 'I am the man.' Our company is one half Academicians. The Duchess of Biron, formerly Lauzun, is one. I observe that M. Necker seems occupied by ideas which rather distress him. He cannot, I think, stay in office half an hour after the nation insist on keeping him there. He is much harassed and madame receives continually *mémoires* from different people, so that she seems as much occupied as he is. If he is a really great man I am deceived, and yet this is a rash judgment; but how can one help forming some judgment? If he is not a laborious man I am also deceived. From dinner I visit Madame de Chastellux. After being there some time the Duchess of Orleans enters. We have a trio for half an hour. She has something or the other which weighs heavy at her heart, perhaps the 'besoin d'être aimée,' that 'painful void left aching in the breast.' I make an apology for her husband's wildness, by advising her to breed her son, M. de Beaujolais, to business, because otherwise at five and twenty, having enjoyed all which rank and fortune can give him, he will be unhappy from not knowing what to do with himself. She repeats that she is very glad to see me there. This is very kind, but I do not exactly know what it means."

After a pleasant hour with the duchess and Madame de Chastellux, a supper with the Baron de Besenval claimed attention. “A large party,” he says, “and his reputed son, the Vicomte de Ségur, is one of the number, and if resemblances and caresses may be taken for evidence of the fact it must be admitted. This young man is the Lovelace of his day and as remarkable for seductions as his father. He does not want for understanding. The tone of the society here seems to be that it was not worth while to call the States-General for such a trifle as the deficit amounts to. The business of M. Necker therefore stands thus: If any mischiefs happen they will be charged to him. If he gets well through the business others will claim the reputation of what good is done by the States-General. He loves flattery—for he flatters; he is therefore easily deceived. He believes that many persons support him out of esteem, who I believe only use him, and will throw by the instrument when it can no longer serve their purpose. Necker is in blast till May, but will probably blow out unless further means can be devised. The Caisse d’Escompte is full of ‘effets royaux’ (royal bills). Consequently both the means and the inclination to afford succor are wanting.”

Not yet entirely used to the manners and customs of Paris, “I find,” Morris says, “that I have been guilty of a *bêtise* in answering a note of Madame de Corney by one addressed to monsieur. Although it was signed De Corney, I ought to have understood better ‘the marks of the crow-quill.’ Dine [March 30th] with Marshal de Castries.* Hint an idea to him respecting the debt and express a wish to converse with him on the subject. He appoints to-morrow. Call on Madame de Chastellux. After some time Madame de Ségur comes in. Her visit is short, being engaged for the evening. After she has left us for a while the Duchesse d’Orléans enters. A look from her Royal Highness opens the idea that M. Morris *est un peu amoureux de Madame la Marquise*, but Madame la Duchesse is mistaken. However, this mistake can do no harm to anybody. The Vicomte de Ségur comes in and a look which he takes great pains to conceal tells me that he believes I am inclined to take his advice of the other day, viz., to have an affair with the widow, and it tells me also that *he* means to console her for the loss of her husband. From thence I go to Madame de Flahaut’s, an elegant woman, and a snug party. She is by no means deficient in understanding, and has, I think, good dispositions. *Nous verrons.*”

In a long conversation on April 1st, which was solicited by the Maréchal de Castries, Morris stated his ideas with regard to the value of the debt from America to France, and proposed to purchase it with tobacco, flour, rice, and salt provisions—part payment to be made with money, and part with the debt. But the Marshal objected to the salt provisions because they must encourage this commerce with Ireland, the Irish buying large quantities of Bordeaux wine. “He thinks,” Morris says, “the tobacco may do, objects to the flour, and says nothing about the rice, and thinks, on the whole, that the payment of the debt is of trifling importance in comparison with the greater object of French commerce. M. Necker will, on the contrary, I presume, be of opinion that the payment of the debt is of the utmost importance.” Morris, however, was to submit his ideas on paper that the marshal might further consider them.

M. de Lafayette had, in spite of Morris’s fears to the contrary, just secured his election for his province in Auvergne, and on the second of April Morris called on Madame de Lafayette to congratulate her on the result, and talk a little politics. From there to

Madame de Chastellux's, where Madame Rully, "another of the Duchesse d'Orléans's women of honor, comes in, and with very fine eyes which she knows very well how to make use of. Has no antipathy to the gentler passion. *Nous verrons*. Madame —, sister to the late M. de Chastellux, joins us, and after some time the Duchess of Orleans. She complains of a headache, but is, I think, rather out of temper than in ill-health. M. Morris seems to me not to be such agreeable company as before. Take leave and go to supper with Madame de Corney. After a little while Madame de Flahaut enters. Presently, M. de Corney.* He has in vain contested for the rights of the *Prévôté* of Paris. Reads us his speech. M. Necker is blamed, and the company do not appear inclined to mercy on his subject. I had learnt at Madame de Chastellux's that the King has received an express that M. de Calonne is at Douay, and will probably be elected a member of the States-General. This intelligence is not disagreeable to the company here. M. de Corney tells me he did everything in his power for Nesbitt, but the bureau of M. DeVille Delville are violently prejudiced against him. This Nesbitt ought to have known, for in his affair he met a beautiful woman, the sister or cousin of his creditor, and in the second affair M. le Secrétaire treated him with the utmost politeness and showed no doubt of the success of his application, etc., whereas at Versailles I found very great obstacles. Thus a little negligence has involved him in a manner which I shall find very difficult to extricate him from. At going away Madame de Corney tells me, 'Et bien, je vous ai fait souper avec Madame de Flahaut, ne suis-je pas une bonne femme?' 'Oui, Madame.' The rest of my compliment is conveyed by pressing her hand and a look of reconnaissance."

"I go [April 3d] to keep an engagement with Madame de Flahaut, to see the statues, paintings etc., of the Louvre. She is in bed and her brother-in-law is sitting with her. So it appears she has, as she says, forgotten her engagement to me. M. de Flahaut comes in. She sends us forward, and is to follow. This is done. We walk over the court of the Louvre, through the mud, view the statues—the paintings we cannot see, that pleasure is for another opportunity. Return to her quarters. Monsieur, presuming that I was about to follow her upstairs merely out of politeness, apologizes for me. In consequence I take my leave, and thus a scene, which my imagination had painted very well, turns out good for nothing. The weather contributes to render it disagreeable—wind, rain, and, of course mud without, and dampness within. But this is human life. Monsieur, as I go away, expresses a hope to see me again soon, and requests to be commanded if he can be useful in anything. This *politesse* is always agreeable, though a man must be a fool to believe in it.

"This is a day of accidents. In going from hence I slip as I step into the carriage, and bruise my shin very much. Thus everything goes wrong. Visit the Comtesse Durfort. She has company and is but just risen. Pressed to dine, but decline it. She is going to sup with the Baron de Besenval, and I promise to be there if I can. She says if I do not go, it is because I will not. 'On peut tout ce qu'on veut.' Stammer out a bald compliment in reply. I am certainly good for nothing, and the only tolerable thing I can do is to go home. This is done, and, being out of humor with myself, I find the dinner very bad. Threaten to deal with another waiter—extremely ridiculous. The waiter, who behaves with great humility, must, I think, despise me for talking angrily before I can talk French. At five o'clock I visit Madame de Ségur. Madame de Chastellux and Madame de Puisignieu are there. In conversing about public men and

measures I am so weak and absurd as to express many opinions which I ought to conceal, and some of which I may perhaps find reason to alter. Two ladies come in, and as I am going away Madame de Ségur, to whom I had mentioned my intention of visiting Mr. Jefferson, has the politeness to say, ‘Nous vous reverrons, M. Morris?’ and I have the stupidity to answer in the affirmative. Call on Mr. Jefferson, and sit an hour with him, which is at least fifty minutes too long, for his daughter had left the room on my approach, and waits only my departure, at least I think so. Returning in consistency with my promise, I call on Madame de Ségur, and am shown into the room where she is with her father-in-law. He lies on a couch, or rather sofa—the gout in his right hand, which is his only hand. Madame de Chastellux and another lady are there. I think I was wrong to come here, and for that reason find it difficult to get away—vastly awkward. At length make a shift to take leave, and, to avoid all further folly for this day, determine to go home.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER III.

Dearth of wheat at Lyons. Morris offers Necker a cargo. Graciousness of the Duchess of Orleans. Ladies vexed by long arguments in the salons. Ten thousand troops ordered out. Swiss guards within the barriers. Necker's fall desired. Tête-à-tête dish of tea with Madame de Ségur. King and princes oppose liberty. Political talk with the Bishop of Autun. Makes a plan of finance for France. Advises the massing of the Swiss guards round the king's person. Election excitements. A water-party on the Seine. An eventful day at Versailles. Meeting of the States-General. Magnificent spectacle. Mirabeau hissed. The Duke of Orleans applauded. Visit to Marly. Madame du Barry. Madame de Ségur at her toilet. Petit-Trianon Gardens. Madame de Suze's lapdog.

In the month of April the dearth of wheat at Lyons gave the ministers serious apprehension, and Morris proposed to the banker Le Coulteux to offer a cargo of grain which was then arriving. The plan was approved of and an express sent to Versailles to consult with M. Necker. "This evening [April 6th] at Madame de Puisignieu's," says the diary, "I am told that there is wheat enough in the kingdom, but that it is bought up by forestallers and that M. Necker is suspected of having engaged the funds and credit of government in the operation, by which he will get for the crown one hundred and fifty millions. I cannot help expressing my detestation of this vile slander, and M. de Puisignieu seems ashamed of hinting it. How wretched is the situation of that man who is raised high above others. His services, the fruit of anxious solicitude, are attributed to chance, or pared down to the size of ordinary occurrences. But every public misfortune, even the interference of the seasons and the operations of human cupidity, are charged to the ignorance or injustice of administration. M. Le Coulteux wishes that I should go with him to one of the administration about the cargo of the Russel, as he is fearful that an offer from him would be considered merely in the light of a private speculation. In the afternoon go to M. Le Coulteux's and take him up by appointment. We visit M. Montlieraiu, and Monsieur C. opens the business. I find he was right in his idea of the reception it would meet with, but I cut the matter short by putting it at once on its true ground without any of those compliments that had already been brought forward and which might of course now be dispensed with. This induces M. Montlieraiu to think more seriously of the matter. The brother of the first magistrate of Lyons is sent for, who wishes it very much. After considering the several difficulties the thing appears of such consequence that a letter is to be written to-morrow, to M. Necker. I desire pointedly that, if my name is used, M. Necker may know that this offer is made from a view to relieve the administration, but above all to succor the distressed people and without the slightest attention to pecuniary considerations."

The "procession to Longchamp" took place on the 8th of April, and Morris described it as "exhibiting a strange mixture of wretched fiacres and superb equipages with all the intermediate degrees. While visiting Madame de Chastellux this evening," he continues, "a message is brought from the Duchess of Orleans to the effect that she cannot pay her intended visit. Madame de Chastellux told me that the Duchess had

observed on not seeing me there for some time, and said she would visit me chez Madame la Marquise this evening. This is a badinage which I begin to comprehend, and there is nothing in it to flatter my vanity. *Tant mieux*. I assure the marchioness of my veneration and affection, etc., for her Royal Highness's virtues, in which there is much more sincerity than a person of her rank has a right to expect. She tells me that Madame de Rully is a slut. I assure her that this information gives me great concern, that I was becoming violently in love with her, and am totally palled by the communication. *Tout cela s'entend.*"

The early spring attracted Morris toward the country, and he mentions visiting the country-seat of M. le Normand, where, with his true farmer's instinct, he carefully examined the farm, and expressed himself very much surprised to learn "that the sheep are housed in winter. I attribute it with other practices to want of knowledge in husbandry," he says, "for, in effect, this is a science very little understood in France. They will acquire it by means of that Anglomania which now rages among them. If at the same time they should improve both their agriculture and constitution, it will be difficult to calculate the power of this nation. But the progress of this nation seems to be much greater in the fine arts than in the useful arts. This perhaps depends on a government oppressive to industry but favorable to genius. At Vieflis [the château of M. le Norrage] we have a thousand proofs that the master does not understand calculation: a very large house not finished, a garden or park which, if ever completed, will at least have been expensive, and will perhaps be magnificent. A large company and a small dinner. An abbé declaims violently against moderation in politics. He will, he says, carry the post by assault. This will be somewhat difficult, as the King has already surrendered everything at discretion. I desire the Comte de Pellue to ask him what he wants. He says a constitution. But what constitution? In explaining himself, it appears that he desires less than is already granted, and a part of the company differ with him because he does not desire enough. And so much for carrying everything by assault. A tedious argument is commenced, to which I pay no attention, but find that the ladies are vexed at it, because the orators are so vehement that their gentle voices cannot be heard. They will have more of this, if the States-General should really fix a constitution. Such an event would be particularly distressing to the women of this country, for they would be thereby deprived of their share in the government, and hitherto they have exercised an authority almost unlimited, with no small pleasure to themselves, though not perhaps with the greatest advantage to the community."

"To-day [April 15th] I visit M. Millet. He is at play with a number of people who look like gamblers. Madame is abroad and probably engaged at a different game. Call on Madame de Durfort. She lets me know that she is going to pay a visit to a sick person, and she takes an officer of dragoons to support her under the affliction. Take tea with Madame de Chastellux. She gives me many curious anecdotes of this country. Two ladies come in and talk politics. One of them dislikes M. Necker so much that she seemed vexed with herself for being pleased with a little *jeu d'esprit* which he composed several years ago and which Madame de Chastellux reads to us."

"In a very long conversation with M. de Lafayette to-day [April 17th] he gives me the history of his campaign in Auvergne. I find that his mind is getting right as to the

business he has in hand. We consider of a revolt in Paris, and agree that it might occasion much mischief but would not produce any good, that in consequence it will be best to enter a protestation against the manner of canvassing the city, etc., but to go on with the business and get the members elected. There is to be a meeting of the noblesse this afternoon and M. Clermont* will talk to this effect. He is, if possible, to be made one of the representatives and is therefore to be brought forward as a speaker immediately. Lafayette says he has genius and family though of small fortune. Go to dine with M. de la Bretèche after dinner. M. de Durfort, comes in. He has been at the meeting. M. de Clermont's speech was very much admired and he carried his point by a large majority, contrary, says M. de Durfort to the wish of M. Necker's friends. I am very curious, and among other things ask if M. de Lafayette was there. Yes, and said a few words which were very well. As M. de Durfort is not the friend of either M. de Lafayette or M. Necker, I fancy things have gone very right. Ten thousand men are ordered into the neighborhood of Paris, and the French and Swiss guards are within the barriers, which makes the Maréchaussée, etc., six thousand more, so that if we have an insurrection it will be warm work. The revolution that is carrying on in the country is a strange one. A few people who have set it going look with astonishment at their own work. The ministers contribute to the destruction of ministerial authority, without knowing either what they are doing or what to do. M. Necker, who thinks he directs everything, is perhaps himself as much an instrument as any of those which he makes use of. His fall is I think desired, but it will not happen so soon as his enemies expect. It will depend much on the chapter of accidents who will govern the States-General, or whether they will be at all governable. Gods! what a theatre this is for a first-rate character. Lafayette has given me this morning the anticipation of a whimsical part of the drama. The Duke de Coigny, one of the Queen's lovers, is directed by his constituents to move that the Queen shall not, in case of accidents, be Regent, and he (Lafayette), who is hated by both King and Queen, intends to oppose that motion. I give him one or two reasons which strike me in support of his opinion, but he inclines to place it on a different ground. His opinions accord best with those of a republic. Mine are drawn only from human nature and ought not therefore to have much respect in this age of refinement. It would indeed be ridiculous for those to believe in man who affect not to believe in God."

"This afternoon [April 28th] over a tête-à-tête dish of tea with Madame de Ségur we have a pleasant talk. The tea is very good, and her conversation is better flavored than her tea, which comes from Russia. After this an hour spent with Madame de Chastellux at the Palais Royal, where I found her with her son lying in her lap. A mother in this situation is always interesting, and her late loss renders her particularly so. In the course of conversation, asking after the health of her princess, she repeats a message formerly delivered. On this occasion I observe that I should be sorry to show a want of respectful attention or be guilty of an indiscretion, and therefore wish to know what would be proper conduct should I meet Her Highness anywhere else—that my present opinion is that it would be proper not to know her. She says I may rely on it that in such case she would recognize me. I tell her farther that, although in my interior I have a great indifference for the advantages of birth, and only respect in her Royal Highness the virtues she possesses, yet I feel myself bound to comply exteriorly with the feelings and prejudices of those among whom I find myself. Between nine and ten it is concluded that the Duchess will not make her evening visit,

and I take my leave, returning the message I had received: ‘I have visited Madame la Duchesse chez Madame de Chastellux, and I am sorry not to have met her there.’”

Morris seemed to be impressed with his lack of the proper spirit of a traveller and sightseer, for in a letter [April 18th] to a friend at Philadelphia he confessed his shortcomings in that regard.

“I am pretty well convinced,” he wrote, “that I am not fit for a traveller, and yet I thought otherwise when I left America. But what will you say to a man who has been above two months in Paris without ascending to the top of Notre Dame, who has been but three times to Versailles, and on neither of those times has seen the King or Queen, or had the wish to see them, and who, if he should continue here twenty years, would continue in ignorance of the length of the Louvre, the breadth of the Pont Neuf, etc.? A man in Paris lives in a sort of whirlwind which turns him round so fast that he can see nothing, and as all men and things are in the same vertiginous situation you can neither fix yourself nor your object for regular examination. Hence the people of this metropolis are under the necessity of pronouncing their definitive judgment from the first glance; and being thus habituated to shoot flying, they have what the sportsmen call a quick sight. They know a wit by his *snuff-box*, a man of taste by his *bow*, and a statesman by the cut of his coat. It is true that like other sportsmen they sometimes miss, but like other sportsmen they have a thousand excuses besides the want of skill. The fault, you know, may be in the dog or the bird or the powder or the flint, or even the gun, without mentioning the gunner.

“We are at present in a fine situation for what the bucks and bloods would term a frolic and high fun. The ministers have disgusted this city by the manner of convoking them to elect their representatives for the States-General, and at the same time bread is getting dearer. So that when the people assemble on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday next, what with hunger and discontent the least spark would set everything in a flame. The state physicians have, by way of antidote, brought between fifteen and twenty thousand regular troops within and about the city; so that at any rate the *bons bourgeois* may not have all the fun to themselves. This measure will rather tend to produce than to prevent a riot, for some of the young nobility have brought themselves to an active faith in the natural equality of mankind, and spurn at everything which looks like restraint.”

“This evening [April 20th] while I am taking tea in Madame de Flahaut’s salon, the Marquis de Boursac comes in fresh from the elections. He has been very busy all day in traversing the views of the ministry in the election of the nobles, and thinks with success. There is to be a meeting to-morrow morning at the Provost’s of Paris, to decide finally what they shall do. Madame goes to make her visit of condolence to Madame de Guibert, whose husband, a Neckerist, is dismissed from his place in the War Office, at which, by the bye, she is delighted, though Madame de Guibert will not be so well pleased, notwithstanding that she is of the party opposed to her husband. Promise Madame de Flahaut to return, and go to M. Millet’s; sit a little while with him and his mistress, and then call on Madame de Corney. She is in high spirits at the opposition like to take place among the nobles. She gives me an anecdote from the Baron de Breteuil, who had it from the mouth of M. Machault, a minister.

The King and Princes have united together to oppose the progress of liberty, the rapidity of which has at length given them serious alarm. The King applied to M. Machault to be premier, which he declined on account of his age. Was asked his opinion of M. Necker. 'I don't like his conduct, but I think it would be dangerous to dismiss him at present.' Madame de Corney presses me to stay to supper, but I decline, telling her I am engaged to her friend the Comtesse de Flahaut, which she of course admits to be a sufficient reason. Go to Madame de Flahaut's. Meet the Bishop d'Autun.† Talk more politics than I ought.

"I am of the opinion that if the Court should attempt now to recede, it is impossible to conjecture the event. The chiefs of the patriotic party have gone so far that they cannot retreat with safety. If there be any real vigor in the nation the prevailing party in the States-General may, if they please, overturn the monarchy itself, should the King commit his authority to a contest with them. The Court is extremely feeble, and the manners are so extremely corrupt that they cannot succeed if there be any consistent opposition. Unless the whole nation be equally depraved, the probability, I think, is that an attempt to retreat at this late period of the business will bring the Court into absolute contempt."

"After the Comédie Française to-night [April 21st] I go to Madame de Chastellux's, and she gives me the news from Versailles. M. de Vauguyon* is not to return to Spain. M. de la Luzerne is to go there. Hope that M. de Ségur will go to London. The nobles of Paris have agreed to elect, protesting against the Règlement. This is the best course they could take. Madame de Chastellux tells me that the Duchesse d'Orléans had left, a little before my arrival, a message for me. She wishes me to see her son, M. de Beaujolais."

Morris had been for some time engaged in forming a plan of finance for France. It had been translated into French, and presented to M. de Malesherbes. The morning of Wednesday, the 22d, Morris spent with Jefferson, discussing the question of the finances generally, and particularly the plan which he had made. "Mr. Jefferson," he says (April 22d), "likes much my plan of finance. We wait till after four for Lafayette, who then comes in déshabille, having been engaged in politics till that moment. The business we believe is going well. I advise that the Swiss guards should be removed from about the King's person by the States-General, and a compliment be at the same time made to the national troops. Mr. Jefferson does not seem to think this important, but I urge it to the conviction of Lafayette. He wishes to have our opinion whether he should take a great part in the debates of the States-General. We agree that he should only speak on important occasions. Afterwards Jefferson and I go to the Palais Royal to get our profiles taken." [The semi-silhouette substitute for the photography of today.]

"To-night [April 24th] at supper at the Baron de Besenval's, we are told of an express announcing the Emperor's death, and then again that he is not dead. It appears, however, that he is not long for this world. We hear a great deal also about the disturbances for want of bread. These give pleasure to the company here, who are all adverse to the present administration. We hear also that there is to be a new administration; that Monsieur is to be the chief, and all the present ministers are to go

out except Necker. This arrangement is less agreeable to the company than it would have been to turn out Necker and keep the rest. For my own part, I do not believe in a change just now. Puisignieu tells me that the States-General will quarrel immediately about the question as to the votes, whether they shall be given *par ordre* or *par tête*. He asserts this with so much warmth as to show that he wishes it. He says, further, that the nation is incapable of liberty; that they can bear nothing long and will not even stay at their regiments above three months. Thus he takes the noblesse for the nation, and judges the noblesse from those members who, from idleness and dissipation, are of the least consequence in revolutions except, indeed, so far as their numbers are concerned. It seems the general position of those who wish the King to be everything that he must inevitably be so in a few years, let the nation do what it will in the present moment. In fact, the revolutionists have but flimsy materials to work with, and unless some greater energy of character should result from their present doings, the friends of despotism must succeed.”

“All this morning [April 25th] I am employed in writing, and in the afternoon go to dine with M. Millet and his mistress, the Marquis de Bréhan, an old lady and her daughter, beautiful and just coming forward, one married woman, a young and extremely handsome one, the husband of the former, and the friend of the latter, with a captain in the navy, who like myself is a bachelor, and a young man I know not who. The dinner (*à la matelote*) and the guests are of M. Millet’s bespeaking. After dessert we are entertained by an old woman who plays on the *vielle* (hurdy gurdy) and accompanies her instrument with loose songs, to the great delight of the gentlemen, the mother, and the married lady, whose husband has an exhausted, disconsolate air. The child listens with infinite attention. The two young ladies are not well pleased. M. Millet proposes another such party for next week, which we agree to. He is to order the dinner and consult us. I tell him it shall be just what he pleases, but that we will, if he pleases, excuse the music. From thence we go to the Hôtel Royal des Invalides, a most magnificent piece of architecture. The chapel and the dome are sublime. In the kitchen we are made to observe, among other things, a little kettle with 2,500 pounds of beef for tomorrow’s soup; another, with a smaller quantity, for *messieurs les officiers*. A spectacle which excited the greatest effect in my mind was a number of mutilated veterans on their knees in the chapel. The most sincere devotion. Poor wretches! they have no hope on this side of the grave. The women went on their knees when we came near the sacristy. At M. Millet’s suggestion, I made a prayer for the two handsomest, which they liked quite as well as any in the Missal. M. Millet tells me that he heard a number of the “invalides” expressing their pity that so fine a man should have lost his leg. He did not perceive me give one of them a crown, or he would have known how to appreciate the compliment and the compassion.”

On Sunday (April 26th) Morris was entertaining a friend, whereupon, he says, “I receive to my great surprise a billet from a lady containing a declaration of love, but anonymous. I write an ambiguous answer to the fair incognita and send my servant Martin to dog the messenger, a little boy, who delivers it to a waiting-woman. She goes to the house of M. Millet. It is therefore from his mistress, who certainly is worth attention. In the evening I call on Madame Millet, but have not an opportunity to say a word to her *en particulier*. Call on Madame de Chastellux, and find that as usual the Duchess has just left her, and a little message for me. There is something whimsical in

this, but I express a regret on the subject. This evening at Madame de Flahaut's they are in the midst of politics, of which I am tired. After supper the Bishop of Autun reads us the protest of the nobles and clergy of Brittany, and during the *lecture* I very uncivilly fall asleep. Madame is not well, and besides has met with something in the course of the day which preys upon her spirits. I enquire what it is and she declines telling me, which I am glad of."

Paris was astir with the excitement of the elections during this month of April. On the 21st the "Electoral Assemblies" had begun. The streets were full of electors of each degree. Besides, the town swarmed with beggars. Twenty thousand vagabonds infested the capital, surrounded the palace, and filled the Hôtel de Ville. The government, being forced thereto, kept twelve thousand of them digging on the hills of Montmartre and payed them 20 sous a day. They were starving. Bread was very scarce. They surrounded the bakers' shops and a bitter murmuring, gradually growing louder, arose from them. Irritated, excited, imaginative, they waited for some excuse for action, however slight. It came on the 25th, in a rumor that Reveillon, an elector and manufacturer, had "spoken badly of the people at an electoral meeting." What he actually said no one knew; that he was a just man all knew; what they imagined he said was that "a man and his wife and children could live on fifteen sous a day," and he was a traitor and must die. All day Sunday the crowds, idle and angry, had time to talk and to encourage each other to violence. On Monday, still idle and drunk, the mob began to move, armed with clubs. Morris mentions going out to see the banker Le Coulteux. "His gate" [April 27th], he says, "is shut and all the shops are shut. There is, it seems, a riot in Paris, and the troops are at work somewhere, which has given a great alarm to the city. I believe it is very trifling." By midnight the crowd was somewhat dispersed, but only to reassemble with renewed energy to do its wild work the next morning. The cause of the "Third Estate" was what they had come to defend, and not even when they faced the cannon and saw two hundred of their number killed did they relinquish their firm conviction that the cause of the Third Estate was righteous and would prevail.

Meantime the society of the Palais Royal in Madame de Chastellux's salon drank their tea quietly, and talked politics. "Madame de Chastellux tells me," writes Morris, "she expects the Duchess to-night. I therefore stay to meet her Royal Highness. She comes in pretty late, is vastly civil, refers to her several messages, extremely sorry not to have met me, etc., to all of which I answer as well as I can. In effect, it goes beyond my idea, though I must from necessity adhere to my original interpretation. She talks a good deal of politics with her friends about the assemblies, etc., and I congratulate her on this employment for her mind, which has contributed already to her health. She says her visit must be very short; she is going to see her children. She came in late, and she should not have made the visit, but to see me. This is clearly persiflage, but it would be vastly uncivil in me should I appear to think so."

In a letter written to Mr. Carmichael on the 27th, mention is made of a visit paid to M. de Montmorin, who received him civilly, but indifferently. He says: "Should the intrigue now carrying on be successful, they will all be turned out, and then I will cultivate the acquaintance of M. de Montmorin, for the Minister of Foreign Affairs is too much occupied. I can say nothing to you about the politics of this country. I know

I write under the inspection of those whose hands this letter may pass through in both kingdoms. Besides, there is nothing that can be depended on till the States-General shall have been some time assembled. The Emperor is, I suppose, by this time in the regions of the departed. This country is not in a condition to send an army of observation to the Rhine, and of course her ministers will be but little attended to. The part which Britain and Prussia may take is uncertain.”

“On the way to see M. Millet [April 28th] I see some troops marching with two small field pieces towards the Faubourg St. Antoine. It seems there has been a riot there. Hear at M. Millet’s a terrible account of it, which certainly is exaggerated. Later I find that the riot has been pretty serious.” But the French theatre, and an endeavor to discover if Madame Millet was the fair heroine of the anonymous billets, evidently occupied more of Morris’s attention than the riots. “It would seem,” he says, “that the billets are not from her and that I am egregiously mistaken, and my curiosity is strong.” M. Millet’s party, planned the week before, was fixed for the 1st of May. “I dress and go to M. Millet’s, where the party are to meet. Madame is waiting for her bonnet, and afterwards we wait for some other persons of the company. Proceed to the Palais de Bourbon. See the small apartments and garden. They are very beautiful. From thence we go to the cabaret, and dine à *la matelote*—the same company we had last week, except the captain in the navy. After dinner, the women propose to go on the Seine, to which I readily agree. We shall be less liable to observation there, which, considering my company, is of some consequence. M. Millet will not go and madame is glad to get rid of him, which he seems to perceive, and goes home alone to enjoy the reflection which such an idea cannot fail to engender. We embark in a dirty fishing boat, and sit on dirty boards laid across. Mademoiselle, who is dressed in muslin trimmed with handsome lace, adds much to the beauty of her dress, which is completely draggled. Her friend seems well pleased with my attentions to her, and she tries to be modest, but apes the character badly. After descending a considerable distance, we remount to the Barrière de Chaillot, but from a mistake in the orders, (which has been the loss of many battles) our carriages are not to be found. We walk towards town. The women, as wild as birds let out of a cage, dispatch the men different ways, but yet no news of our equipages. Cross the river, and go to look for them where we dined. Not finding them, we return to recross it. Meet a servant, who tells me that carriages are at the Grille Chaillot. We recross. The scow is taken over by the course of the current, a rope being extended across the river, and a pulley moving to and fro along it, to which pulley the boat is connected by a strong rope, and that end of the rope which is fastened to the boat moves by means of a loop sliding along a bar at the gunwale such a distance towards the end of the scow from the centre as to present the side of the vessel to the current, in an angle of about forty-five degrees. By this means the scow is carried over with considerable velocity. After waiting some time for the carriages (during which time the women amuse themselves with running about), they at length arrive, and I come home. Dress and go to Madame de Flahaut’s. A large company, a great deal of politics, and some play. I do not get home till one, having set down a gentleman who was unprovided of a carriage. Then I sit and read till near two, and go to bed, heartily fatigued with the day’s amusement, if I may give that name to things which did not amuse me at all. I incline to think that Madame Roselle is my unknown correspondent, and I do not care sixpence who it is.”

On the 29th of April Morris wrote to General Washington giving him a description of M. de Lafayette's success in his political campaign in Auvergne. "He had to contend," he says, "with the prejudices and the interests of his order, and with the influence of the Queen and Princes, (except the Duke of Orleans) but he was too able for his opponent. He played the orator with as much éclat as ever he acted the soldier, and is at this moment as much envied and hated as ever his heart could wish. He is also much beloved by the nation, for he stands forward as one of the principal champions for her rights. The elections are finished throughout this kingdom, except in the capital, and it appears from the instructions given to the representatives (called here *les cahiers*) that certain points are universally demanded, which when granted and secured will render France perfectly free as to the principles of the constitution—I say principles, for one generation at least will be required to render the practice familiar. We have, I think, every reason to wish that the patriots may be successful. The generous wish which a free people must form to disseminate freedom, the grateful emotion which rejoices in the happiness of a benefactor, and a strong personal interest as well in the liberty as in the power of this country, all conspire to make us far from indifferent spectators. I say that we have an *interest* in the *liberty* of France. The leaders here are our friends; many of them have imbibed their principles in America, and all have been fired by our example. Their opponents are by no means rejoiced at the success of our Revolution, and many of them are disposed to form connections of the strictest kind with Great Britain. The commercial treaty emanated from such dispositions, and, according to the usual course of those events which are shaped by human wisdom, it will probably produce the exact reverse of what was intended by the projectors. The spirit of this nation is at present high, and M. Necker is very popular, but if he continues long in administration it will be somewhat wonderful. His enemies are numerous, able, and inveterate. His supporters are uncertain as to his fate, and will protect him no longer than while he can aid in establishing a constitution. But when once that great business is accomplished he will be left to stand on his own ground. The Court wish to get rid of him, and unless he shows very strong in the States-General they will gratify their wishes. His ability as a minister will be much contested in that assembly, but with what success time only can determine.

"The materials for a revolution in this country are very indifferent. Everybody agrees that there is an utter prostration of morals—but this general position can never convey to the American mind the degree of depravity. It is not by any figure of rhetoric, or force of language, that the idea can be communicated. An hundred anecdotes and an hundred thousand examples are required to show the extreme rottenness of every member. There are men and women who are greatly and eminently virtuous. I have the pleasure to number many in my own acquaintance, but they stand forward from a background deeply and darkly shaded. It is, however, from such crumbling matter that the great edifice of freedom is to be erected here. Perhaps, like the stratum of rock which is spread under the whole surface of their country, it may harden when exposed to the air, but it seems quite as likely that it will fall and crush the builders. I own to you that I am not without such apprehensions, for there is one fatal principle which pervades all ranks. It is a perfect indifference to the violation of all engagements. Inconstancy is so mingled in the blood, marrow, and every essence of this people, that when a man of high rank and importance laughs to-day at what he seriously asserted yesterday, it is considered as in the natural order of things. Consistency is the

phenomenon. Judge then what would be the value of an association should such a thing be proposed, and even adopted. The great mass of the people have no religion but their priests, no law but their superiors, no morals but their interest. These are the creatures who, led by drunken curates, are now in the high-road à *la Liberté*, and the first use they make of it is to form insurrections everywhere for the want of bread. We have had a little riot here yesterday and the day before, and I am told that some men have been killed, but the affair was so distant from the quarter in which I reside that I know nothing of the particulars.”

By the 1st of May the elections in Paris were nearly over and the first victory of the people gained in the decision of the Government that the Third Estate should have a representation equal in numbers to that of the orders of the nobles and clergy combined. On Sunday, May 3rd, the Court and clergy at Versailles awaited the result of the audience to be given to the deputies on Monday. A superb day dawned—Talleyrand says, “A heavenly day.” The beautiful lawn of the palace was crowded with groups of gayly dressed officers and high dignitaries of the church, each wearing the brilliant tokens of his rank. Ladies decked in the brightest colors and wearing the happiest smiles talked, sauntered about, and sat on the stone benches along the alleys underneath the delicate spring foliage. In striking contrast to these were the groups of the members of the Third Estate—shunned as if they bore the seeds of a pestilence among them. They talked in whispers, hurriedly and earnestly—they never smiled. Their costume of black hose and surtout and short black cloak, to which they had been condemned by the old sumptuary laws and which denoted the plebeian, made the contrast even greater. Proudly they carried themselves in this dress, but on their faces were care and gloomy foreboding, and a sudden ominous silence fell upon them whenever a stray member of the noblesse happened to pass near.

On a balcony of the palace was the queen, surrounded by a bevy of beauties of the Court, all in high spirits, discussing the pageant of to-morrow, which to them had an interest almost solely spectacular, just as they valued the Salle des Menus as a room where their beauty could be seen to the best advantage because it was lighted from above. Mr. Morris speaks of visiting Madame de Lafayette and finding that “they are on the move to Versailles. Lafayette is already there to pay his respects in quality of representative. I go and sit a while with Madame de Puisignieu at her toilet. Then go to see Madame de Ségur, and amuse myself with the children, and leave her at her toilet, to meet her again to night at Madame de Puisignieu’s, and she tells me she will stay the whole evening in consequence of my being there instead of keeping another engagement. . . . During the evening a gentleman entertains the ladies with the description of the hanging match last Thursday. He is colonel of a regiment which was on duty to attend the execution. We drink a great deal of weak tea, which Madame de la Suze says very justly is *du lait coupé*. Madame de Ségur comes in while the company are at supper, and I tell her very truly that I was just going away but will now stay. The conversation in our corner turns as usual upon politics, and among other things on the want of grain. M. Necker is a good deal blamed, but in my opinion very undeservedly. One foolish thing has indeed been committed, and that is the only one which they do not find fault with. It is the order for searching the barns of the farmers. The riot, also, is dismissed. The Baron de Besenval, who gave the

order for quelling it, seems vastly pleased with his work. He ordered, it seems, two pieces of cannon with the Swiss guards, and when preparations were made for firing them the mob took to their heels. It is therefore agreed that the Baron is a great general—and as the women say so it would be folly and madness to controvert their opinion. If I were a military man I should incline to think that two four-pounders could not be of much use in a city like this, where the streets are in general so narrow as only to permit two carriages to go abreast, where the same narrow streets are very crooked, and where the houses are in general four to six stories of stone walls. But as I am not versed in the art of war it is my duty to agree with the rest that a man must indeed be a great general who, with only 1,500 troops, infantry and cavalry, and, above all, with only two pieces of artillery, could disperse ten or fifteen thousand, chiefly spectators, but the seditious, to the amount of three thousand, completely armed with sticks and stones.”

“Mr. Jefferson to-day [May 3d] tells me of a billet for the audience to-morrow which Madame de Tessé reserves for Mr. Short, and which he will get for me as Short cannot be here. I urge on M. de Lafayette, who dines with us, the election of the Duke of Orleans and give my reasons for it. He tells me he will be elected. Mention to him a way of placing M. Necker advantageously, which he thinks would be very useful. Visit Madame de Chastellux, who is so kind as to bring me the form of the ceremonial of to-morrow from the Duchess of Orleans, and at the same time a message. If she can, will pay a visit. Madame de Chastellux proposes to obtain through her a ticket for the audience for me. M. le Maréchal de Ségur comes in. After some conversation, a message from the Duchess. She cannot visit this evening, being too much engaged in writing. I come home to go early to bed, as I must set off early to-morrow for Versailles.”

On Monday, May 4th, the grand procession of the deputies to the States-General formed and defiled through the streets of Versailles to the Church of St. Louis. The same costumes were enforced as in the last States-General, more than one hundred and seventy years before, and the same etiquette, but it was the last gala day of the old monarchy. All ranks and classes were astir this morning. All turned their faces toward Versailles—the goal of all their hopes. Morris was among the number. He says: “At six this morning I set off for Versailles. Am overtaken on the road by M. le Normand and M. La Caze. We alight and walk together through the streets till the procession commences, except a little while that I sit with Madame de Flahaut, who was so kind as to send and offer me part of a window. While we wait for the procession the conversation turns on the bal de l’opéra. M. de la Ville Blanche tells me a story somewhat characteristic of national manners. His wife and a lady, her friend, went thither together. After a while they separated, and, meeting again, conversed a long time, the lady being perfectly ignorant who the person was whom he had picked up, for she was with him. After the ball was over and all three had got home, they rallied the friend for being so taken in. She could give no other reason for being so much deceived, but that madame was in company with monsieur and therefore she could not possibly suppose it was his wife.”

While the lookers-on thoughtlessly talked, laughed, and joked, careless of all but the gay scene, the procession moved on. The nobles glittered in gorgeous dresses and

orders. The bishops, superb in violet robes, were followed by their humble curés in modest garb. The Commons were in black mantles, very plain, and hats without feathers. Louis ??., beautiful Marie Antoinette, with her maids of honor and the brilliant Court, completed the picture. Morris says: "The procession is very magnificent, through a double row of tapestry. Neither the King nor Queen appears too well pleased. The former is repeatedly saluted as he passes along with the *Vive le Roi*, but the latter meets not a single acclamation. She looks, however, with contempt on the scene in which she acts a part and seems to say: 'For the present I submit but I shall have my time.' I find that my conjecture as to the Queen's temper and the King's is right, when I make a short visit in the salon of Madame de Chastellux later, and, as she is going to the Duchess, she tells me that the King was vexed that the Duke of Orleans* should walk as representative and not as prince of the blood, and also that his consort received no mark of public satisfaction. She was exceedingly hurt. Her conversation on meeting the Duchess of Orleans, who, as well as the Duke, had been repeatedly applauded: 'Madame, il y a une demi-heure que je vous ai attendue chez moi.' 'Madame, en vous attendant ici (at the Church of Notre Dame), j'ai obéi à l'ordre qu'on m'a envoyé de la part du Roi.' 'Eh bien, madame, je n'ai point de place pour vous, comme vous n'êtes pas venue.' 'C'est juste, madame. Aussi, ai-je des voitures à moi qui m'attendent.' I cannot help feeling the mortification the poor Queen meets with, for I see only the woman, and it seems unmanly to treat a woman with unkindness. Madame de Chastellux tells me a sprightly reply of Madame Adelaide, the King's aunt, who, when the Queen in a fit of resentment, speaking of this nation, said, 'Ces indignes Français!' exclaimed, 'Dites *indignés*, madame.' The Duchess of Orleans could not get a billet for me, but the Duchesse de Bourbon has promised to try, and if she succeeds will send it to the Palais Royal this evening, and in that case Madame de Chastellux will receive it from the Duchess of Orleans and send it to me. Return home, receive a note from Mr. Jefferson assuring me that I can get a ticket from Madame de Tessé who has reserved one for Mr. Short, who is not arrived. This has been so fine a day that walking about without my hat has got my face scorched exceedingly, and both my forehead and eyes are inflamed."

The 5th of May, the day long looked for, had come, and royalty welcomed the national estates with all pomp and splendor in the great Salle des Menus. The king, with his ministers of state in front, the queen and princes of the blood at his side, sat on a magnificent throne of purple and gold. Morris says he reached Versailles early, and at a little after eight got into the hall. "I sit there in a cramped situation till after twelve, during which time the different members are brought in and placed, one 'bailliage' after the other. When M. Necker comes in he is loudly and repeatedly clapped, and so is the Duke of Orleans; also a Bishop who has long lived in his diocese, and practised there what his profession enjoins. Another Bishop, who preached yesterday a sermon which I did not hear, is applauded, but those near me say that this applause is unmerited. An old man who refused to dress in the costume prescribed for the Tiers, and who appears in his farmer's habit, receives a long and loud plaudit. M. de Mirabeau is hissed, though not loudly. The King at length arrives, and takes his seat; the Queen on his left, two steps lower than him. He makes a short speech, very proper, and well spoken or rather read. The tone and manner have all the *fierté* which can be expected or desired from the blood of the Bourbons. He is interrupted in the reading by acclamations so warm and of such lively affection that

the tears start from my eyes in spite of myself. The Queen weeps or seems to weep, but not one voice is heard to wish her well. I would certainly raise my voice if I were a Frenchman; but I have no right to express a sentiment, and in vain solicit those who are near me to do it. After the King has spoken he takes off his hat, and when he puts it on again his nobles imitate his example. Some of the Tiers do the same, but by degrees they take them off again. The King then takes off his hat. The Queen seems to think it wrong, and a conversation seems to pass in which the King tells her he chooses to do it whether consistent or not consistent with the ceremonial; but I could not swear to this, being too far distant to see very distinctly, much less to hear. The nobles uncover by degrees, so that, if the ceremonial requires three manœuvres, the troops are not yet properly drilled. After the King's speech and the covering and uncoverings, the Garde des Sceaux makes one much longer, but it is delivered in a very ungraceful manner, and so indistinctly that nothing can be judged of it by me—until it is in print. When he has done, M. Necker rises. He tries to play the orator, but he plays it very ill. The audience salute him with a long, loud plaudit. Animated by their approbation, he falls into action and emphasis, but a bad accent and an ungraceful manner destroy much of the effect which ought to follow from a composition written by M. Necker and spoken by M. Necker. He presently asks the King's leave to employ a clerk, which being granted, the clerk proceeds in the *lecture*. It is very long. It contains much information and many things very fine, but it is too long, and has many repetitions and too much compliment, and what the French call *emphase*. The plaudits were loud, long, and incessant. These will convince the King and Queen of the national sentiment, and tend to prevent the intrigue against the present administration, at least for a while. After the speech is over the King rises to depart, and receives a long and affecting *Vive le roi*. The Queen rises, and to my great satisfaction she hears for the first time in several months the sound of, *Vive la Reine*. She makes a low courtesy and this produces a louder acclamation, and that a lower courtesy. As soon as I can disengage myself from the crowd, I find my servant and I go where my carriage put up, in order to proceed to Paris, being tolerably hungry and not inclined to ask anyone for a dinner, as I am convinced that more such requests will be made this day than will be agreeable to those who have dinners to bestow. I find that my horses are not harnessed, and that I am at a *traiteur's*. I ask for dinner, and am shown into a room where there is a table d'hôte, and some of the Tiers are sat down to it. We enter into conversation, talk of the manner of voting. Tell them that I think when their new constitution is formed it will be well for them to vote *par ordre*, but in forming it to vote *par tête*. Those who best understand the thing incline to this opinion, but they are from Brittany, and one of them inveighs so strongly against the tyranny of the nobles, and attacks his brother so warmly, that the others come about, and one, a noble representing the Tiers, is so vociferous against his order that I am convinced he meant to rise by his eloquence, and finally will, I expect, vote with the opinion of the Court, let that be what it may. I rise, wish them very sincerely a perfect accord and good understanding with each other, and set off for Paris."

A week later the weather grew hot, and the dust and dirt became unbearable; even the garden of the Palais Royal "is," says Morris, "as dusty as a highway and absolutely intolerable." Of the other intolerable nuisances of the Palais Royal, the lawlessness and vice, and the oratorical efforts of the agitators, Morris makes little mention; but evidently Paris had lost some of its attraction, and, glad to escape from it to the cool

of the country, he went to the home of M. Le Coulteux. “The country through which I drive to reach Lucennes,” he says (May 9th), “is highly cultivated, and on the sides of the hills under the fruit trees I observe currant and gooseberry bushes, also grape vines. Probably this mode of cultivating the vine would succeed in America. M. Le Coulteux’s house was formerly the property of a prince of Condé, built in the old style but tolerably convenient, and the situation delicious. His mother and sister arrive in the evening, and his cousin De Canteleu. The Tiers continue to meet and to do nothing, as they are desirous of voting *par tête*, and the other orders do not join them. Sunday morning [May 10th] we drive to the aqueduct of Marli and ascend to the top. The view is exquisite—the Seine winding along through a valley very highly cultivated, innumerable villages, at a distance the domes of Paris on one side, the Palace of St. Germain, very near, on the other, a vast forest behind and the Palace of Marli in the front of it embowered in a deep shade, the bells from a thousand steeples at different distances murmuring through the air, the fragrance of the morning, the vernal freshness of the air—oh, how delicious! I stand this moment on a vast monument of human pride, and behold every gradation from wretchedness to magnificence in the scale of human existence. We breakfast between ten and eleven, and walk over the garden, and upon our return ride to Marli. The garden is truly royal, and yet pleasing, the house tolerable, the furniture indifferent. We are told by the Swiss that they are preparing for His Majesty’s reception. Return to the house of M. L. Le Coulteux and dress. On entering the salon our company is increased by the representatives of Normandy. We had already received an accession of a banker and his two sisters at breakfast. At dinner we have a political conversation which I continue with the Normans after dinner, and we finally agree in our opinions. Discuss, by way of an episode, the propriety of an India company. This afternoon we visit the Pavilion of Madame du Barry.* This temple is consecrated to the immorality of Louis Quinze. It is in fine taste and the finish is exquisite; the view most delightful, and yet very extensive. In returning from thence we see Madame du Barry. She is long passed the day of beauty, and is accompanied by an old coxcomb, the Prévôt des Marchands.* They bend their course towards the Pavilion, perhaps to worship on those altars which the sovereign raised. From the Pavilion we ascend the hill and go between the house and the fishpond, which smells abominably, to see the villagers dance. Returned to the house I have a talk with Laurent Le Coulteux on the subject of the purchase of the debt due to France. He wishes me to have an interview with M. Necker. This matter has hitherto met with great obstacles and difficulties, from the peculiar temper of M. Necker, who is what may be called a cunning man, and therefore those acquainted with him do not choose to come forward at once openly, because they are certain that he would first assume the merit of having previously known everything which they communicate, and, secondly, would take advantage of such communications to defeat their object if he could get by any means any better terms from others to whom he should start the idea. To deal with such a person requires caution and delicacy. Laurent says he cannot get M. Necker to finish the business they already have to do with him, but will, if I please, get me an interview with him. He thinks it must be managed merely as a matter of finance, in which I own that my opinion has from the first accorded with his. I take M. Laurent with me, and on our return to Paris he vents a good deal of ill humor on M. Necker, who has kept him a long time in play and now, as he suspects, (I believe with truth) keeps De Canteleu in the same position. He tells me that their object is to get an order for

money acknowledgedly due. He has an invitation to dine with M. Necker and is then, if the conversation be turned upon that topic, to recommend to M. Necker an interview with me. After a pleasant ride of two hours we reach Paris.”

Back again in Paris, the old routine commenced, writing, receiving innumerable visitors, and making calls in return. “In the evening [May 11th] I go,” he says, “and sit with Madame de Chastellux. She receives a message from the Duchess and sends her answer that I am with her, and have charged her with a commission, etc. This is to make my thanks for her Royal Highness’s kind attention in sending to Versailles for a ticket of admission to the opening of the States-General. In a few minutes she comes in, tells me that she came on purpose to see me, observes that I have been out of town, hopes to see me frequently at Madame de Chastellux’s, is sorry the present visit must be so short, but is going with Madame de Chastellux to take a ride and make some visits. To all this I can make no reply, but by look and manner expressive of deep humility and a grateful sense of the honor done to me. In fact, my tongue has never been sufficiently practised in this jargon, and always asks my heart what it shall say, and while this last, after deliberation, refers to my head for counsel, the proper moment has passed. As I think I understand her Royal Highness, and am tolerably safe on the side of vanity, there remains but one port to guard, and that is shut up. She has perhaps the handsomest arm in France, and from habit takes off her glove, and has always occasion to touch some part of her face so as to show the hand and arm to advantage. Call on Madame Dumolley, who is at chess. Madame Cabarus* comes in. I tell her that it is the fault of La Caze that I have not paid my respects at her Hotel. She tells me I need no introducer. She has a beautiful hand, and very fine eyes. These in a very intelligible manner say that she has no objection to receiving the assurance how fine they are. She goes soon to Madrid, and will be glad to see me both here and there. Slip away without staying to supper and return home. The weather is extremely warm and like to continue so. The spring of Europe, which has been much vaunted by the natives from affection, and the prejudices which it occasions, and by travellers from the vanity of appearing to have seen or tasted or smelt or felt something purer or newer or sweeter or softer than their neighbors—the spring of Europe has reduced itself, this year at least, to one week, namely, the three last days of April and the first four of May, and in this short spring Parker, by changing his waistcoat, has taken the rheumatism.”

Thursday, May 14th, Morris spent at Versailles; called on several of his fair friends, and “in my way about the town,” he declares, “I wander to the Queen’s apartments, which are furnished in very good taste. Pass from thence to the chapel, in which there is just as much devotion as I expected. Call on Madame de Ségur and sit a while at her toilet. She says she is heartily tired of Versailles, which I believe. She shows me a declaration of the clergy of Paris—highly monarchical, and which will do them no good. After leaving her, a shower of rain arising, I take refuge in the antechamber of M. de Montmorin, who asks me if I am come to dine with him, to which I reply in the negative. He tells me I must come some day, which I promise to do. Dine with M. de Lafayette—we have here the politics of the day. Call on Madame de Montvoisseux, who asks me to go with her party to the Queen’s gardens at Petit Trianon. We walk about the garden a good deal. Royalty has here endeavored at great expense to conceal itself from its own eye. But the attempt is vain. A dairy furnished with the

porcelain of Sèvres is a semblance too splendid for rural life. The adjoining muddy pond, on the other hand, but poorly resembles a lake. On the whole this garden is handsome, and yet the money applied in making it has been but badly spent, and would be not badly spared. I observe a number of representatives to the States-General walking about in it. Perhaps there is not one of them who thinks of what ought to strike them all, that this expense and others like this have occasioned their meeting. Return pretty late to town and sup with Capellis and his fair aunt, Madame de Flahaut. Another lady is there, who derives much pleasure from the sound of her own voice. The day has been extremely hot; a shower in the evening does not render the air much cooler.”

“This morning [May 16th] is windy, cold, rainy, and disagreeable; but in consistence with my arrangements in concert with M. Le Coulteux, I set off for Lucennes, and arrive there a little after two o’clock. He and his family have been expected for two days, but none are come, and as the cook has not made his appearance it is evident that he will not be out to dinner. Go to a tavern where, with very promising appearances, the utmost the house can afford is a mackerel, a pigeon, fresh eggs, and asparagus. The first has probably been too long on his travels and acquired too much of the *haut goût* for a plain American. This circumstance occasions the death of the solitary pigeon, who is thereby released from the confinement in which he was starving. The cookery and the provisions are worthy of each other—so that this day at least I shall run no risk of indigestion. Mine host, in a laudable zeal for the honor of his house, makes up in the bill what was deficient in the dinner. By this means the dishes make a very respectable figure. The poor little pigeon is rated at something more than a shilling, and the bunch of spindled asparagus at about three shillings, which is not unreasonable—considering the eggs are at about threepence apiece. After this repast, go to Malmaison, where all is topsy-turvy, a strong smell of paint in the house, and added to that a dish of cabbage and vinegar boiling, which gives another smell not a whit more pleasant. Walk over the garden, which is agreeable. Madame Dumolley takes me in her ‘whiskey,’ and we have a mighty pleasant ride in one of the Royal parks. I take tea with Madame, and return to town after a very pleasant day.”

Going a few days later to call on Madame de Suze, he found her “in a scene of great distress”—which he describes with a touch, at least, of humor. “Her lapdog being very ill, the *pauvre bête* has suffered now for a long time. At first it had the *maladie napolitaine*; for this it was sent to the doctor of dogs, who by a course of mercurials eradicated this disease, and returned him as complete a skeleton as ever came out of the powdering tub. The kind mistress, by her care and assiduity, soon brought him up to a tolerable embonpoint, when, lo! another indisposition. This is très grave, et voilà Madame, la fille de chambre et un des valets, qui ne s’occupent que de cela. At three different times in my short visit: ‘Je vous demande bien pardon, M. Morris—mais c’est une chose si désolante que de voir souffrir comme ça une pauvre bête.’ ‘Ah! Madame, ne me faites point de vos excuses, je vous en prie, pour des soins si aimables, aussi mérités que toutes vos attentions.’ At length, by peeping into his back, she discovers a little maggot. ‘Ah, mon Dieu! Mais, voyez donc!’ I leave them to go to dine with M. la Bretèche. We have the envoy of Saxe-Gotha and M. de Durfort of the guards. After dinner, walk to the pavilion and sit some time. The tutor of the son of M. de Durfort, who was with her husband some time at Florence, gives us a long

account of Italy, during which. I am so unfortunate as to fall asleep, sitting next to Madame. Among other things, he mentions the want of cleanliness among the Italians as very shocking, and speaks of it with the same air of horror which some people put on when they notice a similar defect in the French.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER IV.

Morris surprised at Parisian manners and customs. Tea in the Palais Royal. Visit to Romainville. M. de Beaujolais. Morris writes verses to the Duchess of Orleans. Careless driving. Made a member of the Club of Valois. Interviews with Judges. Note on the tobacco contracts. The Dauphin's death. States-General more than ever embroiled. Morris stands for Houdon's statue of Washington. Strictures on the Bishop d'Autun. Visit to Raincy. The clergy join the Tiers. The Salle des Menus closed. Bath in the Tennis Court. Great excitement in Paris. Morris's sentiments quoted. His interest in France. Necker offers to resign. The mob at Versailles. Inflammatory publications at the Palais Royal. The nobles join the other orders. Revolt among the guards. The Abbaye broken open. The king terrified.

It is impossible not to see the eyebrows slightly raised and the look of surprise on Morris's face as he notes the manners and customs of the ladies of Paris. "What would have induced one of my countrywomen to place herself in such a position?" he says, on one occasion, when a very extraordinary request was made to him, hardly suitable for ears polite. While sitting one evening with a friend in the Palais Royal, drinking lemonade and tea, "the waiter comes to tell me that two ladies are without who wish to speak to me. These, I find, are Madame de Boursac and Madame d'Esplanhall, whom we had met before at the Tuileries. A good deal of light, trivial conversation, in which these ladies intimate to me that their nuptial bonds do not at all straighten their conduct, and it would seem that either would be content to form an intrigue. As they can have no real want of lovers, and as they can have no prepossession in my favor, this conduct evidently resolves itself into some other motive—probably a view to some *jolis cadeaux*. As I have a vast fund of indifference on the subject, I say a number of handsome nothings, and as the ladies are relieved by my presence from the scandal of being alone and the ennui of a female tête-à-tête, I shall have the credit with them of being more agreeable, *et plus homme d'esprit*, than I am, by a great deal."

To fulfil an engagement made with Madame de Chastellux to visit the Marquis de Ségur, Morris went to her apartments on the day appointed and found her in attendance upon the Duchess at her prayers. She brought a message from her Royal Highness of regret that Mr. Morris had not gone to see her at her apartment, and that she would be glad to see him any morning. "I agree to pay a visit to her with Madame de Chastellux. We get into my carriage, and go to Romainville, the seat of M. de Ségur. The view is very fine from the house and from different parts of the garden, at the foot of which is a charming little cottage. In the garden I remark an obelisk dedicated to friendship. It is erected by the Baron de Besenval (I suppose), who was most intimately the friend of Madame de Ségur as well as with the Maréchal. She, with an unusual degree of candor, avowed her passion to her husband, and all three lived very happily together until her death. The present Vicomte de Ségur is son to the Baron, and his elder brother is supposed to be son to the Maréchal. The Comtesse de Ségur does very well the honors of the house, being a very sensible and, indeed, a lovely woman. The Prince and Princess Galitzen* dine this day at Romainville. He

tells me he has been from home now about seven years. We return to town and I visit Madame de Flahaut, who insists on my spending the evening with Madame de Boursac, which I agree to. A good deal of chit-chat, and after supper M. de Boursac comes in, and then M. d'Espinchall, whose lady is also there, and the conversation degenerates into politics. The women prattle a plenty of nonsense about the election of Paris, which it seems is to be disputed, and thereby put their two husbands out of patience.”

The promised visit to her Royal Highness, the Duchess of Orleans, was accomplished on Saturday, May 23d. “At 11 o'clock,” he says, “with Madame de Chastellux I go to her apartments. She is at breakfast, the Vicomte de Ségur sitting next to her. If I guess right his attentions are more agreeable to her than she is aware of. His inquisitive eye asks how I am with Madame de Chastellux, to which I answer by a firmness of insipid countenance perfectly in harmony with the fact that I have never yet harbored an idea respecting her which would derogate from a vestal, and this not from virtue entirely but very much from indifference, and yet she is young and handsome and sensible. What is the reason of *this*? The Duchess also, by an insinuating glance, seems to say, ‘I find you are vastly attentive there and I am glad of it.’ She is vastly mistaken and I am glad of that. Her younger son comes in, M. de Beaujolais, a fine, sprightly boy. Madame de —, one of her women, enters limping. She had something on the toe which she has been extracting and has cut to the quick. I tell her, ‘Madame, quand on est touché au vif on s’en repent longtemps.’ An old devout lady who is present, taking the thing with great simplicity in the literal sense, adds, in the true matron tone, ‘et surtout au pied.’ There is a conserve on table which the Duchess offers, but I decline, as not liking ‘les choses sucrées.’”

There was keen enjoyment to be got out of a drive with a charming, gay companion like Madame de Flahaut, “through the unfrequented parts of the Bois de Boulogne, where a number of deer skipping about contrast very finely with the belles and beaux who are grouped together in different parts.” Again, to wander, as he says, “alone in the garden of Malmaison before dinner, and dream of my country and converse with my absent friends, and by solitude to bring my mind back to its natural tone. Then in the evening I go to see Madame de Chastellux and write for her some lines that occurred to me whilst driving today, but which I tell her are not an impromptu, though I might give them the air of one. She thinks, or at least says she thinks, them very handsome. I agree very honestly that they are well turned and musical, but I cannot agree that they have so much merit as she seems to allow.

“If Beauty so sweet in all gentleness drest,
In loveliness, virtue, arrayed;
By the graces adorned, by the muses carest,
By lofty ambition obeyed;
“Ah! who shall escape from the gold-painted dart
When Orléans touches the bow?
Who the softness resist of that sensible heart
Where love and benevolence glow?
“Thus we dream of the Gods, who with bounty supreme
Our humble petitions accord.

Our love they excite, and command our esteem,
Tho' only at distance adored."

"A few days later," he says, "when I call at the Palais Royal to say good-bye to Madame de Chastellux, who is going to Raincy for the summer, she tells me she gave my verses to the Duchess, who was much pleased; found them very handsome, but not just. She does not merit, etc. In reply, I beg her Royal Highness to be informed that she has at least the security that they were not a premeditated compliment but the result of my reflections during a solitary ride, and that I shall not think so well of her as I have done if she is not convinced of the *justice* of my verses, which in my opinion forms their principal, if not their only merit, for she must know better than any other person whether she merits the good opinion there expressed."

"A day in the country [May 24th]. Very warm weather and dusty. A large company at Lucennes. Among them M. Delville, who speaks of the bad quality of the tobacco sent to him by Mr. [Robert] Morris. I explain to him the nature of the inspection laws, etc., and I tell him that I do not complain of the conduct of the farm, which has been candid and generous, but that the Committee of Berni has occasioned all the mischief. In the evening I drive to Malmaison. Madame Dumolley is very civil, but I must go to see her, I find, only *sur les jours de fête*. Qu.: Is that because she has not at other times a dinner she would wish to exhibit, or wishes not, at other times, to be broken in upon, or wishes to save the risk of a visit when she is not at home? The last is the reason assigned, but the second is that which I believe in. At a little before ten I set off for Paris; and my coachman, being asleep, I am nearly overset in one of the ditches. After several efforts to make him awaken, he still continuing to drive wild, I stop him and ask if he is drunk. Tell him if he is, then to get down from the box and let my servant drive; but, if he is sober, then to go on and to pay more attention, for that if he oversets the carriage I will instantly run him through the body. This has the desired effect, and brings him to the use of his senses. How idle to suppose that man is a reasonable creature. If he had run into the ditch, which is dry, and about six foot perpendicular, it is a thousand to one that I should have been in a condition not to act, and he not to suffer, but this is a danger to which by habit he is familiarized. The other by its novelty makes impression, and he does not consider, at least until he is fairly awake, that I have no weapon but my cane to execute the threat."

Morris's clear views on general subjects, and his particular knowledge of the politics of Europe as well as of France, had already won for him a reputation which was not always to him a wholly agreeable one, for his time was valuable, and yet the interruptions to it, springing from his popularity, were incessant. "To-day" [May 27th], he says, "I am disturbed immediately after breakfast by General Sir How Whitford-Dalrymple and a Mr. Davis. They stay a long time, and enter with much solicitude into politics. As far as their symptoms may go they indicate great attention of the British Cabinet to what passes here regarding the States-General, etc. I tell them that if the King of Prussia were worth a farthing, the English might on the death of the Emperor play a very good game; viz., upon the election of the Archduke, put up the Electors of Bavaria and, giving Saxony to Prussia, take for the Stadholder the Austrian Netherlands, which with some of the little Bishoprics in the neighborhood would form a respectable monarchy, and by this means Britain would form for herself

an extensive barrier, including Hanover, and would hem in her enemy on every side almost. Whereas if France establishes a free government, she may easily exchange with the house of Austria for something to be acquired elsewhere, or for money, the right to Flanders—and then, annexing both Flanders and Holland, she will become indisputably mistress of the fate of Europe; that Holland (that is, the United Netherlands) is now in a position that cannot endure, and her fate depends on the measure of the moment; that if France disposes herself to act, the first step will be to secure an alliance with us at any rate, because on our European ally will depend the fate of the West Indies, etc. We shall see at a future day what will be the effect of such suggestions. Go to dine with Madame Faucault, the daughter of my old friend James Leray de Chaumont. She is at her toilette and is, I am told, a woman of gallantry. Dine and chatter politics. Madame Leray de Chaumont* talks to me very sensibly, considering that she is said to be crazy. After dinner I walk in the Champs Elysées, and meet M. de Durfort, who tells me the number of troops in the neighborhood of Paris is to prevent tumult if the States-General are dissolved; laugh at this idea, which shows only the wishes of himself and his friends. After leaving him I call on Madame de la Suze. She is just going to dress, but that is nothing. ‘M. Morris me permettra de faire ma toilette?’ ‘Certainly.’ So we have the whole performance of undressing and dressing except the shift. Finish the evening in the salon of Madame de Flahaut, where I meet Madame de Boursac, who tells me that I am inscribed a member of the Club de Valois on the nomination of M. de Boursac.”

With unabated energy Morris continued his efforts to bring about an accommodation with the farmers-general and Robert Morris in the affair of the tobacco. But the dreaded suit became inevitable, and, in order to urge it forward, he was advised to visit his judges. This he accordingly did, and in the course of the day obtained assurances from the grocer, that the court was “impartial, and alike uninfluenced by farmers and grand seigneurs, that he would do everything in his power for the cause, etc.,” from the vender of skins, who was so surprised by a chariot stopping at his door “and a servant in livery inquiring for him, without anything of the humble suitor in his countenance,” that his “honor was brought into the street” by the unusual proceeding, a promise to do everything in his power; and from the amiable M. Levi, the vintner, a promise to mention the matter to his brethren at the earliest opportunity, with many assurances that “he believes my suit to be good, and that they desire to give the best reception to strangers, etc.; that of course a winter passage of a thousand leagues is not undertaken on light ground by a man of common understanding, etc. I of course assure him that there is doubtless every reason for confiding in the justice of the French, yet a stranger opposed to a powerful company is at a disadvantage.” After interviews with the bookseller, the woollen draper, the goldsmith, and the furrier, Morris says he was quite overcome by the ludicrous side of the picture, “which is so strongly painted to my own eyes that I cannot forbear laughing at myself, and having at length brought this disagreeable scene to an end, as a means of refreshment I utilize a ticket which I have for the Parc Monceau, where I walk a considerable time. It has merit, and has cost at least as much as it deserves. The gardener, an Englishman, and believing me to be one, is so kind as to direct a sentinel to find me out, and then comes himself and offers to show me the hot-house, etc. This is vastly polite and, indeed, kind, but perhaps the expectation of a little French coin from an English pocket may have had some influence. As this, however, would be an ungenerous

suspicion, I leave him the full gratification of the patriotic sentiment, lavish a profusion of compliments, but not a single sou. After a very magnificent supper and a game of whist at the house of M. Bontin, I propose to him the supplying of the marine with provisions, and offer him a concern. He objects his office, to which I reply that he need not appear in it, but that, besides, it is a most honorable and praiseworthy pursuit to obtain supplies for the Crown upon easier terms, and thereby to cement more strongly an alliance of infinite consequence to France. We are to talk further on this subject.”

The promised visit was paid to M. de Montmorin at Versailles on Friday, the 29th of May. “His porter in a surly tone tells me I am come too late, just when the Count is going to dinner, to which I reply by desiring he will tell his master I wish to speak to him. Stay in the antechamber pretty late. At length dinner is announced, and I deliver the letter which I have kept so long, with an apology, which is well received. Go up to dinner. Common States-General chit-chat. The dinner lasts long, as we wait for a gentleman who is in session of the noblesse. On quitting the Count he very kindly regrets that he sees so little of me this day, which compliment might have been spared, as it depended on him to have had more particular conversation. He desires a repetition of my visit, and that I would consider his house as my home whenever I am there.”

“This morning [May 30th], being rather broken to pieces by business interruptions, I applied the fragments of the day to seeing curiosities with Madame de Flahaut as my companion. First the Gobelins, which, after all that has been said in their favor, are an idle kind of art, because they produce pieces which are more costly and less beautiful than paintings, and though in one sense they last long, yet in another they do not, because the colors fade. For the rest, it is a wonderful operation. From the Gobelins, in the gallery of which are some excellent paintings, we go to the King’s botanical gardens. Having no knowledge of botany except to distinguish onions and cabbages from oak trees, I can pretend to no judgment of this garden, which is, I daresay, excellent. It is in some respects handsome, and, taking the whole together, plants, buildings, etc., must have cost a great deal. Our examination is very cursory. From thence we go to Notre Dame. The altar piece is exquisite, as are several of the paintings. This reverend Gothic building is well worth examination. Dine with the Maréchal de Castries and explain to him the affair of the claim set up against the farm, and I am to make a note out and give it to him. I tell him that a man of sense, decision, and firmness is necessary to the King in the present moment to extricate him from the difficulties in which they are plunged. Also make some rough sketches of the means. After dinner I call on Mr. Jefferson and sit a good while. General conversation on character, politics, etc. I think he does not form very just estimates of character but rather assigns too many to the humble rank of fools, whereas in life the gradations are infinite and each individual has his peculiarities of fort and feeble. Go to Madame de Flahaut’s, spend the evening, and talk a good deal of loose, light nonsense.”

“On my way to Malmaison to-day [May 31st], passing along the Champs Élysées, I stop a moment to speak to Mr. Jefferson and General Dalrymple. They tell me that the Conciliatory Commission at Versailles have parted without doing anything, notwithstanding a very florid harangue of M. Necker. This man’s vanity must be

excessive, to think that he can influence by his eloquence, and especially when the *esprit et intérêt de corps* are in such powerful operation. At Malmaison meet De Canteleu as I expected. I impart my intention of submitting the decision of the tobacco claim to M. Necker himself, which, under all circumstances, he thinks well of. He thinks the indecision of character which marks M. Necker will prevent him from agreeing to our plan about the American debt. Says the treasury is in blast for June and July; that M. Necker knows nothing of administration, is, in effect, ignorant of mankind, etc.”

The note on the subject of the tobacco contracts, and a future contract for the French claim on America, Morris prepared on the 1st of June. “This is a laborious task,” he says [June 1st], “for me, as it is in French. One of M. Le Coulteux’s principal clerks comes to examine the work and see if it *is* French. He finds but little to correct.” The next day the note was presented to M. de Castries. “He finds it very well. He distinguishes between the debt for which France is or was guarantee and that which arises from actual advances, and it seems that on the former they would make no abatement. Evidently he has conversed on this subject with M. Necker. He will have the note copied with a small alteration and will give it to the minister. Thinks that, beginning with the pros and proceeding afterwards to the other points, we may finally have the whole connected together.”

Dining, June 2d, with the Maréchal de Ségur at his country-place, Morris met the Archbishop of Bordeaux. “He is, they say, an intimate friend of M. Necker’s. Converse with him a little on politics, and propose that the King should cut the knot which the States cannot untie; viz., that he should prescribe to them the future constitution and leave them to consider it, etc. He says he thinks it must end in some such way. Return to town and in my way take a view (from the heights) of this vast city. It covers an immense tract of country indeed. Take a turn in the Palais Royal and go to supper with Madame de Flahaut. Confoundedly bored and find it extremely difficult to keep myself awake.”

“This afternoon [June 3d] I go to see Mr. Jefferson. We have some political conversation. He seems to be out of hope of anything being done to purpose by the States-General. This comes of having too sanguine expectations of a downright republican form of Government. The literary people here, observing the abuses of a monarchical form, imagine that everything must go better in proportion as it recedes from the present establishments, and in their closets they make men exactly suited to their systems. But unluckily they are such as exist nowhere else, least of all in France. I am more than ever persuaded that the form which at first appeared to me most fit for them is that which will be adopted, not exactly according to my idea, but probably in some better manner. After refreshing myself with a cup of tea at the café in the Palais Royal, I go to the Club Valois, of which I have been chosen a member. There is nothing remarkable here. Call on Madame de Flahaut, where I am engaged to sup. Find her with her feet in hot water, sick, and has had an ague and fever, and her head is very heavy. She desires me to prescribe for her. I recommend a grain and a half of tartar emetic—and after that bark is to be taken.”

“To-day [June 4th] the news of the Dauphin’s death was announced, and Mr. Short tells us that the States-General are more embroiled than ever. Mr. Jefferson, with whom I take a drive, requests, on the part of M. Houdon,^{*} that I would stand tomorrow for the figure of General Washington, to which I consent.”

Houdon was working at this time on the statue of Washington which now adorns the City Hall at Richmond, Virginia, but there seems to have been no particular reason, other than that of friendship and the fact of his being a countryman of Washington’s, that Morris should have been called upon to make a vicarious victim of himself. The fact of his devoted friendship for Washington, however, was reason enough to obtain his consent to stand for the statue, “although,” as he says, “it, being the humble employment of a manikin, was rather irksome. This is literally taking the advice of St. Paul to be all things to all men. Promise M. Houdon to attend next Tuesday morning at half-past eight to have my bust taken, which he desires, to *please himself*, for this is the answer to my question what he wants with my bust—a question dictated with a view to obviate any future demand of payment on my part. Later in the afternoon I go to the Palais Royal, and pay a visit of respectful inquiry to Madame de Flahaut. She is better. From there go to the Club Valois. The Tiers have agreed to proceed to the verification of the powers, ‘*par ordre sauf à considérer par des commissaires les doutes qui—*.’ This is ‘*une petite victoire remportée par la noblesse, qui s’en glorifie beaucoup.*’ From the club go to supper at the Baron de Besenval’s; nothing worth notice, except that in the salon we have a fire, which seems disagreeable to nobody.”

“The States-General seem to approach a little more toward accommodation, I hear tonight [June 6th], in Madame de Flahaut’s salon, from l’Évêque d’Autun, who is one of our company and an intimate friend of Madame de Flahaut. He appears to be a sly, cunning, ambitious, and malicious man. I know not why conclusions so disadvantageous to him are formed in my mind, but so it is, and I cannot help it.”

“At three o’clock [June 10th] I set off for Versailles and visit some of my friends—among them Mesdames d’Angivilliers and Tessé. The former is as angry about the presumption of the Tiers as the latter was at the intemperance of the nobles; both are equally right and wrong. See here two sisters, who show by their gentle glances that they like to have tender things said, at least. I don’t know them. Call on Madame de Flahaut, but find her too unwell to go abroad this evening. A good deal of chit-chat with her. She tells me that I suit the taste of this country, etc., which is a vast compliment to a stranger—I really apprehend much more than I deserve.”

The expressions of regard and friendship made by the Duchess of Orleans for Morris were not wholly *façon de parler*, and Thursday, June 11th, was the day appointed for him to visit her Royal Highness at Raincy, where he arrived at eleven o’clock. “Nobody yet visible,” he says, “and after some time the Duchess appears and tells me she has given Madame de Chastellux notice of my arrival. This consists with my primitive idea. Near 12 before the breakfast is paraded, but as I had eaten mine before my departure this is no present inconvenience. After breakfast we go to mass in the chapel. In the tribune above we have a bishop, an abbé, the Duchess, her maids, and some of their friends. Madame de Chastellux is below on her knees. We are amused above by a number of little tricks played off by M. de Ségur and M. de Cubières^{*}

with a candle, which is put into the pockets of different gentlemen, the Bishop among the rest, and lighted while they are otherwise engaged (for there is a fire in the tribune), to the great merriment of the spectators. Immoderate laughter is the consequence. The Duchess preserves as much gravity as she can. This scene must be very edifying to the domestics who are opposite to us, and to the villagers who worship below. After this ceremony is concluded we commence our walk, which is long and excessively hot. Then we get in *bateaux*, and the gentlemen row the ladies, which is by no means a cool operation. After that more walking, so that I am excessively inflamed, even to fever-heat. Get to the Château and doze for a little, *en attendant le dîner*, which does not come till after five. A number of persons surround the windows, and doubtless form a high idea of the company, to whom they are obliged to look up at an awful distance. Ah, did they but know how trivial the conversation, how very trivial the characters, their respect would soon be changed to an emotion extremely different. Madame de St. Simon is the subject of an epitaph by the Vicomte de Ségur, the purport of which is that she is lewd, and that idea is *très fortement prononcé*. She attacks him in a serious discourse on the folly of his pursuits, which, having only vanity for a motive, tend to inspire a passion where none has hitherto been felt, and merely because of that. He defends himself by observing that a thing of that sort cannot affect his vanity, because the pursuit of a woman is like a game of chess, when in consequence of a certain set of moves the success is certain. She agrees in this idea, and thence draws more certainly her conclusions that such pursuits are ridiculous. I think I understand this conversation in its full latitude, for my own observation had already pointed at the object, not named but, if I mistake not, clearly understood. After dinner the weather, which had been hot, becomes cold, and the fire is by no means disagreeable. More walking, but I refuse to partake of it, being fairly winged, to use the sportsman's phrase. A little before 8 set off for town, having the company of Madame de Chastellux's nurse and child. The request to take them would have looked odd in America, but I conclude that it is quite in the order of things here, and readily comply, but indeed for a better reason. I am glad in this kind of way to repay attentions which my heart will not let me meet in any other."

"This morning [June 12th] Mr. Jefferson, just from Versailles, tells me that the Tiers had called on the noblesse and clergy to join them and proceed to business, which has thrown the former into a rage. He considers the affairs of this country as being in a very critical situation. They are so, but the royal authority has great weight, and, if brought in to the aid of the privileged orders, may yet prevent their destruction. However, he and I differ in our system of politics. He, with all the leaders of liberty here, is desirous of annihilating distinctions of order. How far such views may be right respecting mankind in general is, I think, extremely problematical, but with respect to this nation I am sure it is wrong and cannot eventuate well."

"To-day [June 19th], I call on Madame de la Suze. She is embroidering with the tambour needle. Is quite out of temper with the politics of the times, but is determined to be of the party which will furnish money, be that which it may, because the husbands of herself and her sisters 'ont beaucoup sur le Roi.' Voilà les opinions politiques qui sont bien motivées. From thence go to the club, and read the papers. The clergy have this day by a small majority determined to join the Tiers. This stroke is fatal to the noblesse, for the Tiers having already constituted themselves the

National Assembly as representing 96 per cent. of the nation, they will now have the claim to be a majority of orders as well as heads. Unless the royal authority be interposed to save the nobles, they are gone, and of this there seems to be but slender probability. From the club go to Madame d'Esplanche's (an invitation which I would gladly have evaded) to supper. I am assailed for the copy of an extempore epitaph written at Raincy on the Vicomte de Ségur, which is wretchedly bad. I evade the request till after supper, when I am again solicited by Madame de Boursac to repeat it, and Madame de Warsi, who is a very beautiful and accomplished woman, entreats me to write it, because she understands English only by the eye—having learnt to read, not to speak it. Having her promise to return the scrap of paper, I write for her the wretched lines in question, which had the single merit at the moment of having been written *sur-le-champ as a petite vengeance* for Madame de St. Simon, on whom he had written an epitaph at breakfast not too delicate.

Here lies a merry, wicked wight,
Who spent in mischief all his life,
And, lest the world should do him right,
Determined not to take a wife.

The applause it met with arose from the pleasure mankind always feel at seeing a tyrant galled. Madame de Warsi begs leave to keep them, which I refuse. She says she remembers them, and, to convince me, sets about writing them from memory, and convinces both herself and me that she cannot. I then take the pencil and write for her:

To one like you, divinely fair,
On nothing but yourself I'll write,
Nor will I own another care,
Than what may give to you delight;
If that delight I might convey,
At every gentle, kind caress,
I'd own the force of beauty's sway,
And you what blessing 'tis to bless.

M. de Boursac tells me (which is the aristocratic consolation) that the King has called a council on the present state of affairs, in which each is to deliver his opinion in His Majesty's presence. I do not believe that this will produce any effect whatever: for the decision this day will awe those who two days ago were loud against M. Necker, and probably those who called, or prompted the call of this council, will find the event to be in direct reverse of their wishes and expectations."

It was on the 17th of June that the Commons, after a long and ominously patient waiting for the other two orders to unite with them, decided "to begin the work of national regeneration," and declared themselves the National Assembly of France. Three days after, when about to assemble to begin their great work, Morris speaks in the diary of the fact "that the different corps of the States-General were prevented from meeting, the chamber being surrounded with guards. The reason assigned," he continues, "is that the King intends to have a Séance Royale on Monday, and that some alterations are necessary to the salon. After driving and walking a while, go to

the club. Meet the Comte de Croix, Duc de la Rochefoucault,* Vicomte de Noailles,† Ségur, young Dillon, and sundry others. Various conjectures about the object of the Séance Royale to be held on Monday. I believe that this step would not have been taken if the Court had foreseen the step of the clergy yesterday. They have very inflammable materials to handle, and must take great heed. The general idea seems to be that the séance is consequential upon what passed in the Tiers, when they assumed to themselves the title of National Assembly. But I conjecture that, however this incident may have precipitated that event, it originates in the idea of arranging the different corps in such a way as that they may act, instead of being as at present an useless horde.”

The schemes of the court and king were not furthered by closing the doors of the great hall against these men—determined upon a new order of things. Several of the more courageous among them led the others to an old tennis-court, where they solemnly swore the great oath, called the Jeu de Paume, “not to separate until a constitution for France had been adopted.”

“At the club this evening” [June 21st], Morris says, “it is said that the Séance Royale intended for to-morrow is postponed. At 5 o’clock on the 20th M. Necker wrote a letter to the lieutenant of police, assuring that it is not intended to prevent the further session of the States. When there is apprehension on one side and determination on the other, it is easy to see how things will eventuate. For my part, I presume that the Séance Royale is postponed that they may come to a new determination consequent on the resolution of the clergé.”

When the news of the Jeu de Paume reached Paris, the Palais Royal, says Arthur Young, “was in a flame; the coffee-houses, pamphlet shops, corridors, and gardens were crowded—alarm and apprehension sat in every eye: nothing was so glaringly ridiculous but the mob swallowed it with indiscriminating faith. It was, moreover, curious to remark among people of another description that the balance of opinion was clearly that the National Assembly had gone too far—had been too violent—and had taken steps the mass of the people would not support.”

“Before starting for Versailles to-day [June 23d] I see the Duchess of Orleans, who says she would ask me to dine if I had not declared that I was going to Versailles. When I arrive at Versailles I call upon Madame de Tessé, who gives me a cordial reception, complaining, however, of my politics. Lord and Lady Camelford, with their daughter, come in. Mr. Jefferson tells me that on the strength of an acquaintance with an acquaintance of Madame de Tessé’s, without being themselves known to her, they had sent and asked a dinner. This is quite as free and easy as the French themselves can be. The King has to-day, in his Séance Royale pleased the nobility and very much displeased the Tiers. I find it difficult to learn exactly what has passed, but it seems to me the nobility have less cause for exultation than they imagine. At dinner I sit next to M. de Lafayette, who tells me I injure the cause, for that my sentiments are continually quoted against the good party. I seize this opportunity to tell him that I am opposed to the democracy from regard to liberty; that I see they are going headlong to destruction, and would fain stop them if I could; that their views respecting this nation are totally inconsistent with the materials of which it is composed, and that the worst

thing that could happen would be to grant their wishes. He tells me that he is sensible his party are mad, and tells them so, but is not the less determined to die with them. I tell him I think it would be just as well to bring them to their senses and *live* with them. He says he is determined to resign his seat, which step I approve of, because the instructions by which he is bound are contrary to his conscience. Before we part I take an opportunity to tell him that if the Tiers are now very *moderate* they will probably succeed, but if violent must inevitably fail. From Madame de Tessé I go to see Madame Montvoisseux, where the party is aristocratical—delighted with the King. In the course of conversation they tell me some anecdotes which convince me that the King and Queen are confoundedly frightened, and I am thence led to conjecture that the Court will still recede. M. Necker yesterday offered to resign, but the King refused to accept his resignation. This afternoon he waits on His Majesty, surrounded by the common people, who attend him with shouts of applause—to the door of the château. At half-past seven, when I leave Versailles, he is still with the King.”

During the last days of June, the mob, composed of idlers, strangers, the leaders of the coffee-houses of the Palais Royal, and disorderly persons of all kinds, swarmed into Versailles. Daily those whom they called aristocrats were grossly insulted. The Archbishop of Paris was hooted through the streets. The king’s secretary and the Keeper of the Seals were insulted until they were in fear of their lives, and the secretary died in consequence of the excitement.

In the hall where the Assembly sat, nominally with closed doors, Bailey says there were always more than six hundred spectators—noisy, active, and disrespectful, often taking part in the deliberations by applause and hisses. When the result of the Séance Royale was known in Paris, Arthur Young says, “the ferment is beyond description; 10,000 people have been all this day in the Palais Royal. It is plain to me, from many conversations I have been witness to, and the constant meetings, united with the inflammatory publications that hourly appear, that nothing the King or Court could do would now satisfy the people.”

By Thursday, the 25th, a majority of the clergy and a minority of the noblesse had joined the Tiers. “Going to Versailles to visit the Duc de Vauguyon, on a matter of business,” Morris writes, “I hear that the minority of the clergy have constituted themselves into a body, and agreed to the King’s propositions. The majority of the noblesse, who of course continue to be the body, have (it is said) determined also to accept the same propositions, but with some modifications. The National Assembly, or whatever else they may now choose to call themselves, have agreed on a deputation to the King. The question is whether His Majesty will receive it, because thereon depends the ultimate state of the noblesse.”

The opposition of the nobles was fruitless. The flood, sweeping everything before it, brought them nearer and nearer to the ranks of the National Assembly, and on Saturday, June 27th, they took their place among them. Morris says: “The nobles have this day, agreeably to a request of the King’s, joined the other two orders. So that at length the great question is determined, and the votes will be *par tête*. It remains only for them to form a constitution, and as the King is extremely timid, he will of course surrender at discretion. The existence of the monarchy therefore depends on the

moderation of the Assembly. For the rest, I think they will soon establish their credit, which, among other things, will bring the exchange between France and foreign nations to be more favorable. If the money of this country is brought into free circulation, I think it will lower interest everywhere. The sum is immense, and its effects must be commensurate to its activity and mass. At present it lies dead and is poorly supplied by the paper Caisse d'Escompte."

Since the 23d of June there had been rioting and insubordination in the ranks of the French guards. They declared their intention not to act against the National Assembly. Eleven of the leaders had been confined in the Abbaye, and on the 30th of June these men sent a letter to their comrades, asking assistance. The mob in the Palais Royal, on hearing this letter read aloud, took fire at once and started for the prison. "I go," says Morris, "to the Palais Royal to see what is doing, and from thence to the club. Find that the mob have broken the prison and released some soldiers, who were confined for their late breaches of military discipline, consequent on their inebriation by those who are debauching them from their duty. This makes, as it ought to do, a serious impression. Probably to-morrow will produce similar and greater excesses. Mr. Jefferson tells me, from the large camp which is forming under the Maréchal de Broglie, and from the air of many who are unfriendly to the present measures of the Tiers, and from the influence of the Comte d'Artois in the Council, very serious events are apprehended, that perhaps the King will be prompted to attempt a resumption of his authority. All this is very well, but, under the existing ideas of the moment, it is very doubtful whether he could prevail on his soldiery to act, and if not, his fulminations will become as contemptible as those of the Church, for in both cases it is the secular arm of flesh which alone renders the anathema terrible."

The following letter, written [July 1st] to the Hon. Mr. Jay, gives a comprehensive view of the situation in Paris. Morris says: "I am too much occupied to find time for the use of a cypher—and in effect this government is so occupied with its own affairs, that in transmitting to you a letter under an envelope there is no risk. This, however, I am pretty certain will go safe. The States-General have now been a long time in session and have done nothing. Hitherto they have been engaged in a dispute whether they shall form one body or three. The commons, who are represented by a body equal to both the others, and who besides have at least one half the representatives of the clergy, insist on forming a single house. They have succeeded, but the nobles deeply feel their situation. The King, after siding with them, was frightened into an abandonment of them. He acts from terror only. The soldiery in this city, particularly the French guards, declare they will not act against the people. They are now treated by the nobility, and parade about the streets drunk, huzzaing for the Tiers. Some of them have, in consequence, been confined—not by the force, but by the adroitness of authority. Last night this circumstance became known, and immediately a mob repaired to the prison. The soldiers on guard unfixed their bayonets and joined the assailants. A party of dragoons ordered on duty to disperse the riot thought it better to drink with the rioters and return back to their quarters. The soldiers, with others confined in the same prison, were then paraded in triumph to the Palais Royal, which is now the liberty pole of this city, and there they celebrated as usual their joy. Probably this evening some other prisons will be opened, for Liberté is now the general cry, and Autorité is a name, not a real existence. The Court are about to form

a camp in the neighborhood of Paris of 25,000 men, under the command of the Maréchal de Broglie. I do not know him personally, therefore cannot judge what may be expected from his talents, but all my information goes to the point that he will never bring his army to act against the people. The Garde du Corps are as warm adherents (in general) to the Tiers as anybody else, strange as that may seem, so that in effect the sword has slipped out of the monarch's hands without his perceiving a tittle of the matter. All these things, in a nation not yet fitted by education and habit for the enjoyment of freedom, give me frequently suspicions that they will greatly overshoot their mark, if indeed they have not already done it. Already some people talk of limiting the King's negative upon the laws; and as they have hitherto felt severely the authority exercised in the name of their Princes, every limitation of that authority seems to them desirable. Never having felt the evils of too weak an executive, the disorders to be apprehended from anarchy make as yet no impression. The provincial assemblies or administrations—in other words, the *popular executive* of the provinces—which Turgot had imagined as a means of moderating the *royal* legislative of the Court, is now insisted on as a counter-security against the monarch, when they shall have established a *democratical* legislative, for you will observe that the noble and clerical orders are hence-forth to be *vox et præterea nihil*. The King is to be limited to the exact sum necessary for his personal expenses. The management of the public debt and revenue to provide for it will be taken entirely out of his hands, and the subsistence of the army is to depend on temporary grants. Hence it must follow that his negative, in whatever form reserved, will be of little avail. These are the outlines of the proposed constitution, by which, at the same time, *lettres de cachet* are to be abrogated and the liberty of the press established. My private opinion is that the King, to get fairly out of the scrape in which he finds himself, would subscribe to anything, and truly from him little is to be expected in any way. The Queen, hated, humbled, mortified, feels and feigns, and intrigues to save some shattered remnants of the royal authority; but to know that she favors a measure is the certain means to frustrate its success. The Comte d'Artois, alike hated, is equally busy, but has neither sense to counsel himself nor choose counsellors for himself—much less to counsel others. The nobles look up to him for support, and lean on what they know to be a broken reed, for want of some more solid dependence. In their anguish they curse Necker, who is in fact less the cause than the instrument of their sufferings. His popularity depends now more on the opposition he meets with from one party than any serious regard of the other. It is the attempt to throw him down which saves him from falling. He has no longer the preponderating weight in counsel which a fortnight ago decided everything. If they were not afraid of consequences he would be dismissed, and on the same principle the King has refused to accept his resignation. If his abilities were equal to his genius, and he were as much supported by firmness as he is swayed by ambition, he would have had the exalted honor of giving a free constitution to above twenty millions of his fellow-creatures, and could have reigned long in their hearts and received the unanimous applause of posterity. But as it is, he must soon fall—whether his exit be physical or moral must depend on events which I cannot foresee. The best chance which royalty has is that popular excesses may alarm. At the rate at which things are now going, the King of France must soon be one of the most limited monarchs in Europe.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER V.

Grain under convoy. Tumult in Paris. Fourth of July dinner. Visit to Romainville. Bread scarce. Paris gay. The administration routed and Necker banished. M. de Narbonne. Mobs in the streets. Armorers' shops broken open. Scenes in the Palais Royal Gardens. Terrible night in Paris. The Hôtel de Force broken into. Morris dons the green bow. No carriages allowed in the streets. Affairs at Versailles. A cry for arms. Carriages stopped and searched. The Bastille taken. Madame de Flahaut's salon. M. de Launay. Carnival at Versailles. The Bastille in ruins. The King comes to Paris and dons the red and blue cockade. The procession.

In the beginning of July of this eventful year wheat was scarcer than ever. Some towns had none at all, and such grain as could be bought was musty. But even this bad bread was the object of envy to starving creatures, who robbed the fortunate possessors of it on the high-roads. "The grain supply of Paris must be guarded," Morris says, "or it would be robbed and exhausted before reaching the town. While I was out this day I met a convoy of grain coming into town under the guard of a party of troops. For several weeks, all of the grain and stores brought to this town has been escorted in like manner. I hear of an intended attack on the Hôtel de Force."

The evening of July 3d Morris spent with M. Le Coulteux, discussing the offer of the farm to take a certain amount of the tobacco about which there was so much trouble. "Cantaleu, who is there, is full of politics," he says, "and tells me I am frequently quoted by the aristocrats as being of their party. This leads to an explanation of my opinions, in which we perfectly agree, and he appears glad of it. The conciliatory point is an abolition of the *parlements*, which I think necessary to the establishment of freedom, justice, and order."

Surrounded by tumult and disorder on his own national holiday, Morris endeavored to find some consolation in reminding himself of the blessings of peace, and in a letter to a friend he spoke of the day as "demanding our filial acknowledgments—a day now at length auspicious, since by the establishment of our new Constitution we have the fair prospect of enjoying those good things for which we have had so hard a contest." Mr. Jefferson celebrated the day by giving a dinner to the many Americans in Paris, among whom were "M. and Madame de Lafayette. We have," Morris says, "some political conversation with him after dinner, in which I urge him to preserve, if possible, some constitutional authority to the body of nobles, as the only means of preserving any liberty for the people. The current is setting so strong against the noblesse that I apprehend their destruction, in which will, I fear, be involved consequences most pernicious, though little attended to in the present moment."

It was a continuously cold and uncomfortable season which Morris encountered this year in France. "Until this month," he wrote in July to Mr. Carmichael, "fire has been a companion not only agreeable but even necessary. So much for that charming vernal season of Europe which I have often heard celebrated by many of our countrymen, whose principal merit lies in having twice crossed the Atlantic. ... You ask me if Mr.

Jefferson is gone to America. He is not, but is ready to depart at a moment's warning, having staid some time expecting his congé, but is still in the same expectation. I conclude that it will not be expedited until the arrangement of the ministerial departments shall have been completed. Probably the Secretary of Foreign Affairs will decline acting until appointed under the new government. It is probable also that the question of the congé will not be agitated till another question is determined, viz., who shall act here in the interim; and also I doubt not but the secretary, Mr. Short, will be empowered. You suppose that the minister has introduced me to the Corps Diplomatique. I hinted that matter to him shortly after my arrival. He told me they were not worth my acquaintance. I have a set which I have made myself, and these are not, you will easily conceive, among the worst company of Paris. As to the ministerial dinners, I have not been at them. It has never been proposed to me. The ministers, you know, give no invitations themselves, and we are bashful. By the bye, I some time since went and asked a dinner of the Comte de Montmorin, who very kindly assured me at parting that I must in his house consider myself perfectly at home, and this you know from him is not an unmeaning compliment. I am *tout bête* that I have not since profited by these kind assurances. But what can I do? Versailles is the most *triste séjour* on earth, and though I am tempted by the strong passion of curiosity to go thither and attend the debates of the États-Généraux, I have not yet prevailed on myself to do it. I believe no man ever made less use of strong recommendations to ministerial people. Probably I am wrong, but I cannot help it. Apropos, do you know Lafayette? Should you reply by asking me, Whence so strange a question? I answer, in the words of the great Montesquieu, 'My object is not to make men read but to make them think.' There are great intrigues against the administration here, but hitherto without any effect. I have steadily combated the violence and excess of those persons who, either inspired with an enthusiastic love of freedom, or prompted by sinister designs, are disposed to drive everything to extremity. Our American example has done them good, but, like all novelties, Liberty runs away with their discretion, if they have any. They want an American constitution, with the exception of a king instead of a president, without reflecting that they have not American citizens to support that constitution. Mankind see distant things in a false point of light, and judge either more or less favorably than they ought—this is an old observation; another as old, perhaps, but which all are not in the position to feel, is, that we try everything by the standard of preconceived notions, so that there is an impossibility almost of knowing by description a distant people or country. Whoever, therefore, desires to apply in the practical science of government those rules and forms which prevail and succeed in a foreign country, must fall into the same pedantry with our young scholars just fresh from an university, who would fain bring everything to a Roman standard. Different constitutions of government are necessary to the different societies on the face of this planet. Their difference of position is in itself a powerful cause—their manners, their habits. The scientific tailor, who should cut after Grecian or Chinese models, would not have many customers either in London or Paris; and those who look to America for their political forms are not unlike the tailors in the Island of Laputa, who, as Gulliver tells us, always take measure with a quadrant. He tells us, indeed, what one would naturally expect from such a process, that the people are seldom fitted. The King, who long since declared for the people, has since been wavering. He is an honest man, and wishes really to do good, but he has not either genius or education to show the way towards that good which he desires. In the

contest between the representatives of the people and of the nobles, he has by those about him been induced to give support to the latter; but he came forward too late, and not in the proper manner. The result is that he has retreated, and the nobles have been obliged to give way. . . . The noblesse, who at this day possess neither the force, the wealth, nor the talents of the nation, have rather opposed pride than argument to their assailants. Hugging the dear privileges of centuries long elapsed, they have clamored about the *Court*, while their adversaries have possessed themselves fully of the public confidence everywhere. Knowing and feeling the force of that situation, they have advanced with a boldness which, to those unacquainted with all the facts, has looked like temerity. But this hardihood has imposed—those who are at the head of the opposition to them are not possessed of talents or of virtue. The chief has not even courage, without which you know that in revolutions there is nothing.

“The French troops, as far as can be ascertained, would not serve against their countrymen, and the foreign troops are not sufficiently numerous to make any serious impression. The people of this city are going (by that invincible instinct which produces in every animal the conduct peculiar to his situation) in the same road which marked the aurora of American opposition. Three months ago the sight of a soldier excited awe—now they speak of attacking whole regiments, and in effect there are not infrequently some scuffles with the foreign troops. Thus opinion, which is everything, becomes daily fortified. While I write I consider the sovereignty of this country as being effectually lodged in the hands of the *Assemblée Nationale*, for you will observe that this name is assumed instead of *États-Généraux*, which is tantamount to an American *legislature* resolving itself into a *convention*. They mean immediately to form a constitution, and I have no doubt but that they will obtain the King’s consent. The partisans of the ancient establishments have contrived to have a very large body of troops assembled in this neighborhood, but, if I conjecture rightly, those troops will soon be dispersed. The National Assembly have already marked their disapprobation, but the matter will not stop here, and sooner or later the King must send them away. Indeed, I am induced to believe that this measure will cause the kingdom to be cleared of foreign troops, for, not being able to rely on the French regiments, they have selected principally the foreigners. The probable object of those who are at the bottom of the business is to surprise some order from His Majesty’s fears, which are now continually excited, so that he is constantly the sport of apprehensions. But they have a more difficult and dangerous business than they are at all aware of. The Assembly have determined that all taxes shall cease, when they separate, except such as they continue to impose. This provides for as long a term of existence as they may choose to take, and if dispersed, France will certainly refuse to pay. An army will never break a general combination to that effect; so that either sooner or later they must submit, and every show of authority now will weaken it without producing any other effect. Such, then, is the state of this country, in which I think the crisis is past, without having been perceived, and now a free constitution will be the certain result. If they have the good sense to give the nobles as such some share in the national authority, that constitution will probably endure; but otherwise it will degenerate into a pure monarchy, or become a vast republic. A democracy—can that last? I think not—I am sure not, unless the whole people are changed. In any event, however, of the business it bids fair to change the political face of Europe. But whither am I going?”

“Walk to-day [July 8th] in the Champs Élysées, where I meet Mr. Appleton and Mr. Jefferson, who tell me the news of Versailles. There will be on Saturday night 25,000 men in and about Paris. Some talk of a Séance Royale on Monday, but this not founded. Go to M. Le Coulteux’s. They have sad news: that the États-Généraux are to be dissolved, a bankruptcy declared, and the pay of the troops decreased, etc. While at dinner De Norraye comes in from Versailles and assures the company, from the mouth of M. de Montmorin, that there is to be no Séance Royale on Monday.”

The next day (July 9th) Morris was in the hands of the doctor, “who says I must stay eight days longer in Paris. He is certain I shall soon be very well. I should more readily adopt this opinion if I were anywhere else than in so large and foul-smelling a city as Paris. As soon as I can get my business done I am off directly for London. Visit Mr. Jefferson, who shows me his letter to M. de Lafayette on the subject of M. Mirabeau’s misinformation to the States-General. To my surprise, it contains nothing like what M. de la Norraye yesterday at dinner told the company it did contain, having had it at M. de Montmorin’s. An excellent lesson this, to be cautious of believing.” A note this morning from Madame de Flahaut summoned Morris to her apartment during the important and mysterious ceremony of the toilet. Here usually in attendance was the abbé, without whom the hour of the toilet was not complete, who told the latest scandal and read the latest brochures. At this hour, poetically called *la jeunesse de la journée*, the arrangements of the day were made—the affiche of the theatre was examined, graceful scented notes of tenderness were received and sent, gowns to be inspected and flowers to be sold, temptations in the way of laces and *articles de luxe*—all found their way into my lady’s boudoir during the hour of the toilet. And her caprices and fascinations charmed the particular favorite who was admitted to the intimacy of this informal morning hour. There were several visitors with Madame de Flahaut on this occasion, and, a pleasant chat ended, Morris drove to Romainville to bid adieu to the Maréchal de Castries and his daughter-in-law. “Madame Lebrun is there, the famous painter, who is as pleasant a companion as she is artist; Madame de — the friend of the Vicomte. We walk about the garden. The Maréchal very kindly asks me to stay at his country-house for the re-establishment of my health. Approaching the house we find Mesdames de Ségur and Chastellux, and are presently joined by M. de Puisignieu. He assures me that the scarcity of corn is excessive, which he is the better able to judge of as his regiment of Chasseurs are employed in the escort of provisions and protection of grain now standing. Take a walk with Madame de Ségur and converse on the situation of their public affairs, which she understands as well as anybody. Take leave, with promises to return speedily. Promise also to write to her. Return to town. This day has been hot. I observe that the potatoes which I see growing are what we consider the worst kind, at least if one may judge from their tops. I go to the club when I return to town and hear that the King, in answer to the address of the États respecting the troops, has told them that he had no intentions that will affect them, and if their apprehensions continue he will remove the session of the States to Soissons or Noyon and go himself to Compiègne. This is an artful reply. If he can get them far from Paris he will weaken that impulse which at present creates such alarm. But the evil lies deeper than his counsellors are aware of, and the business now broached must have its complete course. While at the club receive a message from Madame de Flahaut, who begs I will come to supper to tell her the news. Go. *A partie carrée*, when I arrive and make the

fifth. Stay late, and reconduct an abbé, one of her favorites. He is hunch-backed, and far from an Adonis in other respects; it must therefore be a moral attachment. This day has been hot, but the evening is pleasant and I feel no small pleasure to smell the ripening grain. There are now, in and about this city, above a million of human creatures whose only resource for bread is in the vigilance and attention of government, whose utmost exertions, however, can but just keep pace with the necessity.”

Daily this great necessity grew more terrible—the great army of the unemployed increased and clamored for bread. Rumor announced the approach of a large army from Versailles to the capital, and that the Baron de Breteuil had said, “If it is necessary to burn Paris, burn Paris.” Gayety meanwhile reigned at Paris. Fêtes and dinners enlivened the frequenters of the Palais Royal Gardens, and a ball in the Champs Élysées kept up the spirits of the fishwomen and the dwellers in the Faubourg Saint Antoine. Everything and everybody in Paris seemed ready for civil war. In the council-room Necker and his friends saw the king sleep his false sleep, which was a ruse of His Majesty to cover his embarrassment, and they shrewdly suspected what it meant. July 12th, Morris dined with the Maréchal de Castries. “As I am going away he takes me aside to inform me that M. Necker is no longer in place. He is much affected at this intelligence, and, indeed, so am I. Urge him to go immediately to Versailles. He says he will not, that they have undoubtedly taken all their measures before this moment, and therefore he must be too late. I tell him he is not too late to warn the King of his danger, which is infinitely greater than he imagines; that his army will not fight against the nation, and that if he listens to violent councils the nation will undoubtedly be against him; that the sword has fallen imperceptibly from his hands, and that the sovereignty of the nation is in the Assemblée Nationale. He makes no precise answer to this, but is very deeply affected. Call, agreeable to my promise, on Madame de Flahaut; learn that the whole administration is routed out and Necker banished. Much alarm here. Paris begins to be in commotion, and from the invalid guard of the Louvre a few of the nobility take a drum and beat to arms. M. de Narbonne, the friend of Madame de Staël, considers a civil war as inevitable, and is about to join his regiment, being, as he says, in a conflict between the dictates of his duty and of his conscience. I tell him that I know of no duty but that which conscience dictates. I presume his conscience will dictate to join the strongest side. The little Abbé Bertrand, after sallying out in a fiacre, returns frightened because of a large mob in the Rue St. Honoré, and presently comes in another abbé, who is of the parliament, and who, rejoicing at the change, is confoundedly frightened at the commotions. I calm the fears of Madame de Flahaut, whose husband is mad, and in a printed list, it seems, of the furious aristocrats. Offer to conduct the abbé safely home, which offer Bertrand accepts of. His terror as we go along is truly diverting. As we approach the Rue St. Honoré, his imagination magnifies the ordinary passengers into a vast mob, and I can scarcely persuade him to trust his eyes instead of his fears. Having set him down, I depart for Mr. Jefferson’s. In riding along the boulevards, all at once the carriages and horses and foot passengers turn about and pass rapidly. Presently after we meet a body of cavalry, with their sabres drawn and coming half speed. After they have passed up a little way they stop. When we come to the Place Louis Quinze, observe the people, to the number of perhaps an hundred, picking up stones, and on looking back find that the cavalry are returning. Stop at the angle to see the fray, if

any. The people take post among the stones which lie scattered about the whole place, being then hewn for the bridge now building. The officer at the head of the party is saluted by a stone, and immediately turns his horse in a menacing manner toward the assailant. But his adversaries are posted in ground where the cavalry cannot act. He pursues his route, and the pace is soon increased to a gallop, amid a shower of stones. One of the soldiers is either knocked from his horse or the horse falls under him. He is taken prisoner, and at first ill-treated. They fired several pistols, but without effect; probably they were not even charged with ball. A party of the Swiss Guards are posted in the Champs Élysées with cannon. Proceed to Mr. Jefferson's. He tells me that M. Necker received yesterday about noon a letter from the King, by the hands of M. de la Luzerne, in which he orders him to leave the kingdom; and at the same time M. de la Luzerne is desired to exact a promise that he will not mention the matter to anybody. M. Necker dines, and proposes to Madame Necker a visit to a female friend in the neighborhood. On the route he communicates the intelligence, and they go to a country-seat, make the needful arrangements, and depart. M. de Montmorin immediately resigned, and is now in Paris. In returning from Mr. Jefferson's I am turned off to the left by the vedette posted on the road to the Place Louis Quinze. Go to the club. A gentleman just from Versailles gives us an account of the new administration. The people are employed breaking open the armorers' shops, and presently a large body of the Gardes Françaises appear, with bayonets fixed, in the garden, mingled with the mob, some of whom are also armed. These poor fellows have passed the Rubicon with a witness. 'Success or a halter' must now be their motto. I think the Court will again recede, and if they do, all further efforts will be idle; if they do not, a civil war is among the events most probable. If the representatives of the Tiers have formed a just estimate of their constituents, in ten days all France will be in a commotion. The little affray which I have witnessed will probably be magnified into a bloody battle before it reaches the frontiers, and in that case an infinity of *corps bourgeois* will march to the relief of the capital. They had better gather in the harvest."

In the beautiful garden of the Palais Royal, among the flowers and fountains, the news-venders and the gamblers—in this place, which had been described by the anti-revolutionists as the image of the Chimera, with the head of a beautiful prostitute, the tongue of a serpent, the hands of a harpy, with eyes throwing forth flames and a mouth distilling poisonous and patriotic words—all of revolutionary Paris had assembled this Sunday, the 12th of July. The news of Necker's dismissal came, and was greeted with a cry of rage. Camille Desmoulins, mounted on a table, cried, "Aux armes!" and announced that the Court meditated a "St. Bartholomew of patriots." Women distributed green cockades, the favorite color of the hour, and at midnight the big bells of Notre Dame and of the Hôtel de Ville rang out their alarm. That night, in Paris, none but children slept. At Versailles the day passed in anxiety; communication with Paris was cut off, and when the Assembly began its sitting, the morning of the 13th, Versailles was still in ignorance of events at Paris. But they knew that the old ministry had been ordered to quit the Court, and that in the new one they had small confidence.

The next morning Morris hears from Martin, his servant, that the Hôtel de Force is broken into, and all the prisoners liberated. "Presently after," he continues, "a letter is

brought in enclosing one for me from Mr. Nesbitt, who is at the Temple and wishes to see me; but my *cocher* tells me he cannot bring my carriage, having already been stopped and turned back. In effect, the little city of Paris is in as great a tumult as any could wish. They are getting arms wherever they can find any; seize 600 barrels of powder in a boat on the Seine; break into the Monastery of St. Lazare, and find a store of grain which the holy brotherhood has laid in. Immediately it is put into carts and sent to the market, and in every cart a friar. The Garde-Meuble du Roi is attacked, and the arms are delivered up to prevent worse consequences. These, however, are more curious than useful. But the detail of the variety of this day's deeds would be endless. I dine at home, and after dinner go to the Louvre, having previously ornamented my hat with a green bow in honor of the Tiers, for this is the fashion of the day, which everybody is obliged to comply with who means to march in peace. It is somewhat whimsical that this day of violence and tumult is the only one in which I have dared to walk the streets, but as no carriages are abroad but the fiacres, I do not hazard being crushed, and apprehend nothing from the populace. Madame de Flahaut is under a great apprehension, which I endeavor to appease. Capellis comes in, and when we are about to set off for the Palais Royal, we meet on the stairs monsieur, from Versailles, who tells us the news. Go to club. Sit a while chatting on the state of public affairs. M. de Moreton tells me that the present ministers are a set of rascals and tyrants, that he knows them perfectly well, and one of them, it seems, is his relation, for whom he exhibits no partiality. After a while Monsieur de ——— arrives from Versailles, and tells us that the fashion at Court is to believe that the disturbances at Paris are very trifling. The National Assembly have advised the King to recall the former ministry, and to permit the Assembly to send a deputation to Paris to recommend the forming *des corps bourgeois* for the maintenance of order in the city. To the first, he replied that the executive power is his, and he will appoint whom he pleases to be his ministers; and he disapproves the second measure. In consequence of this, the Assembly make some sharp resolutions, whose purport seems to be the devoting to public infamy the present administration, and declaring His Majesty's advisers to be guilty of high treason. Thus the Court and popular party are pitted against each other. In ten days I think it will be decided whether the retreat of the monarch will be immediate and only ruin his counsellors, or whether it will be remote and his own ruin involved in that of his ministers. Some horses are brought into the Palais Royal. We go to see what they are, but cannot learn. We are told, however, by one of the orators that they have received a deputation from the two regiments quartered at St. Denis, offering to join the Tiers if they will come out and receive them! My companions urge them by all means to go. But this manœuvre must at least be deferred till to-morrow. The leaders here, I think, err in not bringing about immediately some pretty severe action between the foreign and national troops. The consequences would, in my opinion, be decisive."

"Arms and bread!" is the cry on Tuesday, the 14th. The wine and bread shops have been pillaged; now arms are wanted. The mob rushed to the Hôtel de Ville, hearing from an elector, the Abbé d'Ormesson, that arms were stored there; then to the Hôpital des Invalides, and forced the garrison to give up arms. Then came the cry, "We want the Bastille." Nearly 80,000 men, with scarcely the semblance of a leader, had been got together. A horde of these men, armed and desperate, filled the avenues leading to this fortress, prison, and tomb. Morris mentions being stopped twice while

driving, “to see if there be any arms in my carriage. While I am visiting M. Le Coulteux a person comes to announce the taking of the Bastille, the Governor of which is beheaded, and the Prévôt des Marchands is killed and also beheaded. They are carrying the heads in triumph through the city. The carrying of this citadel is among the most extraordinary things I have met with. It cost the assailants 60 men, it is said. The Hôtel Royal des Invalides was forced this morning, and the cannon and small arms, etc., brought off. The citizens are by these means well armed, at least here are the materials for about 30,000 to be equipped with, and that is a sufficient army. I find that the information received last night as to the *arrête* of the Assemblée Nationale is not correct. They have only declared that the last administration carry with them the regret of the chambers that they will persist in insisting on the removal of the troops, and that His Majesty’s advisers, whatever their rank and station, are guilty of all the consequences which may ensue. Yesterday it was the fashion at Versailles not to believe that there were any disturbances at Paris. I presume that this day’s transactions will induce a conviction that all is not perfectly quiet. From M. Le Coulteux’s go to visit Madame de Flahaut, who is in much anxiety. Her husband, she tells me, is foolhardy, and she apprehends much for his safety. I am present at a family scene in which she plays her part extremely well, and appeals to me for my opinion on one of the points. I answer that in discussions of such a delicate nature it is a rule with me not to interfere. The question is whether he should leave the city. I advise him, if he does, to go at noonday, etc. While he is sitting with us, madame having on her lap an *écritoire*, by way of exciting his curiosity I scribble some wretched lines, which he asks me to translate for him. Nothing is easier; but, unluckily, one of the ideas is not calculated to please. It was thus:

In fever* on your lap I write,
Expect, then, but a feeble lay;
And yet, in every proverb’s spite,
Tho’ ‘tis in verse, believe, I pray.
No lover I; alas! too old
To raise in you a mutual flame.
Then take a passion rather cold,
And call it by fair friendship’s name.”

She tells me that he looked rather foolish at the declaration of being too old to excite a passion. I assure her my object was only to excite curiosity. She observes that I succeeded in my wishes, but that it was ridiculous in monsieur to ask an explanation, because I could have given him the same translation if the lines had been entirely different.”

During the hours of fright, tumult, and horror in Paris, when the body of De Launay, after being kicked and dragged through the gutter and his head carried on a pike through the streets in triumph, was left lying, with many other victims, in the Place de Grève, the Comte d’Artois at Versailles held high carnival in the orangery and, with dances, songs, feasting, and wine in abundance, entertained the foreign soldiery. The morning of the 15th, Morris says, “La Caze comes from Le Normand to tell me that it is impossible to do business this day, which, I fear, is true enough. He also tells me the King is coming to town this day [July 15th], which I do not believe a word of.

Dress and wait long for my carriage. Receive a message from Madame de Flahaut. Walk to the Louvre, and order my carriage to follow; later I go to Mr. Jefferson's, and am stopped near the Pont Royal and obliged to turn into the Rue St. Honoré. Stopped again at the Church St. Roch, and a number of foolish questions asked. Colonel Gardner comes to me; is very happy to be in Paris at the present moment. So am I. Considers, as I do, the capture of the Bastille an instance of great intrepidity. A few paces from the church I am again stopped, and a vast deal of self-sufficiency in the officer brings on an altercation with my coachman. As everything is turned into this street and interruptions of the kind I experience are so frequent, the *embarras* is very great. I therefore turn back, and come to the Hôtel to dine. While I am at dinner La Caze comes in. He contradicts his news of this morning, but says a deputy is just arrived from the States-General who brings an account that the King has retreated, etc. This I expected. We shall see. Go, according to promise, to Madame de Flahaut's, with her nephew and the Abbé Bertrand; we proceed along the quay to the Tuileries, walk a little, and sit some time. She wants to see the deputies of the Assemblée Nationale come to town, owns that it is foolish, but says that all women have the same folly. There is much *réjouissance* in town. After placing madame at home, her nephew and I go to the club. I send away my carriage, and presently after receive a message from her desiring the loan of it. Send the servant after the coachman, but it is too late. His horses are put up, and he is patrolling as one of the *garde bourgeoise*. The Duc d'Aguillon* and Baron de Menou† are at the club, both of them deputies of the noblesse. I learn through and from them the secret history of the revolution of this day. Yesterday evening an address was presented to the Assembly, to which His Majesty returned an answer by no means satisfactory. The Queen, Comte d'Artois, and Duchesse de Polignac had been all day tampering with two regiments, who were made almost drunk, and every officer was presented to the King, who was induced to give promises, money, etc., to these regiments. They shouted 'Vive la Reine, 'Vive le Comte d'Artois,' 'Vive la Duchesse de Polignac,' and their music came and played under Her Majesty's windows. In the meantime, Maréchal de Broglie was tampering in person with the artillery. The plan was to reduce Paris to famine, and to take two hundred members of the National Assembly prisoners. But they found that the troops would not serve against their country. Of course these plans could not be carried into effect. They took care, however, not to inform the King of all the mischiefs. At two o'clock in the morning, the Duc de Liancourt went into his bed-chamber and waking him, told him all; told him that he pawned his life on the truth of his narration, and that unless he changed his measures speedily all was lost. The King took his determination. The Bishop d'Autun (they say) was called on to prepare *un discours*, which he did. The orders were given for dispersing the troops, and at the meeting of the Assembly the King, accompanied by his two brothers and the captain of the guard, came in and made his speech. This produced very enthusiastic emotions of joy, and he was reconducted to the Château by the whole Assembly, and by all the inhabitants of Versailles. They tell me that the Baron de Besenval* is *dénoncé* by the Assemblée Nationale, which appellation the King recognizes in his *discours*; that they will pursue the present ministry. I give my opinion that after what is passed the Comte d'Artois should not be suffered to stay in France. In this they agree. They say that they will 'faire le procès' of the Maréchal de Broglie, and probably of the Baron de Breteuil. Sup with them, and, the claret being better than any I have tasted in France, I give them as a toast the liberty of the French nation and of the city of Paris, which are

drunk with very good will. Return home. This has been a very fine day. It is said that the King is to be in town at 11 o'clock to-morrow. But for what? Bon mot: The Baron de Besenval is *dénoncé* on account of some letters he had written which were intercepted. The Duc de la Rochefoucault, appointed one of the Assemblée Nationale by the city of Paris, meets the baron coming out of the King's cabinet. 'Eh bien, Monsieur le Baron, avez-vous encore les ordres à donner pour Paris?' The baron takes it as a *politesse*. 'Non, Monsieur le Duc, excepté qu'on m'envoie ma voiture.' 'Apparemment c'est une voiture de poste, Monsieur le Baron.' Another: In the procession yesterday the King and Comte d'Artois, walking together, were much crowded. One of the deputies said to another, 'Voyez comme on presse le Roi et Monsieur le Comte d'Artois.' The other answered, 'Il y a cette différence pourtant, que le Roi est pressé par l'amour de son peuple.' To which the King, not hearing more than the last words of the conversation, replied, in turning round, 'Oui, c'est juste.'"

This was the last successful day for the king. Among the deputies who, taking hands, made a chain around him—even amid the cries of "Vive le Roi!"—there lurked suspicion. A woman in the crowd dared press by the Comte d'Artois to the king and say to him, "Oh, my king, are you sincere? Will you not change within a fortnight?" "No," said the king, "I shall never change."

On the 16th a committee was held in the king's apartments, to discuss the important question whether His Majesty should quit Versailles with the troops, or go to Paris to calm the people. "The queen was for departure," Madame Campan says, but it was decided that the king alone should go to Paris. The king accordingly went to Paris on the 17th, accompanied by the Maréchal de Beauvau, the Duc de Villeroy, the Duc de Villeguier, and the Comte d'Estaing.* "The queen restrained her tears," says Madame Campan, "and shut herself up with her family in her private rooms. She scarcely expected that the king would return; a deadly terror reigned throughout the palace, and fear was at its height."

"This morning" [July 17th], says the diary, "my coach-man tells me there are placards up forbidding any carriages to run, as the King is in town this day between ten and eleven. Here is another day in which nothing will be done. Dress immediately, and go out. Get a window, through the aid of Madame de Flahaut, in the Rue St. Honoré, through which the procession is to pass. In squeezing through the crowd my pocket is picked of a handkerchief, which I value far beyond what the thief will get for it, and I should willingly pay him for his dexterity could I retrieve it. We wait from eleven till four. It seems that His Majesty was escorted by the militia of Versailles to the Point-du-Jour, where he entered the double file of Parisian militia which extends from thence to the Hôtel de Ville. Our friend Lafayette, elected general of the militia of Paris, precedes his sovereign. They move slowly, amid the acclamations of, 'Vive la nation!' Each line composed of three ranks; consequently it is a body six deep extending that distance. The Assemblée Nationale walk promiscuously together in the procession. The King's Horse Guards, some of the Gardes du Corps, and all those who attend him, have the cockades of the city, viz., red and blue. It is a magnificent procession in every respect. After it is over, go to dinner at the 'traiteur's,' and get a beefsteak and bottle of claret. A deputy from Bretagne comes in, whom I met yesterday at a table d'hôte at Versailles. We seat him at our little table. He tells me

that the King yesterday sent the Assembly a letter of recall for M. Necker; that the ministers have all resigned, except the Baron de Breteuil, who says he never accepted; that the Comte d'Artois, the Duc and Duchesse de Polignac, M. de Vaudreuil, and, in short, the whole Committee Polignac, have decamped last night in despair. I tell him that travelling may be useful to the Comte d'Artois, and therefore it may be well that he visited foreign parts. We have a conversation on the commerce of their islands, in which I state to him what I conceive to be the true principle on which their system should be founded. He desires a further conversation, when that matter shall be agitated. Tell him I am going to London. He desires to have my address, that he may write to me. I promise to let him have it. He mentions something which interests my friend the Comtesse de Flahaut. I tell him sundry truths the communication of which will be useful to her, and omit certain others which might prove injurious, and thus make an impression different from what he had received, but I fear the folly of her husband and the madness of his brother will ruin them both. It is impossible to help those who will not help themselves. I call on her, and tell her what has passed in the government. Sit a while with her and the Abbé Bertrand, and then go to the club. The King this day confirmed the choice made by the mayor; gave his approbation of the regiment of city guards. He put in his hat a large cockade of the red and blue ribbons, and then, and not till then, received the general shouts of "Vive le Roi!" This day will, I think, prove a useful lesson to him for the rest of his life, but he is so weak that unless he is kept out of bad company it is impossible that he should not act wrongly."

"The weather [July 18th] is pleasant, and the town begins to be a little quiet. I go to the club and take tea. Kersaw tells me that the Augean stable of Versailles is now quite clean. The Abbé Vermond, and the King's valet de chambre De Thierry, and the Comte d'Angivilliers,* of his buildings, are departed. De Thierry he dismissed, with many execrations. There are places in abundance to bestow now, and, of course, there will be an abundance of intrigue to get them. In short, the whole conspiracy against freedom is blown up to the moon."

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER VI.

Dinner at Madame de Flahaut's. Artists' studios. Dinner with Lafayette. Visit to the Bastille. The Club. Foulon's head carried through the streets. Making up a foreign mail. Madame de Montmorin. Ideas respecting a constitution for France. Asked to consult with the ministers. Passport for London. Journey to England. Beggars. Impressions of England.

That *jolie intrigante*, Madame de Flahaut, who never failed to pull the strings that moved the puppets high in authority, had probably some scheme in her clever little head when she hospitably entertained her satellites in the persons of the Abbé Bertrand, the Duc de Biron, the Évêque d'Autun, and Mr. Morris at dinner, soon after the Augean stable at Versailles had been cleansed and there were places in abundance to bestow. "Very agreeable," Morris says he found this society. It would not be difficult to imagine the wit and *abandon* of the conversation; the *spirituel* and delicate repartee which fell from the lips of the fair hostess; the sarcastic and subtle wit, joined with immense tact, which characterized the Bishop of Autun; the careless, daring indifference to consequences which seemed to belong to that Don Juan, the Duc de Biron; the Abbé Bertrand, whom Morris always found agreeable; and, last of the number, Morris himself, not very much behind the Frenchmen in wit and appreciation. It is matter of regret that none of the conversation found its way into the pages of the diary; but "we all go," Morris says (July 19th), "after dinner, to visit a painter and see three pieces, in one of which the actual execution of perspective goes beyond the power of my imagination, particularly in the right hand of the principal figure, which stands out so completely from the canvas that one absolutely sees all round it, a thing scarce credible, but which is not the less true. The subject is Love escaped from his cage and leaving by his flight the ladies in anguish and despair. The expression does not come up to my ideas of the power of this art, but the light and shade are distributed through the piece in a most astonishing perfection. He (the painter) shows us a piece he is now about for the King, taken from the *Æneid*: Venus restraining the arm which is raised in the temple of the Vestals to shed the blood of Helen. I tell him he had better paint the Storm of the Bastille; it will be a more fashionable picture, and that one trait will admit of a fine effect. It is of the *garde française* who, having got hold of the gate and unable to bring it down, cries to his comrades of the populace to pull by his legs. And this man has the force and courage to hold while a dozen of them pull him like a rope and bring down the gate, so that he actually sustains the rack. To represent him drawn out of joint, with his head turned round, encouraging them to pull still harder, must, I think, have a fine effect. L'Évêque d'Autun agrees with me entirely in this sentiment. Returning, we find M. de Rouillé, who, I find, is writing a history of the present revolution. He promises to meet me at the club and give me the news of M. Necker. Take the abbé home, and then go to the club. M. de Rouillé tells me they have yet no news of M. Necker, but expect an express to-night, and that if he is not yet farther than Brussels he will be in to-morrow night. Recommend a subscription to collect the various papers found in the Bastille, and then to employ an able hand in writing the annals of that diabolical castle, from the beginning of Louis Fourteenth's reign to the present moment.

Something of this sort will, I believe, be done. Give the hint also of forming the Garde Française into a city guard, with very high pay, and keep up the corps by putting with it all those who, by good conduct, shall have merited something more than the rank of a common soldier, without being qualified for that of a sergeant. They know not what to do at present with this corps.”

“This morning [July 20th] I go to the Hôtel de Ville. With much difficulty find out the Marquis de Lafayette,* who is exhausted by a variety of attentions. Tell him I will send his letters to America, and he must give me a passport to visit the Bastille. Agree to dine with him, on condition that I may bring my own wine. Return home, write, and at four go to the Hôtel de Lafayette. Find there Madame and the Duc de la Rochefoucault, M.—,etc., to dine. He gives me my passport for the Bastille. Suggest to him my plan respecting the Garde Française which he likes. Advise him to have a completed plan for the militia prepared, and to submit it to the committee. Ask him if he can think of any steps which may be taken to induce the King to confer on him the government of the Isle of France. He tells me that he would prefer that of Paris simply; that he has had the utmost power his heart could wish, and is grown tired of it; that he has commanded absolutely an hundred thousand men; has marched his sovereign about the streets as he pleased, prescribed the degree of applause which he should receive, and could have detained him prisoner had he thought proper. He wishes therefore, as soon as possible, to return to private life. In this last expression he deceives himself or wishes to deceive me, or both, perhaps. But in fact he is the lover of freedom from ambition, of which there are two kinds: one born of pride, the other of vanity, and his partakes most of the latter.”

“At half-past one [July 21st] I call for Madame de Flahaut, who expressed a wish to accompany me to the Bastille. Capellis and the Abbé Bertrand are waiting. Presently after Madame appears, with Mademoiselle Duplessis. We get all together into the coach of Capellis, and go to the Bastille.* Some difficulty in getting through the guards, notwithstanding my passport. We meet in the architect employed in the demolition an old acquaintance of the abbé’s, who is glad to be useful. He shows us everything—more than I wish to see, as it stinks horribly. The storming of this castle was a bold enterprise. Return to the Louvre with Madame de Flahaut. Make a long visit, at first *tête-à-tête*. Give her some verses, and with infinite coolness tell her that I am perfectly my own master with respect to her; that, having no idea of inspiring her with a tender passion, I have no idea either of subjecting myself to one; that, besides, I am timid to a fault—that I know it to be wrong, but cannot help it. She thinks it a very strange conversation, and, indeed, so it is; but I am much mistaken if it does not make an impression much greater on reflection than at the present moment. *Nous verrons*. The Duke of Orleans is at the club to-day. I am as cold with respect to him as an Englishman. A thousand to one we are never acquainted, but, if we are, he must make *au moins la moitié du chemin*.” This was Morris’s first sight of the duke, for, although he had been so much with the duchess her lord had never appeared. Possibly near her was the last place to look for him.

“To-day [July 22d] I go to the club to meet a gentleman. At a table d’hôte we have a good dinner for three. Coffee, etc., included, the price of the dinner is 48 francs. After dinner walk a little under the arcade of the Palais Royal waiting for my carriage. In

this period the head and body of M. Foulon* are introduced in triumph, the head on a pike, the body dragged naked on the earth. Afterwards, this horrible exhibition is carried through the different streets. His crime is to have accepted a place in the ministry. This mutilated form of an old man of seventy is shown to Berthier, his son-in-law, the intendant of Paris, and afterwards *he* is also put to death and cut to pieces, the populace carrying about the mangled fragments with a savage joy. Gracious God! what a people!”

With the Séance Royale on the 22d of July the crisis passed, and the destructive work of the revolution was complete. As Taine says, “It is no longer a government which falls that it may give way to another, it is *all* government which ceases to exist.” It was well to be able to turn from such revolting spectacles as those which were presented to the public gaze in the streets of Paris, and forget for a moment scenes so atrocious, even if forgetfulness were only attained by spending the entire night making up a mail for America—an arduous task when the grandfathers of the present generation sent letters across the sea. “I wrote all night,” Morris says (July 23d), “and went to bed at seven this morning. Waked up at eight to seal my letters. Take some more sleep, and between one and two respond to a wish of Madame de Flahaut’s that I should go to see her, as she does not go as she intended to Versailles. She keeps me to dine, and after dinner we glide into a confidential conversation. To cure me of any sentiment she might inspire in me, she avows a marriage of the heart. I guess the person. She acknowledges it, and assures me that she cannot commit an infidelity to him. I leave her, and go to Jefferson’s. Sit and chat and take tea.”

Of Jefferson’s standing in Paris Morris wrote to Robert Morris (July 22d) in the following terms: “He commands very much respect in this country, which is merited by good sense and good intentions. The French, who pique themselves on possessing the graces, very readily excuse in others the want of them, and to be an *étranger* (like charity) covers a multitude of sins. On the whole, therefore, I incline to think that an American minister at this Court gains more than he loses by preserving his originality. Mr. Jefferson lives well, keeps a good table and excellent wines, which he distributes freely.”

On the eve of a journey to England, then a formidable undertaking, Morris mentions going out to Versailles to say good-by to his friends there—among them, Madame de Montmorin. “I desire to be favored with her commands for London,” he says. “To my compliments on the Count being restored to his place, she replies that she wishes to be a good way off, that she is shocked at the scenes acting in Paris.” The terrible catastrophe which later overtook her and her family cast its shadow before it and over her very early in the Revolution. M. de Montmorin perished in the September massacres. She and one son died on the scaffold. One daughter died in prison, and Madame de Beaumont died of grief. “After dining with the Montmorins,” Morris continues, “among other things I speak to monsieur of M. de Moustier. Tell him confidentially that he is not agreeable to the people of America, and that he must send us such a man as the Chevalier de la Luzerne. He tells me in confidence the person he intends to send over, but makes me promise not to mention it to anybody. Visit at De la Luzerne’s. He reproves me for not dining with him. I find he is taking a great deal of pains to show that he is well with M. Necker, which proves beyond all things to me

the preponderance which Necker will have in the council. I presume the place of Garde des Sceaux is kept vacant until his pleasure shall be known." Later in the evening, "visit Madame de Tessé. She is deeply engaged in a political discussion. I find that the high democrats begin to cool a little, and I think that by degrees they will *feel*, though they would not *understand* reason."

Morris had been requested by a member of the States-General to "throw together some thoughts respecting the constitution of this country. I am occupied all Saturday morning [July 24th], in this work. While I am about it, Dr. McDonald comes in. I read to him what I have written, and see him forcibly struck with the thoughts and with the manner. This serves as an evidence to me that there is some weight and truth in my observations."

The following evening (July 25th) he dined with Mr. Jefferson, who gave him several letters of introduction for use in London, and a passport. Sunday morning (July 26th), he received a note "from Madame de Flahaut, who has something to communicate. Visit her at one. She desires to know whether I will go to Versailles to confer with the committee who are to report a constitution. She is charged by one of them to make this request. I reply that if it will not delay my departure for London I shall consult, conceiving it my duty to render any service I can to this country. I explain to her the paper written yesterday, that she may translate it afterwards. Have a little chit-chat, and dine with her *partie carrée*, and afterwards drive and walk in the Bois de Boulogne. Received while I was dressing a note from Madame de Chastellux, desiring me to interest Lafayette in favor of a protégé of her late husband, who wants to be placed in the *Régiment National*. At five go by appointment to Madame de Flahaut's. She is at her toilette. Monsieur comes in. She dresses before us with perfect decency, even to her shift. Monsieur leaves us to make a long visit, and we are to occupy ourselves in making a translation."

"See Lafayette to-day [July 28th], to ask a commission for the protégé of Madame de Chastellux, and I desire him to give the King some consolation which may make him easy, as it is of the last importance to France. I cannot tell him my reasons, because they are founded on a secret intrusted to me, but I am most serious. As we cannot have conversation now, he desires me to dine with him. Return home and set about the translation of what I wrote yesterday afternoon. Interrupted by visitors. As soon as completed, go to Madame de Flahaut's. Monsieur not gone, as was intended, to Versailles. This is unfortunate. He comes in and chats a while, but it is clear that he means to give us the pleasure of his company, that we may not have the pleasure of his absence. This is very absurd. People who wish to please should never be troublesome. Go to Madame de Fouquet's. A lively conversation; pressed to stay to dinner. Cannot. Promise on my return to visit her immediately. Make various visits, and go to M. de Lafayette's and dine. After dinner mention again M. Martin's affair, and he promises to do all in his power. Urge again the taking measures to put the King at ease (note—Madame de Flahaut gave me yesterday the communication), upon which he is desirous of knowing my reasons. I tell him that they arise from a secret communication, therefore cannot go farther. Propose an association to protect the Prince, and to declare those who may insult him enemies, both public and private. Propose a plan to get rid of the difficulty of the Assemblée Nationale, which is bound

not to tax till the constitution is completed, and which is pressed in consequence for time. Then urge strongly the danger of a constitution too democratical, and leave him. Go to Madame de Ségur's; take leave, with an engagement to correspond together; thence to Madame de Flahaut's. Monsieur is there, and Vicq d'Azyr, the Queen's head physician. The latter goes away presently. The former is called down, and she communicates a request for my thoughts on the subject of education for the French. Monsieur enters—again is obliged to go abroad. This is right. Take supper with Madame de Flahaut. Some conversation with her and Monsieur, who returns, which is on the interesting subject of their public affairs. He seems well pleased with me, which is uncommon. Make arrangements for a correspondence with Madame.”

All preparations for the journey to London were finally completed—except the passport—to obtain which required a visit to Lafayette at the Hôtel de Ville. “I do this,” Morris says, “on the principle that if I do not take care of my own business, I cannot expect anyone else to do it for me. Mankind are in the constant practice of believing in the attention of others, and of neglecting those who believe in them. *Il faut être juste*. I find that I was right. At the Hôtel de Ville there are a world of difficulties, but they are at length all surmounted. From thence I go to take leave of Madame de Flahaut, and thence to Madame de Corney; a number of gentle reproaches for neglecting her, which I had well merited.”

The next day, with post books and maps, Morris started on his journey. Outside of Paris many convoys of wheat and flour going to Paris, escorted by troops, and large droves of cattle and pigs, which he mentions as being “the worst formed animals I ever saw; long, narrow, and meagre, they seem more fitted for the race than the table,” had possession of most of the road. The weather was fine, and “the mind and eye,” he says, “are delighted by the exuberance of the approaching harvest.” At the entrance to Dieppe a number of questions were asked, owing to the fact of a number of refugees having lately passed into England. While waiting for a calm sea and a favoring wind to take him to the shores of England, Morris availed himself of the opportunity of a vessel sailing direct to New York, to write to Washington an account of recent events at Paris. He told him as private news that “the Comte de Moustier has his congé and Colonel Ternant will be his successor as chargé d'affaires, and possibly as minister later. The important trait in this appointment is that he is named as a person who will be agreeable to us. You may rely on what I am about to mention, but which I pray you not to disclose. It is known to very few in this country, and may perhaps (as it ought) be buried in oblivion. The King has actually formed the design of going off to Spain. Whether the measures set on foot to dissuade him will have, as I hope, the desired effect, time only can discover. His fears govern him absolutely, and they have of late been most strongly excited. He is a well-meaning man, but extremely weak, and probably these circumstances will in every event secure him from personal injury. An able man would not have fallen into his situation, but I think that no ability can now extricate him. He must float along on the current of events, being absolutely a cypher. If, however, he should fly, it will not be easy to predict the consequences, for this country is at present as near to anarchy as society can approach without dissolution. There are some able men in the National Assembly, yet the best heads among them would not be injured by experience, and unfortunately there are a good number who, with much imagination, have little knowledge, judgment, or

reflection. You may consider the revolution as complete; that is to say, the authority of the King and of the nobility is completely subdued, but yet I tremble for the constitution. They have all that romantic spirit, and all those romantic ideas of government which, happily for America, we were cured of before it was too late. They are advancing rapidly. I pass over those facts which you cannot but know, to mention in one word that the whole army of France have declared for liberty, and that one reason why His Majesty has not taken the step above mentioned is that he does not know a single regiment that would obey him.”

The usual vicissitudes of weather and the usual discomforts of the Channel awaited Morris when he started for England on the 1st of August, and it was not until the 3d that he finally landed at Brighthelmstone. Three miles from shore the vessel was met by a small boat, and the passengers were landed on the beach, and “got on shore dry, a thing which does not always happen,” he says. Lodgings were difficult to find owing to the races, and the traveller did not linger longer than to notice that the “cleanliness of the place forms a reverse of the place I quitted yesterday, although that is the cleanest town, except Versailles, I have seen in France.” After many detentions and failures to provide post-horses, the races at Lewes being the absorbing interest of the moment, Morris at length started for London. “In descending a hill,” he says, “we arrive at a seat of Lord Abergavenny. The old castle, which was once, I suppose, the residence of the feudal tyrant of this soil, becomes now simply an object of ornament to the grounds. The house is neat, and the clumps of trees which are strewed upon the waving ground of vivid green derive an additional beauty by contrast. At Croydon they are holding the sessions, so that we have great difficulty to get anything. In the last ten miles I see some fine forest-trees, but not before. Those which had met my view were small and low, so that I actually, in one instance, took the forest for a large orchard till I came very near. I have as yet seen no land in Europe equal to our best soil in America, and very little as good as our second quality. All the difference of product arises from culture. With perpetual rains they have but little water, and, to my great surprise, in this hilly country, I have found no springs or rivulets.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER VII.

London. The Haymarket Theatre. The Marquis de la Luzerne. Trumbull. The refugees. Lady Dunmore. The Cosways. Hon. Mrs. Damer. Society duties. Strictures on society. Sail on the Thames. Downe Place. Returns to Paris. Critical state of affairs. Madame de Tessé. Lafayette. Public opinion sets against the National Assembly. Finances. Scarcity of bread. The Flanders Regiment. Social life. Prepares a memorandum on subsistence. The queen. Madame de Flahaut. The banners blessed. The opera. Resistance to authority among the bakers. Versailles. Question on the finances. Mirabeau speaks in the Assembly. Meets Madame de Staël. Conversation with Madame de Flahaut. Asked to furnish flour for Paris.

As the traveller neared London, the absence of “those fine trees which give,” he says, “an air of magnificence to the approaches to Paris” surprised him. “The last stage brings me to the Adelphi Hotel, and early next morning Mr. Parker comes to breakfast. He is to get me good lodgings and a chariot, and will send out his servant for these purposes while I dress. He has found lodgings, according to Mr. Parker’s directions, in the same street with him. *Cela s’entend*. Do not observe it, even by a look. The dealer in carriages enters, and we agree for a carriage and horses, which will cost me four guineas a week, besides a shilling a day for board wages for the coachman. This is pretty well. Go to look at the lodgings. They are very indifferent, at two guineas per week. Go from thence to Frome’s Hotel, Covent garden, where I take rooms at six shillings per day, and one shilling for my servant. This is dear; however, it will do till I can get in a better position. After dinner Mr. Parker goes with me to the Haymarket Theatre. This, it seems, is a benefit night. The pieces and performers, one only excepted, are alike wretched. From the applause lavished by the audience I am led to question their taste, or give entirely up my own. In the box adjoining to us is Lady Dunmore and family. With the aid of rouge she looks as well, I think, as when I saw her in America, near twenty years ago, and then she was pretty well advanced, and rather to be admired for grace than beauty.”

A visit to the Marquis de la Luzerne,* the French ambassador, was among his first duties. “His reception,” Morris says, “is perfectly good.” The next visit was one of business, to Mr. Bourdieu. “I talk to him about a loan. He tells me that nothing of that kind can be done in the city; that perhaps I may meet with people at the west end of the town who are better disposed, but that the name of America terrifies the mercantile part of the community. I receive some letters here, but none from Holland, so that I cannot go to work for relief of Robert Morris’s affairs. Madame de Flahaut, in a letter, gives me an account of poor Besenval’s capture and detention.”

Next day (August 7th) he goes to see R. Penn, who receives him quite *en famille*. “He tells me the state of the family claims and his own, and desires me to consider myself at home at his house. Call on Sir John Sinclair† at Whitehall. He is out of town. Later go to dine with the Marquis de la Luzerne; several of the Corps Diplomatique. The Marquis de la Luzerne informs me of the organization of their ministry: M. de la Tour du Pin, Minister of War; l’Archevêque of Bordeaux, Garde des Sceaux, which

Malesherbes refused. I am sorry for this refusal. Tell the Marquis that I understood the Bishop of Autun was thought of for it. He says that he has not the right kind of head for this office. Thence I conclude that he is rather visionary in his ideas, and perhaps he is, for that is the common misfortune of men of genius who do not sufficiently mix in the affairs of the world.”

“To-day [August 8th] I call on Mr. Trumbull the painter. He shows me a small piece he has copied from his original *Sortie of Gibraltar*, which I think very fine. Return home and dine on a composition called *turtle-soup*, with which I drink a composition called *claret*. The latter is preferable to the former.” To the refugees who were always to be found in considerable numbers in the drawing-rooms of the Marquis de la Luzerne, Morris tried to administer a little comfort. He says of them: “The refugees talk a little *refugee*, which is natural. I tell them that all the little commotions—burning castles, etc.—though painful and distressing, are but specks in the great business, and will if they get a good constitution be soon forgotten. M. de Fitzjames inquires of me the news from Paris, but I find that we left it about the same time. I did not recollect him, but it seems that we had met at club. The Marquis de la Luzerne takes me aside, and we converse a little on their politics. I think his object is merely to show an attention before his company which may be useful to me. In going in to dinner M. Cate, the Lieutenant de Police, takes hold of me, and says he will not be parted. Seats himself next me, and at dinner tells me his story. All this requires polite attention on my part, which is paid. Dine on a very fine trout, or rather a part of one, which I think must have weighed about eight pounds. Observe that I am somewhat a favorite with Madame la Vicomtesse. This must be kept up, *et pour cause*. Inquiries are made, I find, by Lady Dunmore and her daughter about the *jambe de bois*. Lady Dunmore makes acquaintance after dinner; asks the opinion of my countrymen about his lordship; I tell her candidly. We have a conversation which she is pleased with, and to my surprise, and I dare say her own, we are on terms of great familiarity. La Luzerne and Capellis, I find, remark on it, so that I am obliged to join them and stop the laugh. The French tell him a world of wonders and confusions, upon which I take him aside and tell him to believe nothing of what they say; that it is refugee news, and he knows well what sort of thing that is. The Princesse Galitzen, who shares in the conversation with Lady Dunmore, is, I find, like others totally mistaken with respect to the troubles in France. They all supposed, as was supposed in the American Revolution, that there are certain leaders who occasion everything, whereas in both instances it is the great mass of the people. At going away her ladyship thanks me for answering her questions.”

Among other letters, Morris had one to Mrs. Cosway, the wife of the distinguished miniature-painter. By appointment, one evening was spent in her drawing-rooms, where were a “very genteel company,” he says, “the Dowager Duchess of Bedford among them. Music very good. The arrangement of the company, however, is stiff and formal. There must be in this, as in other countries, the ways of bringing people together, even to intimacy, but it appears at the first aspect to be rather difficult. We shall see. I observe to the Hon. Mrs. Damer* that the French, having no liberty in their government, have compensated to themselves that misfortune by bestowing a great deal upon society; but that I fear in England it is confined to the House of Commons. She seems to suppose the latter part of this observation ironical, and tells me, with an

animated smile, that we enjoy liberty in my country. This lady is a great statuary, and is *doing* the King. Quære, if she copies after nature, for she does it as large as life. Her taste is justly considered as extraordinary, but I doubt whether she is the single instance within these three kingdoms of a fair one who keeps at home a block to work upon. Visit at the assemblée of Madame de la Luzerne. The Duke and Duchess of Luxemburg are there, and the Duke and Duchess of Leeds. After some time the Duke of Leeds makes up and inquires of Mr. Adams. A light conversation ensues. After the Duke and Duchess of Leeds retire, Lady Dunmore, whom I had seen at Mrs. Cosway's, comes in. A little sociable chat in the small circle until late."

Together with his very important and difficult business affairs, Morris found that his rapidly increasing society duties kept him more than agreeably occupied. "From the necessity of being my own clerk," as he wrote to Robert Morris, August 26th, "and the interruptions to which I am constantly exposed, you will easily perceive that my moments are few and precious. Indeed, in the way I now live, I might pass five years in London and yet know but little more of it than when I left Philadelphia." He regretted much that he had been able to make so little progress in Mr. Robert Morris's affairs. "But I have had," he wrote, "the wind ahead of me ever since I left the Capes of Delaware. It will be favorable by and bye."

The London "rout" was evidently not in accord with Morris's taste, and he expresses an ever-fresh astonishment at the stiffness of the drawing-rooms and the ladies. "I go to-night to Mrs. Cosway's," he says. "She is vastly pleasant, but her ladies are all ranged in battalia on the opposite side of the room. Discuss a little with her the *froideur anglaise*, and, while she is in conversation with them, throw the pith of that discussion into these stanzas, which I leave with her, being a kind of address to the ladies.

By nature's various beauty blest,
Ah! why your wealth conceal,
And why, in cold indifference drest,
Her blessings not reveal?
Vast treasures in a heart confined
No pleasures can impart;
And so the treasures of the mind,
And feelings of the heart.
Your conversation, like your coin,
Is gold, but yet 'tis strange
How oft, when social circles join,
You want a little change.

Observe that she is about to communicate this for their edification, and therefore take Capellis off with me."

Notwithstanding the multiplicity of his engagements, Morris found time to see a few of the sights of London. He speaks of taking a wherry at Westminster Bridge and going down the Thames. "The Bridge of Blackfriars is crumbling to pieces, and London Bridge does not seem formed in a manner to last forever. The famous

building of Somerset House, which I had heard vaunted highly, seems to be built in a paltry style, and the front of stone accords but illy with the sides of brick. The shipping are the really curious object here. These give to the reflecting mind a high idea of the commerce and wealth of this great city. Having gone down to the farthest of those which can properly be said to lie in the port of London, we ascend the river again to the Tower stairs, where my carriage is waiting. The wherries of this river are admirably calculated for stemming rapid currents.”

A visit to Downe Place, the country-seat of John B. Church,* Member of Parliament from Wendover, proved most interesting. One day (September 6th) was delightfully employed visiting Herschel. “He receives us,” Morris says, “in a manner which is, I think, peculiar to men of his kind of greatness: simplicity, modesty, mildness. He shows and explains his great telescope; a speculum now polishing for it weighs 1,400 lbs.—that in present use, 2,500. The polishing at present is performed by a machine, but formerly it was done by hand, and twenty-two men were engaged in that work twenty weeks. The concavity of this speculum is about two-tenths of an inch, the diameter about three feet, I think. The substance is a composition of metals. From thence we go to Windsor Castle,” the view from which especially impressed him.

Arrived in town on the 8th, Mr. Parker communicated intelligence which, Morris says, “affects deeply our plan about the purchase of the American debt to France. I must in consequence set off immediately for Paris.” For this M. de la Luzerne provided him with a passport, and Mrs. Penn gave him a guinea to buy rouge for her, and on Wednesday, the 9th, he left London. This return journey was made by the way of Canterbury and Dover, at which place he arrived on the 10th, and hired a cutter to take him across the channel. “After much higgling,” he says, “by the boatman over the price, and having got outside the harbor, find that there is as little of cleanliness as of morality on board. At eight o’clock, being much fatigued, I go below and lie down on a blanket spread on the cabin floor. The bed is hard but wholesome. The vermin, however, have not yet supped and I must furnish them entertainment. The hope of slumber is, from this and other circumstances, soon over.” By two o’clock in the morning, however, he was safely on shore “at a clean house and between clean sheets without the walls of Calais.” While he is preparing to depart thence on the morrow, “a friar comes in to beg, with an air that shows his conviction how improper a thing it is to lay me under that kind of contribution. I tell him it is a bad trade which he follows, and that I understand the National Assembly are about to reform such institutions. He has heard so, but as this is the only mode they have to get a living they must continue at it as long as possible. I give a shilling, and in return for the usual routine of good wishes, (which he runs over with the same easy air which distinguished my friend Dr. Cooper, of King’s College, in reading the Litany) I wish him a better business. This wish is more sincere than his, by a shilling at least. At eleven leave Calais, duly provided with a passport from the new government. Cross the Oyse. Near Clermont, on its banks, is the château of the Duc de Liancourt, to whose interposition is attributed the timely retreat of poor Louis Seize upon the taking of the Bastille.

“Being obliged to stop at Chantilly to repair the linchpin of the carriage, I examine the stables; a magnificent habitation, indeed, for twenty dozen horses, who have the honor to dine and sup at the expense of Monseigneur le Prince de Condé. From thence

I take a view of the château on the outside, but have not time for examination. It must have been strong before the invention of cannon. At present the wide, deep fosse which surrounds it, and which is well supplied with good water, furnishes an agreeable habitation to a variety of carp, white-spotted, etc., who come at a call and eat the bread thrown to them. My conductor is a politician, but he is not of the fashionable sect. He is a chasseur of the Prince and finds it very wrong ‘que tout le monde ait le droit de chasser.’ On the way I observe a very uncommon mode of hunting partridges. The chasseurs, armed with clubs, are spread everywhere over the fields. When a bird lights, it is pursued until it is so fatigued it falls a victim to pursuers. Martin thinks it is a sin and a shame, but while he utters his lamentations the postilion turns round to me: ‘C’est un beau privilège que les Français se sont acquis, monsieur.’ ‘Oui, monsieur, mais il me paraît que ce privilège ne vaudra pas autant l’année prochaine.’”

“On Tuesday [September 13th], about seven, I arrive at the Hôtel de Richelieu, at Paris. Dress and go to the club. I learn that the Assemblée Nationale have agreed to a single chamber of legislation, and a suspensive veto in the King. This is travelling in the high-road to anarchy, and that worst of all tyrannies, the despotism of a faction in a popular assembly. I am led into a little discussion on this subject, and stay to supper, after which taste some Hungarian wine presented by a Polish colonel, whose name ends with ‘whisky,’ but his liquor is delicious. By one means or another seven bottles are consumed, and two more being ordered, I rise and declare that I will drink no more, which puts an end to the business. The Duke of Orleans comes in during this match, and from some little circumstances I perceive that I may be well acquainted with his Royal Highness if I please.”

“Writing to-day [September 16th] till noon. Then call on Mr. Jefferson. He engages me to dine to-morrow in company with the Marquis de Lafayette and the Duc de la Rochefoucault. I then start for Versailles, and call on Madame de Tot. She is at her toilette but visible. Some conversation on their affairs, by which I find that opinions change. Return to M. de Montmorin’s to dine. Madame is much afflicted by the state of affairs. Madame de Ségur comes in with her brothers. She is in great anxiety; apprehends that the King will fly. I tell her that his flight appears impracticable. She thinks it will set Paris in a flame. There is no conjecturing the consequences. A prince so weak can influence very little either by his presence or absence. After dinner we have a conversation on politics with some of the deputies, in which I endeavor to show them the absurdity of their suspensive veto, and the probable tyranny of their single chamber. I had better let this alone, but zeal always gets the better of prudence. M. de Montmorin expresses a wish to see me often, which I promise, but think it will not be possible to perform this time.”

Calling on Madame de Montvoissieu, he found her “very *indignée*,” and adds that “she, as well as Madame de Ségur, wishes to be in America.” Thence he went to see Madame de Tessé. “She is a convert to my principles. We have a gay conversation of some minutes on their affairs, in which I mingle sound maxims of government with that piquant *légèreté* which this nation delights in. I am fortunate, and at going away she follows me and insists that I dine with her next time I come to Versailles. We are vastly gracious, and all at once, in a serious tone, ‘Mais attendez, madame, est-ce que

je suis trop aristocrate?’ She answers, with a smile of gentle humiliation, ‘Ah, mon Dieu, non.’ From thence I regain my carriage, to go to the Assemblée Nationale to find De Cantaleu. While waiting there I see, among others, young Montmorency, who takes me round and procures admittance to the gallery. Chance places me next to Madame Dumolley and Madame de Cantaleu. We recognize each other suddenly, with a very pleasant surprise. Madame Dumolley asks me the question which I have already been obliged to answer a hundred times: ‘Et que disent les Anglais de nous autres?’ With a significant tone, ‘Ah, madame, c’est qu’ils raisonnent, ces messieurs-là!’”

“Dine to-day [September 17th], according to my promise, with Mr. Jefferson. One of his guests, the Duc de la Rochefoucault, is just come from the States-General, and at half-past four Lafayette arrives. He tells us that some of the troops under his command were about to march tomorrow to Versailles to urge the decisions of the States General. This is a rare situation, for which they must thank themselves. I ask him if his troops will obey him. He says they will not mount guard when it rains, but he thinks they will readily follow him into action. I incline to think that he will have an opportunity of making the experiment. Mention to him my desire to confer on the subject of subsistence. He says I must come and dine with him; but this is idle, if I am rightly informed, because he generally has a crowd and is but few minutes at home. After dinner go to the club. The opinions are changing fast, and in a very little time, if the Assemblée Nationale continue their present career, a majority of this nation will, I think, be opposed to them. Their adherents, however, are zealous, and if a civil war does not take place it must be from some circumstance which escapes my conjecture. There is, indeed, one thing which promises peace; viz., that from the King’s feebleness of character nobody can trust themselves to him or risk themselves in support of his authority. But if he escapes from Versailles and falls into different hands from those now about him there must be a struggle. A slight circumstance will show how well the present rulers are fitted to conduct the affairs of this kingdom. Lafayette is very anxious about the scarcity of bread, and holds out that circumstance for conversation and discussion. The Due de la Rochefoucault thereupon tells us of some one who has written an excellent book upon the commerce of grain.”*

It would be unnecessary to enlarge here upon the unique, and at the same time pathetic, impulse of the nobles in the Assembly at Versailles on the night of the 4th of August. It seemed a sudden awakening to a sense of love and justice, and a devastating battle ensued between self-interest, the traditions of years, and the great inspiration which, born in that moment, threw a lurid light upon the rottenness of the feudal system and the pressing needs of the people. The decrees and regulations which followed the resolutions of that night are matters of history. Taine says they were but so many spiders’ webs stretched across a torrent. There was excitement and joy in the ranks of the mob, but deep depression and gloom followed the almost hysterical generosity and self-abnegating spirit of the nobles during that memorable night. Louis ?? appeared to receive with gratitude the title of Restorer of French Liberty, which after much wrangling was offered to him *en masse* by the Assembly, on the 13th of August. They chanted a Te Deum and struck off a medal, but the homage offered reduced to nothing the kingly power.

“To-night [September 18th] at the club, where I take supper, the king’s letter to the Assembly on the subject of the resolutions of the nobles on the famous Fourth of August is introduced. It is very moderate and, like the rest of M. Necker’s writings, too long and flowery, but it will excite much sensation, I believe. It holds out the idea of retreating if pushed hard, which is a sort of invitation to the aggressor. But one thing that perhaps the ministers are not aware of is, that from this moment the King will derive force from every instance of disrespect which is shown to him. Nothing can save the National Assembly but modesty and humility, their share of which is not too abundant. The current of opinion begins to set strong against the *Assemblée Nationale*. Many who looked on with anxious silence six weeks ago now speak out, and loudly.”

Again, at this time, Morris pressed on Lafayette the question of subsistence for the army. But he was slow to make arrangements, and complaints came to Morris of failures on Lafayette’s part to keep promises. He says of him: “I have known my friend Lafayette now for many years, and can estimate at the just value both his words and his actions. If the clouds which now lower should be dissipated without a storm, he will be infinitely indebted to fortune; but if it happen otherwise, the world must pardon much on the score of intention. He means ill to no one, but he has the *besoin de briller*. He is very much below the business he has undertaken, and if the sea runs high he will be unable to hold the helm.”

Necker had declared in August that the treasury was empty. The Duc d’Aiguillon showed among the expenses of the State, the debts of the Count d’Artois alone, which amounted to one hundred and twenty thousand francs: the items—gardens, horses, dogs, and mistresses. The August and September receipts were thirty-seven, and the expenditures seventy millions. The finances were at the moment the all-absorbing topic of conversation. “At the club to-day [September 20th] they are in violent discussion about the finances, which seem to be going fast to the devil. Opinions are changing fast, and in about fifteen days we shall hear somewhat of the sentiment the provinces entertain of their present rulers.”

These last days of September were full of terror. There was no money, and there was no bread. At Versailles the king, and those in authority under him, struggled feebly to meet the emergency, with what success the horrors of the 5th of October give a melancholy proof. At Paris the mob struggled against hunger and misery, and died in the struggle. In the midst of their trouble they were told that the king, whom they looked on as their only friend, was to be taken to Metz. Simultaneously the streets filled with foreign uniforms. Green trimmed with red, and black cockades were seen. Enemies seemed to encompass Paris. There was movement and excitement everywhere; a certain ominous agitation as of impending peril. Since the 15th of September some members of the Assembly had known, through warning letters, that the 5th of October was fixed for a decisive blow. On the 18th came the news of the march of the *Garde Française* to Versailles; on the 23d the Flanders Regiment arrived. Meanwhile the other life of Paris went on. The gayety seemed to grow more giddy and reckless, as if impelled by some unseen force to its destruction. “Indeed,” Morris says, “pleasure is the great business; everybody has his country-seat, and comes to town to do business once in three or four days, and then works not to finish but to get

rid of work, that he may again go out of town, making business dealings with them extremely uncertain.” People dined and drank plentifully, and went to the theatre or opera, to forget all care. Morris mentions Marmontel’s “Didon,” which, he says, “is given as well as an opera can conveniently be.” And so in various ways society, so called, closed its eyes to what was enacting in real life, outside the walls of the theatre, at its own doors.

In the midst of constant and varied demands upon his time—for the fair dames of Paris were exacting of the devotion of those who had been admitted to the boudoir and bedroom—Morris found time to prepare for M. de Corney a *mémoire* on the subject of subsistence. Lafayette, when told by M. de Corney of the note, said that he would push it with all his power—that a plan from Mr. Morris on subsistence merited every attention.

“At the club to-night [September 22d] there is nothing worthy of remark,” the diary says, “except that everyone seems now to be of opinion that queens should be excluded from the regency, on like principles to those by which they are excluded from the throne, viz., *la loi salique*; and further, that no stranger should be in the regency. This last article is not amiss, if the first can be excepted out of the provision. I tell them my opinion, which is generally disliked, but they will change. One of the company waits, as I am going out, to whisper that he is of my opinion.”

Madame de Flahaut, who was deep in the secrets of the government, chiefly through her intimacy with the Bishop of Autun, was also the confidante of Morris in his plans for the public benefit. “This morning I go by appointment to see Madame de Flahaut. She is at her toilette with her dentist. Show her a list of the Committee of the Finances and take her opinion of some characters; finally, I tell her that I have a project respecting them in which she must participate and must aid in the execution of. She gives me reason to expect that M. de Montesquiou will be Minister of the Marine, and that in such case good things may be done. We shall see. At the club I hear a sketch of Necker’s propositions to the States. They appear to me strange. However, no judgment can be formed till we have the details.”

“Madame de Flahaut has the latest news from Versailles to-day [September 25th]. She says that Necker has made a wretched discourse filled with self-applause; that the Marquis de Montmorin will to-morrow report from the Committee of Finance upon his propositions, and therein will detail his own plan; asks if I will go, as in that case she will procure me a ticket, and for Monday also, when the Bishop d’Autun is to report from the Committee on the Constitution. I agree to both propositions. She has conveyed to Montesquiou an expression of mine, which by the manner of relating is turned into an elegant compliment. She says he was well pleased, and that if he is brought into the ministry I may boldly visit him with the certainty of a good reception; that if he is Minister of the Marine we may do valuable business, in which, as in other objects where she may be useful, she is to participate. At noon take her to the convent to visit her *religieuse*, and am to call for her again at four. In the mean time I go to see the Marquis de la Billarderie, the brother of the Comte de Flahaut, to tell him how turtle is to be dressed; but we fall on the subject of politics and the question about the *tortue* is postponed *ad inferendum*. Going back to my hotel I am

delayed by militia, who are going, or have been, to church to obtain a blessing on their banners. Later I visit Madame de Chastellux, and excuse myself for not drinking tea with her. She tells me that the Duke of Orleans is plunging himself into debts and difficulties to support the present faction's temper, and that the Duchess will demand an appropriation of the revenue to her separate use. The sum fixed on by her is half a million. Many compliments from M. Lafayette; he has not placed Madame de Chastellux's protégé, and she is extremely vexed. This conduct, which flows from the same source with those things which have brought him up, very naturally tends to bring him down. After a drive with Madame de Flahaut and two young ladies to the Bois de Boulogne, I go to the opera, according to my promise, and arrive toward the close of the piece at the loge of Madame Lavoisier. The dancing after the opera is prodigiously fine. Vestris* and Gardell, who are upon the stage together, are both wonderful; Gardell is second only because Vestris is first. Go to the arsenal and take tea with Madame Lavoisier en attendant le retour de monsieur, who is at the Hôtel de Ville. Monsieur comes in and tells us of the *obstination* of the bakers. This corporation threatens the municipality of Paris with a discontinuance of their occupation, unless a confrère justly confined is released. Thus the new authority is already trampled on."

The question of the finances came on in the Assembly on Saturday the 26th. A start at five in the morning and a rapid drive to Versailles brought Morris to the door of the Assembly at eight. "By this means," he says, "I am still in time and get well seated immediately behind my friend Madame de Flahaut. At ten the session is opened; some trifling matter of presents to the Assembly called the gifts of patriotism, but more properly the sacrifices to vanity; after these a tedious verbal controversy on the reduction of yesterday's minutes, much heat and noise and impatience, by which means half an hour is employed in what ought to have been settled in half a minute. The Marquis de Montesquiou makes his report; vast respect for the Premier Ministre des Finances, and then sundry details and combinations, which show that the committee understand the business much better than the ministers. At the close, however, of the report, there is a feebleness which they are perhaps not fully aware of, or perhaps it was unavoidable. They appeal to patriotism for aid, but they should, in money matters, apply only to interest. They should never acknowledge such want of resource as to render the aid of patriotism necessary. After the report is read the Comte de Mirabeau objects to the consideration of it, and insists that they should immediately take up M. Necker's proposition, in which he has a motion to make. He is called to the tribune, and in a tone of fine irony urges the adoption of the plan proposed by the Premier Ministre from the blind confidence which the Assembly have in him, and from that unbounded popularity which he enjoys. 'These,' says he, 'in that dreadful situation which he has exposed, and in the imminency of danger which produces debate, urge, nay, command us to adopt without examination what the minister has devised for our relief. Let us agree to it literally (*textuellement*), and if it succeeds let him, as he ought, enjoy the glory of it; if it fails, which heaven forefend, we will then exercise our talents in trying to discover if yet there remains any means to save our country.' To my great astonishment the representatives of this nation, who pique themselves on being the modern Athenians, are ready to swallow this proposition by acclamation. The President, Clermont-Tonnerre, who perceives its tendency, throws into a different form the style of adoption. Mirabeau rises and very

adroitly parries the stroke by showing that this form is not consistent with his view, which the Assembly seemed willing to comply with; that certainly a subject of such magnitude should not be carried by acclamation without having the specific form before them, and that if he were to propose a form it would require at least a quarter of an hour to consider it and prepare it. He is immediately (by acclamation) ordered to *rédact* his proposition, and while he is about it the Bishop d'Autun retires. We remark it. My friend Madame de Flahaut acknowledges that they are in league together. The world already suspects that union. During their absence there is a great deal of noisy debate on various subjects, if indeed such controversy can be dignified with the name of debate. At length Mirabeau returns and brings his motion forward in consistence with his original idea. The Assembly now perceive the trap, and during the tumult Lally de Tollendal proposes that the motion be sent to the Committee of Finance to frame as an *arrêté*. Here again Mirabeau manœuvres to evade that coup, and while the house are hung up in their judgment, or rather entangled from want of judgment, d'Espresmenil makes a motion coincident with that of Mirabeau in substance, though contrariant in form. There is not sufficient confidence in him, and therefore the proposition drops. But it would seem from hence that he is in the faction with Mirabeau and Autun, or that the same principle of hatred to Necker has operated a coincidence of conduct on the present occasion. After this, tumult and noise continue to reign. Mirabeau at length, in another speech, openly declares his disapprobation of Necker's plan. It is moved to postpone the consideration of the subject at three o'clock, but that motion is lost. At half-past three Madame de Flahaut goes away, and at four I retire, extremely fatigued, in the belief that Mirabeau's motion cannot possibly be adopted, and that they will postpone at last the consideration. Go to Madame de Tessé's. She is at the Assemblée. Madame de Tot is so kind as to order some bread and wine for me 'en attendant le diner.' At length the Comtesse de Tessé arrives at five. Madame de Staël is with her. I had nearly told this last my opinion of Necker's plan before I knew her. The Assembly are *aux voix* on the adoption; the proposition not essentially different from that of Mirabeau, and thus they are the dupes. He has urged, they say, a decision with the eloquence of Demosthenes. While we are at dinner the Comte de Tessé and some members arrive. The adoption is carried *hollow*, at which Necker's friends rejoice and Madame de Staël is in raptures. She is pleased with the conduct of Mirabeau, which she says was perhaps the only way of bringing such a wrong-headed body to act rightly; that the only thing they could do was to comply with her father's wish, and that there can be no doubt of the success of his plans. Bravo! After dinner, Madame de Tessé having told her that I am *un homme d'esprit*, she singles me out and makes a *talk*; asks if I have not written a book on the American Constitution. 'Non, Madame, j'ai fait mon devoir en assistant à la formation de cette Constitution.' 'Mais, Monsieur, votre conversation doit être très intéressante, car je vous entends citer de toute part.' 'Oh, Madame, je ne suis pas digne de cet éloge!' How I lost my leg? It was, unfortunately, not in the military service of my country. 'Monsieur, vous avez l'air très imposant,' and this is accompanied with that look which, without being what Sir John Falstaff calls the 'leer of invitation' amounts to the same thing. I answer affirmatively, and would have left the matter there, but she tells me that M. de Chastellux often spoke of me, etc. This leads us on; but in the midst of the chat arrive letters, one of which is from her lover (De Narbonne), now with his regiment. It brings her to a little recollection, which a little time will, I think, again banish, and, in all human probability, a few interviews

would stimulate her curiosity to the experiment of what can be effected by the native of a new world who has left one of his legs behind. But, *malheureusement*, this curiosity cannot now be gratified, and therefore will, I presume, perish. She enters into a conversation with Madame de Tessé, who reproves most pointedly the approbation she gave to Mirabeau, and the ladies become at length animated to the utmost bounds of politeness. I return to Paris much fatigued; the day has been prodigiously fine.”

“To-day [September 27th] I read M. Necker’s propositions; they are wretched, and I think he is certainly ruined. See Madame de Flahaut, who tells me the plan of the Bishop d’Autun respecting finance, which is in some respects defective. She wishes me to have an interview with him and the Marquis de Montesquiou, and will endeavor to arrange it. Chatting with her upon various subjects we arrange a ministry and dispose of several persons— Mirabeau to go to Constantinople, Lauzun to London. I tell her that this last is wrong, as he does not possess the needful talents; but she says he must be sent away because without talents he can influence in some degree the proposed chief, and a good secretary will supply the want in England. We converse a great deal about the measures to be pursued, and this amiable woman shows a precision and justness of thought very uncommon indeed in either sex. After discussing many points, ‘Enfin,’ she says, ‘mon ami, vous et moi nous gouvernerons la France.’ It is an odd combination, but the kingdom is actually in much worse hands. This evening she is to confer with the Queen’s physician, and set him to work to remove some of Her Majesty’s prejudices. I tell her that she may easily command the Queen, who is weak, proud, but not ill-tempered, and, though lustful, yet not much attached to her lovers, therefore a superior mind would take that ascendancy which the feeble always submit to, though not always without reluctance.” To this Madame de Flahaut replies, “with an air of perfect confidence,” that she would take care to keep the queen supplied with an alternating succession of gallants and masses, and Morris comments: “It is impossible not to approve of such a *régime*, and, I think, with a due proportion of the former medicine she must supplant the present physician.”

Morris grew rather wearied of Lafayette’s procrastination in the matter of the *mémoire* respecting subsistence. No attention had been paid to it; but while Morris was waiting for his answer, several other men in authority applied to him for aid in supplying flour; “indeed M. Cretel,” he says, “asks me if I would not furnish some flour. I tell him that if Laville will appoint some person to treat with me on that subject I will do anything in my power, and that I think I can be useful, but that I will not throw myself at their heads. I then tell Lafayette that a vessel had been detained some days waiting for the answer to the *mémoire*; that in a few days more I will have nothing to do with the affair; that some of the persons of the committee have, I presume, been casting about for the ways and means to make money out of the present distress, and are easy as to consequences because certain they shall not be victims!”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER VIII.

The feast at Versailles. Consternation at Paris. Morris urges Lafayette to attach himself to the king's party. Disturbance in Paris. Church property discussed. Expedition to Versailles proposed in the Palais Royal Gardens. Excited state of the people. Carriages stopped in the streets. Agonizing night at Versailles. The royal family brought to Paris. The heads of the Body-guard carried through the streets. The royal family installed at the Tuileries. Despatches opened by the mob. Clermont de Tonnerre. The Comte de Narbonne and Madame de Staël. Dinner at Lafayette's. Conversation with Lafayette on the situation of France. Mirabeau. Madame de Chastellux's salon. The Duchess of Orleans. The Bishop of Autun reads a motion to be presented to the Assembly. A ministry arranged.

On Thursday, the first of October, the feast was prepared at Versailles for the Flanders Regiment. This superb entertainment had been conceived in an unfortunate moment by the court to bring the loyal regiments to feast together. The queen with all the ladies of the court graced the scene by their presence in the boxes, and increased the brilliant effect. Her Majesty descended from her box, and with her son and husband, graceful and tall, with a truly queen-like dignity, walked through the ranks of soldiers. Excited by wine, by music, and by the presence of their queen, they drank her health, cheered her, dragged the tricolor cockade from their hats, trampled it under foot, and donned the white cockade. Quickly the news of the sumptuous banquet at Versailles reached Paris. It spread like fire among the famishing crowds. Aristocrats had trampled their colors under foot. They had bread and to spare; they feast while we starve. Let us go to Versailles and demand bread. If we once have the king, queen, and dauphin in the midst of us they will be obliged to feed us. We will bring back with us the Baker, Bakeress, and the Baker's Boy!

The first of October found Morris and M. de Corney at work making estimates for Lafayette for the purchase of provisions at reasonable rates to be served out to the poor of Paris. Fresh pork which was selling at sixteen sous per pound, they offered to transport to Paris and sell at half the price. Next day: "I go to-day to Lafayette's and ask a dinner," he says. "I find that even among his military family, there are some who at least wish well to the noblesse. After dinner I take him aside and tell him some of my sentiments on his own situation; that he must immediately discipline his troops and make himself obeyed; that his nation is used to be governed and must be governed. That if he expects to lead them by their affection he will be the dupe. So far he accords; but on the subject of discipline his countenance shows the self-accuser, for he has given the command to officers who know nothing of their business. I mention to him the subject of subsistence. He wishes me to appear before the new committee on Monday, and that Mr. Short should also be there, so as to give it the appearance of a diplomatic affair. This is not otherwise, but I desire him to write to me what he wishes, and to write also to Short. We will see how feebleness will manage in arduous circumstances. I tell him the serious truth, that if the people of this metropolis want they will send their leaders to the devil at once, and ask again their bread and their chains; that Paris is, in fact, the dupe of this business at any rate, because her

splendor is owing entirely to despotism, and must be diminished by the adoption of a better government. I then urge him, in the great division of parties, to attach himself to that of the king, being the only one which can predominate without danger to the people. He is startled at this assertion. I proceed to demonstrate it, but Mazzie comes in and with his usual self-possession makes a third person in the conversation. Therefore I quit it. Chat a little with Madame de Lafayette, who receives me much better than she used to do. I know not why, but perhaps I have contracted more of that *tournaire* to which she has been habituated. I go to the club. De Noailles tells us that Necker's proposition as modified will take. Kersau says that letters from the provinces assure the same thing. I am, however, still incredulous. Laborde gives us the fourth of his income (400,000 f.), and the Duc d'Orléans 600,000. I ask Kersau who is the fittest man in this kingdom for military Minister of the Marine. He tells me it is Marignan, his brother-in-law, or himself. Mirabeau's address to the nation on the subject of the new *imposition* is said to be superb. Those who contribute their fourth are to receive an interest of four per cent., and the contribution is to be paid in three years. Those who have less than 400 per annum are not to pay but at their pleasure."

"Much disturbance in Paris," is chronicled by the diary, October 4th. "The foolish story of the cockades at Versailles and the serious suffering for the want of bread have collected from eight to ten thousand wretches, who go to the Hôtel de Ville. How it will end I know not, but this is certain, that unless they contrive to obtain food for the people they will be constantly embroiled. Bailly, the mayor, is, they say, inept and wishes to resign. They talk of Mirabeau as a successor. Thus every country has its John Wilkes. It is no common combination, that of a heart to devise, a head to plan, and a hand to execute. Dine with Madame de Flahaut and the Bishop d'Autun at the Louvre. She is taken ill at dinner. We converse about the public affairs, and she tells us that if he is minister we must make a million for her. He has many just ideas on the subject of finance, but a defect which he is not aware of. To correct it I tell him that he must get men about him who understand work and who love work. Mention De Corney as the kind of man who would suit him, and observe that there are very few of the kind in this country, to which he heartily agrees, but is not willing to acknowledge that he does not love work himself. He says the present ministry will last forever; that is, longer than he wishes; but Necker's health and the difficulties he is already plunged in seem to me to augur differently. We cannot even sketch the outlines of a future plan distinctly, but in general we agree as to what ought to be done. On the subject of the church property, I urge that it should be obtained by consent of the Clergy, and only mortgaged at first, but sold afterwards by degrees so as to obtain the full value. State this as security for the principal, and the *dîmes* [tithes] as security for the interest, of a loan which is to be subscribed instantly by means of foreign aid; and then, instead of insisting on the right to repay to the owners of the *rentes viagères* their capital advanced (which is his idea), to invite them to a change, by giving the principal which the *rente* is worth, calculated at an interest of five per cent.—that principal reimbursable, and bearing an interest of six per cent.; then begin to pay the principal with money obtained at four per cent., and force all the public creditors who will not take four per cent. to accept their capital. This scheme is not only practicable but easy. Urge the propriety of obliging the Caisse d'Escompte to settle their accounts before any further extension is given their establishment, and that in future the management should be part by commissioners, to prevent the present mischief; which

is, that the ministers who are in the administration make use of it merely as the means to support circulation, by which they raise a fictitious capital and gamble at the risk of the community. This idea he approves of, but does not relish my further idea of having subordinate banks in the great cities. I did not sufficiently explain it, but I have a general idea which might, I think, be executed with great advantage in this country. If opportunity offers for execution I will detail it, but for the present I must think of other affairs.”

In the Palais Royal this Sunday (October 4th), possibly for the first, certainly not for the last time, a woman used her voice to extinction proposing the expedition to Versailles and denouncing the “plaster-of-Paris bread, sacrilegious opera dinners, green uniforms, and black cockades.” Danton “roared” his denunciations, and Marat, equally condemnatory, made “as much noise as the four trumpets on the Day of Judgment.” Acts of violence and cries of “À bas!” were the result of seeing the black cockades, which men ruthlessly dragged off and crushed under foot. So passed Sunday. Monday morning, “the town is in alarm,” Morris says. “I go towards Chaillot to see what is doing, but am stopped at the Pont Royal. Go into the Tuileries. A host of women are gone towards Versailles with some cannon. A strange manœuvre! Walk up to Mr. Short’s; he is just going to dine. We return together to the Place Louis Quinze. This tumult is the continuation of last night; a wild, mad enterprise. Go to the arsenal. Admitted with difficulty. They are at dinner. Madame Lavoisiér is detained in town, as all carriages were stopped and the ladies obliged to join the female mob. While we sit at table, we learn that the militia and the Régiment National are marching towards Versailles. Return home and dress. At eight o’clock go to the Louvre to take Madame de Flahaut to sup with Madame Capellis. Capellis is with her. He says the Régiment de Flandre, the Milice de Versailles, and the Garde du Corps are determined to give the Parisians a warm reception. Lafayette has marched by compulsion, guarded by his own troops, who suspect and threaten him. Dreadful situation! Obligated to do what he abhors, or suffer an ignominious death, with the certainty that the sacrifice of his life will not prevent the mischief. I go to supper. Much discourse about what is to happen at Versailles, and we agree that our Parisians will be beaten and we consider it as fortunate that they are gone. I venture the assurance that from this day forward the French army will return to its sovereign, presuming, always, that the Régiment de Flandre will, as it is said, do its duty this night. A gentleman here tells us an anecdote which shows how well this nation is adapted to the enjoyment of freedom. He walked near a knot of people collected together, where an orator was haranguing. The substance of his oration was: ‘Messieurs, nous manquons du pain, et voici la raison. Il n’y a que trois jours que le Roi a eu ce *veto* suspensif, et déjà les aristocrates ont acheté des suspensions et envoyé les grains hors du Royaume.’ To this sensible and profound discourse his audience gave a hearty assent. ‘Ma foi, il a raison. Ce n’est que ça.’ Oh rare! These are the modern Athenians—alone learned, alone wise, alone polite, and the rest of mankind barbarians! I learn this evening that several of the provinces are become discontented at the acts of the Assemblée Nationale, but principally with the city of Paris. At Madame de Flahaut’s the company at supper was reduced almost to a tête-à-tête. The guests all decline, from the public confusion.”

At Versailles by eleven in the morning the Comte de St. Priest knew of the approach of the mob, with its advanced guard of seven or eight thousand women—women in the guise of Amazons: the Queen of the Halles, dressed in scarlet, with eyes flashing and hair flying; and sad women, with starving babies in their arms. It was a mob with many unexpressed intentions, but with a fixed, unalterable resolve to find bread. The king, strangely infatuated, hunted that eventful day, and must be reminded of his duty. And even in the face of approaching calamity he found time to make an entry in his journal and to note the forty-one birds killed, and to comment on the interruption occasioned “par les événements.” The queen, while taking a walk—the last she ever took—in the pretty gardens of Trianon, was called to a realization of “les événements,” to which she was more keenly alive than the king.

In the Assembly they squabbled over the king’s response relative to the Rights of Man, quite unmindful or ignorant of the fact that men had come to settle the debated question in their own way. Through the wild gale and the deluges of rain, the darkness adding to the general misery, the mob came. The tocsin sounded, and mingled its voice with that of the tired, wet, hungry mob in the streets. In the château, the Comte de Luxembourg begged the king for orders. “What orders?” asked Louis ?? “Against women? You mock me.”

Hasty preparations were making to take the royal family to Rambouillet, but the king refused to go, and the queen refused to leave him. Fear and apprehension grew insupportable as the night dragged slowly on. The queen heeded nothing; not even the cries of the Dauphin, “Mamma, I am hungry,” elicited any response. Suddenly, about four o’clock in the morning, the agony was increased, if possible, by blood-curdling proposals made concerning the queen among the mob. Then the château suddenly filled with armed men, who found access through the door of the Cour de l’Opéra, which in the confusion had been left open. They followed the passages which led to the queen’s chamber, where she, exhausted by the confusion of the day, slept. Brave Miomandre de Sainte Marie met the mob on the great staircase, and pleaded with them to desist from their mad purpose, but unavailingly; on they went. Then he shouted to the guards, “Save your queen!” Rudely awakened, she rushed, scantily clad, to the king’s chamber by a secret passage, and for a moment she found a refuge; but the crowd demanded that she should show herself, and with her children she appeared on the balcony. “No children,” came the cry; and she stood alone before them, heroic and queen-like. The king must go to Paris, the crowd decreed; and he promised to go “on condition,” he said, “that I shall not be separated from my wife and family.” At one o’clock the melancholy procession set out—a hundred of the deputies and the bulk of the Parisian army, the royal family, and in the midst the heads of the two body-guards murdered during the night, carried on poles. The day was one of rare beauty. It was on such a day and in such a manner that Versailles ceased to be the home of kings.

“Tuesday morning, October 6th, Paris is all in tumult,” Morris says. “Two heads of the gardes du corps are brought to town, and the royal family, who are in possession of the Regiment National, late Gardes Français, are to come this afternoon. I go to see Madame de Flahaut. She wants to visit at the Place Royal. We take her fille de chambre along (to save appearances). The gentleman, M. de St. Priest, is not at home,

but is returned from Versailles. On our return we find that among other visitors the Bishop has been there. Madame is alarmed; sends after him. She wants to know the news from Versailles. Presently after, asks if she shall send for Capellis to know the news of Paris. I agree. While at supper Capellis comes in. The Bishop is not to be found. Capellis gives a recital of what has passed. Many circumstances of insult to the royal personages. The Queen obliged to fly from her bed in her shift and petticoat, with her stockings in her hand, to the King's chamber for protection, being pursued by the *poissardes*. At the Hôtel de Ville M. Bailly, in reading the King's speech, omitted in some part the words 'avec confiance.' The Queen corrected him, which produced a shout of, 'Vive la Reine!' They are to lodge in the chambers fitted up in the Tuileries (as slander says) for her amours. These will now present her but bitter remembrances. Oh virtue! thou art valuable, even in this world. What an unfortunate prince! the victim of his weakness, and in the hands of those who are not to be relied on even for pity. What a dreadful lesson it is for man that an absolute prince cannot with safety be indulgent. The troubles of this country are begun, but as to the end, it is not easy to foresee it. The National Assembly is to come to Paris, and it is supposed that the inhabitants of the Louvre will be *dénichés*. Madame de Flahaut declares she will go off on Monday. I am very heartily tired of myself and everything about me, and return home, with the one consolation that, being very sleepy, I shall in that sweet oblivion lose a thousand disagreeable thoughts. This day has been rainy and windy, and I believe (at sea) a high gale if not a storm. Man turbulent, like the elements, disorders the moral world, but it is action which supports life."

"The King forbade all resistance, Madame de Flahaut hears [October 7th] from Versailles, and the Queen, on retiring to her own chamber, told her attendants that, as the King was determined to go to Paris, she must accompany him, but she should never leave it. Poor lady, this is a sad presage of what is too likely. The King ate a very hearty supper last night. Who will say that he wants fortitude? At the club there is a good deal of random conversation about public affairs. Most men begin to perceive that things are not in the best train. There are still, however, a number of the *enragés* who are well pleased. If my calculations are not very erroneous, the Assemblée Nationale will soon feel the effects of their new position. There can be no question of the freedom of debate in a place so remarkable for order and decency as the city of Paris. I told O'Connell that they must give discharges to all the soldiers who asked them, if they want to have an obedient army, and recruit next winter when they are hungry and cold, because misery will make them obedient. I think he will circulate this idea as his own, because he has a good dose of what is called by different names, but in a soldier is the love of glory. A curious incident has happened this day. The district of St. Roch have opened the despatches to the ministers and read them to the black-guards, to see if they contained anything against the nation."

M. Le Coulteux, on the 8th of October, again suggested that Morris should have an interview with M. Necker, and propose to him the purchase of flour and wheat. "I receive the proposition very coldly," says the former, "and tell him that I am going to England, being heartily out of humor with everything in France. Later I proceed to M. de Lafayette's. He is surrounded. In conference with Clermont de Tonnerre, Madame de Lafayette, M. de Staël, and M. de Semien his friend, are *en comité* in the salon. This is all *petit*. I take a few minutes to tell Lafayette what appears necessary as to a

change of administration. He has spoken to Mirabeau already. I regret it; he thinks of taking one minister from each party. I tell him that he must have men of talents and firmness, and for the rest it is no matter. Am to dine with him to-morrow and converse on this matter. Visit Madame de Flahaut. M. Aubert is there, and before he goes Mr. O'Connell arrives. He stays till nine o'clock. I then tell her that I want to see her Bishop, and that he pledge himself to support Lafayette; wait for his arrival, but as he does not come in, and M. St. Priest and his daughter arrive, I go away. At M. Le Coulteux's Cantaleu tells me of what has passed with Necker. They see their way to a supply till March next, but then they must have aid. In conversing with him on the means, he proposed an interview with me, and mentioned that I wished to see him on the subject of the debt from America. Necker immediately observed that perhaps I would take the debt in payment of supplies. Thus we stand. I am to see him between five and six on Saturday afternoon. Lafayette is to desire him to speak to me on the subject this evening. *Nous verrons*. At eleven I receive a note from Madame de Flahaut. The Bishop is just arrived and wishes to see me. I go to the Louvre. Capellis is there. Madame takes the Bishop and me out, which surprises Capellis not a little. We converse pretty fully on the arrangement of a ministry. The getting rid of Necker is a *sine qua non* with the Bishop, who wants his place. Indeed, I am of the same opinion. He gives me every assurance I can wish respecting Lafayette. After arranging the new ministry, we come to finance: the means of restoring credit, etc. Consider his plan respecting the property of the church. He is bigoted to it; and the thing is well, but the mode not so well. He is attached to this *as an author*, which is not a good symptom for a man of business. However, our friend insists with him so earnestly that she makes him give up one point. She has infinite good sense. After the Bishop d'Autun leaves, Count Louis de Narbonne, Madame de Staël's lover, comes in; a lively scene of raillery between them, upon an affair of the Bishop d'Autun's with Madame de Staël. It seems that he and the Bishop are intimate friends. He at bottom is much hurt at the conduct of his friend, and very gayly proposes to her a pleasant vengeance. Asks for dinner. She desires me to stay longer, but my hour is come, and therefore we must postpone reflections till this afternoon. Leave her and go to see De Corney. He shows me his letter to the King on the subject of subsistence. I approve of it, for he has delivered it this morning. His wife, I find, is acquainted with the whole affair. This is the woman's country. Go to Lafayette's. A large company to dine. After dinner go into his cabinet and talk to him about a new ministry of more ability than the present. Mention the Bishop of Autun for the Finances. He says he is a bad man and false. I controvert the proposition, upon the ground already given to me. I tell him that with the Bishop he gets Mirabeau. He is surprised at this, and assures me they are enemies. I tell him that he is mistaken, and as my information is the best, he is thrown into the style of a man greatly deceived. I tell him the idea of the Bishop, that the King should immediately have given him (Lafayette) a blue riband. This goes farther towards convincing him that he is an honest man than many good actions. Montesquiou as Minister at War might do. He does not much like him, but he is the friend of M. de Montmorin. Propose Touret for Garde des Sceaux. He owns that he has talent, but questions as to his force of mind. I ask him what he intends to do with Clermont-Tonnerre. He says he is not a man of great abilities. I add that he is a man of duplicity (*faux*). He agrees that he is; therefore no difficulty with respect to him. I tell him that the coalition I propose will drive Necker away by the very populace which now support him. Necker is already frightened, and sick of the business he is engaged

in. The Duc de la Rochefoucault comes in. He tells us that the Assembly are to come to Paris, and that the motion of the Bishop respecting the property of the church is postponed till to-morrow, when he expects to have the clergy with him. I am to see Lafayette again on Sunday morning at nine. I cannot dine with him to-morrow; besides, it is nonsense to meet at dinner in a crowd. Ternant and I have a little conversation. He tells me he is sure of his regiment, and can bring with him six hundred chasseurs from the skirts of the Bois de Boulogne. I ask him if I shall name him as one who can be relied on to a person of my acquaintance. He desires that his name may not be used, unless in the houses where he visits; but that I may say I know an officer who can be relied on, etc., without naming him. Go to Madame de Flahaut's. Madame de Corney is with her. After she is gone she asks the result of our conversation at Lafayette's. I give the amount in few words. She tells me that Louis de Narbonne, who, with infinite wit, is 'un assez mauvais sujet,' will be the enemy of the Bishop on account of the amour. I am tired and vexed; therefore come home, take tea, and go early to bed. This has been a rainy, disagreeable day."

"I am to meet the Bishop at Madame de Flahaut's this evening," says the entry for October 10th. "I see M. Le Coulteux this morning, and confer about the debt to France. In speaking about the mode in which we are to treat with M. Necker, I mention my determination to act very openly, etc. Laurent le Coulteux wants to higggle, and as I treat this mode of dealing with contempt, we have a pretty smart conversation; in the course of it he discovers how much he is hurt by my indifference. I pursue, however, my straightforward line, and Cantaleu agrees with me in sentiment. We have soon some more company, and go to dinner. His attentions and those of Madame are marked. At five call on Cantaleu, and we visit M. Necker. Madame asks us to dine next Tuesday. We go to the cabinet of monsieur, and after some chat proceed to the consideration of the debt of the United States to France. I tell him the whole truth with respect to it, and assure him that I will not engage in a purchase without such a view to profit as will save me from all risk, and that he must make a sacrifice. Cantaleu reads the note I gave to the Maréchal de Castries, and we finally come to consider between sixteen and twenty millions. He proposes the latter sum, and on Tuesday we are to talk farther about it. Visit Madame de Flahaut, who leaves me reading "La Pucelle" and goes out in my carriage. She returns after a short visit. Stay till near eleven, but the Bishop does not appear, so I quit the field."

"I go this morning [October 11th] to keep my appointment with Lafayette. He keeps me waiting a very long time. Find that he wishes to avoid coming to any points as to a new administration, therefore carelessly ask him if he has thought on the subject of our last conversation. This leads us on. I state to him the present situation of France, and the necessity of combining men of talents who have principles favorable to liberty; that without talents the opportunity of regaining executive authority will be lost, and that without the proper principles the authority when recovered will be abused; that *he* cannot possibly act both as minister and soldier—still less as minister of every department; that he must have coadjutors in whom he can confide; that as to the objections he has made on the score of morals in some, he must consider that men do not go into administration as the direct road to Heaven; that they are prompted by ambition or avarice, and therefore that the only way to secure the most virtuous is by making it their interest to act rightly. He tells me that he means to introduce

Malesherbes as Garde des Sceaux, and to the objection that he will not be induced to accept, the reply is, that he will accept from M. de Lafayette. I have a stronger objection, which I do not choose to make; viz., that he is not sufficiently a man of business, although certainly well informed and possessed of a great deal of understanding. He mentions Rochefoucault as Minister of Paris, and to the objection that he has not the needful talents, he answers that he will give him a *premier commis* who has. The Minister of War is in the same situation, but they cannot carry the *commis* into the council to deliberate and judge. He will himself be in council, and will take care to manage everything there. Unluckily he does not reflect that he himself wants both talents and information. He again mentions that he will have Mirabeau, to which I reply that a man so profligate will disgrace any administration, and that one who has so little principle ought not to be trusted. I do not, as I might, retort on the subject of morality. I know pretty well the man I am speaking to, and therefore can estimate his reasons. He is very desirous to get rid of me, and I take my leave. I am vexed to find that by littleness the little are to be placed where greatness alone can fill the seat. He keeps Necker, whose talents he despises, because Necker is honest and he can trust him, as if it were possible to trust a timid man in arduous circumstances. Visit Madame de Flahaut. She is with her physician, but receives me a little after one, and begs me to dine tête-à-tête with her. The Queen is coming round. This morning the King's dentist fell dead at his feet. The poor King exclaimed that he was devoted to experience every kind of misfortune. He had, however, presence of mind enough to desire Vicq d'Azyr, the physician, to go and break the matter gently to the Queen, who was not well and might suffer from such a shock. She is highly pleased with the Bishop's motion. Visit Madame de Chastellux. She is in bed and, I think, very ill; a dreadful cough, which must terminate fatally if not soon relieved. The Duchess comes in, and makes some kind reproaches for not visiting at Raincy. Return home, write and dress, and then go to club. Stay but a few minutes. Go to Madame de Flahaut's. She is abroad; I wait her return, which is not until after three. She tells me that she has repeated to the Bishop my conversation with Lafayette, of which, by the bye, I told only such parts as could by no means convey his intentions, although they were not communicated to me in *express* confidence. Mirabeau is to have an interview this evening with the King (*private*, and unknown to anybody but ourselves).

"I leave her and visit at M. de Montmorin's. M. de la Luzerne is there. Both very glad to see me, and as they have been at a conversation duly serious, I animate it with a gayety which produces very good effect. It is a pity that these people have not the needful abilities; however, I have labored to keep Montmorin in place, and I think it possible still to succeed. He is very honest, and his situation with Florida Blanca* renders him a desirable member of the ministry, because, so long as these two continue in office, they may count upon Spain with certainty. From hence go to Madame de Chastellux's. The Duchess is there, and Mr. Short. A light, pleasant conversation; among other things, her picture at the salon, which Mr. Short thinks is perfect. I tell her Royal Highness: 'Madame, ce portrait-là n'a qu'un défaut à mes yeux.' 'Et qu'est-ce donc, ce défaut?' 'C'est qu'il ne m'appartient pas, Madame.' The Duc de Penthièvre is in town, and Madame de Chastellux tells me she is sure I should like him. 'Il passe sa vie à bien faire. Oui (pointing to the Duchess), elle est bien faite,' etc. The Comtesse de Ségur comes in, and afterwards the Chevalier de

Boufflers;* then the Abbé St. Phar. Madame de Ségur asks my opinion of the affairs. Talk to her sensible observations, but I cannot go farther. She gives me her information, that the Duc de la Rochefoucault is to be brought into the ministry. At half-past nine go to the Louvre to supper. Madame de Rully had come in before I left. She gave us some anecdotes, and also the state of Corsica, where her husband now is with his regiment. At Madame de Flahaut's we have Colonel O'Connell and Madame Laborde his friend, with her husband. After dinner the Bishop comes in, and the rest go away. I tell him what has passed with Lafayette, as far as is proper, and my future intention, which is to tell him that, having done my duty to him and to his country, I quit the matter and leave him to the course of events. I urge an union with those who are to form the new ministry, and that they avow themselves to the people as candidates and let the Court know that they will come in together or not at all. He thinks this right, and also that the present circumstances have sufficient force to consume another administration before things are entirely fixed. He reads us his motion; it is well done. Afterwards we talk about the best ways and means to effect the intended objects, and I give him a few hints on general principles tending to the wealth and happiness of a nation and founded on the sentiments of the human heart. He is struck with them, as men of real talents always are with the disclosure of real truth, and this, by the bye, forms a principal charm of conversation. Oh, it is dreadfully tiresome to explain down to the first principles for one of those half-way minds which see just far enough to bewilder themselves. Leave the Bishop with Madame.”

“Monday [October 12th], I visit Madame de Flahaut by appointment. She shows me a letter to the Bishop, which is perfect. A deep knowledge of human character, an acquaintance with the world which arises from reflection on the hearts of those who live in it, and the most just conclusions of the regulation of his conduct, enforced by the tenderness of female friendship—all this join to render a hasty production perfect. I thought well of myself, but I submit frankly to a superiority which I feel. She told me some days ago, after seeing Mr. Jefferson's countenance, ‘Cet homme est faux et emporté.’ The arrangement talked of at present for an administration is to make Necker Premier, the Bishop d'Autun Minister of Finance, and Liancourt Minister of War. Mirabeau (who had yesterday four hours' conversation, not with the King but with Monsieur, and who is to see the King this day) wishes to be in the ministry; an embassy will no longer content him. I leave her and go to Madame de Chastellux's. At about eight the Duchess comes in with the Vicomte de Ségur. About fifty members of the Assemblée Nationale, it is said, have retired; among them De Mounier* and Lally-Tollendal.† This will excite some sensation, if it be true. Go thence to Madame de Laborde's, and sup. After supper make tea for them.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER IX.

Deputies demand passports. The streets alive with disorderly characters. Houses marked for destruction. Unsafe to walk about Paris. Necker sombre and depressed. Madame de Staël's salon. The Duke of Orleans leaves for England. Morris calls on Necker, and suggests the idea of raising the price of bread. Letter to Lafayette. The Duke of Orleans is stopped at Boulogne. News of insurrections. Conversation in Madame de Flahaut's salon about intended changes in the ministry. Lafayette commits a blunder in offering himself to Mirabeau. The Cardinal de Rohan. Flour to be imported from America. Graphic letter to Robert Morris. Madame de Flahaut disconsolate over the reduction in pensions.

Before many weeks had passed, three hundred deputies demanded passports. An indisposition attacked them, which Louis Blanc calls the "maladie de la contre-révolution avortée." Among the two parties which formed the counter-revolutionists, there were differences of action. The one endeavored to shun events, the other strove to ferment new agitations. The streets were alive with women of no character, dressed as for the masquerade, who entered houses and demanded money. Later, houses marked for more or less destructive purposes were everywhere to be seen. Red indicated fire, white signified pillage only, but the black mark proclaimed the house doomed, and its inmates subjects for death. Malet-du-Pin* wrote to some one that moderation had become a crime, and Mirabeau told the Comte de la Marck that, "given up to itself, Paris in three months will probably be a hospital, and certainly a theatre of horrors." Honest women were no safer than courtesans from arrest and insult, and hardly dared to cross their own door-sills. Loustolot wrote that there was not a citizen in Paris who dared to say, "To-night I shall sup with my children."

During these days, Morris employed himself with the necessary calculations and estimates for the purchase of the debt to France, preparatory to an interview with M. Necker. "I go this evening" [October 13th], says the diary, "with M. Le Coulteux to dine with M. Necker. He is *sombre* and *triste*, and so engrossed by the affairs of subsistence that I cannot speak to him upon the other subject. At dinner Madame de Staël seats herself next to me, and repeats part of the conversation of the other day at Madame de Flahaut's. The Count Louis de Narbonne has told it to her. I apologize for my share in it, and add that I had rather say twice as much to her face. My apology, which is the reverse of an excuse, is accepted, and she asks why I do not come to see her. 'Ily a longtemps, madame, que je désire avoir cet honneur-là!' Some civil things are said on both sides, and I am to visit this evening."

Quite the first salon of Paris at this time was that over which Madame de Staël presided. Her regular Tuesday evening supper, when not more than a dozen or fifteen covers were laid and her chosen friends were admitted into the little salon, the "chambre ardente," was the great feature of the week. Here, the candles extinguished to heighten the effect, the Abbé Delille declaimed his "Catacombs de Rome," and here Clermont-Tonnerre submitted to the criticism of his friends his discourse before delivering it in public. Near the chimney Necker stood, entertaining the Bishop of

Autun, who smiled but avoided talking. Here was to be found the Duchesse de Lauzun, of all women the most gentle and timid; and in the midst stood the hostess, in her favorite attitude before the fire, with her hands behind her back, a large, leonine woman, with few beauties and no grace of gesture. She nevertheless animated the salon by her masculine attitude and powerful conversation. When Morris entered the charmed circle on this particular Tuesday, he found, he says, "De Narbonne, who is of course with Madame de Staël this evening. M. de Montmorin is also there, with his daughter, and a madame de Coigny, said to have *beaucoup d'esprit*. I feel very stupid in this group, which by degrees goes off and leaves madame, three gentlemen, and myself. As soon as supper appears I make my exit, promising her to come again. Much anxiety is felt about the situation of public affairs. Le Coulteux owned to me this afternoon that he has no hopes of a constitution but from the hand of the King."

"This morning [October 14th] General Dalrymple* spends two hours with me. Tell him he must introduce me to the King's banker, who, he says, is very rich. Tell him that I desire such an introduction because I think I shall possess information as to things in this country from which money may be made. He asks immediately if I would advise speculations in their funds at present, to which I reply in the negative. He tells me that the Duke of Orleans is off for England; he wants to know my opinion as to his journey. I am surprised at this, but conclude that some transactions of his Royal Highness have been discovered which would involve disagreeable consequences, and that the King has desired him to go off by way of avoiding inquiry. It is said that he has gone on business of a public nature, but this, I think, must be an excuse, because no man in France is more personally disagreeable to the King of England. Go to dine at Madame de Flahaut's. She receives a note from the Bishop d'Autun. He is to be with her at half-past five. She insists that I shall leave her at five. I put on a decent share of coldness. Go to the club and inquire a little about the departure of the Duke of Orleans, who certainly is sent by the King in a diplomatic capacity, but there must be some reason not diplomatic. Go from thence to General Dalrymple's, where two gentlemen of this country are drinking hard. A lady of a certain sort is at the table. Later I see Madame de Flahaut; she tells me that the Bishop will not accept of the Finances under Necker. She is leaving soon, and we are to dine a trio with the Bishop at four to-morrow."

"To-day at four [October 15th] I go to the Louvre as arranged. We wait till near five before the Bishop comes from Versailles, and then sit down to an excellent dinner. She engages us to sup at Madame de Laborde's.* I go away and visit Madame de Ségur, who begins a conversation which is broken in upon by the arrival of two visitors. Go from thence to Madame de Corney's. She is in bed and has a very disagreeable cough. Go to Madame de Chastellux's: the Duchess is there, as usual; also the Vicomte de Ségur. Some politics with him. Madame de Ségur comes in late; has been detained by her visitors. Requests me to visit Lafayette and pray him not to go into the Council. I decline, but at last, upon her urgency, promise to write him a letter to-morrow. Go thence to the Louvre; madame is dressing; is much fatigued. The Bishop arrives; I tell him my intention of writing to Lafayette. He approves of it, and observes that he must be preserved because he is useful. He tells me that he will not accept of a place in the present administration, and I approve of that determination. He is received with infinite attention at Madame de Laborde's, which proves that they

expect he will be somebody. Madame de Flahaut's countenance glows with satisfaction in looking at the Bishop and myself as we sit together, agreeing in sentiment and supporting the opinions of each other. What triumph for a woman. I leave her to go home with him."

"To-day [October 16th] I call upon M. Necker and mention to him the idea of raising the price of bread in Paris by making the difference fall on those who employ workmen; so that, estimating it at two sous, the master should be obliged, when bread is at four, to allow, say, two, three, or four sous additional. Also start to him the idea of asking the Assembly to appropriate a sum to the supply of Paris. To the first he replies that there is no wheat to be got, and he treats responsibility to the nation for such use of public money with contempt. I tell him that he must not count on supplies from England; at this he seems alarmed. I offer my services to obtain it from America. He thanks me, but has already given his orders, which I knew, or I should not have said so much. He makes no mention of the debt, nor I either. Go from thence to the club, and hear a little of the sentiment entertained of the Duke of Orleans. His friends appear chopfallen and defend him, which is absurd, for they know not enough of the matter to make an able defence, or, if they know, conceal that knowledge, which comes to the same thing. Visit at Madame de Chastellux's. At eight the Duchess comes in, and remarks to me upon her punctuality; afterwards Madame de Ségur, who tells me that M. de Lafayette does not go into the Council, at least for the present. After making tea, etc., I visit Madame de Flahaut, who has just returned from the opera. The Bishop comes in and I read my letter to Lafayette, she translating, but Capellis comes in before it is finished and stays till twelve, when we all take leave."

The letter referred to, after a careful revision by Madame de Flahaut and the Bishop of Autun, Morris sent to Lafayette on the 17th of October. It is as follows:

Paris, October 16, 1789.

MyDearSir:

I took the liberty, in some late conversation, to give my sentiments on public affairs. I know the folly of offering opinions which bear the appearance of advice, but a regard for you, and the sincerest wishes for the prosperity of this kingdom, pushed me beyond the line which caution would have drawn for one of less ardent temper. I do not wish you to consider this as apology; on the contrary, I desire you to recollect, both now and hereafter, the substance of those conversations. In that progress of events which rapidly advances, you will judge my judgment.

I am convinced that the proposed constitution cannot serve for the government of this country; that the National Assembly, late the object of enthusiastic attachment, will soon be treated with disrespect; that the extreme licentiousness of your people will render it indispensable to increase the royal authority; that under such circumstances the freedom and happiness of France must depend on the wisdom, integrity, and firmness of His Majesty's councils, and, consequently, that the ablest and best men should be added to the present administration; that, so far as regards yourself, you should take care that those who come in be sensible of the obligation they owe you,

disposed to repay it, and of a temper neither to desert you nor their sovereign nor each other, in the moment of danger or for the sake of advantage; I consider the present time as critical, and that if neglected, many irreparable mischiefs must ensue. Such are the bodings of a mind not easily ruffled nor alarmed, but feelingly alive to the interests of friendship and devotedly attached to the liberties of mankind. Certainly, you have much better means of information than I have. Certainly, you have that intimate knowledge of your own nation which it is impossible for a stranger to acquire, and most certainly you have perfect acquaintance with the characters which stand forward for public observation.

Let what I have said, therefore, go for nothing; I have repeated it here as being in some sort the needful introduction to what I am now to communicate. Last evening, in company with some of your friends who supposed me to enjoy a share of your confidence, in which I assured them, with great truth, that they were mistaken, I was urged to visit and entreat you not to go into the Council. Knowing how much you are occupied and how improper it is for me to interfere, I declined the visit, but was at length prevailed on by earnest entreaty to promise that I would in a letter assign the reasons which influence them: 1. That your present command must of necessity engross your time and require undissipated attention; and in consequence, that you must fail in the duty either of minister or general. 2. That when in Council your opinions will not have more weight, and perhaps less, than they have at present, because at present they are respected as coming from you, but will only be received in Council according to the reasons adduced in their support, and it is not always that the wisest man is the most eloquent. 3. If your opinions do not prevail, you will have the mortification to sanction by your presence the measures which you disapprove, or quit in disgust the seat which you have taken. 4. If your opinions prevail, you will then, in your quality of general, be called on to execute what, in your quality of councillor, you had ordained. In this situation the public opinion will revolt unless it be subdued. The one will ruin you and the other your country. 5. The jealousy and suspicion inseparable from tumultuous revolutions, and which have already been maliciously pointed against you, will certainly follow all your future steps if you appear to be too strictly connected with the Court. The foundations of your authority will then crumble away, and you fall, the object of your own astonishment. 6. The retreat of the Duke of Orleans is attributed to you, and if you go into the Council immediately after what is called by some his flight, and by others his banishment, the two events will be coupled in a manner particularly disadvantageous and disagreeable. 7. If you go into the ministry with Mirabeau, or about the same time, every honest Frenchman will ask himself the cause of what he will call a very strange coalition. There are in the world men who are to be employed, not trusted. Virtue must ever be sullied by an alliance with vice, and liberty will blush at her introduction if led by a hand polluted. Lastly, I am earnestly, most earnestly, requested by those who love you well to add one caution as to your friends: Trust those who had that honor before the 12th of July. New friends are zealous, they are ardent, they are attentive, but they are seldom true.

Excuse the liberty of an old one, who is, truly yours,

Gouverneur Morris.

“Laurent Le Coulteux dines with me to-day [October 17th], and we enter into conversation about the shipment of wheat and flour from America. I give him information, and tell him if he chooses to take an interest in such business he may have it. My indifference makes him desirous of it. He proposes a concern in thirds, to which I assent, and desire him to prepare his letters and send them to me. We then speak of the tobacco business. He is very unwilling to give the credit I require, hesitates, and tries to evade it. Luckily my carriage arrives, and I tell him that a pressing engagement obliges me to leave him. Drive to the Louvre and take Madame de Flahaut to the convent to visit her *religieuse*, Maman Trent, who is as much of this world as one devoted to the other can be. The old lady admires her looks, and will not believe that she has been indisposed. We return again; I leave her to receive the Bishop. She drops an expression, for the first time, respecting him which is cousin-german to contempt. I may, if I please, wean her from all regard towards him. But he is the father of her child, and it would be unjust. The secret is that he wants the *fortiter in re*, though he abounds with the *suaviter in modo*, and this last will not do alone. Visit Madame de Chastellux; the Duchess is there, the Maréchal and Vicomte de Ségur; make tea. A person comes in and tells the Duchess that her husband is stopped at Boulogne. She is much affected; we undertake to assure her that it cannot be—though there is every reason to suppose that, in the present disordered state of the kingdom, he would not pass. She is very solicitous to know the truth, and I go to M. de Lafayette’s to inquire it. He is not at home, or, rather, if I may judge from appearances, he is not visible. Thence to M. de Montmorin’s, who is abroad. Return to Madame de Chastellux’s; the poor Duchess is penetrated with gratitude for this slight attempt to serve her. It is very hard that a heart so good should be doomed to suffer so much. Take leave; she follows me out to express again her thankfulness. Poor lady! Go to Madame de Staël’s; a pretty numerous company; a great deal of vivacity, which I do not enter into sufficiently. She asks me, while I sit next to Narbonne, if I continue to think *she* has a preference for M. de Tonnerre. I reply only by observing that they have each of them wit enough for one couple, and therefore I think they had better separate and take each a partner who is *un peu bête*. I do not enter enough into the *ton* of this society. After supper some gentlemen come in, who tell us that there is a riot in the Faubourg St. Antoine. We have had a great deal of news this evening; a number of insurrections in different places. It is affirmed by madame, on good authority, that the Duke is stopped. Go from thence to the club, where we learn that the supposed riot is a false alarm. But my servant tells me that they expect one to-morrow, and have ordered out a large body of troops at eight o’clock in the morning. The grenadiers of the late French guards insist on keeping possession of the King’s person. This is natural. It has been a fine day—something like what we call in America the second summer.”

“At the club [October 18th] M. —, who is one of the *entours* of M. de Lafayette, tells me that the friends of the Duke of Orleans will (it is apprehended) denounce him to the Assemblée Nationale, so as to oblige him to return, they expecting that his popularity in Paris will make him triumph over his enemies. He wishes me to go and dine with Lafayette, but this cannot be; besides I will not again trouble him with advice unless he asks it, and perhaps not then. At three visit Madame de Flahaut. The Bishop is with her. Converse about the intended changes in administration. I insist that Mirabeau be not brought into the Council, that they are mistaken in supposing he

can after that elevation preserve his influence in the Assembly; that introducing a man of such bad character will injure them in public opinion, and that everything depends in the present moment upon the preservation of that opinion. The Bishop tells me that in his opinion no administration can work well in which M. Necker has a share. After he is gone Madame tells me that Lafayette is determined not to let Montesquiou into the war department. This Mirabeau told the Bishop, and Montesquiou told her that Necker declares the calculations in the Bishop's motion are pitiful. This accounts for his opinion delivered to me. Lafayette has committed a great blunder in opening himself to Mirabeau. If he employs him it will be disgraceful, and if he neglects him it will be dangerous, because every conversation gives him rights and means. She tells me that the Bishop has invited himself to dine with her every day. We laugh and chat. I go to General Dalrymple's to dinner. The General says he is well informed that the Duc d'Orléans was on his knees to entreat pardon of the King. Despatches are sent off to urge his dismissal from his keepers at Boulogne. The conversation is turned by degrees to American affairs, and I tell them (which is true) that they have committed an error in not sending a minister to America. They are vastly desirous of convincing me that an alliance with Britain would be for our interest, and I swallow all their arguments and observations in such a way as to induce the belief that I am convinced, or at least in the way of conviction. The young man thinks he has done wonders. From thence I go to the Louvre, though I had determined not. The Cardinal de Rohan* is with Madame. We talk among other things about religion, for the Cardinal is very devout. He was once the lover of Madame's sister, and much beloved. He says the King is not the fool he is supposed to be, and gives instances to prove it; but the Cardinal is not the man of sense he was supposed to be, and therefore his evidence is not to be taken blindly. Shortly after the Cardinal goes, M. de St. Venau comes in and I take my leave."

After much discussion and trouble, Morris and M. Le Coulteux finally agreed to import 30,000 barrels of flour from America as soon as possible—"having," as Morris says, "in contemplation the relief of those wants which I foresee will take place here the ensuing spring." "I am persuaded," he wrote at this time, in a very graphic letter to Robert Morris, "for my own part, that this government must feel secure in the article of subsistence before they take the measures needful for the order which is indispensable. Everything now is as it were out of joint. The army without discipline or obedience. The civil magistracy annihilated. The finances deplorable. They have no fixed system to get through the difficulties, but live upon expedients, and are at the mercy of projectors. A country so situated may starve in one province while another suffers from its abundance. There is no order anywhere. I have only once attended the deliberations of the National Assembly since September. Indeed that once has fully satisfied my curiosity. It is impossible to imagine a more disorderly Assembly. They neither reason, examine, nor discuss. They clap those whom they approve and hiss those whom they disapprove. But if I attempted a description I should never have done. That day I dined in company with the President, and told him frankly that it was impossible for such a mob to govern this country. They have unhinged everything. The executive authority is reduced to a name. Everything almost is elective, and consequently no one obeys. It is an anarchy beyond conception, and they will be obliged to take back their chains for some time to come at least. And so much for that licentious spirit which they dignify with the name of 'Love of Liberty.' Their *Literati*,

whose heads are turned by romantic notions picked up in books, and who are too lofty to look down upon that kind of man which really exists, and too wise to heed the dictates of common-sense and experience, have turned the heads of their countrymen, and they have run-a-muck at a Don Quixote constitution such as you are blessed with in Pennsylvania. I need say no more. You will judge of the effects of such a constitution upon people supremely depraved.”

“To-day [October 19th], I hear the purport of Cantaleu’s conversation with M. Necker about the debt of the United States to France. This last demands a million louis, which I think too much, and says that he cannot think of presenting to the public view a bargain in which he gets less than twenty-four millions [francs]. This afternoon I drive with Madame de Flahaut to the Bois de Boulogne, but we are stopped for want of a passport at the barrière. We make a short visit at the convent. Madame is in much grief over the loss of her income. The reduction of her brother’s affairs, who is superintendent of the King’s building, takes some of her support from her; and 4,000 which was due by the Comte d’Artois vanishes with his Royal Highness’s person. Thus there remains but 12,000, and those badly paid, being a *rente viagère*. With this little income it is impossible to live in Paris. She must then abandon her friends, her hopes, everything. Shortly after we arrive at the Louvre M. de Montesquiou comes in, and discusses the motion of the Bishop d’Autun. He disapproves of the calculations. He is right in his observations, which are precisely those which I made to the Bishop previous to his motion. However, good may be drawn from the business eventually. Leave them, promising to return. Go to Madame de Chastellux’s, and, as usual, make tea for the Duchess. Nothing here but the usual chat. Madame de Ségur is here and Mr. Short. Return to the Louvre. The Maréchal de Ségur tells us at Madame de Chastellux’s that Mirabeau was to be in the ministry. Madame de Flahaut tells me that Montesquiou says he is false to the Bishop, and is to go with Necker conjointly into the finances. She is anxious to see the Bishop this evening; she is ill and apprehends a fever, but I restore her considerably by the aid of a little soup.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER X.

Denis François accused of secreting bread and beheaded. Paris abandoned to cruelty and violence. Martial law passed by the Assembly. The Duke of Orleans liberated. He goes to England. At the club. Chit-chat in Madame de Flahaut's salon. Belgrade surrenders. Anecdote of the 5th of October. Clermont de Tonnerre proposes going to America. Morris asked his plan for restoring order to France. Necker unable to cope with the difficulties. Dinner at Madame Necker's. Talk about Lafayette's connection with Mirabeau and with Necker on plans for subsistence. News from Flanders. Asked to take part in the administration of affairs. Dines with the Duchess of Orleans. Takes the Bishop of Autun to visit Lafayette. The Assembly suspends the *parlements*. Criticisms on the society in Madame de Staël's salon. Lively dinner conversation with Madame de Staël.

It was on Wednesday, the 21st of October, that a woman started the cry that Denis François, the baker, had secreted bread. The shop was mobbed, and a few loaves were found put aside for the family consumption.

“There has been hanged a baker this morning by the populace, and all Paris is under arms,” says the diary. “The poor baker was beheaded according to custom, and carried in triumph through the streets. He had been all night at work for the purpose of supplying the greatest possible quantity of bread this morning. His wife is said to have died of horror when they presented her husband's head stuck on a pole. Surely it is not the usual order of Divine Providence to leave such abominations unpunished. Paris is perhaps as wicked a spot as exists. Incest, murder, bestiality, fraud, rapine, oppression, baseness, cruelty; and yet this is the city which has stepped forward in the sacred cause of *liberty*. The pressure of incumbent despotism removed, every bad passion exerts its peculiar energy. How the conflict will terminate Heaven knows. Badly I fear; that is to say, in slavery. The court of the Louvre is occupied by cavalry. Go to the Champs Elysées where I see General Dalrymple. He tells me some additional circumstances of what is passing in Austrian Flanders. There is great reason to believe that the Stadtholder, supported by Prussia, will possess himself of that valuable territory. While they are about it they may as well take some of the strong posts which France holds there, with some of the little principalities upon the eastern quarter, and then these Low Countries will form a very powerful state. Discord seems to extend itself more and more through this kingdom, which is remotely threatened with a disunion of its provinces.

“There is nothing new at the club this evening, but the Bishop of Autun brought the latest news to Madame de Flahaut. He tells us that the Assembly have passed what they call the law martial, but which is, properly speaking, a riot act. The Garde des Sceaux has defended himself this day before the Assembly tolerably. The Bishop seems to have no great desire for a post in the administration at present. I think this arises partly from disappointment and partly from apprehension. I urge again the necessity of establishing among the candidates for places such arrangements and good understanding as may endure when in office, and contribute to the attainment of it.

After dinner the Bishop goes away and Capellis comes in with Madame d'Angiviliers. Some incidents related in the conversation to show that M. de Narbonne, Madame de Staël's friend, is 'un fort mauvais sujet,' which accords well with a certain obliquity of aspect that distinguishes a countenance otherwise good. Go from hence to Madame de Chastellux. The Vicomte de Ségur gives me a book he has written, and desires that I will give him my candid opinion of it. It is a supposed correspondence between Nifion de l'Enclos and her lover, the Marquis de Villarceaux. The Duchess receives a note from the Duc de Biron that the Duc d'Orléans embarked yesterday at nine in the morning with a fair wind for England. It is said that three persons are to be hanged to-morrow, by due course of law, for putting the baker to death. They are wrong to defer the execution."

"At the club to-day [Oct. 22d] I enter into some discussions with a member of the États-Généraux or Assemblée Nationale, who shows his own imbecility. At leaving the room the company almost commit the indecency, so common in the Assemblée, of clapping the speaker they approve. One of them follows me out to mention that it is in vain to show light to the blind. *N'importe*. Go to Madame de Flahaut's. She has with her the Duc de Biron, who soon leaves her. She tells me an anecdote of Lafayette, not much to his honor; he had said in his little society of Madame de Simiane, in speaking of the Duc d'Orléans, 'Ses lettres de créance sont des lettres de grâce.' The Duc de Biron who knows all the steps taken with the Duc d'Orléans (his friend), wrote to Lafayette on this subject, and has received an answer in which he tells him, 'Je n'ai pas pu me servir d'une telle expression puisqu'il n'y a aucun indice contre le duc d'Orléans.' She says she has seen the letter. Undoubtedly the Duc de Biron will make it tolerably public. I leave when the Marquis de Montesquiou comes in, and visit Madame de Chastellux. The Duchess arrives late, having been to visit the Queen. Madame de Chastellux tells me the position of affairs in this family. We discuss the line of conduct which the Princess ought to pursue, and as she is in the hands of the Vicomte de Ségur and of Madame de Chastellux, I think she will act with a degree of understanding and firmness not natural to her. From thence return, according to my promise, to supper at Madame de Flahaut's. A good deal of random chit-chat, in which she plays the *moqueuse* on my bad French. This is not amiss. Stay till twelve and then we all quit. Two persons have been hanged this afternoon for murdering the baker, and there are two or three more; it is said, to be hanged to-morrow."

"Write all the morning [October 23d], and then take Madame de Laborde and Madame de Tour to walk in the Champs Élysées. General Dalrymple, who joins us, tells me that Belgrade has surrendered; and he also tells me of certain horrors committed in Arras, but to these things we are familiarized. Leave Madame de Laborde and I go to M. Le Coulteux's. After a few minutes M. de Cubières comes in. He gives me a ludicrous account of the conduct of the Duc de — on the famous night of the 5th, and afterwards mentions the interview between Lafayette and his sovereign—the former pale, oppressed, and scarce able to utter the assurances of his attachment; the King, calm and dignified. The first request was to give the custody of the royal person to the former Gardes Français, now Milice Nationale. This was conveyed in the form of an humble prayer to be admitted to take their ancient post. Cubières was then obliged to retire, as some persons had entered who had no right to be present, and in leaving the room he was obliged to retire with them. From thence

go to Madame de Chastellux's. The Maréchal and Comtesse de Ségur are there, but a fifth person is present, which prevents conversation of any interest; at a quarter after eight I retire, leaving a message for the Duchess, who has not kept her appointment. By the bye, Madame de Flahaut hinted this morning a wish to be among the women of the Duchess. I think this cannot be, *mais nous verrons s'il y a une place qui viendra de vaquer*. Visit Madame de Staël. Clermont-Tonnerre is there, and asks whether he can be decently placed in America for 60,000 francs. I observe that he is despondent. I give scope to my ideas respecting their situation, and he feels from thence no small remorse, for, in fact, the evils they feel arise from their own folly. Madame gives some little traits of reproach for the weakness of mind which induces an idea of retreat. I tell him that I have abandoned public life, I hope, forever, but that if anything could prompt a wish for a return it would be the pleasure of restoring order to this country. I am asked what is my plan. I tell them that I have none fixed, but I would fix my object and take advantage of circumstances as they rise to attain it; as to their Constitution, it is good for nothing—they must fall into the arms of royal authority. It is the only resource which remains to rescue them from anarchy. Madame de Staël asks me if my friend the Bishop will sup with her this evening. 'Madame, peut-être M. d'Autun viendra, je n'en sais rien, mais je n'ai pas l'honneur de son amitié.' 'Ah, vous êtes l'ami de son amie.' 'A la bonne heure, Madame, par cette espèce de consanguinité.' The Bishop, it seems, has invited himself and M. de Tonnerre to sup with her. Go from thence to Madame de Laborde's. A table of tric-trac, and a good deal of chit-chat after it, keep us till one o'clock.

In a conversation on Saturday, the 24th, M. de Cantaleu told Morris "that Necker had sent him word that I may make my propositions regarding the debt on a quarter of a sheet of paper. Cantaleu, like the rest, is very desponding about their public affairs. He says Necker has not abilities enough to get through his business, and that there is equal danger in holding and abandoning his post. This is very true. The Ministry and Assembly are on the eve of a squabble, whose object will be to determine which of them is to blame for the miserable situation to which France is reduced. There is tonight at Madame de Chastellux's the usual society. The Duchess tells me I must come and dine with her. I tell her I am always at her orders for any day she pleases. She tells me to come when I please. I promise. After the rest of the company is gone, the Chevalier de Foissy and I stay with Madame de Chastellux and chat a little. She says she will make her *don patriotique* by presenting me to the King for one of his ministers. I laugh at the jest, and the more so as it accords with an observation made by Cantaleu to the same effect, which I considered as bordering on persiflage at least, and answered accordingly."

Mr. Morris mentions on Sunday, the 25th, spending the evening in Madame Necker's salon. "M. Necker," he says, "is much occupied, and I cannot speak to him. See for the first time since I arrived in Europe Count Fersen, whose merit consists in being the Queen's lover. He has the air of a man exhausted."

On Tuesday, October 27th, an invitation came to dine with Necker, and converse about the French debt. "I go thither," Morris says. "M. de Staël is very polite and attentive. After dinner we retire to the minister's cabinet. Cantaleu and I open the conversation. Tell M. Necker that the terms he seems attached to differ so materially

from what I had thought of, that no definitive bargain can be made, and therefore, after fixing the terms, I must have time to consult persons in London and Amsterdam; that he is the best judge as to the sum below which he cannot go; that I will not attempt to bring him lower than what he thinks he can justify, but if it is too high, I am off; that, having fixed the sum, we will then fix the terms, and finally he must be bound and I free; that it is necessary to keep the transaction secret, because, whether we bargain or not, if my name be mentioned, it will destroy the utility of my friends in America, who have been and will continue to be firm advocates for doing justice to everybody; and further, that if it be known in America that France is willing to abate, it will be a motive with many to ask abatements on the part of the United States. He feels the force of these observations, and desires to consider how far he and M. de Montmorin can treat this affair without the Assembly. He does not like the idea of being bound, and leaving me free. I observe to him that nothing is more natural. He is master of his object, and can say yes or no. But I must apply to others, and it cannot be expected that rich bankers will hold their funds at my disposal upon the issue of an uncertain event, much less withdraw those funds from other occupation. He agrees that there is force in this observation. He then talks of ten millions per annum for three years as being a proper consideration. I tell him that I cannot agree to such sum. He says he has been spoken to about it, and is informed that he can discount it in Holland at twenty per cent. I tell him that I doubt the last, because, having been in correspondence with two capital houses in Holland relative to a loan which I am authorized to make, they both inform me that the several loans now opened for different powers, and the scarcity of money, renders success impossible. De Cantaleu presses me to offer terms. I mention 300,000£ a month, to begin with next January, and continue till the 24,000,000 £ are paid. Here this part of the conversation ends. He is to confer with Montmorin. He then asks me about the export of wheat and flour from America this season. I reply that my answer must be much hazarded, but at length estimate that it may amount to a million bushels of wheat and 300,000 barrels of flour. He proposes the question whether there be not goods in France which, sent out to America, may serve for the purchase of flour. I tell him no, for that goods will sell on credit, and flour for cash. He asks whether it would not be well to send ships to America for flour on the part of the King, for such a scheme has been proposed to him from Bordeaux. I tell him no, because the alarm would be spread, and prices thereby greatly raised; that the ships should be chartered in such a way as to be bound to take wheat, flour, or tobacco, and then they might proceed in the usual line of mercantile speculation. Finally I drop the idea that six weeks ago I would have contracted for the delivery of one hundred to one hundred and fifty thousand barrels of flour, at a fixed price. He asks with vivacity why I did not propose it. I reply that I did not choose to push myself forward, which is a slight hint that he might, if he pleased, have applied for information. He asks why not propose such a contract now. I tell him that the order he has already given will, I fear, raise the prices too high in America. He says it is a trifle, only 30,000 barrels. I tell him it is 60,000, but he says the last 30,000 is very uncertain. Rather presses me to make an offer. I tell him I will consider of it.

“Leave M. Necker and go to Madame de Chastellux’s. She is in bed and in tears; fears that her brother is killed, or rather dead of the wounds he received at the capture of Belgrade. I give her all the comfort which the case admits of; viz., a hope that it is not so, for, by suspending the stroke a little while, its effect is less forcible. The letter she

has received, and which she shows me, looks ill. Converse a little with Madame de Ségur about our friend Lafayette's connection with Mirabeau. She wishes to know what I would have him do. I tell her that if he did me the honor to ask my advice, I could not give him any good; that he has reduced himself to the situation of making Mirabeau a dangerous enemy by neglect, or still more dangerous friend by aiding him in his views; that it is M. Necker who now plays the handsome part. He will not stay in the ministry if Mirabeau be admitted. Mirabeau insists on coming in, and if he succeeds, M. Necker has the desired opportunity of retiring from a post which at present it is equally dangerous to keep or leave. Being forced out, Mirabeau will be obliged by the general opinion to abandon the place he has acquired, and then a ministry will be chosen entirely new. She wishes much to know who I think would be proper, and mentions the Bishop d'Autun as having a very bad reputation. I tell her that I doubt the truth of what is said against him, because there are facts which show that he has some virtue, and merits confidence; that he has talents, but that, without being attached to him or any other person in particular, I am persuaded that France can furnish men of abilities and integrity for the first offices; that M. de Lafayette should discipline his troops, because his friend Mirabeau may otherwise turn that weapon against him."

"Dine at the Palais Royal [October 28th] with Madame de Rully, who sits for her picture in crayons. She has a mind to coquet with me, because she has the same mind as to everybody else. A madame de Vauban who is here is a disagreeable looking woman. The interior of this *ménage* is very much like the Castle of Indolence. Go from thence to the Louvre. The Bishop is with madame; he asked a dinner with her son, who is arrived this day. Quite a family party. He goes away, and I tell her that I am sorry to have interrupted such a scene. She dwells much upon her child and weeps plenteously. I wipe away the tears as they fall. This silent attention brings forth professions of endless affection. She means every word of it now, but nothing here below can last forever. We go together to Madame de Laborde's and make a short visit, the child being in company. Set her down at the Louvre, and go to Madame de Chastellux's. The Duchess, who was not well at dinner, is very little better now, or rather she is worse; the usual case with those who suffer from the lassitude of indolence. Sleep becomes necessary from the want of exercise as well as from the excess of it."

"After dining with M. Boutin, I go to Madame Necker's [October 29th], where I speak to M. Necker on the subject of subsistence. He catches at the idea of a contract for 20,000 barrels of flour, but will not make the kind of contract which I proposed. He asks me what the flour will cost. I tell him it will cost about 30/ sterling, and I offer to deliver it at 31/; he wishes it at 30/, and desires me to write him a note on the subject, that he may communicate to the King. He will not listen to the idea of importing pork and rice, and giving them to the poor. I endeavor to show him that by doing this and letting the bread be sold at what it costs, the treasury would save, because few would accept the donation, but all derive advantage from the loss on bread. He is wrong, but *humanum est errare*. Go to Madame de Chastellux's. Her brother is dead. The Duchess comes in late and the tea is delayed, and finally I am obliged by the various delays to leave them abruptly. At the Louvre madame is waiting for me. We go to Madame de Laborde's to sup, and M. d'Afry and I are, it

seems, each to drink a bottle of wine. I perform very nearly my task, but he declines entirely. The wine is good, but the strongest I ever tasted. After eating an enormous supper to accompany the liquor, I make tea and then chat with the ladies.”

“At dinner I hear [October 30th] the news from Flanders. The Austrian Netherlands seem to be in a fair way of shaking off the yoke, and it is said that they have a great number of deserters, both officers and soldiers, from the Prussian army. It is to be concluded that Prussia is concerned in the business, and if so England may probably be also for something. Indeed, this opportunity is most inviting. There appears to me no good reason why all the Low Countries should not be united under one sovereign, and why they should not possess themselves of all the strong places on the French frontier, Calais, Lille, Tournay, Douay, Mons, Namur, and even Cambrai, in which last place there is absolutely no garrison, for the *milice bourgeoise* have insisted on doing the duty, which they are now heartily tired of. Namur, which is in the Emperor’s dominions, is absolutely dismantled. Go, after dinner, to Madame de Chastellux’s and make tea for the Duchess. She presses me to come and dine with her soon, with Madame de Ségur. I promise for Monday, to which Madame de Ségur agrees. Go to Madame de Staël’s; a conversation too brilliant for me. Sup and stay late. I shall not please here because I am not sufficiently pleased.”

“Saturday afternoon [October 31st] I go to the Louvre, and get Madame de Flahaut to correct my letter to M. Necker. Capellis mentions to me the supplying of Brest, Rochefort, and Toulon with flour, and says he believes they have already ordered it from America. I tell him that M. de la Luzerne would have done well to consult me on the subject; that the different departments sending separate orders to different people necessarily raised the prices upon each other. Take tea with Madame de Chastellux. The Duchess comes in. M. de Foissi tells us that the debate on church property is postponed till Monday, at the instance of Mirabeau, and that it was thought the motion would have been negatived had the question been put this day. The Duchess reminds me of the promise to dine on Monday and then departs.”

“A large party at Madame de Flahaut’s on Sunday [November 1st]; a very excellent and a very pleasant dinner. After dinner Madame’s physician comes in and tells her that a M. Vandermont has said of me that I am an ‘*intrigant, un mauvais sujet*’ and a partisan of the Duc d’Orléans. He insists not to be named; she tells me that this man is very dangerous, being a *mauvais sujet*, and wishes me to speak to Lafayette. There is but one thing to be done, if I stir at all, and that is to call on him and tell him that if he speaks disrespectfully of me again I will put him to death; but in times like the present such conduct would only give an air of importance to what must otherwise fall of itself, for I am not of sufficient consequence to occupy the public attention. This man, she says, would not scruple to bring me to the lanthorn, in other words, to have me hanged. This would be rather a sharp retribution for the remark which has excited his rage. On the fifth of last month he dined with me at M. Lavoisier’s, and observed that Paris maintained the kingdom of France, to which I answered, ‘*Oui, Monsieur comme moi je nourris les éléphants de Siam.*’ This excited the choleric humors of a pedant, and he takes his revenge by saying things which are, luckily, too improbable to be believed. On the whole, I resolve to take no notice of this thing, particularly as I could not produce my author, should M. Vandermont deny the fact, and that would place me

in a very ridiculous position. At five I visit the Marquis de Lafayette. He tells me that he has followed my advice, though he did not answer my letter. I congratulate him on what passed two days ago from a gentleman to the Comte de Mirabeau, which was so pointedly affrontive as to ruin him, because he cannot be now placed in the ministry and is lost in the opinion of the Assembly. He asks with eagerness if I think he is lost with them. I reply that the Bishop d'Autun has just expressed that opinion to me. He says he does not know the Bishop much, and should be glad to know him more. I offer to give them a dinner together the day after to-morrow, or if he does not choose it, I will say nothing about the matter. He desires me to say nothing of it, because if he should dine with me instead of at home, it would make an *histoire*—which is true. He wishes me, however, to bring the Bishop to breakfast with him the day after to-morrow. I promise to invite him. Go to Madame de Laborde's. M. de la Harpe reads us some observations on La Rochefoucault, La Bruyère, and St. Evremond. They have merit but are liable to criticism. After supper we fall into politics. Monsieur tells us that the municipality of Rouen have stopped some grain intended for Paris. This leads to observation on the many-headed monster they have created in the executive department. He exculpates the Assembly as having been obliged to destroy in order to correct. But the necessity of such an apology augurs ill. Indeed, whenever apology for the conduct of government becomes necessary, they are in the way toward contempt, for they must acknowledge misconduct before they excuse it, and the world is kind enough to believe the acknowledgment and reject the excuse."

"Monday morning [November 2d] take Madame de Flahaut and Madame de Laborde to walk in the King's Garden and then to the Church of the Sorbonne to examine the monument of the Cardinal de Richelieu. The dome of the church is fine. Go later to the Palais Royal to dine with the Duchesse d'Orléans. I arrive late and have kept dinner waiting half an hour. Excuse myself as having waited news from the Assemblée Nationale, which is true, because I stayed at the Louvre some time to see the Bishop d'Autun, who did not come in. We dine well and pleasantly, with as little ceremony as possible, at the table of a person so high in rank. After coffee go with Madame de Ségur to the apartments of Madame de Chastellux. The Maréchal reads us a letter from M. Lally-Tollendal to his constituents which is not calculated to do much good to the Assemblée Nationale. It will not do him any good either, for the King, for whom it is meant, will want rather those who can render the Assemblée useful, than those who absent themselves from it. The Duchess comes in and gives us the bulletin of the Assemblée. They have determined that the church property belongs to the nation, or, at least, that the nation has a right to make use of it. This latter expression seems to have been adopted as conciliatory. From thence go to Madame de Laborde's. After some time the Bishop d'Autun comes in. He is to breakfast with me to-morrow, and go thence to M. de Lafayette's."

"Tuesday morning [November 3d] in fulfilment of his promise, the Bishop d'Autun calls on me and we breakfast. He tells me that M. de Poix is to visit M. de Lafayette this morning, in order to make terms for Mirabeau. We talk a little about M. de Lafayette; his worth and what he is worth. At nine we go to visit him. The cabriolet of M. le Prince de Poix is at the porte-cochère, whence we know he is here. M. de Lafayette is closeted with him. A great many visitors and affairs render the minutes for our conversation short. Lafayette makes professions of esteem, and desires to

receive frequent visits. There is an *émeute* in the Faubourg St. Antoine about bread, which leads to a consideration of the means to supply Paris. Lafayette proposes a committee, consisting of three ministers, three of the municipality of Paris, and three members of the États-Généraux, and says there is a man who, acting under such committee, can serve the supplies. The Bishop thinks the Assemblée will not meddle. I am sure they will not, because they act only from fear, and will not risk the consequences of being responsible for the subsistence of this city. Lafayette asks the Bishop what he thinks of a new ministry. He says that nobody but M. Necker can sustain the famine and bankruptcy which appear unavoidable. Lafayette asks if he does not think it would be right to prepare a ministry for some months hence. The Bishop thinks it would. They discuss a little character, and as *par hasard* Lafayette asks whether Mirabeau's influence in the Assembly is great, to which the Bishop replies that it is not enormous. We fall back by degrees to the subsistence, and I suggest a hint which Short has given me, viz., to give medals to the poor, representing a pound of bread, and then let it rise to what price it may, by which means the Government will in effect pay for the bread they eat, and for that only, whereas they now pay for a part of what everybody eats. On this the Bishop observes that the ministers, in this moment when the charge of plot is so frequent, will be accused of a conspiracy against the nation if they make largesses of bread to the multitude. I think he sees that their plan would give the administration too much power to be removed, and he is right. His idea, I think, is to come in when the magazines are full, and then to do what he wishes may not now be done. Lafayette in the course of conversation mentions his friend La Rochefoucauld, saying at the same time that he has not the needful abilities, but that his integrity and reputation are important. I think this is the only man he will insist upon, and I think any person we please may be admitted as the price of the duke's admission. The Bishop says he cannot think of a new ministry unless the change is entire. Lafayette agrees to this, and says that in this moment the friends of liberty ought to unite and to understand each other. At coming away the Bishop observes to me that Lafayette has no fixed plan, which is true. With a great deal of the *intrigant* in his character he must be used by others because he has not talent enough to make use of them. Go to M. Necker's after setting the Bishop down. M. Vauviliers receives me in the drawing-room with a compliment as being the person who is to feed France. After dinner M. Necker takes me aside. He wishes to tie me down to fixed periods for the arrival of the flour and for the payment. I tell him I wish to have a house to contract with me. He says I run no risk, and he will have the agreement signed by the King. My carriage not being come, Madame de Staël insists upon taking me where I want to go. Later, when I go to the club, I find that the Assembly have this day suspended the *parlements*. This is a better blow at tyranny than any they have yet struck, but it will occasion much ferment among the numerous influential characters which they are composed of."

"At the club there is the usual diversity of opinion on the state of public affairs [November 4th]. Go from here to Madame de Chastellux's. The Duchess reproaches me for going away early last evening and coming late now. Has been here near two hours, and her son, M. de Beaujolais, is brought on purpose to see me. He presents himself with a very good grace. Is *enjoué et empressé*. I kiss him several times, which he returns with eagerness. He will make a pleasant fellow some ten or twelve years hence, for the *petites-maîtresses* of that day. Puisignieu is here, and after some time

Madame de Ségur comes in. The Maréchal is afflicted with gout. Madame de Chastellux is to take a bouillon to-morrow with her fair friend. Thence I am led to believe in the possibility of a marriage between her and the old gentleman, which other circumstances give much room to imagine. Go thence to Madame de Staël in consequence of her invitation yesterday. A great deal of *bel esprit*. The Bishop d'Autun declined coming this morning, when I asked him at Madame de Flahaut's. I am not sufficiently brilliant for this consultation. The few observations I make have more of justice than splendor, and therefore cannot amuse. No matter, they will perhaps remain when the others are effaced. I think there is a road to success here, in the upper region of wits and graces, which I am half tempted to try. It is the sententious style. To arrive at perfection in it one must be very attentive, and either wait till one's opinion be asked, or else communicate it in a whisper. It must be clear, pointed, and perspicuous, and then it will be remembered, repeated, and respected. This, however, is playing a part not natural to me. I am not sufficiently an economist of my ideas. I think that in my life I never saw such exuberant vanity as that of Madame de Staël upon the subject of her father. Speaking of the opinion of the Bishop d'Autun upon the subject of the church property, which has lately been printed, not having had an opportunity to deliver it in the Assembly, she says it is excellent, it is admirable, in short there are two pages in it which are worthy of M. Necker. Afterwards she says that wisdom is a very rare quality, and she knows of no one who possesses it in a superlative degree except her father."

"This morning [November 5th] the Comte de Luxembourg and La Caze come to breakfast for the purpose of knowing my sentiments on public affairs. At dinner I hear the news from Brabant, viz., that the imperial troops had been much worsted, and that the people have declared independence. This latter part is certain, for I read the declaration, or rather part of it."

"Spend the morning [November 6th] with Le Coulteux adjusting the form of a contract for flour with M. Necker, which is to be copied and sent with a note from me. Return home after three to dress, then go to M. de Montmorin's. Luckily the dinner has been kept back on account of some members of the États-Généraux or Assemblée. After dinner he asks me why I do not come oftener. He wishes much to converse with me. He is engaged to dine abroad next Tuesday, but any other day, etc. Chat with Madame de Beaumont, his daughter, who is a sprightly, sensible woman, and at six take Madame de Flahaut to the opera, where I am so weak as to shed tears at a pantomime representation of the 'Deserters.' So true it is that action is the great art of oratory. Go from the opera to Madame de Chastellux's; the Comtesse de Ségur has been there with her children; all disappointed at not seeing me; this is civil, but I am sorry not to have met them. The Duchess has left her reproof; all that is well enough. Madame tells me that the Prussian General Schlefer, who commanded the army of 10,000 men sent to quiet the troubles of Liège, after a few executions which restored order, harangued his troops, thanked them for their zeal, and then, *by reason of the disordered state of his master's finances*, disbanded them; but in consideration of their former services, left them their *arms, baggage, etc.*, and gave them a month's *pay to maintain them on their journey home*. In the astonishment naturally resulting from such an event the patriots of Brabant offered them very advantageous terms, and of course the whole army passed into their service. General Dalton, apprised of this

manœuvre, immediately applied to Count d'Esterhazy, commanding at Valenciennes, to know if he would receive the Austrian troops. This last despatched an express to M. de la Tour du Pin, the Minister of War here. A council was held and the answer returned this morning. Go to Madame de Laborde's. In the course of the evening mention this as a rumor, the authenticity of which I will not warrant. M. Bonnet tell us that such a report being spread, though differing materially in circumstances, inasmuch as it related only to a request to be admitted unarmed in case events should render a retreat necessary, he had inquired of one of the ministers and had been told that they had *luckily* found an excuse for not complying with Dalton's request, in the want of subsistence, already so great. This is weak indeed; they should have received those troops, near 10,000 men, and marched them slowly toward Strasbourg, there to wait the Emperor's orders. The battalions he has already marched to their assistance, joined to these and to the foreign regiments in the service of France, would form an army sufficient to restore order to this kingdom, and discipline to their troops, etc. The idea of those who differ with me is, that the Parisians would immediately assassinate the King and Queen; but I am far from believing in such an attempt, and I am persuaded that a respectable body of troops in a position to avenge that crime would be a cogent motive to prevent it. These, however, are the conjectures of a private man. Unhappy France, to be torn by discord in the moment when wise and temperate councils would have led thee to the pinnacle of human greatness! There has happened this day a very strange incident; a person who says he belongs to the family of Montmorenci (*i.e.*) a servant of one of them, is arrested for giving money to a baker not to bake. Either some of these persons are mad, or else their enemies have a wickedness of invention worthy of the prime mover of evil. At going away this evening the Comte de Luxembourg takes me aside and asks if I have thought of a person for Prime Minister of this country. I repeat what I told him on Thursday, that I am not sufficiently acquainted with men and things here to hazard opinions; that France has my best wishes for her prosperity and sincere regret for her situation. He is to breakfast with me on Monday. This evening, not being able to obtain cream for her tea, one of the company proposed to Madame de Laborde to try a species of cheese. This odd proposition was adopted, and to my amazement it proved to be the best cream which I have tasted in Paris. I get home late, and find a letter from Cantaleu, desiring my aid to combat a proposition made in the Assembly this morning by Mirabeau. It is to send an embassy extraordinary to America, to desire payment of the debt to France, in corn and flour."

"This morning [November 7th] Cantaleu breakfasts with me, and we prepare his argument against Mirabeau's proposition. I hear that M. Necker is making inquiries as to the price at which flour can be delivered here. I tell my informer, who wishes to know my sentiments, that if M. Necker has set on foot such an inquiry it is with a view to chaffering in a bargain he is about to make; that I have told him the price which the flour will cost. Call at half-past three on Madame de Flahaut. The Bishop comes immediately after. The event of Mirabeau's propositions, levelled at the ministry, has been a resolution that no member of the present States-General shall be admitted to share in the administration. Some measures have been taken to guard the church property, at the instigation of the Bishop. The news which Madame de Chastellux communicated last evening are, I believe, entirely false, and yet they were

told to her by a confidential person. To be sparing of one's faith is in this country to economize one's reputation."

"Engaged all the morning [November 8th] writing. At three I dine with Madame de Flahaut. We have an excellent dinner, and, as usual, a conversation extremely gay. After dinner, the company go to cards, and I who have imposed upon myself the law not to play, read a motion of the Comte de Mirabeau, in which he shows very truly the dreadful situation of credit in this country, but he is not so successful in applying a remedy as in disclosing the disease. This man will always be powerful in opposition, but never great in administration. His understanding is, I believe, impaired by the perversion of his heart. There is a fact which very few seem to be apprised of, viz., that a sound mind cannot exist where the morals are unsound. Sinister designs render the view of things oblique. From the Louvre go to Madame de Chastellux's. The Comte de Ségur and his amiable daughter-in-law are there. Make a declaration of love to her in jest, which I might have done in earnest; but as she expects every hour a husband whom she loves, neither the jest nor earnest would be of consequence."

Formality seems to have taken no part in the arrangement of dinner guests, for Morris says, "I go to-day [November 9th] to dine at M. Necker's, and place myself next to Madame de Staël, and as our conversation grows animated, she desires me to speak English, which her husband does not understand. Afterwards in looking round the table, I observe in him much emotion. I tell her that he loves her distractedly, which she says she knows, and that it renders her miserable. Condole with her a little on her widowhood, the Chevalier de Narbonne being absent in Franche-Comté. Much conversation about the Bishop d'Autun. I desire her to let me know if he succeeds, because I will, in such case, make advantage of such intelligence in making my court to Madame de Flahaut. A proposition more whimsical could hardly be made to a woman, but the manner is everything, and so it passes. She tells me she rather invites than repels those who incline to be attentive, and some time after says that perhaps I may become an admirer. I tell her that it is not impossible; but, as a previous condition, she must agree not to repel me, which she promises. After dinner I seek a conversation with the husband, which relieves him. He inveighs bitterly against the manners of this country, and the cruelty of alienating a wife's affections. He says that women here are more corrupt in their minds and hearts than in any other way. I regret with him, on general grounds, that prostration of morals which unfits them for good government. Hence, he concludes, and I believe truly, that I shall not contribute towards making him uncomfortable.

"When M. Necker has got rid of those who environ him he takes me into his cabinet, observes that I have stipulated to receive such premium as the court may give for other flour on importation of the first 20,000 barrels. I tell him that he must feel with me the propriety of that stipulation, but that I presume he will not give any premium. He says that he disapproves of it, but that so many urge the measure he shall be obliged perhaps to submit, for in the present times they are frequently under the necessity of doing what they know to be wrong. He leaves that stipulation, but he says I ought to be bound in a penalty to deliver the 20,000. I tell him that I certainly mean to comply with my contract, but that he also ought to be bound to a penalty. He proposes £2,000, assuring me that it is only to comply with needful forms. I tell him I

have no objection to a greater sum, except that I cannot command the elements, and, of course, do not know how long it will be before my letters reach America. He says that they will not exact the penalty on account of the delay of a month or two, upon which we agree. He pauses in amending the agreement, at the binding of the King to a like penalty. I cut the matter short by telling him that I rely on His Majesty's honor and the integrity of his ministers. I tell him that I expect he will not extend his orders in America, and he says he will not, but rely on me, for which purpose it is that he wishes the bargain to be such that he may have full confidence in it: Having signed the agreement, which he is to send to me to-morrow countersigned by the King, I go later to Madame de Chastellux's, make tea for the Duchess and introduce the eating of a rye bread toast, which is found to be excellent. The Vicomte de Ségur comes in and tells us that the Baron de Besenval has discovered that England gives two millions sterling to make mischief in this country. I dispute the matter, which is, I am sure, impossible. He insists with great warmth that it is true, and thence concludes that the tales circulated to the prejudice of the Duke of Orleans are false. There is a great deal of absurdity in all this, and if he makes such a defence for the Duke everywhere, he will convict him. Madame de Ségur takes me aside at going out, to remark on this, and adds her persuasion that the Duke was the distributor of the money given for these wicked purposes. The Comte de Luxembourg asked me, in the course of the evening, what should be done to ameliorate the deplorable situation of France. I tell him, nothing; that time can alone indicate the proper measures and the proper moment; that those who would accelerate events may get themselves hanged, but cannot alter the course of things; that if the Assembly become generally contemptible, a new order must naturally arise from that circumstance; but if they preserve public confidence, they only can restore this country to health and tranquillity, and of consequence no private individuals can in the present moment do good. He says he is afraid some persons will be precipitate, and show an armed opposition. I tell him that if any be so mad, they must take the consequence of their rashness, which will be fatal to themselves and to their cause, for that successful opposition always confirms authority. This young man desires to meddle with the state affairs, but he has not yet read the book of man, and though a good mathematician I am told, may yet be a very wretched politician. M. le Normand, whom I see to-day, considers a public bankruptcy here as inevitable, and views a civil war as the necessary consequence."

"I hear from Mr. Richard [November 10th] that the Duke of Orleans offered Beaumarchais 20 per cent. for a loan of 500,000 francs, and that he had since applied to their house for a loan of 300,000 francs, but in both cases without success; that their house is so pushed for money, they know not how to turn themselves. Go to dinner at Madame La Tour's; arrive very late, but, luckily, the Comte d'Afry and the Bishop d'Autun arrive still later. We have a bad dinner and more company than can sit at the table. Everything is *ennuyeux*; perhaps it arises in a great measure from myself. Go with the Comte d'Afry to the representation of 'Charles Neuf,' a tragedy founded on the massacre of St. Bartholomew. It is a very extraordinary piece to be represented in a Catholic country. A cardinal, who excites the king to violate his oaths and murder his subjects, then in a meeting of assassins consecrates their daggers, absolves them from their crimes, and promises everlasting felicity, all this with the solemnities of the established religion. A murmur of horror runs through the audience. There are several observations calculated for the present times, and, I think, this piece,

if it runs through the provinces, as it probably will, must give a fatal blow to the Catholic religion. My friend the Bishop d'Autun has gone a great way towards its destruction by attacking the church property. Surely there never was a nation which verged faster towards anarchy. No law, no morals, no principles, no religion. After the principal piece I go to Madame de Laborde's. I am requested to attend Madame d'Angivilier, and, as the devil will have it, they enter on politics at eleven and stay till one, disputing whether the abuses of former times are more grievous than the excesses which are to come."

"This morning early [November 11th] the Comte de Luxembourg comes in and stays all the morning. He presses me hard to promise that I will take a part in the administration of their affairs. This is a mighty strange proposition, particularly from a man who has, I think, no sort of interest, though indisputably of the first family in this country. He drops the idea of a combination which exists, and whose intention is to restore affairs to a better situation, and that he is in their confidence. But two questions naturally arise upon this subject: What they mean by a *better* situation? and whether they be not persons who think they can govern because they wish to govern? It is possible that this young man may be connected with people of greater maturity on some political intrigue, and may be authorized to talk to me, though I doubt both the one and the other, particularly the latter. I make, however, the same answer, which I should do to a more regular application, that I am wearied with public affairs; the prime of my life has been spent in public occupations; my only present wish is to pass the remainder in peaceful retirement among my friends. I add, however, for his own government, that, in my opinion, no change can be operated at present which will be either useful or safe.

"After he leaves me I go to Madame de Stael's. The Bishop d'Autun is here, and I fix with him to dine at Madame de Flahaut's with the Marquis de Montesquiou next Friday, for the purpose of discussing M. Necker's plan of finance, which is then to be proposed.* A great deal of light chit-chat here, which amounts to nothing. Madame Dubourg is so kind as to stimulate me a little into conversation with her, and whispers that 'Madame l'Ambassadrice fait les doux yeux à M. l'Évêque,' which I had already observed, and also that he was afraid I should see too much."

"I dine to-day [November 12th] with M. de Montmorin. After dinner converse with him on the situation of affairs. He tells me that their administration has no head, that M. Necker is too *virtuous* to be at the head, and has too much vanity; that he himself has not sufficient talents, and if he had he could not undergo the fatigue; that as to great measures the King is incapable of them; and therefore he has no other method of acquiring power but to gain the love of his subjects, to which he is entitled by his goodness of heart. Madame de Flahaut tells me, when I call on her this evening, that she wishes to have her husband appointed minister in America. Has spoken to Montesquiou on the subject, who has applied to Montmorin, but was told that the place was given ten months ago. I had already told her that it could not be, at least, for the present."

"To-day [November 13th] I am invited to meet the Bishop d'Autun and the Duke de Biron at Madame de Flahaut's, but first to take Madame de Laborde and my fair

hostess to visit Notre Dame. The Bishop d'Autun and the Duke consider M. Necker absolutely ruined. The Duke tells me that Necker's plan was disapproved of yesterday in the Council, or rather, last evening. Montesquiou comes in and I go away, as there is a little affair to settle between him and the Bishop. Visit Madame de Corneville. Leave her surrounded by two or three persons, one of whom is engaged in the discussion of the *procès* of M. de Lambesc, accused of the crime of *lèse nation* for wounding a man in the Tuileries on the Sunday preceding the capture of the Bastille. Return to the Louvre. Madame informs me that the affair is settled between the Bishop and the Marquis. Indeed, it could not be otherwise, for it was a falsehood related of the former to the latter, and, of course, a denial put things to rights. Madame being ill goes into the bath, and when placed there sends for me. It is a strange place to receive a visit, but there is milk mixed with the water, making it opaque. She tells me that it is usual to receive in the bath, and I suppose it is, for otherwise I should have been the last person to whom it would have been permitted."

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XI.

Exodus from the ranks of society. Many closed salons. Changed state of feeling. Necker's "plan" for the *Caisse d'Escompte*. The Pope quarrels with the farmers-general. Opposition to Necker. Mirabeau describes the Assembly. Lafayette's ambition. A tedious session. Interview with Necker. Tea at Madame de Laborde's. Plan for dealing with the American debt to France. Necker converses on the constitution then preparing. The Bishop d'Autun asks advice as to speaking in the Assembly. A rumor that he is to be appointed American Minister to the Court of Louis ???. An evening in Madame de Staël's salon. Tact of the hostess. Clermont-Tonnerre reads a discourse. Necker speculates as to the issue of one hundred and thirty millions of paper money. The Abbé Delille reads his own verses in Madame de Chastellux's drawing-room.

By November society began to feel the exodus from its ranks. The most brilliant salons of a few months back were closed and silent, and their gay inmates languishing in foreign lands. In the few that remained open the society forgot that persiflage and coquetry which had been its life. The hostess forgot her tranquil mode of dispensing hospitality while listening to the heated debate; and, presiding over her tea-table, was not unlikely, in the excitement of political discussion, ungracefully to spill the scalding liquid over her hands. Men forgot to make love to their hostesses in their eagerness to read to them the latest news in the *Gazette*, and strangest of all, the women forgot to notice the cessation of compliments and love-making in their zeal to discuss a motion to be made by a deputy, or the latest brochure of a friend.

The salon of Madame de Beauharnais still flourished, and she, with her pretty, very feminine and *enjuponné* talent, entirely inoffensive to the *amour propre* of the sterner sex, continued to draw about her a coterie who bemoaned the insensibility of the world to their literary efforts. Here *la liberté et l'égalité*, those *dames d'atours* of madame, her counsellors *les plus intimes*, presided. Madame had herself once made two or three *jolis mots*, and contented herself by repeating them at intervals. Madame also knew how to listen, or appear to listen when she never listened at all, and here literature was the god to which they dedicated themselves; here Voltaire was crowned. Society must find relief from constant political conversation, and the gaming-table offered the best advantages. It became the resort of the deputy, worn out trying to hear or make himself heard in a disorderly séance, and of the noblesse who played for money for daily expenses; and so it was that the gaming-table, offering so much to so many, continued through all the shiftings and changes of events and people in Paris, and flourished until the days of the Terror.

There was now a general unrest, a murmuring and spasmodic movement in the streets of Paris—one day like those of a dead city; the next awake with a feverish excitement, and orators holding forth everywhere. The National Assembly fought over the constitution, Necker struggled with the finances and subsistence, and Camille Desmoulins wrote about and gloated over the disclosures of the Red Book, with its list of fraudulent pensions and its appalling sum-total.

It was Saturday, November 14th, that M. Necker brought forward his plans for the Caisse d'Escompte, which was to convert it into a national bank. "M. d'Aguesseau tells me," Morris says, "that Necker proposed his plan with much modesty and diffidence. No opinion can be formed of the reception it will meet with. The Chevalier de Boufflers and the Comte de Thiard, whom I meet at dinner at the Duchess of Orleans's, are neither of them pleased with what is going forward in the Assembly. They are to sit three times a week in the afternoons. Go to the Louvre; Madame is in bed *enrhumée*. We have several visitors, Madame Capellis among others, who tells me that the Pope's nuncio is to be of our party next Monday evening, and gives me to understand that he wishes to be acquainted with me. I do not suppose that this arises from any great devotion on my part to the Holy Roman Apostolic See. While I am visiting I am troubled with spasmodic affections of the nervous system which give great pain at times in the stump of my amputated leg, and, in the other leg, an anxious sensation which I conceive to arise from some derangement of the nervous system, and therefore I must expose myself more to the air and take exercise. The wind has blown all night very hard and continues high this morning. I think it is from the southwest, and I fear that many have fallen victims to its rage. General Dalrymple, whom I visit after dinner, tells me that the gale of wind which we have had within these few days has committed dreadful ravages on the British coast, and that his letters announce the destruction of eight hundred men. He considers M. Necker's plan as flat nonsense, and tells me that the bankers he conversed with are of opinion that it is good for nothing. I have read the *mémoire*, and I think this plan cannot succeed."

"On Monday at half-past nine call on Madame de Flahaut to take her to supper with Madame Capellis. She is in bed and very much indisposed. Stay but a few minutes and then go to supper. The nuncio of His Holiness is not here. It is the day on which his *courier* departs. Capellis tells me he wishes to bring us together, because the Pope has quarrelled with the farmers-general about the supplies of tobacco formerly taken from them; that he draws them now from Germany, and he thinks an agreement might be made to furnish his Holiness from America. I doubt much the success of the scheme, for the Pope can only contract from year to year, and the distance is such that half the year would be consumed before a leaf of tobacco could arrive. The company here are much disgusted with the actings and doings of the Assemblée Nationale."

"To-day [November 17th] I hear the latest American news, which were conveyed by the British September packet. Mr. Jefferson has been made Secretary of Foreign Affairs. After some visitors leave, I go to the Châtelet to visit the Baron de Besenval. The old gentleman is much pleased with this attention. We talk politics a little and he takes an opportunity to whisper that we shall soon have a counter-revolution, which I have long considered as inevitable, though I am not sufficiently master of facts to judge from whence it is to arise. Go to club. The Parlement of Metz have, it seems, acted with more pointed opposition than the Parlement of Rouen, and the Assemblée will fulminate its decrees in consequence. The Church, the Law, and the Nobility, three bodies intermediary, which in this kingdom were equally formidable to the King and people, are now placed by the Assemblée in direct hostility, and they have at the same moment, by the influence of ill-grounded apprehension, tied the hands and feet of their natural ally, the King. A very little time must unite the opposition, and when united they will of course place themselves under the banners of the royal authority,

and then, farewell Democracy. Go from the club to M. de Montmorin's. Nothing here worthy of attention. M. d'Aguesseau and M. Bonnet dine with us; the latter wants some information about their affairs in India. I tell him that the way to check Britain in India is to make the Isle of France *un port-d'armes*, and a free port, etc. M. de Montmorin tells us that he proposed this very plan in 1783. M. Bonnet asks me if free ports in France are necessary for us. I tell him that I believe not, but on this subject he must consult Mr. Short, who is our representative. He desires an interview, but M. de Montmorin tells him that Mr. Short can have no precise information on the subject. In effect, when this matter was first agitated, Jefferson consulted me, but I chose to preserve the respect due to the representative of America. Visit Madame de Chastellux. She gives me an account of the interior of her family. The Duchess comes in, and the Maréchal de Ségur. He tells me that Brittany has undergone a sudden change; the Noblesse and people are united, and they will reject the acts of the Assemblée. M. de Thiard had told us that something of this sort would happen. The Cambrises are also discontented. Go from thence to the Louvre. Madame is in bed. The Bishop arrives; he lays down his hat and cane, and takes a chair in the manner of a man determined to stay. He confirms the news from Brittany, and adds that the *cochois* (?) looks black. This brings to my mind some dark hints communicated by the Comte de Luxembourg about Normandy. I told him, in reply to his apprehensions about the dismemberment of the kingdom, that if Normandy, Picardy, Flanders, Champagne, and Alsace continued true to the King, His Majesty might easily reduce the remainder of his kingdom."

"This morning [November 18th] while I am writing La Caze comes in. He tells me that there was last night a meeting of the *actionnaires de la Caisse a'Escompte*. They have named the *commissaires* to treat, report, etc., on Necker's plan. The general opinion seems to be opposed to the plan, which, indeed, I do not wonder at. Dine with M. de Lafayette on the Quai du Louvre. He does not come in until long after we had sat down to dinner, and yet we did not sit down till five. After dinner I ask him what he thinks of Necker's plan. He says it is the general opinion that it will not go down. He adds that the Bishop d'Autun, or somebody else, should come forward with another. I reply that no man can properly come forward with a plan except the minister, because no other person can know sufficiently all the needful circumstances; that the present administration must be kept in their seats, because the late resolution of the Assembly prohibits a choice of ministers in their body. He says that he thinks he can *for once* take a ministry out of the Assemblée, provided he does not name Mirabeau and one or two others. Upon this I observe that I do not know whether the Bishop d'Autun and his friends will be so weak as to accept of office in the present wild situation of affairs; that nothing can be done without the aid of the Assemblée, who are incompetent; and that, the executive authority being annihilated, there is but little chance of carrying their decrees into effect, even if they could be induced to decree wisely. He says that Mirabeau has well described the Assemblée, which he calls the *Wild Ass*; that in a fortnight they will be obliged to give him authority which he has hitherto declined. He shows clearly in his countenance that it is the wish of his heart. I ask him what authority. He says a kind of dictatorship, such as Generalissimo, he does not exactly know what will be the title. Upon this I tell him again that he ought to discipline his troops, and remind him of a former question, viz., whether they would obey him. He says they will, but immediately turns round and talks to some

other person. Here is a vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself. This man's mind is so elated by power, already too great for the measure of his abilities, that he looks into the clouds and grasps at the supreme. From this moment every step in his ascent will, I think, accelerate his fall. Leave this place and go to the Louvre. Madame has company. Stay till they are gone. The Marquis de Montesquiou was here when I arrived; he had just entered. He is running round now to smell the incense which will be offered him for his plan of finance, which was this day communicated to the Assemblée. It goes, as I am told, upon the basis of paying off the national debt by a sale of the church property. I tell Madame that, if this be so, it will prove a bubble, for the reasons long since assigned to the Bishop d'Autun. The reliance on this fund was the radical defect of his plan. Go hence to the apartments of Madame de Chastellux. She tells me that the Marquis de Lafayette intends to imitate Washington and retire from public service as soon as the constitution is established. Perhaps he may believe this himself, but nothing is more common than to deceive ourselves. Sup at Madame de Laborde's. The Comte de Luxembourg tells me that the opposition made in some districts to the recalling of the Gardes du Corps has prevented the execution of a plan. I do not ask him what it is, because I do not wish to know. He tells me that M. de Lafayette committed a great imprudence in telling him aloud, in the hearing of many persons, that he could not be charged with preventing it. I collect from this only that there is much latent animosity against him, and that while he is building his castle others are employed in mining the foundation."

"This morning [November 19th], while the Comte d'Estaing is with me, I receive a note from M. Le Coulteux. He has been three hours yesterday with M. Necker and the Committee of Subsistence. He says that M. Necker will treat with me for wheat at six shillings, but I can obtain six shillings and sixpence, and that he has fixed an interview for me with Necker at seven this evening. He is obliged to go abroad, therefore desires me to consider of the means of execution, and call on him before I go to M. Necker's. After a walk through the Champs Élysées, I go to the Palais Royal and dine with the Duchess of Orleans. Thence to the Louvre to get a ticket, which the Bishop was to procure for the Assemblée of to-morrow. Receive it, and go to M. Le Coulteux's. Converse about the means of executing a contract, if any is made. He cannot furnish credit or money, etc. See M. Necker. He, I find, expects from me a pointed proposal, and tells me that M. Le Coulteux had named the quantity I would deliver, the price, and the terms. I tell him there is some misunderstanding, and take my leave."

"This morning [November 20th] I rise early and go to the Assemblée. Stay there till four. A tedious session, from which I derived a violent headache. Mirabeau and Dupont are the two speakers on M. Necker's plan who command the most attention, but neither of them, in my opinion, derives honor from the manner of treating it. Probably it will be adopted, and if so, it will be, I think, fatal to their finances, and completely derange them for some time to come. Sup at Madame de Staël's; give her my opinion of the speeches of this morning, and show one or two things in which M. Dupont was mistaken. She does not like this, because he supported her father's plan, which she declares to be necessary."

“Dine to-day [November 24th] with the Prince de Broglio. The Comte de Ségur dines with us. A pleasant company. The Bishop is of the number. After dinner I give him some hints as to the objection made by many to the opposers of M. Necker’s plan, because they do not come forward with a better. Go from hence to M. Necker’s. The mayor and the Committee of Subsistence waiting to speak with him. Send in my name, and in consequence he comes out to the antechamber. I tell him that I cannot undertake to furnish him with wheat; that I must either ask for it an extravagant price or risk a loss; that I do not choose the first, and will not incur the second; that if he has any other plan for obtaining it, in which I can be useful, he may command me. He is a little disappointed at this intelligence. Leave him, and pay my respects to Madame Necker. Leave here and go to the Louvre. The insurgents in Brabant seem to be in a fair way to success. The Imperialists are in possession of Bruxelles only, and are besieged there. Madame de Flahaut, as becomes a faithful ally to the Emperor, quells all insurgency on my part. Shortly after M. de Thiard comes in. He gives us some account of what has passed in Brittany. Among other things, it happened that the municipalities quarrelled about subsistence, and the matter went so far as to use force on each side. Each in consequence gave orders to a regiment to march against the other, for in each a regiment happened to be quartered. Luckily, a compromise took place; but this is the first-fruits of the new constitution of armies and municipalities. There will be many others of the like kind, for, when mankind are resolved to disregard as vulgar prejudice every principle which has hitherto been established by experience for the government of man, endless inconsistencies must be expected. Sup here. Make tea for Madame de Laborde. Madame de Flahaut complains that she has not a handsome sugar-dish for her tea-equipage. This is by way of introduction to the story that she (who pretends to be very avaricious) would not accept of one as a present from me, and that Madame de Laborde, who pretends to be disinterested, accepted a handsome cup and saucer. In fact, the latter was done in consequence of her urgency. I insist that this conduct arises from pure malice, and write with my pencil the following:

Clara, your avarice you boast, And boast,
too, your good nature;
I know not which you prize the most,
I guess which is the greater.
The proffered present you refuse,
But make your friend receive;
For what she takes you her abuse,
And me, for what you leave.

This has been a fine day, clear but cold. The ice remained all day in the shade.”

“Go to see [November 26th] Madame de Bréhan and M. de Moustier, who are just returned from America. Converse with her a considerable time, always inquiring news of my country, and she desirous of obtaining the state of her own; natural on both sides, but of course much variegated. M. de Moustier has much to say about the American debt, and gives reason to believe that no bargain can be made for it. I call on the Maréchal de Ségur, who is ill with the gout. Some conversation about the proposed reduction of the pensions. I disapprove of it, and this disapprobation, which

with me is sincere, suits very well with the ideas of the Maréchal, who is one of the most considerable pensioners. See De Moustier again tonight at Madame de La Suze's. He is now well pleased with America and believes in her good disposition and resources; is charged with the request on her part that this Court will make no negotiation whatever for the debt, but will postpone the instalments for three years longer, and then the interest beginning with the next year shall be regularly provided for. I tell him that I think M. Necker's plan of borrowing on it in Holland is liable to a great objection; viz., that the Dutch will not probably lend without being so authorized on the part of the United States as to have a claim upon them, because otherwise the Government of America might pay the amount to France, and refuse to pay anything to Dutch individuals. He says he has already spoken to the Comte de Montmorin on this subject, and to some members of the States-General; that he will speak also to M. Necker whenever he desires it. This will certainly interfere with our former plan, and oblige us either to change or to abandon it. After a long conversation with him, and much amity from him and the Marquise, I take my leave.

“See M. Laurent Le Coulteux and tell him the plan which has been digested, of offering for the debt to France as much of the French stocks as would produce the same interest. He is so pleased with it that he offers himself to be the negotiator, provided he can have sufficient security in Holland. This is vastly obliging. Agree to meet at Cantaleu's this evening. Go to Van Staphorst's. Tell him the objection brought by Moustier to the negotiation which M. Necker has proposed in Holland. He tells us a proposition made to him by Lafayette to act as spy for discovery of intrigues of the aristocratic party, by which, says Lafayette, a civil war may be prevented. We advise Van Staphorst to decline that honorable mission. Parker adds that it should be declined verbally, so as to leave no written trace of the negotiation. I leave them together and return home to dress. The Comte de Luxembourg comes in and tells me a great deal of news, which I forget as fast as I hear it. He has a world of projects, too, but I give him one general opinion upon the whole, that he and his friends had better take measures for influencing the next elections. This afternoon I see Cantaleu; he seems to think that De Moustier's intelligence is fatal to our project. We have a great deal of useless talk; at length it ends with my desire to Cantaleu that he should find out the impression made by De Moustier, and my promise to talk to Necker on the subject.

“Dine at the Louvre with Madame de Flahaut. The Bishop and his intimate friend, the Duc de Biron, are of the party. The Bishop asks my opinion of the American debt. I tell him that I think well of it; it is a debt which ought to be paid. The Duc de Biron says that he thinks it will be paid, and I agree with him in opinion. I tell the Bishop that there is a proposition to be presented to M. Necker for liquidation of it with French *effets* bearing an equivalent interest. He thinks that the offer ought to be accepted. After dinner, visit the Comte de Montmorin; mention to him the proposition of paying the debt with *effets*. He desires money. He says that they have no doubt of receiving payment from the United States, but that they want now to receive money.”

“The Comte de Luxembourg comes [November 28th], and detains me along time for nothing. Tells me, however, that the party of the Nobles are determined to be quiet. This is the only wise conduct. A message from Madame Necker to dine with her; I

presume that this is for the purpose of talking about a supply of wheat which I engaged for. Go to M. Necker's, and am introduced into his cabinet. He broaches a conversation on the constitution. I declare my opinion that what they are now framing is good for nothing, and assign my reasons. He makes some inquiries respecting the American Constitution, which I reply to. Ask him about wheat and tell him the manner in which I would have executed a contract for it had I conceived, such contract prudent. I tell him that I shall lose by the contract for flour, but that nevertheless it shall be executed. Ask him how he stands as to his loan in Holland. He says he has some propositions. I tell him that I shall make him some which will be agreeable, perhaps, and then go into the salon, that he may read a long piece of writing just put into his hands. Madame de Staël comes in, who reproaches me for forsaking her; I apologize, and promise to sup next Wednesday. We have a good deal of random conversation. Dine, and after dinner tell M. Necker that a person from London gives me information respecting the debt which, added to other things, will enable me to make him a good offer when he has finished with other people. He says we will talk about it in his cabinet when I go away. We retire thither, and then I offer him as much of capital in their *rentes perpétuelles* as will make the interest of 1,600,000£ now payable by the United States. He thinks the proposition a good one, but says he must have half money. I tell him no, that is too much; he says the sacrifice of the interest is too great, and will expose the bargain to severe criticism. He seems to think that the report of Moustier is not of sufficient weight to prevent the prosecution of his plan in Holland. We finally part, he saying we must wait."

"To-day [December 1st] I prepare a note to make M. Necker an offer for the debt, which I think he cannot refuse. Dine with M. Boutin; * pretty large company and a very good dinner—*très recherché*. I have a good deal of conversation with the Comte de Moustier. He is preparing a letter about the American debt, and shows me the heads of it. I tell him my plan, though not in detail, and he likes it because it tends to defeat the views of M. Duer and his associates, Clavière and Warville. I hear that Mr. Short is much pleased that I have determined to propose a plan, and will call on me to-morrow. The Marquis de Lafayette has spoken to Necker, and the latter has promised not to conclude any agreement without a previous communication to Mr. Short. Arrive very late at the Louvre. Communicate to the Bishop my plan for the debt, which I tell him I will show him, and which, if refused by M. Necker, may probably come before the Assembly. On Thursday evening we are to meet at Madame de Flahaut's, to consider the discourse he will pronounce on Friday morning."

"This morning [December 2d] Mr. Short calls and I show him the proposition I mean to make to M. Necker. He is much pleased with it. I tell him that if he approves of it I wish he would undertake to recommend it to the United States, as he must see that it will promote their interest. He tells me that his recommendation can have but little weight, as I must know, but that, if necessary, he will urge the adoption of it here. He presses me to make the proposition immediately. I tell him that I mean to show it to Lafayette, and for that purpose to dine with him. He likes this. He sets me down at Lafayette's, who arrives sooner than usual from the Hôtel de Ville, and has but little company. I communicate my plan, which he also is pleased with. I then tell him something of the Bishop d'Autun's plan. He tells me that the Bishop is to call upon him Friday evening. He says that Necker must be kept for the sake of his name."

“Have much conversation to-day [December 3d] with various persons on speculations they propose in the debt. Dine at the Palais Royal at a restaurateur’s. Dr. Senf tells me that the affairs of Brabant are going on well, that the other Imperial provinces will soon join, that a declaration of independence will be the immediate consequence, and that a treaty with England and Prussia will speedily follow. This I believe, because it is probable. Take Madame de Flahaut to the Comédie Française. Return to the Louvre. The Bishop comes in, according to agreement. He asks my opinion whether or not to speak tomorrow in the Assemblée, and tells me the substance of what he means to say. I make some observations on the heads of his discourse. Advise him to speak, but confine himself as much as possible to the line of objections; add some reasons to be given to the Assemblée for not proposing a plan. Urge him to treat the Caisse d’Escompte with great tenderness; to blame the administrators as such for their imprudence in lending the Government more than their capital, but excuse them at the same time as citizens for their patriotism; treat the arrearage to them beyond the first loan of 70,000,000£ as a sacred debt, demanding preference of all others; criticise M. Necker’s plan very lightly if it is like to fall, but if he thinks it will be adopted, very severely; to deal much in predictions as to the fatal effects of paper money, the *agiotage* (stock-jobbing) which must ensue, and the prostration of morals arising from that cause; finally, the danger which must follow to the public, and the advantage to a future administrator who shall think proper to speculate in the paper or funds; that these observations become him as a clergyman and as a statesman, and they will be the more proper as his enemies charge him with sinister designs of this sort. He goes away to consider, as he says, whether he shall say anything. I urge again that, when he comes into the ministry, he will want the Caisse d’Escompte, and tell him at the same time to remove from the mind of Lafayette the idea that he is connected with the Duke of Orleans.”

“Go to M. de Montmorin’s [December 4th] and meet, according to appointment, the Comte de Moustier and Madame de Bréhan. Show him my proposition intended for M. Necker. He seems not fully to approve. I rather think that he withholds assent because he thinks it like to be very successful, but I may be deceived. At going away the Comte de Montmorin asks why I depart so soon. I tell him that I am going to M. Necker’s, etc.; that if he chooses I will communicate to him my proposition, not as a minister but as a friend. He asks to see it, examines it with attention, requires explanations, and finally approves it much, and offers to speak to M. Necker on the subject. I desire him not, lest M. Necker should think I have been deficient in respect. Go to M. Necker’s; he is gone to council. Converse with Madame in such a way as to please her. She asks me to dine to-morrow. I mention my prior engagement, but say I will come after dinner, as I wish to see M. Necker. She tells me I had better come to dinner. I will if I can. Go to the opera. After a while the Comte de Luxembourg comes into the *loge*. He has something to say of politics. I take Madame de Flahaut home. The Comte de Luxembourg comes in; he takes her aside and has a conversation, the purport whereof is to offer to the Bishop the support of the aristocratic faction. I doubt much his being authorized to make this offer. Leave them together, and go to Madame de Staël’s. Music here. She sings and does everything to impress the heart of the Comte de Ségur. Her lover, De Narbonne, is returned. Ségur assures me of his fidelity to his wife. I join heartily in praise of her, and truly assure him that I love her as much for her children as for her own sake, and she is certainly a very lovely woman. After

supper De Narbonne tells us that he is authorized by Franche Comté to accuse the *Comité des Recherches*. This committee is very like what was called in the State of New York the Tory Committee, of which Duer was a leading member, a committee for detecting and defeating all conspiracies, etc. Thus it is that mankind in similar situations always adopt a correspondent conduct. I had some conversation before supper with the Comte de Ségur, who disapproves of the Bishop's oration, and so, indeed, do most others. And they blame particularly those things which I had advised him to alter. He has something of the *author* about him. But the tender attachment to our literary productions is by no means suitable to a minister: to sacrifice great objects for the sake of small ones is an inverse ratio of moral proportion. Leave Madame de Staël's early. Set down M. de Bonnet, who tells me that I am to succeed Mr. Jefferson. I tell him that if the place is offered it will be difficult for me not to accept, but that I wish it may not be offered."

"This morning [December 5th], Mr. Parker calls and tells me that Necker will treat upon the terms I am to propose. He says that he is convinced, from the conversation he has had with Ternant, that Necker would not have been permitted to deal for the debt under par, and that therefore no agreement could have taken effect unless concluded privately. Go to Madame Necker's to dine. Madame de Staël comes in, and at the instigation of her husband asks me to dine next Wednesday. At dinner we converse pretty freely of political subjects and, in consequence of an observation I make, Necker exclaims in English, 'Ridiculous nation!' He does not know that my servant understands English. After dinner in the salon I take him aside, to ask if he has considered my proposition. He tells me that a Colonel Ternant has a plan. I tell him that the one I now give is the same, that my last proposition was the utmost that the houses here would agree to, and therefore what I now offer is without their participation. He asks if we are prepared to lay down the French *effets*. I tell him no. He says he cannot listen to propositions which give him no solid security. I reply that no house in Europe is sufficient for so large a sum, and therefore security as such is nonsense, but that he shall run no risk, for he shall not part with the *effets* till he receives payment. He objects that he will still have no certainty of the payment, and wants to know how I shall make the operation. I tell him that it is by means of our connections in America and in Holland, that we can do the business better than he can, and therefore we can give him better terms than he can obtain from others. He insists that the proposition shall be supported by solid security before he will consider it; I tell him that this is not just, that there are two points for his consideration: First, whether the offer is good, and, secondly, whether he is sufficiently secured; that if the offer is not good, it is useless to talk of security, but if it be such as he ought to accept, then it will be proper to know what kind of responsibility will be sufficient. In the meantime it would render me ridiculous to ask security for performance of a bargain not made. To this he replies that if I once get his promise I shall make use of it as a ground to negotiate upon and go about knocking at the doors of different people. This is not a very delicate comparison. I reply in a tone of dissatisfaction, mingled perhaps with a little pride, that I shall knock at no doors but such as are already open to me. Our conversation is loud, he makes it so purposely, and at this point Madame de Staël, with the good-natured intention of avoiding ill-humor, desires me to send her father to sit next to her. I tell her, smiling, that it is a dangerous task to send away M. Necker, and those who tried it once had sufficient cause to repent it. This latter observation

brings back good-humor, and he seems inclined to talk further with me, but I take no further notice of him, and, after chatting a little with different people, I take leave. Go to Parker's and tell him what has passed, which of course disappoints him not a little. We consider of what is next to be done, and, after canvassing the matter a good deal, agree that we will sleep upon it, and give him time to cool."

"This morning [December 6th] Mr. Parker comes and tells me that Colonel Ternant says Necker shall be forced to accept the proposition. He will meet me this day at the Comte de Montmorin's at dinner. Go to Madame de Flahaut's. We converse on affairs; the Bishop regrets much that he did not follow my advice. She censured severely last night his advisers, in the presence of M. de Suzeval, who is one of the principal ones. He acknowledged that he had done wrong, and regretted his weakness. The Comte de Luxembourg, who was to have been of her party for dinner, sends an apology, and we then agree that I shall stay and dine in order to converse with the Bishop about Laborde's plan of finance. The Bishop arrives, and tells me what has passed on the subject. It appears that M. Laborde has behaved with meanness and treachery. The plan is Panchaut's. It was delivered to Laborde by the Bishop to consider of the practicability in a pecuniary point of view, and with a declaration that he desired to obtain by that means a provision for Panchauts family, who are indigent. After many conferences, Laborde declared that the two hundred millions required could not be obtained. In consequence the Bishop made the declarations contained in his speech, and M. Laborde came forward the next day with his plan, which requires three hundred millions, and criticised what had been said by his friend. The plan seems to be very much like what I had thought of, and Madame de Flahaut, to whom I had given this morning a few outlines of my scheme, was astonished at the resemblance or, rather, at the identity. Consider some notes, etc., which the Bishop is about to add to his speech now in press. I then communicate to him my plan for the American debt. But first I ask whether a *caisse d'escompte* will be established, and whether the American debt will be transferred to it as a part of the fund. He tells me that he thinks both will be done. I tell him that I wish they may, and then state to him M. Necker's conversation with me, and remark on the folly of asking from an individual adequate security to the amount of forty millions. He agrees with me entirely, and I think that M. Necker will sooner or later have reason to regret that he treated my offer with so much contempt. Immediately after dinner I go to M. de Montmorin's. He is engaged in conversation with a gentleman who detains him until he is obliged to retire to his bureau. Go and sit with Madame de Corney some time, and explain the nature of my agreement for flour, as I find that De Corney had been informed of a contract I had made with the city and which does not exist. He might have supposed that I did not deal candidly with him. Go hence to Madame Dumolley's. Some political conversation, with a degree of heat that is inconceivable among so polite a people. Thence to the Louvre, where I stay till near twelve. A large company. I tell the Bishop what has passed with De Cantaleu, for which he is much obliged to me."

"To-day [December 8th], while I am calling on M. de Montmorin, who is trying to discover Necker's reasons against the proposition, De Moustier comes in. He says that he has just delivered a letter to the porter on the subject of the American debt; that all negotiation upon it must be deferred. I think he has endeavored to throw cold water on

my plan. Tell Colonel Ternant so, who says that he should equally oppose it in any other circumstances, but that the distresses of France form a sufficient reason now for the adoption.”

“On Wednesday at three I dine with Madame de Staël. After dinner M. Clermont-Tonnerre reads us a discourse he intends to deliver in the Assemblée. It is very eloquent and much admired. I make, however, one or two observations on the reasoning, which bring the company to an opinion adverse to his. He goes away mortified, and thus I think I have made an enemy. We shall see. Go to the Carrousel, and stay till twelve. The company is large and I employ the time in reading. The Comte de Luxembourg tells me that some persons meditate a massacre of the King, Queen, and Nobles. I tell him that I do not believe it.”

“To-day [December 12th], dine with the Duchess at the Palais Royal. Afterwards take Madame de Flahaut to the opera—’Didon,’ with the ‘Chercheuse d’esprit,’ a ballet. These form anything except rational amusement. M. Necker’s chief clerk, who was the other day at M. de Montmorin’s, assured M. de Montmorin that he thought my proposal for the debt such as the minister ought to adopt. A small company at the Louvre; we sup, and I leave them together at play. The Bishop d’Autun says the committee have been engaged all this evening with M. Necker in considering how one hundred and thirty millions of paper can be issued with the least inconveniency. The affairs are in a sad condition indeed, and I think they will not mend speedily.”

“After dinner to-day [December 13th], go to the Louvre and find my amiable friend in tears. She has been to see her *religieuse*, who is ill and suffering from a scorbutic complaint, and suffering from the neglect of her sister nuns also. She reproaches herself with not having been to pay her a visit for several days, by which means she was ignorant of her situation. She has given orders for a better treatment. I administer all the consolation in my power, and that consists first in sympathy, which is very sincere; then in attenuating the evil. I then take her to the opera, and leave her there.”

“At Madame de Chastellux’s to-day [December 14th], we have a large breakfast party, and the Abbé Delille reads or rather repeats to us some of his verses, which are fine and well delivered. Go to the Louvre. The Bishop is there; he mentions a plan for issuing *billets d’État* bearing interest. I show him the folly of such a measure. He says it is a plan of Montesquiou’s, to which I reply that, as none of the plans likely to be adopted are good they may as well take that of M. Necker, since otherwise they enable his friends to say that the mischief arises from not having followed his advice; that, besides, if paper money be issued, that of the Caisse is quite as good as any other. He says that by taking a bad step France may be ruined. I tell him that is impossible, and he may tranquillize himself about it; that whenever they resort to taxation credit will be restored, and, the credit once restored, it will be easy to put the affairs of the Caisse in order. Go to the Palais Royal, not having been able to leave Madame de Flahaut till four. I arrive when dinner is half over. After dinner the Abbé Delille entertains us with some further repetitions. Go to club, and thence to the Comte de Moustier’s. Sit a while with him, and Madame de Bréhan. Go together to Madame de Puisignieu’s. Spend the evening. Conversation chiefly with De Moustier. I find that, notwithstanding public professions as to the public proceedings of

America, both De Moustier and Madame de Bréhan have a thorough dislike to the country and its inhabitants. The society of New York is not sociable, the provisions of America are not good, the climate is very damp, the wines are abominable, the people are excessively indolent.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XII.

The opera. Gardell and Vestris. Strictures on the character of the people of France. The Caisse Patriotique opened. Paris gay with uniforms. People sacrifice their jewels for the public benefit. Morris disapproves of Necker's plan of finance. Resolutions passed in the Assembly which affect Protestants. The public debt. The king's brother goes to the Commons. Monsieur and the Favras conspiracy. Lafayette intriguing deeply. Morris makes punch for the society at Madame de Vannoise's. His first suggestion of settling the banks of the St. Lawrence. Asked for information about America. Ceremony of saluting the ladies with a kiss on New Year's eve.

The opera to-night [December 15th] is a new one, and very good. I take Madame de Flahaut to enjoy it with me. It has as little of the inevitable evil of an opera as can easily be supposed, but the radical vices remain; the scenery is fine. After the opera, Gardell and then Vestris exhibit their muscular genius. The latter seems almost to step on air. It is a prodigious piece of human mechanism. Take M. and Madame Robert (the painter) from the opera, and go afterwards to the Louvre. M. St. Priest is here. We are to sup trio. The Vicomte de St. Priest comes in—a coxcomb, and, what is worse, an old one. The conversation is dull.”

“To-day [December 16th] I hear that the Comte de Montmorin says M. Necker is ready to accept my proposal as soon as a solid house in Europe will come forward with the offer; that the plan I have offered suits (as M. de Montmorin says) this government exactly, and must be very well if it suits the United States as well. At Madame de Laborde's I am introduced to Madame d'Houdetot, who is the *protectrice* of Crêvecœur, who is much courted by the academicians, who was the only beloved of Rousseau, who had at the same time another lover, a happy one, and who is, I think, one of the ugliest women I ever saw, even without her squint, which is of the worst kind.

“Madame de Flahaut tells me to-night that Montesquiou will propose to-morrow a plan of finance, which consists in issuing a large sum of *billets d'État* bearing interest; but if the report of the committee to be made by Le Cantaleu is adopted by acclamation, Montesquiou will be silent. He and the Bishop were with her this evening and they discussed the matter together. She asks my opinion. I tell her it is good for nothing, and give one or two reasons. I add that the more reasonable their plan, the more unreasonable is their conduct in offering it. But the character of this country is precipitation, not to mention the vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself. There is, besides, a spur to prick the sides of their intent with all the sharpness of necessity, for both these gentlemen are not a little out at elbows. The Marquis de Montesquiou comes in. He tells me the plan of finance reported by the committee and that which he means to move in substitution. The first is complicated, and it would seem that the farmers have, by bewildering, convinced themselves. The second is simple, but liable to a little objection which the author had overlooked; I state it. He endeavors to obviate it; in effect, he feels attached to his plan, which is natural, but if adopted, I think it will work evil to him as well as to the country, for the paper money

must depreciate. He asks whether, in my opinion, the paper proposed by the committee will sustain its value. I tell him no, but that he had better let the plan of his opponents do the mischief. He seems to be convinced against his will, and therefore, according to 'Hudibras,' is, I presume, of the same opinion still."

On the 17th of December the report of the ten commissioners was presented to the Assembly. On the 19th, Morris says: "The Bishop just come from the Assemblée; says they have passed tumultuously the plan of the committee grounded on the plan of M. Necker. He seems much dissatisfied with it." Necker's plan adopted, the Caisse Patriotique was opened, and into it flowed every imaginable thing, of great or small value—precious stones, articles of jewellery, "mouches" boxes, some time since abandoned by the ladies. Great ladies sacrificed their jewels, and adorned themselves with ribbons instead. Madame de Genlis and Madame de Bulard, to give emphasis to their patriotic feelings, wore pieces of the stone of the Bastille set in laurel leaves, pinned on with a forest of ribbons of the three colors. The king and queen contributed their share, in gold plates and dishes of great value. A spasm of generosity possessed all ranks, and rivalled the soldier fever, which for months had been strong, and had filled the streets of Paris with the most fantastic costumes imaginable, of which red, green, and gold epaulets were a brilliant feature. Each district had its distinctive color and mode, but all united in carrying the tricolor, in the manufacture of which all the available material in Paris seems to have been sacrificed. During the last month of 1789 a loan of eighty millions was made to the Caisse d'Escompte. As to the new plan, the diary says:

"At Madame de Ségur's this morning [December 20th] her brother, M. d'Aguesseau asked my opinion of the new plan of finance. I gave it very candidly, but find from Madame Chastellux this evening that it made a very sombre impression upon his mind. M. de Montmorin tells me that M. Necker is pleased with my proposition, and willing to treat with me, provided I can show that I am authorized by persons of sufficient property in Europe to create a due responsibility. I communicate to him what passed with M. Necker, and, if I can judge rightly of this conversation, the Count at least (and probably M. Necker) is desirous of bringing this business to a conclusion. He asks me if he may speak to M. Necker about it. I tell him yes, and that I will take an opportunity one day to call at M. Necker's coffee, and converse with him if he chooses."

"The Assemblée passed to-day [December 24th] a resolution which gives the Protestants admission (by necessary implication) to the offices of state. The Bishop is much pleased with it, but said nothing in its support. I advise him to have his conduct remarked in some of the journals, because that his order is already against him, and therefore he must secure the interest of those who are against his order."

"M. de Moustier tells me to-day [December 25th] that some persons were arrested last night in consequence of a plot formed to assassinate M. de Lafayette, M. Bailly, and M. Necker, and to carry the King off into Picardy. I don't believe a word of the plot. It will, however, serve a certain purpose to the inventors. Moustier tells me further that Necker is prepared to accept my offer, and vaunts much his services in the business, all which I know how to estimate at the just value. The conversation at Madame de

Chastellux's this Christmas evening is sensible, but not *marquante*. The Comtesse de Ségur tells me that M. du Fresne, who is M. Necker's right-hand man, says that his chief is not equal to his business. The Duchess comes in, and Mr. Short. I tell him of Moustier's eagerness to show his utility to America, and add that certainly if the plan takes effect it must be attributed to him, Parker, and myself. Go to Madame de Guibert's to supper. After supper a question is agitated respecting the Dauphin, father to Louis Seize and the Duc de Choiseul, which leads to the subject of poisons. M. de Laborde mentions a very extraordinary kind of poison as being notorious, and detailed in the dictionary of medicines. It consists in fattening a hog with portions of arsenic, and then distilling his flesh, which gives a poisonous water of slow but sure effect. He appeals, then, to the Count de Thiare for the truth of this extraordinary fact. A lady at court asked for a glass of water. It was brought, and she drank it. Immediately she burst into tears, declaring that she was poisoned, and told the King, 'It is that villain,' pointing to one of his attendants, 'who has done it.' The King rallied her on the subject, but she went away greatly distressed, and died in about eight days. The person she had designated asked leave, in the interim, to go and look after his affairs in Savoie, went off, and was never heard of. We afterwards get upon finance, and M. de Guibert, who loves to hear himself talk, says a good deal to prove that he knows but little. He is, however, a violent Neckerist. I leave this house before twelve, being not very well. It has been a fine day, but Paris, on this great festival of the nativity, shows how much she has fallen by the revolution. The paper of the Caisse keeps going down, and is now at two per cent. discount. The *actions* also fall fast, which is very natural."

"A member of the Committee of Finance mentions at the club to-day [December 26th] that the totality of the public debt here is about 4,700,000,000£, including herein all reimbursements of charges of every kind, and calculating the *viagères* [life annuities] at ten years' purchase; that it may amount, perhaps, to 4,800,000,000£, that is, to 200,000,000 pounds sterling. This, then, is the extreme of a burthen which this kingdom totters under. The Abbé d'Espagnac insists that it is not so much by a great deal. While the dispute on this subject is at its height, a gentleman arrives who communicates the extraordinary intelligence that Monsieur, the King's brother, has been to the Commons and made a speech on the subject of a charge circulated against him yesterday, that he was at the head of the supposed plot against M. Bailly and M. de Lafayette. Go to Madame de Chastellux's. While there the Chevalier de Graave brings us Monsieur's speech. It is very well written, but has the fault of calling himself a citizen, and, again, his audience fellow-citizens. Go to the Louvre. Madame tells the history of this speech. Monsieur yesterday, upon hearing of the slander, applied to the Duc de Livi, who, not knowing what advice to give him, applied to the Bishop d'Autun, who made the speech for him. This morning Monsieur applied to the King, and asked him if he meant to send another of his brothers out of the kingdom; then went on to complain of the slander. This touches Lafayette, who has too many of these little matters on the anvil. It was then determined that Monsieur should go to the *Ville*, etc."

"At half-past two [December 27th] visit Madame de Flahaut. The Bishop d'Autun is there. She reads me a letter he has written to the author of the *Courrier de l'Europe* explaining his plan. I make to him sundry observations concerning it, but refuse to

take it with me and make notes. After he is gone she asks me not to mention to Lafayette, as was intended, the archiepiscopacy of Paris for the Bishop d'Autun, but to show the advantages which may be derived from the step taken by Monsieur. Go to M. de Lafayette's. After dinner I speak to Lafayette about Monsieur's speech to the Commons. He takes Short* and me into his closet. Tells us that for a long time he has had information of a plot; that he has followed the track, and at length took up M. de Favras; that on M. de Favras was found a letter from Monsieur which seemed to show that he was but too deeply concerned in it; that he had immediately waited upon him with that letter, which he delivered, telling Monsieur that it was known only to him and M. Bailly—consequently, that he was not compromised; that Monsieur was much rejoiced at this intelligence; that yesterday morning, however, he sent for him, and, being surrounded by his courtiers, spoke in high terms respecting a note which had been circulated the evening before charging him with being at the head of the conspiracy. Lafayette told him that he knew of but one way to discover the authors, which was by offering a reward, which should be done; that Monsieur then declared his determination to go to the town-house in the afternoon, and that in consequence due preparation was made to receive him when he should come; that he came, and pronounced the speech we have seen, which was written by Mirabeau, whom he considers as an abandoned rascal. Every man is dear to himself. All the world knew Mirabeau to be a rascal when Lafayette connected himself with him; but it is in this moment only that he feels the misery of such a connection. I remind him of the warnings I had given with respect to Mirabeau, and add the intelligence which the Comte de Luxembourg desired me to convey; viz., that Mirabeau had sworn he would ruin Lafayette. I then tell him that this step of Monsieur's has thrown the cards into his hands; that he has placed himself at the head of the revolution, in which place he ought to be kept, because, if there should happen any counter-revolution, he secures the heads of all others against accidents, and if the revolution is fully effected, the nullity of his character will of course seclude him from all weight and authority. He relishes this idea. I then take the opportunity to inculcate upon his mind anew the advantage of an administration whose characters are fair, which appears strongly in the case of M. Necker, to whose probity everything is pardoned. He feels conviction, but it will not last. His temper is turned towards intrigue and must unite itself to them of similar disposition. At going away I ask him if he sees often the gentleman I presented to him. He says that he does not. Mentions, however, his name (the Bishop d'Autun), which I did not intend, and tells me that he desired to have given him the King's library, with the Abbé de Sieyès* under him, as a step toward *l'éducation nationale*, which is the Bishop's hobby-horse. I undertake to make this communication at his request. Visit Madame de Chastellux. She tells me that Monsieur is not much applauded in society, that is, in good company. I am not at all surprised at this. Go from hence to Madame de Laborde's, having first written a little extempore address to the Duchess as from Madame de Chastellux, to whom she had presented a small clock *comme étrennes*:

To show how the minutes glide swiftly away,
 Dear Princess, a present you send;
 Oh come, by your presence this loss to repay,
 Oh come at the call of your friend.
 Your goodness has taught me those moments to prize,

Your kindness their value bestows,
And my love, like the bounty which beams from your eyes,
Each moment more fervently glows.”

“Dine to-day [December 30th] with the Duchesse d’Orléans. Take tea with Madame de Chastellux and then go to Madame d’Houdetot’s. Her lover, M. de St. Lambert, is here. Conversation is sensible and agreeable enough, but I think I shall not go often. Of all Cupid’s magazines the least valuable, in my opinion, is his cabinet of antiquities. Have a conversation with M. de Montmorin and chat a while with the ladies, and, observing some almanacs on the chimney-piece, I take out my pencil and address a few lines to Madame de Beaumont, his daughter:

How days and months and years succeed,
Clara, you here behold;
But while you look on this, take heed,
Both you and I grow old.
Those days which come, the past destroy,
Do not too long delay;
For every hour, not spent in joy,
Is so much thrown away.

She is more pleased with this than she expresses, for the moral is rather to be adopted than approved. Go hence to a party at Madame de Vannoise’s. The intention, I find, is to hear the harmonica and drink punch. I am requested to mix that liquor and, in order that my glasses may produce equal music with those of the performer, I make it very strong. Madame de Laborde comes and sits next to me, with M. Bonnet. I repeat to her the lines I had written for Madame de Beaumont. She, of course, objects to the liberality of the sentiment, and M. Bonnet, who is to judge and can understand English only by the eye, though he has translated ‘Tristram Shandy,’ gives me his pencil and a piece of paper. I address to her a demonstration of my theme instead of copying what I had written:

You find my morals somewhat free,
But why enthral the mind?
The truest doctrine, trust to me,
Is nature unconfined.
What she commands let us obey,
Nor strive to be too pure;
All human maxims lead astray
And only hers are sure.

I do not know whether this is exact, but it is convenient, and will, I know, be more strictly followed by those who condemn it than by the author. A reputation either good or bad as to morals is easily acquired. To judge a man by his actions requires a degree of attention which few have a right to expect, and few are willing to pay. It is much more convenient to judge from the conversation than from the conduct.

“At the club to-day we have a strange story of a sentinel stabbed, and the instruments left behind inscribed, ‘Va-t’en attendre Fayette.’ I profess, as usual, my disbelief. Go to the Louvre. The Duc de Biron, l’Évêque d’Autun, and M. de St. Foi, who dined here, are still with Madame, who is dressing to go to the Comédie. I am vexed at this. The Bishop and M. de St. Foi retire to a consultation, which is, I suppose, about his letter to the *Courrier de l’Europe*; when that is finished, I tell the Bishop what Lafayette had desired me to communicate. I add that I did not mention the archbishopric because Madame desired me not, but more because, notwithstanding the fair opportunity, I persisted in the opinion transmitted by her, for which I had not, however, given to her the reasons; that I think he should speak first himself, because he is of too elevated a rank to deal by an intermediary; if he were of an inferior grade, I would ask for him. He approves of this. Madame asks me to go to the play, which I refuse, and to Madame de Laborde’s, which I decline; I offer, however, to set her down at the play-house, which she accepts of. Go to Madame de Chastellux’s. M. de Brabançon comes in, to whom I communicate an idea which has occurred to my mind of forming a settlement upon the banks of the River St. Lawrence. He seems pleased with it, and will speak to the persons of his acquaintance who want to go out to America.”

“Go to Madame de Laborde’s to supper [December 31st]. Madame d’Houdetot tells me that she dined at M. Necker’s. I find that his family are much hurt at a refusal of the Assemblée to accept a gift proffered from Geneva, which is considered as a slight to M. Necker. She tells me that the Abbé Rayneval has addressed an excellent letter to the Assemblée. I suppose from hence that it is a criticism upon their conduct, which will not, I think, do them much good.

“This morning two persons come to see me who are determined to go out to America, and to purchase there my Raritan trust. I am to write a letter for them to New York. A person calls to obtain information about America, which I give, and also advice. Write, and then go to dine with M. Millet. After dinner one of the King’s pages comes in, who is to begin his tour of duty to-morrow. He tells us of the wonderful sagacity, understanding, and instruction of the King, his virtues, etc. He must be very confident, I think, of the credulity of his audience. M. de Moustier, who had spoken very favorably of him to me, and particularly as being an honest man, looks somewhat ashamed. A good deal of company at the Louvre. At midnight the gentlemen kiss the ladies; I do not attempt this operation, because there is some resistance, and I like only the yielding kiss and that from lips I love.”

Many people in Paris were already looking toward America as offering more safety if not comfort than any place nearer home, in the general upheaval of society that they felt was surely coming; and much of Morris’s time was occupied in giving advice and assistance to the emigrants. Several colonization schemes had already been set on foot in Paris by Americans anxious to get rid of their unproductive lands. One of the most shameful and cruel of these projects was the famous Scioto enterprise, and the founding of Gallipolis on the Ohio. Joel Barlow and Duer were among the men who furthered the emigration of hundreds of unfortunate families, lured to destruction by pictures of a salubrious climate and fertile soil. Morris, who was entirely convinced of

the rottenness of the Scioto Company, cautioned and tried to protect the unwary Frenchmen from too hastily rushing into the forests of America.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XIII.

Comparison between the newspaper of 1777 and 1789. New Year's salutations. Scene at the Châtelet. Madame de Flahaut's boudoir. Stoppage of pensions. Lively discussion thereon in Madame de Staël's salon. Visit to the Comte de Chastellux. Message from the Parlement of Brittany. Morris examines table-ornaments for Washington. Decree in the Assembly concerning office-holding. Adherence to the constitution required. Riot in Paris. A handsome surtout for the table sent to Washington. Need of cultivating the taste of America. The Duchess of Orleans obliged to economize. The Cardinal de Rohan. The Bishop of Orleans. Marmontel. Letter to Washington. Morris writes a note on the situation of affairs for the king. Delivered to the queen by her physician. Anecdote of the king. He goes to the Assembly. Conversation with Lafayette.

Not the least important of the stirring events of the year just closed (1789) was the sudden development of the great and far-reaching power of journalism. Already Marat, Camille Desmoulins, Loustalot, and the principal journalists of the Revolution, had forced themselves before the public; and the genius of the Revolution had spoken through their medium with telling effect. There is a striking comparison between the first daily paper which was published in Paris in 1777, with its article on the "Almanac of the Muses," its letter describing some "Vagary of Voltaire's," "Two Facts," and a "Witty Thing," and the violent organs of the Girondin party, or the power wielded by the pen of Camille Desmoulins, while the Revolution was in full swing. And now was instituted what might almost be called the cult of the Lantern, for which someone wrote a sacrilegious litany supplicating it to avenge the wrongs of France and have pity on the people, with the refrain, "Effroi des aristocrates, vengez-nous." The street lamp only came into general use in Paris during the reign of Louis ???. Before his time, for many years, the Parisians had been in the habit of setting a lamp in a conspicuous window during times of danger; but under Louis ??? the lantern in the streets became an object of great admiration. The first and most interesting lantern of Paris hung on a house opposite the Hôtel de Ville below a bust of the Grand Monarque, and during the reign of Louis ??? this iron branch came to be at once interesting and terrifying to the aristocrats. The year 1790 was more or less quietly ushered in at the capital, but throughout France châteaux were burned, their owners cruelly outraged and banished, a vast amount of property of all kinds destroyed, and terror and confusion reigned supreme.

"The first day of the year," Morris says, "some friends call and give me the salutations of the season, and I go [January 1st] round and pay sundry visits of the season, among others at the Châtelet to the Baron Besenval. He is a little vexed at finding new delays in his trial. He receives a visit from the *dames de la Halle*, who in very bad French, though Parisians, make him their sincere compliments, promise friendship and assistance, which are not to be despised. He of course treats them all with respect, and Mesdames d'Oudenarde and La Caze stimulate them to acts of violence. This is truly characteristic of wrathful women. I go to M. de Lafayette's. A long time before the company assemble. Dine at half-past four. He tells me that

Monsieur and Mirabeau are closely allied, that one is a weak and indolent creature, the other an active and artful rascal. I tell him that they must finish the trial of Besenval because the people begin to take his part, and that of course a violent torrent may be turned against his prosecutors; this affects him. To my surprise he tells me that, notwithstanding my criticisms on the Assemblée, I must acknowledge that their constitution is better than that of England. I assure him that he is much mistaken if he imagines that to be my opinion. Visit Madame de Staël, who expresses very kindly her apprehension that I had forgotten her; stay till half-past ten, and go to the Louvre, where the Bishop d'Autun is waiting for me. Explain to him a plan which I had communicated to Madame for purchasing facilities in America and in which she is to be interested. He tells me that, if the advantage is great and the operation solid, he thinks he can obtain two millions. I tell him that I wish to confine the object to one million. We are to talk further. He observes on what I say that the American debt would furnish a good speculation. I tell him that I am already engaged in it; that it is so large an object that the junction of many capitalists became necessary. Madame being ill, I find her with her feet in warm water, and when she is about to take them out, one of her women being employed in that operation, the Bishop employs himself in warming her bed with a warming-pan, and I look on. It is curious enough to see a reverend father of the church engaged in this pious operation."

"Go to the club [January 4th]. The National Assembly have stopped the pensions, giving only 3,000£ for arrearages to the first instant. The list is to be examined between this and the 1st of July next, for the purpose of reformation, and absentees are to receive nothing until their return. Go to Madame de Staël's, where this matter is discussed pretty much at large. I tell them that when privileges were abolished the road was opened for the destruction of all property. This gives rise to an endless dispute, in which she shows much genius and little good breeding. The opinions are various, but they will all be alike. I threw out the idea on purpose to make an impression on some who have, I know, styled me aristocrat, etc., because I do not approve of their sentiments.'

"I find Madame de Flahaut *au désespoir* about the reduction of the pensions, but she has very little reason. I convince her of this, or, rather, she was already convinced of it, but says she will cry very loud. Her servants this morning have waited on her, with the assurance that they will, if necessary, live on bread and water for the next six months. The Bishop d'Autun comes in. She had told me, before his arrival, that Monsieur has written a letter to the King demanding a seat in council. It is in concert with the Bishop and the Duc de Livi. The Bishop says that the *décret* respecting the pensions would not have taken effect but for the Abbé de Montesquiou. Dine with M. de Montmorin. The pensions are of course the subject of conversation. I treat the *décret* as a violation of the laws of property. It seems to be so considered, but not in a light so extensive as that in which I place it. Draw a parallel between this and the compensation given by Great Britain to the American Loyalists. The absence of many members who had gone to dinner is considered here the cause of the decree. At parting, M. de Montmorin asks me how my plan goes on. I tell him that I expect to be joined by the Hollanders, for that three persons who are here are agreed, and one of them goes this afternoon to Amsterdam to bring in his associates. He is very glad to hear this. See Madame de Chastellux, who tells me that she has seen M. de Lafayette;

that Favras will be hanged; that Monsieur was certainly in the plot; that he is guided by Mirabeau. As M. de Lafayette makes the world his confidant, the secret must of course be kept, for it cannot go farther. But the consequence to him must be perpetual enmity from Monsieur, the brother of the King, who in all cases must be doing mischief, even if he has not ability to do good. The Maréchal de Ségur comes in. We have some conversation about the pensions, and my sentiments accord well with his.”

“Go to M. de Moustier’s to dinner [January 7th]. The Comte de Croix, the Prince de Broglio, and Clermont-Tonnerre are our party. The last two are greatly violent against the Assemblée, to which they belong, but the Comte de Croix has a little of the *obstination flandraise*, and continues firm to the edicts, many of which he opposed.”

“Dress, and dine to-day [January 8th] with the Duchess of Orleans. She has changed, I think for the better, in her maître d’ hôtel. After dinner visit the Comte de Chastellux and his lady—in a pavilion of the Louvre, in the garret, near one hundred and sixty steps from the earth, in little cabins, and stinking most odiously from the collected treasures of ages. Madame shows me a box presented by her Princess, who had sent a painter on purpose to the Castle of Chastellux to take the different views. It is a situation in the mountainous part of Burgundy, near a small, clear river, abounding in trout. The Count and his lady are a domestic couple. How happy might they be to breathe the air of their own château, if it were possible for mortals to know what constitutes their own felicity. Madame de Ségur is here, and the Maréchal. The Duchess comes in. I make her a dish of tea. She makes use of many obliging expressions, the reason of which I cannot conjecture, but incline to think that they result from inattention. We shall see. After she is gone, the Chevalier de Graave reads us the speech made this day by the Parlement of Brittany to the Assemblée. It is written with great force and precision, and shows that they are confident of being supported by the province.”

“Dine to-day [January 10th] with M. de Lafayette. After dinner he asks me how they are to provide for the case of disobedience in the provincial and district administrations, which are submitted to the orders of the King, but, being elected, may not respect those orders. I tell him that no provision can be made; that it is an institution radically wrong, and they cannot alter it, because they have said so much to the people about liberty; that they must of necessity leave the correction of this and many other defects to time and experience, happy if the changes induced by the latter should not bring back an authority too severe. He does not like this sentiment. I suppose they will find out some expedient, but certainly nothing effectual. Go from hence to the Louvre. Madame de Flahaut is distressed. She has been in tears all day. After much entreaty she tells me the cause. Her pensions from Monsieur and from the Comte d’Artois are stopped; on that from the King she receives but 3,000£, and must therefore leave Paris. I try to console her, but it is impossible. Indeed, the stroke is severe, for with youth, beauty, wit, and every loveliness, she must quit all that she loves, to pass her life with what she most abhors. Go from hence to Madame de Chastellux’s. Short is here. I repeat, in conversation about the Parlement of Brittany, what in his presence I observed to Lafayette; viz., that the Assemblée must deal very delicately with the Bas-Bretons. But he repeats Lafayette’s answer; viz., that nine-tenths of the province are with the Assemblée. I doubt this intelligence, because the

address of the Parlement is in a style of calm firmness which shows a conviction of support, and their position in the neighborhood of Britain is critical.

“This morning [January 11th] I go to the Porcelaine to see a kind of ornament cemented on glass, being birds formed with their feathers and other natural objects in the same way; of course, the representation is more just than painting. The maker is here, and we inquire the price of a surtout (epergne)* for a table ten feet long and two feet wide. It is 2,000£, and cannot be finished before October next. Go to the Luxembourg, to dine with Count Louis de Narbonne. A very good dinner, and very good wines; the Comte d’Afry, the Duc de —, the Chevalier de Narbonne, Madame de Vintimille, and Madame Fronsac. This last I had seen at M. de Montmorin’s. She appears to have a great deal of the free and easy about her; whether it is the result of a virtue out of all reach, or of an indifference about appearances, is to be examined. She is not unhandsome, and plays well on the harpsichord. M. de Bonnet, who was to have dined here, comes in late from the Assemblée. They have passed a decree by which the members of the Chambre des Vacations are rendered incapable of holding any office, or of electing or being elected, until they shall announce to the Assembly their adherence to the constitution. This is strong, but the Count de Mirabeau was of opinion that they should be sent to the Châtelet and tried for *lèse-nation*.

“Go from hence to Madame de Chastellux’s. Madame de Ségur and the Maréchal and the Count come in. Conversation is about the decree of the day, and so it is at Madame de Staël’s. I contend that this decree is void, according to the principles of the Assemblée themselves, who have declared their incompetency to act in a judicial capacity. This induces a long dispute, in which I take a greater part than the thing is worth, but the society here has that *tournure*, and one must conform to or abandon it. The latter, perhaps, is the wiser course.”

“After dinner [January 13th] go to the Louvre, and find Madame de Flahaut in deep distress at the idea of leaving Paris. She cannot go with me to look for a surtout and ornaments, having affairs. The Bishop arrives. He has had me elected into a society here which as yet I do not exactly know the meaning of; it is, however, a select one. He expects to get a million for the speculation proposed to Madame. He tells me that the members of the Breton Parlement come hither voluntarily, because they apprehended force from the Commons of Rennes. This is extraordinary, for Rennes subsists only from the presence of the Parlement. There has been a riot this day in Paris, and a number of the *militaires* engaged in the squabble have been taken prisoners. The matter is not generally understood, but all agree that Lafayette has acted with great prudence and decision.”

“See Madame de Flahaut this morning [January 14th]. She tells me that next week the Caisse d’Escompte will stop payment in coin altogether. At Madame de Chastellux’s the Duchess reproaches me with neglecting her while she was ill the last three days, to which I reply that if I could have been useful to her I should certainly have shown my attention. I call for Madame de Flahaut and we go to look for a surtout; afterwards go to the manufactory of Angoulême. We agree that the porcelaine here is handsomer and cheaper than that of Sèvres. I think I shall purchase for General Washington here. Madame tells me that the Comte de Ségur has persuaded Lafayette

to place the Bishop in the finance. He told him that he disliked the Bishop as much as M. de Lafayette, but that they had no man of sufficient abilities, and it would not do to have the abilities of the Bishop opposed to them. Lafayette told this to his friend Madame de Simieu, she to Madame de Coigny, she to Madame de —, who told it to the Duc de Biron, and he told it to Madame de Flahaut, who desires me to keep up this apprehension through Madame de Ségur; but I shall certainly say nothing to her but the truth, nor that, unless the occasion calls for it. Her husband is, I think, wrong in pushing so hard to obtain a place in the administration. But time must determine the propriety of this judgment. The Duchess arrives late at Madame de Chastellux's tonight. The mother of the Bishop d'Autun is here. She is highly aristocratic; she says that the great of this country who have favored the Revolution are taken in, and I think that she is not much mistaken in that idea."

A surtout of seven plateaus and the ornaments in biscuit and three large glass covers for the three groups were bought and sent to Washington. When sending the pieces, Morris wrote to him as follows: "In all there are three groups, two vases, and twelve figures. The vases may be used as they are, or, when occasion serves, the tops may be laid aside and the vases filled with natural flowers. When the whole surtout is to be used for large companies, the large group will be in the middle, the two smaller ones at the two ends, the vases in the spaces between the three, and the figures distributed along the edges, or rather along the sides. ... To clean the biscuit warm water is to be used, and a brush such as is used for painting in watercolors. You will perhaps exclaim that I have not complied with your directions as to economy, but you will be of a different opinion when you see the articles. I could have sent you a number of pretty trifles for very little prime cost, but you must have had an annual supply, and your table should have been in the style of a *petite maîtresse* of this city. ... I think it of very great importance to fix the taste of our country properly, and I think your example will go very far in that respect. It is therefore my wish that everything about you should be substantially *good and majestically plain*, made to endure. ... By the bye, you must be thankful that I did not run you into further expense, for I was violently tempted to send out two dozen cups and saucers, with the needful accompaniments, to Mrs. Washington."

"There is a musical party at Madame Le Coulteux's tonight [January 16th], which is to me very dull, although the singing is very good. De Cantaleu asks me with a sarcastic smile how the Bishop d'Autun is. I tell him that he is by no means eager to enter into the administration at present. He observes that at present a minister can do nothing; things will go forward in their own way. I tell him that he is right as to the present moment, but that ministers might have directed some time ago, and either everything will go to destruction or they will hereafter direct the machine; that even now it is important to individuals to be apprised of their intentions. I find that M. de Cantaleu has all the self-importance of a parvenu who thinks that his merit has obtained what, in fact, is the price of his attachment to the ministers. I ask Laurent if nothing can be made out of the assignats. He says that until five or six months are passed, and their value a little known, it will be impossible to judge about them."

"Dine at Lafayette's [January 17th]. He asks what I think of Ternant as Minister to America. Tell him that I approve. Hence I conclude that he intends the appointment to

pass in my opinion as of his making. Very well. After dinner Gouvernay tells me that Necker is much better, but makes himself worse than he is, by way of securing a retreat which he meditates. He says further that a chief minister is necessary. I ask him who is to be in the finances; whether the Bishop d'Autun. He says that he will not do at all; that he is unequal to the business; that M. Touret for the Home Department, and M. de St. Priest for the Foreign Affairs will do very well, but there are no other men sufficiently eminent. I ask Madame de Lafayette, who comes up to us, to name a man. She cannot. I observe that I hear the Comte de Ségur is in pursuit of the office of Foreign Affairs. Gouvernay and she join in declaring that he is not fit for it. At dinner Lafayette asked me what they should do about their militia. I told him, nothing; for they cannot do what is right, and therefore had better leave it in such situation as that it can be mended, which would not be the case if fixed by the constitution. He says that he and others are determined to select particular articles in the constitution as it now stands, and form of them a constitution properly so called, leaving the rest to the mercy of the legislature. This I approve of, but yet much will depend on the selection. I advise that they should, in respect to their bill of rights, imitate the masons, who knock down the scaffolding when they have finished the house. Go to the Louvre and give Madame de Flahaut such information as relates to her friend; but he has too good an opinion of his own opinion to make a good Minister of Finance. In the different societies everybody seems to agree that things go badly, and they speak with despondence; but, in fact, nothing good could result from the measures of Government, which have been so very ill judged."

"Dine to-day [January 19th] at the Palais Royal.* The Duchess tells me that the Duke's treasurer does not pay as he ought to do, monthly, and that unless this is done she will not adhere to the contract. She receives now 450,000£ per annum, of which 350,000£ are appropriated to the house, servants, table, etc.; near 15,000 louis. Certainly a great economy might be made upon this article. After dinner go to the Louvre. The Cardinal de Rohan is there. Accidentally he mentions his *procès*, and, after relating the circumstances which brought it to his mind, he declares that he thinks it a weakness to talk of it; and he is right. He has *plus de grâce que d'esprit*. But he speaks in too good style to write in a style as bad as Madame de la Motte has attributed to him. A new piece at the Comédie to-night much applauded, but a very bad one. It is, however, *la mode*. The object is to ridicule, or rather to preach against, the prejudices entertained against the family and connections of a man who is hanged. A 'Lor Anglais' is the preacher, who takes from the book of England a text which is not to be found in it, and, with the aid of antitheses and other such figures, gives the audience much satisfaction, which is greatly increased by the judicious ranting of the actors—judicious, because a natural action would disclose the defects of the piece, now concealed by the roaring."

"While Count Dillon and I are walking in the Champs Élysées to-day [January 21st], the report of a pistol is heard, which Dillon considers some duel, for of late there is a great deal of that kind of work going forward. I laugh at the idea, but presently we see a man led along by a party of soldiers; making up to them we learn that he just now shot himself, but he took bad aim, so that the ball, which entered in at his forehead, came out at the top of his head. The soldier says he does not know who the man is, and that when a man has lost his all, without any fault of his own, the best thing he

can do is to shoot himself. Go hence to the Louvre, and stay but a few minutes; M. le Vicomte de St. Priest is here. Dine with the Duchess of Orleans. The Bishop of Orleans is here. This Bishop seems to be of that kind whose sincerest prayer is for the fruit of good living, and, to judge by his manner of talking, one would suppose that he deems it of more importance to speak than to speak truth. Go to the Louvre. Immediately after my arrival the Bishop comes in, who seems not at all content to find me here. His expectations of procuring a million prove abortive. The party tells him that he thinks the affair excellent, but as they must soon have paper money in France he must collect his funds to take advantage of that event, by which he will gain greatly. The Bishop goes away, and Madame gives me a plan of finance to read which is prepared by M. de St. Foi for the Bishop and on which she asks my opinion. I tell her that nothing more is necessary to ruin him entirely. In effect, it is a scheme for 1,000,000,000£ in paper money redeemable in twenty years, at the rate of 50,000,000£ per annum; the sum redeemed to be determined by lottery every six months, and then 25,000,000£ to be paid, and on that, premiums of twenty per cent. or five millions, and to effectuate this, a tax of sixty millions to be laid. This plan, then, is to borrow at an interest of ten millions per thousand millions, or one per cent. The author is clear that the paper, instead of depreciating, will be above par, but the one hundred and twenty-five million loan which forms the standard for the price of stocks here and which bears near seven per cent. interest, premiums included, sells at a discount of above ten per cent. I show her a few of the many fatal consequences which would attend the adoption.”

“Walk in the gardens of the Tuileries [January 22d] with Madame de Flahaut and M. de St. Pardou, and then dine with the Comte de Montmorin. M. de Marmontel* is here. After dinner I speak to the Count about the commerce with their islands. He says he hopes something will be done in the next fifteen days; that in his opinion they ought to permit a much freer commerce with us than with any other nation, because that the state of their colonies must depend on us. I communicate to him, in the most perfect confidence, the commission with which I am charged in part. I tell him two very great truths: that a free commerce with the British Islands is the object which will chiefly operate on us to give us the desire of a treaty of commerce with Britain, and that I prefer much a close connection with France. He tells me that their great misfortune here is to have no fixed plan nor principle, and at present no chief. I tell him that they ought to go to war. He says he is convinced that if they do not soon make war, it will soon be made against them. But their finances! I tell him that there is less difficulty in that than he is aware of. But the great mischief is in a constitution without energy. We join the company. A good deal of conversation about public affairs, in which Marmontel agrees with me in opinion. I had an opportunity at dinner to remark on the varieties in taste. A large trout was received from the Lake of Geneva, and it was a question when we are to dine off it. The maître d’hôtel was interpellated and the trout was produced—a very large one, of at least twenty pounds weight and perfectly fresh, having been brought by the courier. The maître d’hôtel says it must be kept till Wednesday, ‘pour être mortifié,’ and as that day does not suit the company, poor Monsieur Trout must e’en mortify two days longer. I cannot but sympathize in his afflictions.”

“The Vicomte de St. Priest, who dines at the Palais Royal to-day [January 25th] and sits next to me, mentions the idea of the King’s going to the Assemblée in order to put himself at the head of the Revolution. I blame this step and tell him, without mincing the matter, that his advisers to that step give him *un conseil ou inepte ou perfide*. Madame de Ségur differs with me, and after dinner her husband, to whom she mentioned it, also tells me that he holds the opposite opinion and wishes to discuss the matter with me. I only add that the King ought to send the Comte d’Artois his children, so that the whole of the royal family should not be in the power of their enemies, and that he should let the nation do as they please. In the course of things, they will come back to their allegiance. The occasion does not suit for a discussion of this matter. Return home and write. At nine go to the Louvre. The Bishop d’Autun is here. Some conversation about coinage, in which he is not quite right, but I find that he has studied the matter. I remind him of the book he was to lend me. Send my servant home with him, and he transmits it. ‘Tis somewhat droll to receive the ‘Portier des Chartreux’ from the hands of a reverend father in God.”

The following letter, written in January, to Washington, gives a forcible and correct picture of Paris, and of France as well. “Your sentiments,” he wrote, “on the Revolution effecting here I believe to be perfectly just, because they perfectly accord with my own, and that is, you know, the only standard which Heaven has given us by which to judge. The King is in effect a prisoner at Paris, and obeys entirely the National Assembly. This Assembly may be divided into three parts. One, called the *aristocrats*, consists of the high clergy, the members of the law (not lawyers), and such of the nobility as think they ought to form a separate order; another, which has no name, but which consists of all sorts of people, really friends to a free government. The third is composed of what are called here the *enragés*, that is, the *madmen*. These are the most numerous, and are of that class which in America is known by the name of pettifogging lawyers, together with a host of curates, and many of those who, in all revolutions, throng to the standard of change because they are not well. This party, in close alliance with the populace, derives from that circumstance very great authority. They have already unhinged everything. . . . The torrent rushes on, irresistible until it shall have wasted itself.

“The aristocrats are without a leader, and without any plan or counsels as yet, but ready to throw themselves into the arms of anyone who shall offer. The middle party, who mean well, have unfortunately acquired their ideas of government from books, and are admirable fellows upon paper; but as it happens, somewhat unfortunately, that the men who live in the world are very different from those who dwell in the heads of philosophers, it is not to be wondered at if the systems taken out of books are fit for nothing but to be put into books again. Marmontel is the only man I have met with among their literati who seems truly to understand the subject; for the rest, they discuss nothing in the Assembly. One large half of the time is spent in hollowing and bawling—their manner of speaking. Those who intend to speak write their names on a tablet, and are heard in the order that their names are written down, if the others will hear them, which often they refuse to do, keeping up a continual uproar till the orator leaves the pulpit. Each man permitted to speak delivers the result of his lucubrations, so that the opposing parties fire off their cartridges, and it is a million to one if their missile arguments happen to meet. The arguments are usually printed; therefore there

is as much attention paid to making them sound and look well, as to convey instruction or produce conviction. But there is another ceremony which the arguments go through, and which does not fail to affect the form, at least, and perhaps the substance. They are read beforehand in a small society of young men and women, and generally the fair friend of the speaker is one, or else the fair whom he means to make his friend, and the society very politely give their approbation, unless the lady who gives the tone to that circle chances to reprehend something, which is, of course, altered if not amended. Do not suppose I am playing the traveller. I have assisted at some of these readings, and will now give you an anecdote from one of them. I was at Madame de Staël's, the daughter of M. Necker. She is a woman of wonderful wit, and above vulgar prejudices of every kind. Her house is a kind of Temple of Apollo, where the men of wit and fashion are collected twice a week at supper, and once at dinner, and sometimes more frequently. The Comte de Clermont-Tonnerre (one of their greatest orators) read to us a very pathetic oration, and the object was to show that, as penalties are the legal compensation for injuries and crimes, the man who is hanged, having by that event paid his debt to society, ought not to be held in dishonor; and in like manner, he who has been condemned for seven years to be flogged in the galleys should, when he had served out his apprenticeship, be received again into good company as if nothing had happened. You smile; but observe that the extreme to which the matter was carried the other way, dishonoring thousands for the guilt of one, has so shocked the public sentiment as to render this extreme fashionable. The oration was very fine, very sentimental, very pathetic, and the style harmonious. Shouts of applause and full approbation. When this was pretty well over, I told him that his speech was extremely eloquent, but that his principles were not very solid. Universal surprise. A few remarks changed the face of things. The position was universally condemned, and he left the room. I need not add that as yet it has never been delivered in the Assembly, and yet it was of the kind which produces a decree by acclamation; for sometimes an orator gets up in the midst of another deliberation, makes a fine discourse, and closes with a good snug resolution, which is carried with a huzza. Thus, in considering a plan for a national bank proposed by M. Necker, one of them took it into his head to move that every member should give his silver buckles, which was agreed to at once, and the honorable member laid his upon the table, after which the business went on again. It is difficult to guess whereabouts the flock will settle when it flies so wild, but, as far as it is possible to guess at present, this (late) kingdom will be cast into a congeries of little democracies, not laid out according to the rivers and mountains, but with the square and compass, according to latitude and longitude; and as the provinces had anciently different laws (called *coutumes*), and as the clippings and parings of several provinces must fall together within some of the new divisions, I think such fermenting matter must give them a kind of political colic.

“Their Assemblée Nationale will be something like the old Congress, and the King will be *called* executive magistrate. As yet they have been busily engaged in pillaging the present occupant of his authority. How much they will leave him will depend upon the chapter of accidents; I believe it will be very little, but, little or much, the perspective of such a king and such an assembly brings to my mind a saying which Shakespeare has put into the mouths of two old soldiers upon hearing that Lepidus, one of the famous Triumvirate, was dead: ‘So the poor third is up. World, thou hast a

pair of chaps no more; and throw between them all the food thou hast, they'll grind the one the other.' At present the people are fully determined to support the Assembly, and although there are some discontents, I do not believe that anything very serious exists in the style of opposition. Indeed, it would be wonderful if there should, for hitherto an extension of privileges and a remission of taxes to the lower class has marked every stage of the progress. Besides, the love of novelty is a great sweetener in revolutions. But the time will come when this novelty is over, and all its charms are gone. In lieu of the taxes remitted other taxes must be laid, for the public burden must be borne. The elected administrators must then either indulge their electors, which will be ruinous to the fisc, or, in urging the collection of taxes, displease their constituents. In all probability there will be a little of both; hence must arise bickerings and heart-burnings among the different districts, and a great languor throughout the kingdom, as the revenue must fall short of calculation in point of time, if not in amount (and that is the same thing where revenue is concerned). It will follow that either the interest of the public debt will not be regularly paid, or that various departments will be starved; probably a little of both. Hence will result a loss of public credit, and then with much injury to commerce and manufactures, operating a further decrease of the means of revenue, and much debility as to the exterior operations of the kingdom. At this moment the discontented spirits will find congenial matter in abundance to work upon, and from that period all the future is involved in the mist of conjecture. If the reigning prince were not the small-beer character he is, there can be but little doubt that, watching events and making tolerable use of them, he would regain his authority; but what will you have from a creature who, situated as he is, eats and drinks and sleeps well, and laughs and is as merry a grig as lives? The idea that they will give him some money when he can economize, and that he will have no trouble in governing, contents him entirely. Poor man, he little thinks how unstable is his situation. He is beloved, but it is not with the sort of love which a monarch should inspire; it is that kind of good-natured pity which one feels for a led captive. There is, besides no possibility of serving him, for at the slightest show of opposition he gives up everything, and every person. As to his ministers, the Comte de Montmorin has more understanding than people in general imagine, and he means well, very well, but he means it feebly. He is a good, easy kind of man, one who would make an excellent peace minister in quiet times, but he wants the vigor of mind needful for great occasions. The Comte de la Luzerne is an indolent, pleasant companion, a man of honor, and as obstinate as you please, but he has somewhat of the creed of General Gates, that the world does a great part of its own business, without the aid of those who are at the head of affairs. The success of such men depends very much upon the run of the dice. The Comte de St. Priest is the only man among them who has what they call *caractère*, which answers to our idea of firmness, joined to some activity; but a person who knows him pretty well (which I do not), assures me that he is mercenary and false-hearted; if so, he cannot possess much good sense, whatever may be his share of genius or talents. M. de la Tour du Pin, whom I am almost unacquainted with, is, I am told, no great things in any respect. M. Necker was frightened by the *enragés* into the acceptance of him instead of the Marquis de Montesquiou, who has a considerable share of talents and a good deal of method. Montesquiou is, of course, at present the enemy of M. Necker, having been his friend.

“As to M. Necker, he is one of those men who has obtained a much greater reputation than he had any right to. His enemies say that as a banker he acquired his fortune by means which, to say the least, were indelicate, and they mention instances. But in this country everything is so much exaggerated that nothing is more useful than a little scepticism. M. Necker, in his public administration, has always been honest and disinterested, which proves well I think for his former private conduct, or else it proves that he has more vanity than cupidity. Be that as it may, an unspotted integrity as minister, and serving at his own expense in an office which others seek for the purpose of enriching themselves, have acquired him very deservedly much confidence. Add to this, his writings on finance teem with that sort of sensibility which makes the fortune of modern romances, and which is exactly suited to this lively nation, who love to read but hate to think. Hence his reputation. He is a man of genius, and his wife is a woman of sense. But neither of them has talents, or, rather, *the* talents of a great minister. His education as a banker has taught him to make tight bargains and put him upon his guard against projects. But though he understands *man* as a covetous creature, he does not understand *mankind*, a defect which is irremediable. He is utterly ignorant also of politics, by which I mean politics in the great sense, or that sublime science which embraces for its object the happiness of mankind. Consequently he neither knows what constitution to form nor how to obtain the consent of others to such as he wishes. From the moment of convening the States-General, he has been afloat on the wide ocean of incidents. But what is most extraordinary is, that M. Necker is a very poor financier. This I know will sound like heresy in the ears of most people, but it is true. The plans he has proposed are feeble and ineptious. Hitherto he has been supported by borrowing from the Caisse d’Escompte, which (being by means of what they call here an *arrêt de surséance* secured from all prosecution) has lent him a sum in their paper exceeding the totality of their capital by about four millions sterling. Last autumn he came forward to the Assemblée with a dreadful tale of woe, at the fag end of which was a tax upon every member of the community of a fourth of his revenue, which he declared to be needful for saving the state. His enemies adopted it (declaring, what is very true, that it is a wretched, impracticable expedient) in the hope that he and his scheme would fall together. This Assemblée, this patriotic band, took in a lump the minister’s proposition, because of their confidence and the confidence of the people in them, as they said, but, in fact, because they would not risk the unpopularity of a tax. The plan thus adopted, M. Necker, to escape the snare which he had nearly got taken in, altered his tax into what they call the patriotic contribution. By this every man is to declare, if he pleases, what he pleases to estimate as his annual income, and to pay one-fourth of it in three years. You will easily suppose that this fund was unproductive, and, notwithstanding the imminent danger of the state, here we are without any aid from the *contribution patriotique*. His next scheme was that of a national bank, or at least an extension of the Caisse d’Escompte. It has been variously modelled since, and many capital objections removed, but at last it is good for nothing, and so it will turn out; at present it is just beginning. By way of giving some base to the present operation, it is proposed and determined to sell about ten or twelve millions sterling of the Crown and Church lands, both of which are, by resolution of the Assemblée, declared to belong to the nation; but as it is clear that these lands will not sell well just now, they have appointed a treasurer to receive what they will sell for hereafter, and they issue a kind of order upon this treasurer, which is to be called an *assignat*, and is

to be paid (out of the sales) one, two, and three years hence. They expect that on these assignats they can borrow money to face the engagements of the Caisse d'Escompte, and they are at the same time to pay some of the more pressing debts with the same assignats. Now this plan must fail as follows: First, there will be some doubt about the title of these lands, at least till the Revolution is completed. Secondly, the representative of lands must always (for a reason which will presently appear) sell for less than a representative of money, and therefore, until public confidence is so far restored as that the five per cents are above par, these assignats, bearing five per cent., must be below par; money, therefore, cannot be raised upon them but at a considerable discount. Thirdly, the lands to be disposed of must sell a great deal below their value, for there is not money to buy them in this country, and the proof is that they never obtained money on loan at a legal interest, but always upon a premium sufficient to draw it from the employments of commerce and manufactures; and as the Revolution has greatly lessened the mass of money, the effect of the scarcity must be greater. But further, there is a solecism in the plan which escapes most of them, and which is nevertheless very palpable. The value of lands in Europe is, you know, estimated by the income. To dispose of public lands, therefore, is to sell public revenue, and therefore, taking the legal interest at five per cent., land renting for roof. ought to sell for 2,000ff; but they expect that these lands will sell for 3,000£, and that thereby not only public credit will be restored but a great saving will be made, as the 3,000£ will redeem an interest of 150£ It is, however, an indisputable fact that, public credit being established, the stocks are worth more than land of equal income, and for three reasons: First, that there is no trouble whatever in the management; secondly, there is no danger of bad crops and taxes; and, thirdly, they can be disposed of at a moment's warning, if the owner wants money, and be as readily repurchased when it suits his convenience. If, therefore, the public credit be restored, and there be a surplus sum of ten to twelve millions to be invested, and if such large sales (contrary to custom) should not, from the amount, affect the price, still the lands must go cheaper than the stocks, and consequently the interest bought will be smaller than the revenue sold.

“Having thus given you a very rude sketch of the men and the measures of this country, I see and feel that it is time to conclude. I sincerely wish I could say that there are able men at hand to take the helm, should the present pilot abandon the ship. But I have great apprehensions as to those who may succeed. The present set must wear out in the course of the year, and most of them would be glad to get fairly out of the scrape at present, but it is alike dangerous to stay or to go, and they must patiently await the breath of the Assembly and follow as it blows. The new order of things cannot endure. I hope it may be mended, but fear it may be changed. All Europe just now is like a mine ready to explode, and if this winter does not produce peace, next summer will behold a wider extension of the war.”

“To-day [January 26th], at half-past three, I go to M. de Lafayette's. He tells me that he wishes to have a meeting of Mr. Short, Mr. Paine, and myself, to consider their judiciary, because his place imposes on him the necessity of being right. I tell him that Paine can do him no good, for that, although he has an excellent pen to write, he has but an indifferent head to think. In conversing about this affair he tells me that he has gotten into his possession a *mémoire* written by the refugees of Turin to stir up the

Princes of Germany against France, etc. It is to be read in council to-morrow by M. de Montmorin. Lafayette says it shall be published. I desire him to suspend that determination, and give him reasons which convince his judgment, but without affecting his will. He is to show it to me to-morrow, and I think the public will soon be let into the secret. At half-past nine go to the Louvre. Madame has another lady with her and is at play. She apologizes for it in English, which the other understands. This is whimsical enough. I make tea for them, and at half-past eleven we are left *en tête-à-tête*. I communicate to her a note, written this morning, upon the situation of affairs, and the conduct which the King ought to pursue. This she will hand to the Queen through Vicq d'Azyr, the Queen's physician. I tell her that she must cultivate the Queen and give her good advice, the direct contrary of what the King receives from the ruling party; that if they succeed she will then be provided for by means of her friends, but if they fail, then the Queen will feel obligations which, having the power, she will of course repay. My friend feels some repugnance to this, which is only proper conduct for her. She tells me an affair in which the Marquis de Montesquiou behaves with indelicacy, and in which she sees the prospect of making some money. She is to give me the particulars for my consideration. I leave her at half-past twelve and return home."

"Friday [January 29th], I go to M. de Montmorin's to eat the trout, which was so much 'mortifié' that he refused to assist at this repast. In plain English, it was spoiled some days ago. Before dinner the question of the King's visit to the Assemblée was started, and I very imprudently give my opinion of that measure. Reflection tells me that whether proposed by Necker or by Lafayette, Montmorin has probably agreed to it. The Baron de Besenval is released from his confinement this evening, about eight o'clock. From what Madame de Chastellux tells me as coming from Madame Necker, by the Duc de Nivernois, I conclude that the proposed plan for the King originates in the Finance Department. It is ridiculous. Go to the Louvre. M. de Montesquiou is there. We have some conversation on political topics, and after a while he goes away. Madame de Flahaut is exceedingly distressed. She tells me their conversation, from which she collected that unless he can borrow money to relieve his wants he must put an end to his existence. She is much shocked at the situation of a friend who has been long and sincerely attached to her. I calm her griefs as well as I can, and leave her to go to Madame de Chastellux's. The Comte de Ségur gives me all the reasons for the King going to the Assemblée, which are not worth a sou, in my opinion."

"This morning [February 1st] the Comte de Luxembourg comes to breakfast with me; as I am very busy, I cut the conversation short and begin to write. He leaves me, lamenting always that he is not old enough to be in administration, where, with the aid of my counsels, he could do wonders. He will know better by and by. Dine with the Duchess of Orleans. After dinner we discuss a question on which I deliver a sentiment somewhat extraordinary, in this extraordinary country, viz., that a woman of sense and learning is more easily led astray than another; among other reasons, because, having perhaps a higher sense of duty, she feels a pleasure proportionately greater in the breach which leads her on further and faster than another could go. The Duchess denies this position, but in my elucidations I give some traits of female sentiment so true that an old lady present declares my opinion to be abominable, but fears it is just. I cannot stay to finish the discussion, but as soon as my carriage is announced I step

into it and go to M. Necker's. I tell him briefly the conduct of the houses in Holland, and add that I must go thither before I can deal further with him. He seems to be much disappointed. I tell him that I will do everything in my power to conclude the affair agreeably to his wishes; that it is possible the United States may employ me, and in that case I shall, from motives of delicacy, decline all further dealings with him, but in such case I will cause the thing to be done by others. He seems better pleased. He is one of those men whose opinions one must guess at. From Madame's manner, I think I can perceive that my neglect of the house for some time past has not been useful. Perhaps there are other reasons. There are commotions in Brittany, and the Comte de Thiard tells me that commotions arise from the Tiers, *i.e.*, from some citizens disguised as peasants. Evidently it is a concert with the members of the Assemblée. Go hence to the Louvre, and sup. Madame de Flahaut tells me that the Queen has told Vicq d'Azyr she has heard that the Bishop is a man of great abilities, and that it is worth while to have such men. Vicq d'Azyr said he was well assured, from one of his intimate friends, that Her Majesty would never have cause to complain of him. The Queen smiled and said she knew who that friend was, to which the physician replied, 'Then Your Majesty will spare me the indiscretion of mentioning it.' He gave her the note I had written, and which Madame de Flahaut had copied for the purpose. The Queen said that, so long as M. Necker continues in office, she will not interfere in affairs."

"This morning [February 3d] M. de la Chaise calls, and I spend the rest of the morning with him. I try to persuade him to join me at once in an offer to M. Necker on the debt, but he is afraid. I show him the advantages of which the plan is susceptible, and the facility of the execution, but he dares not. He recommends it to me very strongly to go to Holland, and I think I shall take his advice. Dine at the Palais Royal. An excellent dinner. Puisignieu, who is here, tells me that he finds that I was right in my ideas about the effect of the King's speech, and owns that he was mistaken. I whisper to Madame de Ségur that this information has no effect either to alter or confirm that opinion, which is founded on what I conceive to be the nature of man. It is a very strange thing that men who have lived in the world fifty years should believe that opposition, founded on strong direct personal interests, can be instantly calmed by a few honeyed expressions. The present idea is that it will have a wonderful effect in the provinces, but I can conceive of no other effect there than to create animosity. The noblesse will consider it as the effect of the thralldom in which he is held, and the populace as a declaration of war against their superiors. The Abbé Delille repeats some verses, his 'Catacombs.' They are very fine, and very well spoken, but I remark to him that one of his lines is *un peu fort*:

'Il ne volt que la nuit, *n'entend que la silence.*'

He tells me he is surprised that I, above all men, should make that remark, who must certainly remember Milton's 'darkness visible.' There is a difference, however, both in the phrase and in the idea; there is a difference, also, in the kind of poem, and perhaps Milton was on the verge, at least, of bombast in that expression. However, I do not discuss the matter further with him."

Just as Morris was hoping to arrange satisfactorily the affair of a loan on the debt to France with houses in Holland, he received the information “that the houses in Holland have not only refused to be connected with me, either as parties or on commission, but have opened a loan for 3,000,000£ on account of Congress, and written a letter to Mr. Hamilton* and M. Necker urging them not to agree. Go to Mr. Short’s to see the letter to Hamilton, which, besides being a very foolish one, is, like all the rest, a violation of the promises made to me. I tell Van Staphorst my opinion of their conduct, which he acknowledges to be just. I have disagreeable forebodings about the affairs negotiating in Holland. Van Staphorst tells me that he thinks I had better go to Amsterdam, and that, although the houses do not merit a participation in my plan, yet they can be so useful that I shall find it to my interest to employ them. I tell him that I think I shall go. Short comes to see me, and I read him my letter to Colonel Hamilton. He will write in conformity to my sentiments, and is much hurt to find that the plan has not succeeded. Madame de Ségur is at Madame de Chastellux’s when I call there. She tells me, and the Maréchal confirms it, that the Queen decided the King to go to the Assemblée. She adds, as received from an aristocratic quarter, that His Majesty, the day before, swore hard at Necker, and asked him if that step would procure peace, which the poor minister could not promise; that he was very much out of humor, also, all the morning, and that when he returned from the Assemblée he passed some time in tears. I doubt that this picture is overcharged, but I believe the ground is just, and my fair informant is of the same opinion. The Maréchal avows that he has been very much mistaken as to Necker’s abilities.”

On the 4th of February the King sent a message to the Assembly to say that at midday he desired to attend their deliberations: “Je désire être reçu sans cérémonie.” Dressed in black, attended by several pages and his ministers, he arrived, affected not to sit down, but, hat in hand, read his discourse. The diary comments on the event as follows: “The Comte de Montmorin tells me that the King’s speech has been received with great applause. The Assembly take an oath to support the constitution which is to be made. A strange oath. If this step of His Majesty has any effect on reasonable minds, it must be to prove more clearly the feebleness of his ministers. For three months past they have inveighed (to the members) against the proceedings of the Assembly, and they appear to give His Majesty’s full approbation. Go from hence to M. de Lafayette’s. He asks my opinion of this step, and is much surprised to hear that I disapprove of it. I tell him that I think it can do no good, and must therefore do harm. He says it will enable him to advocate the royal authority in the Assemblée.”

“Dine to-day [February 5th] with the Prince de Broglio, and go afterwards to Madame de Chastellux’s. The Prince of Hesse comes in, and tells us of what has passed in Brabant relative to the reduction of 12,000 Hessian troops which are sent for, and will probably arrive. This comes exactly to the point which I have long suspected. Mention, in consequence of what Madame de Chastellux says, my opinion, which he contests a little, but on going away he tells me it is all easy enough if the Prince of Brunswick were at the head of affairs; but this, he says, is prevented by the Baron de Hertzberg. I find Madame de Flahaut at dinner with Miss Fanny and Alice, nieces of her *religieuse*. After dinner go with Madame de Flahaut below to answer a letter. After returning to the chamber, they contrive to keep me by simply locking the door, and thus I am deprived of my intended visit to the Commandant General. Go from

hence to the house of Madame de Vannoise. A Madame de Pusy, who is here, seems to be on the lookout for aid. Go to Madame de Laborde's. A Mrs. Williams, who is the wife of an English artillery officer, and daughter of Doctor Mallett, the friend of Lord Bolingbroke, makes acquaintance with me. She pays me some compliments, which are too pungent for my nerves, and, though they might have passed in French, they revolt in English."

"While I am dining to-day [February 10th] with Madame de Flahaut, the Bishop comes in, and tells us the King's advice to the Comte d'Angivilliers, which is curious. 'Pray be quiet, Count, for the times are difficult, and everyone must take care of himself; so that, if you censure the present measures, you may get yourself into trouble.' Go hence to Madame de Chastellux's; the Bishop's report of an address from the Assemblée to their constituents is as much censured here as it was applauded at M. de Lafayette's. I see M. de Montmorin, and tell him what has passed respecting the debt, and that in consequence I am going to Holland. Go from hence to the Comédie Française. A wretched piece. Take Madame de Flahaut home. Monsieur comes in from Versailles; lend him my carriage to go to the King's *coucher*. Tell her that I must go in a day or two to Holland."

"Go to-day [February 13th] to M. Necker's to dinner. After dinner, as I am going away, I ask if he has any commissions for Amsterdam. He asks what leads me thither; I tell him that I wish to divert the gentlemen there from their present pursuits and bring them into my views. He objects. Says he understands that the loan they have opened is filled, and that he expects the Americans will pay the debt, which is the best way. Thus it seems that this plan is finally ruined. At Madame de Chastellux's, to-night, the Comtesse de Ségur tells me that on Wednesday next M. Necker is to go to the Assemblée, and tell them that upon the 1st of March there will not be a shilling in any chest belonging to the public. The Duchess comes in; the usual chit-chat."

"After dining with the Duchess of Orleans, go to Lafayette's [February 15th]. He takes me into his closet and enters into conversation on the state of affairs. In the course of conversation I ask him what situation their frontier towns are in toward Flanders. He gives but a disagreeable account of them, and complains of the Minister at War, whose misconduct has aided the spirit of revolt prevalent among the troops. I tell him that the enemies of France must be extremely stupid if they do not attack those places. He is much alarmed at the riots which still rage in the provinces, and consults me as to a plan he has in agitation for giving legal authority to quell them. Apprehensive that the officers of the municipality may not appear on some occasions to head the military, he has, in concurrence with M. Short, *for this extraordinary occasion*, determined to authorize the commanding officer of the troops to act alone. Thus these violent advocates of liberty adopt the measure most hostile to it. I oppose the plan; show him the evil consequences, personal and political. In reply to the question, what are they to do if the municipalities will not make use of the authorities committed to them, I first mark out the various penalties which may be devised, but conclude that they will all prove insufficient, because the institution of the municipalities is radically wrong. Predict to him that they will become the sources of endless confusions, and of great debility, but observe, at the same time, that they have flattered the people with such extravagant notions of liberty that I see it is out of their

power to alter that organization until experience may have made them wiser. Suggest the appointment of commissioners as conservators to be sent into each district. He thinks that the Assemblée will not agree to give the King authority to name such commissioners. Finally, however, we agree that it may be proper to declare, *provisoirement*, that certain commissioners already named for other purposes shall be vested with the power in question until the municipalities are organized. He tells me that he must give the King a sugar-plum for his speech to the Assembly. I smile, and tell him that he has no sugar-plum to give; that they have already parcelled out the executive authority in such way that they cannot restore it to the monarch. He tells me that he has thought of appointing St. Priest Minister at War, with Duportail under him. I tell him that I do not know St. Priest, but understand from one who does know him that he is *faux*, and advise him to be clear on that point before he makes him his master. As to Duportail, I say nothing, but I believe him to be incapable because I believe him to be too much a man of the closet; but I know that he has ideas very different from Lafayette as to this revolution. I tell Lafayette that their finances are in the high road to destruction; that anarchy seems to menace, and even already to attack on every quarter; wherefore they must, above all things, secure the army, which promises to be the only existing establishment. I tell him that if a war breaks out they must conduct it on principles totally different from those hitherto used; that they must put strong garrisons in their islands, and then abandon the ocean and totally stop their commerce, which they will be unable to protect; that such ships as they can fit out must be sent to cruise as privateers; that they must march with all the force they can muster directly into Holland, and endeavor to possess themselves of that country. I have not time to develop these ideas, but if needful I will take an opportunity to put them on paper. Mr. Short tells me that Lafayette consulted him, with others, this morning about the means of quelling riots. Go from hence to Madame de Staël's. Stay but a little while. She desires me to bring her a novel from England, if any good one comes out. She has been told that I speak ill of her. I tell her it is not true."

"The morning of February the 16th, prepare for my journey to Holland, get a passport and maps, bid Madame de Flahaut adieu, and at eleven on the 17th leave Paris."

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XIV.

Journey to Antwerp. Brussels. Reflections on the state of Flanders. Vanderhooft's committee. Notes on the cathedral and galleries of Antwerp. Supper at M. Cornelison's. Agreeable society of Antwerp. Notes during the journey to Amsterdam. Evening in Madame Bost's salon. Political discussions. Force of the Dutch navy. Scene on the Merchants' Exchange at Amsterdam. News from France of Necker's resignation. The Hague. The churches at Delft. Crosses to England. Interview with the Duke of Leeds on the treaty and despatch of a minister to the United States. News from Paris. Pointed opposition to Necker. Visits Sir John Sinclair. Letter to Colonel Ternant. Meets Fox at dinner. Mrs. Jordan at Drury Lane Theatre. Warren Hastings's trial. Criticism on Burke and Fox. Brilliant ball at Mrs. John B. Church's.

Morris's journey to Antwerp was not marked by any particular adventures. Rather uncomfortable inns, extortionate landlords, and lazy horses are the principal experiences he notes. "Through France," he says, "I find that the decree of the Assembly respecting the monks was very much hazarded and is disagreeable to the people in general. The appearance of the houses and people in Flanders announces a milder government than that of the country we have quitted. Parts of the country abound in coal, and the pits are now worked to advantage by the aid of steam-engines. This article seems all which was wanted for the wealth of Flanders, and if in the present ferment they should (by being annexed to Holland or otherwise) get the Scheldt opened, it will be difficult to conjecture what will be the extent of their wealth.

"At Brussels I see in the Grande Place the Milice Bourgeoise. Valor may supply these people with something instead of discipline, but I am inclined to think that their fate must be decided by other force than that of this country. I learn that the popular party, joined to the nobility, begins to show itself here against the clergy, but the monks have the advantage in the villages."

"At Malines," says the diary for February 21st, "the people are disposed to subject themselves to the Stadtholder and form one country with Holland. They dislike the conduct of the States, at least so says an intelligent fellow of a waiter, and he seems as likely to understand the sentiments of his fellow-citizens as anybody. I ask him if the religion of the two countries will not form an obstacle. He says it is thought not, for that many of the Dutch begin to become converts to the Catholic faith, *'which is not to be wondered at, because man cannot continue forever on this earth'*. I express my joy at this happy circumstance and add my opinion that the Dutch believe in God; but this is expressed with an air of doubt which requires further information. 'Yes, sir, they believe in God, but not in the Holy Virgin, and, besides, they eat flesh upon fast days; wherefore you see that they are in a very dangerous way.' I acknowledge the force of this observation. At Antwerp I overtake M. Grand, who left Paris near three days before me; but by sundry accidents to his carriage he has been delayed for nearly that space of time. He departs to-morrow. Asks the news of Paris, and communicates what he has heard in his way. We converse a little on politics and I give him the result

of my reflections on the state of this country, which is, that the true interest of Holland is that it should be a republic and, as such, a barrier against France. The Scheldt will then continue to be shut up for the benefit of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The interest of France is to possess this country, by which means she keeps all enemies at a most respectful distance, and the interest of this country is to become subject to Britain, for by that means only can they enjoy the benefit of an extensive commerce.

“M. Grand tells me [February 22d] that M. Necker wants the money which has been borrowed by the Dutch houses. After he leaves me I visit M. de Wolf, and we enter upon business immediately. Visit M. Van Ertborn and converse with him about the situation of the politics of this country. In the course of conversation he tells me that the people here have more capital than good use for it, but they are wary of speculations and loans, many affairs of that kind having turned out badly. They are generally of opinion here that France must make soon a bankruptcy. It is made long since. Dalton is dead, but it is yet a dispute whether by poison, pistol, or gout. Vanderhooft is of a committee called the Secret Committee. He is to be in town tomorrow. That committee, a kind of self-elected body, have, it is said, made some kind of treaty with foreign powers. I doubt that fact much. A young man who arrives from Brussels, and is in the patriot army, gives but a wretched account of the États-Généraux. Already there has been a riot at Brussels, in which they say one person lost his life. In consequence, Vanderhooft, *as the representative of the Nation*, has published a placard purporting that the States act only as representatives of the people, in whom the sovereignty resides.”

“Breakfast [February 27th] with M. Dubois. He gives me the French gazettes. The Marquis de Favras is, I find, condemned and executed. He died bravely, and I believe unjustly. But a sacrifice was, I suppose, deemed to be necessary. After breakfast we go to the cathedral, and there view the famous ‘Descent from the Cross,’ painted by Rubens. It is done with dreadful exactitude. Another fine picture in this church is the ‘Beatification of the Blessed Virgin,’ which appears to have been completed by Rubens in fifteen days, and to have been paid for at the rate of 100 florins per day. His receipt has been discovered for this picture charged in that way. From the cathedral instead of going, as we at first intended, to visit some galleries of paintings, we go to the house of M. Van Ertborn to see the triumphal entry of M. Vanderhooft. On this occasion the troops are all turned out under arms, and we have as fine a procession as the city can afford. It is, in fact, very splendid, and the hero of the day enters amid the repeated acclamations of his fellow - citizens. Van Eupon, the Secretary of the States, accompanies him, and is also one of the pillars of the Revolution.

“Go to dine with M. de Wolf. Mr. Westbrook and his lady are here, also a colonel in the British service, a German, whose object at Antwerp is to make a loan for the Prince of Wales and the Dukes of York and Clarence. Mr. Westbrook assures me that the revolution is to be attributed entirely to Vanderhooft. The colonel tells me that Yorktown in Virginia was taken by the French troops only, and that the Americans looked on at a distance. I hope, for the honor of Mr. Vanderhooft, that the one piece of information is more just than the other. I take the liberty to put the colonel right, which might as well perhaps have been let alone, but I could not resist the propensity. We have a very good fish dinner, for this is a maigre day. Go with M. Dubois to a

concert. We are in the box of Madame with her sister, the Comtesse d'Otromonde, and their father, the Comte d'Aes, who informs me that news are arrived announcing with certainty the Emperor's death. The Comte d'Otromonde and his lady repeat a very polite invitation to dine on Monday, as I could not be of their party this day, but I must depart for Amsterdam. After waiting about half an hour Vanderhooft comes in, and is received by loud acclamations, which are repeated at every interval during the concert. After he goes out they continue singing different songs to his honor in the French and Flemish languages. The former are more estimable for the sentiment than for the poetry, and the latter I do not understand. With my pencil I write on a card and give to the ladies my tribute of applause in English, which they do not understand, and are therefore at liberty to believe that it is excellent.

Let freedom's friends from every clime
Here virtue's noble triumph see.
Hail, Vanderhooft! to latest time
Thy name shall still remember'd be.
For thee the patriot's breast shall glow,
For thee the grateful song shall rise,
On thee celestial choirs bestow
A place distinguish'd in the skies.

From the concert we take a turn in the coach of Madame Dubois through the town to see the illuminations, and then go to supper at M. Cornelison's, who married the sister of M. Dubois. The burgundy here is transcendently good, but though of generous quality and generously bestowed, I feel not the desire to pour out large libations. After supper the conversation turns on the politics and revolution of this country. The master of the house, who seems to be much indisposed to the authority assumed by the States, and is not perhaps a very great friend to the revolution, gives us a history of it in his way; and as some dispute arises, I am able to collect from the whole conversation that a much greater portion of the success is to be attributed to the misconduct of the Austrian troops than to the vigor of the patriots either in body or mind. And it seems also to be pretty clear that the members of the States are of that species which is called good sort of men; and, indeed, if I might judge from Vanderhooft's countenance, he, also, is rather distinguishable for *bonhomie* than for talents. Those who are called the Tiers État are representatives rather of the sovereign than of the people, from the manner in which the elections are made; and as the nobles are hereditary, and the clergy are more properly a profession than a political order, it must be confessed that such an assemblage (originally possessed by their constitution of a share of the legislative authority, and now by their own assumption possessed of the remainder, and of the whole executive authority) does not seem likely to render the condition of the people very agreeable should this form of government be finally established. But I cannot but think it more prudent to secure the country first against the late sovereign, and afterwards, when the revolution is completed, put their internal affairs in order.

“The English nation seems to be more agreeable to the inhabitants of this country than either the Dutch or French. I do not exactly see the reason of this, nor do I recollect anything in their history which should have given rise to this preference. The shutting

up of the Scheldt seems naturally enough to account for a rooted dislike of the Dutch, and perhaps they are too near neighbors for the French to be very much attached to them, for among nations as with individuals near neighbors are seldom good friends.”

“After dining to-day [February 28th] with M. de Wolf we behold the procession of M. Vanderhooft, who is about to depart, and who is escorted from the city with as much pomp as was yesterday displayed to receive him. Later in the evening M. Dubois takes me to his brother’s to sup. After supper the conversation is accidentally turned to religion, and a gentleman present observes that in all countries there is an established religion. I assure him that there is none in America. We are led too far on this head, for this country is too ignorant as yet to understand the true principles of human policy with respect to religion, and too bigoted, so that truths almost universally acknowledged appear almost like atheism. At least such is my conjecture, from the countenances of the company, when I tell them that God is sufficiently powerful to do his own business without human aid, and that man should confine his care to the actions of his fellow-creatures, leaving to that Being to influence the thoughts as he may think proper.”

March 1st, Morris left Antwerp and proceeded to Amsterdam. “My short residence in this city,” he says, “has attached me to the society I was in, so that I leave it with regret.” The business which occasioned his visit was not without result, for he and De Wolf “agreed as to ways and means of operating hereafter in the American debt.” On his way he observes that “the whole country on the right is laid waste, and the greater part is under water. The appearance as we approach is terrible, for it looks like a wide ocean which we are to cross on a strip of land. The fact, I find, is that the dyke was broken down by the river, and the torrent swept away everything. It appears to have been done a year or two ago, and is at present repaired, but this is only a specimen of the state which seems to threaten, though perhaps at a very remote period, this extraordinary country. A great part of it is very much below the level of the water, and therefore the smallest perforation of the bank would let in the inundation at any time. The texture of these dykes also appears to me to be nothing more than the common earth thrown up. If so, a cargo of musk-rats would do them more serious mischief than an hundred thousand men, provided that animal could exist in this climate, and I see no reason why it should not. After we leave this theatre of destruction we go along a very considerable distance with the Haarlem Meer (a very large lake communicating near to the city of Amsterdam with the ocean). On our left and on our right the turf grounds are under water, the road too narrow to admit of more than one carriage for a great part of the way, and the Haarlem Meer (perhaps swelled by the tide) is nearly on a level with us. This is as dreary and disagreeable a ride as can be wished. At a little before four we are set down at the ‘Arms of Amsterdam,’ so that we have been nine hours on the road.”

“Go to see M. Hope on business of the American debt [March 4th]. The envoy from Prussia to Portugal comes in. At dinner the conversation turns a little upon the state of Europe, and the envoy seems to think that the Archduke will be chosen Emperor if he will make the needful sacrifices, one of which (and, indeed, the principal one) is to give up the alliance with the Empress of Russia and make peace with the Turk. He seems to suppose that he may by this means recover the possession of Flanders. Go

hence to Madame Bost's. A very general company and excellent music. The salon is very handsome, and decorated with valuable pictures by the greatest masters. French politics are immediately broached, and I find that they are of the Orange party, consequently glad to see the miseries which the Revolution has brought upon France. I endeavor to show that the state of things in France was such as to necessitate a change of some sort, and although they have, as is natural, gone into an extreme, yet there is reason to hope that, seeing their error, they will return. Insensibly we come toward Holland, and in reply to an observation of Madame I observe that this country appears to me in a situation as precarious as any other in Europe; that they cannot long continue what they now are, but must descend of necessity by the weight of irresistible circumstances. This calls out M. Bost (a man of sense and information), and in the spirit of argument he communicates useful facts, which are nevertheless in confirmation of the opinion he combats. I tell him that the individual wealth of the country resulting from the accumulated interest of money lent is fatal to the public wealth; that it has from natural causes banished manufactures, and that their agriculture, circumscribed within narrow bounds, cannot bear any further impositions; consequently the revenue cannot be increased. And as their commerce, though positively greater than in the last century, is comparatively much less, that source of public wealth is drying up the competition of people whose natural position gives them advantages. For the commerce here, being that of an intermediary between other nations, renders a profit only to the merchant without adding anything to the general mass. M. Bost in reply to this says that the wealth depending on manufactures is not only precarious but a *felo de se*, and necessarily destructive of itself, because it must so raise the price of labor as to give to other countries an advantageous competition. He is mistaken, but I think it best to let him enjoy his mistake. Besides, it is time to go to the concert.

“We have very good music. I ask an officer of the navy the state of their army and navy. He tells me they have fifty ships of the line and as many frigates; their army consists of 3,000 infantry and 2,000 artillery, and as many cavalry. These last are some of the finest in Europe. I ask Mr. Bost how much the tax of the twenty-fifth penny yielded here. He tells me that it produced in the province of Holland eighty millions of guelders.”

“The news from France to-day [March 6th] is that M. Necker is to go to the Assemblée and propose a plan of finance which will put everything to rights, and this they seem to be convinced of. La Chaise had told me last evening that things were going on very badly in their finances, and that M. Necker has the jaundice; thus the same post brings very different accounts of the same thing.”

“Go to the exchange [March 10th], which is a very curious scene. Jan Willinks takes me upstairs to a window to show it more fully. A general meeting, this, of the representatives of the earth. Each merchant has his stand, and the brokers, who are as busy as it is possible for men to be, keep constantly applying to them on one subject or another. Go to the French Theatre, and sit in the Burgomaster's box immediately behind Madame Bost and Madame Hasselaer. I find that this latter was acquainted at Spa with my brother, General Morris. She says that his wife is a very amiable woman. Learn the news from France, which is that Necker has announced that he must retire,

and proposes to stop payment for a year, also to issue paper money (at least, so says the abstract of his speech). These wild measures must ruin the exchange and stocks.”

“Dine [March 13th] with W. Willinks (*en famille*). Our company consists of his children, with their private tutors and a professor, who is, he says, a very learned man; also a student under that professor. By this means we are ten at table, and Madame places me in an arm-chair at the end of it. She sits on my right, and Monsieur on my left. Two dishes of cod, one at each end, some potatoes in the middle, the cod’s liver boiled in one sauce-boat and butter boiled in the other, form the first course. With the aid of some mustard, I take in a sufficient quantity of the fish to be covered against contingencies. When this service is removed, the potatoes are replaced by a piece of boiled beef, and the dish of fish next me is in like manner replaced by two miserable chickens, or rather fowls, whose sharp breast-bones complain of the fire by which the little juice they once might boast of has been dried away. A watery sauce which surrounds them can but ill supply the defect of nature and the waste of art. A flat pudding at the other end, and four plates of greasy vegetables at the corners, make up this second course. The dessert is a little better as to quantity, but the quality shows that the principles of a rigid economy have been duly attended to. The wines, however, might give that indigestion against which the due precautions have been taken in the dinner, but from a similar cause, there is little danger of excess. Some insipid Cape Madeira figures in the dessert, with some sweet wine which is called White Cape. The conversation is like the feast, and turns upon business. I have but little reason to be satisfied with it; however, time and chance produce strange revolutions on this globe. We shall see.”

“To-day [March 16th] we embark in M. Willinks’s yacht for Saardam. It is a flat-bottomed vessel, with leeboards, and is broader in proportion to the length than a periauger. It is rigged sloop-fashion. At Saardam I am made to remark the old-fashioned dress, and am struck with what is not pointed out; viz., the manner of arranging the hair as I have seen it in old pictures of the time of Louis ??., in little ringlets on the forehead. A girl of about fifteen, with auburn locks in that style, a clear complexion, and rosy cheeks, looks like one of the woodland nymphs of ancient poesy. Another thing pointed out to me is, I believe, peculiar to this part of the world—a mortuary door, which is never opened but to take away a corpse.”

“I hear [March 19th] that the Committee of Finance have made severe strictures on Necker’s plan, and reprobated in particular the idea of a board of commissioners of the treasury, chosen from out of the Assemblée. They recommend also a paper money, bearing interest, which they think will not depreciate, and in this I think they are very much mistaken. Time only can show the worth of that measure. The exchange in the meantime, and the *effets royaux*, continue to fall. I go to the older Madame Capadoces, but the young ladies of the family are here. Madame Caton receives well my advances. Madame Sara seems to have more understanding than her sister-in-law. She is equally beautiful, though in a different style, and has an air *moins lubrique*, but her eyes speak the language of that sentiment which warms and melts the heart. No pulse but the beat of delight, no sound but the murmur of joy. Heaven knoweth best, ye fair daughters of Sion, if ever it will be my lot to behold you again. All which I can do is to raise some gentle prepossessions not unfavorable to future

efforts, should chance again place me within that circle where you fill so bright a space. I find that my adorations are not illy received by the fair Sara, and that the delicious Caton is less pleased than she expected at those worshippings. *Tant mieux.* We retire after one o'clock, which is not the way to preserve health, I believe."

Morris left Amsterdam on the 22d, with assurances from Mr. John Willinks that if it were possible they would effect his object in regard to the debt question. The Hague was the next stopping-place, and the following morning, immediately after breakfast, he went to Scheveningen, then "a little fishing-village" merely. "The road is straight, level, and paved with brick. We go directly through the dunes or sand-hills, which, viewed in their extent northward along the coast, have somewhat the shape and appearance of a troubled sea. A small ascent from Scheveningen of five or six feet presents to my view the German ocean. Three fishing-vessels lie on the beach. Their leeboards are made of one plank only, and are long; the vessels short, and by no means clean-built. They are not quite flat-bottomed, but nearly so. My guide tells me that they have a great commerce for fish. At present they are packing up skate for Brabant. Returning, we go to the prince's cabinet of paintings. There are here several very good pieces—and some indifferent; a 'Venus' and an 'Eve,' both by Rubens. Dine, and depart for Rotterdam. Stop at Delft and visit two churches. In the one are the monuments of Van Tromp and another admiral; in the other church is the monument of the great Nassau, first Stadtholder, murdered in this city by a person whom the Spanish had hired for the purpose. At the feet of the hero is represented his faithful dog, who, when his master was slain, would neither eat nor drink, and so perished in affectionate and sorrowful attendance. Poor, worthy creature! In this church is also the monument of Grotius. Over the Stadtholder are represented two weeping Cupids, but nothing can be more ludicrous than their grimaces. From hence we proceed to Rotterdam, and arrive at half-past six, having been but three hours. Mr. Gregory, I find, has engaged a packet, and the next morning [March 24th] we take a wagon and cross over to Helvoetsluys. The weather is very warm, the violets are in full bloom, and I pick up on a slope of the works which faces the sun a mushroom very large, but too old to be eaten. We disappoint our host in not dining with him, and in taking one bottle only of his wine for our sea-stores. Set sail with a wind directly ahead and the tide almost done, consequently with but little prospect of getting to sea this evening. At low-water it falls calm, and we cast anchor about two leagues below Helvoet. Captain Bridges seems to be a good-natured, honest fellow; his mate, with a sour though not sober countenance, looks ineffable contempt at the passengers; I suppose, because they are not seamen. A fine evening closes this day."

Fifty hours after sailing Morris was landed safely at Harwich on Saturday, March 27th, whence he proceeded immediately to London. "The season here," he says, "is very far advanced. The primroses, the violets, and many fruit-trees are in full bloom. The rape-seed, also, is in blossom. Arrive at five o'clock at Froome's Hotel, Covent Garden. Go to bed at ten o'clock, and am but just fairly nestled there, when my brother, General Morris, arrives. My sister is also at the door, but does not come in. The object was to take me home to supper. Am to breakfast with them at ten tomorrow."

“This morning [March 28th], at ten, I go to General Morris’s. A very sisterly reception from his lady. Stay and chat till near twelve, then visit the Marquis de la Luzerne, ambassador from France. He tells me the news from Paris, and in reply to my question of who is to replace Necker, he says that the story of his going away is all fabricated by Calonne. I tell him that I am persuaded that he will quit, and that I do not consider it as a misfortune. I find, however, that he is much an advocate of M. Necker and his measures. This is extraordinary, for he has, I think, good sense enough to see the faults which have been committed. Call on the Duke of Leeds, who is not at home; leave a card and tell the porter I will write a note. Go to the Duc de Luxembourg’s; admitted with difficulty; his son receives the letter with which I am charged by his brother, the Duke being in bed. Return home; write a note to the Duke of Leeds, asking to know the time when it will be most convenient for his grace to receive certain communications which Mr. Morris is desired to make in a semi-official capacity to His Majesty’s ministers by the President of the United States of America. Go to the French ambassador’s to dinner. The Vicomtesse says she has a great deal to say about the affairs of France when she sees me with less company. Return home, and find a note from the Duke of Leeds, giving me a rendez-vous for tomorrow at half-past two. I told the Marquis de la Luzerne this morning that I was directed to call on the ministry here for a performance of the treaty, and enjoined him to secrecy. (He told it everywhere.) I think it prudent to be in a situation to say always to the French Court that every step taken by us has been with their privity.”

“Monday [March 29th], at the appointed hour I go to Whitehall, and communicate to the Duke of Leeds* Washington’s letter to me. He expresses himself with some warmth of approbation. ‘I am very happy, Mr. Morris, to see this letter, and under the President’s own hand. I assure you it is very much my wish to cultivate a friendly and commercial intercourse between the two countries, and more, and I can answer for the rest of His Majesty’s servants that they are of the same opinion.’ ‘I am very happy, my Lord, to find that such sentiments prevail, for we are too near neighbors not to be either very good friends or very dangerous enemies.’ After more professions from him I mention the points of the treaty which remain to be performed, and observe that, by the Constitution of the United States, which he has certainly read, all obstacles to the recovery of British debts are removed, and that if any doubt could have remained it is now obviated by the organization of a Federal court which has cognizance of all causes arising under the treaty. He is very happy to receive this information. I then mention that I believe there are two points which remain to be fulfilled on their part: viz., as to the Posts and compensation for negroes taken away; that perhaps, as to the first, they may have sent out orders since the President’s letter was written. He does not exactly know the situation. As to the last, he had long wished that something had been done, but something or another had always interfered. He changed the conversation, which I bring back, and which he changes again. It is evident, therefore, that he is at present confined to general assurances. I tell him that there was a little circumstance which operated very disagreeably in America. He interrupts me: ‘I know what you are going to speak about, our not sending out a minister. I wished to send you one, but then I wished to have a man every way equal to the task, a man of abilities, and one agreeable to the people of America, but it was difficult; it is a great way off.’ ‘My Lord, you cannot want men well qualified, and I am certain that there are many who will be glad to accept it.’ He again changes the conversation. I

therefore observe that he will probably choose to consider this matter a little, and to examine the American Constitution, the treaty of peace, etc. He says that he should. I tell him that I shall be glad to receive his answer as speedily as may be. He promises despatch. In the course of the conversation he mentioned a letter he had written to Mr. Adams, in which he expressed the opinion that the performance of the treaty should be article by article, as they stood in order. I reply that my private opinion had always been that it would be proper for us to execute the treaty fully on our part, and then call for execution by them, for that if each were to delay until the other should act, all treaties would be illusory. He agreed in the propriety of the observation. I left [Washington's] letter with him, which he is to have copied and returned."

"Mr. Church engages me to dine with him on Friday [March 30th], *en famille*. He goes to find Charles Fox and ask him to meet me."

The following sprightly society letter Morris despatched to Mr. Short at Paris, to be by him shown to the disconsolate fair ones he had left behind, and who complained of his silence. "Place me before them gracefully," he wrote, "and assure them that they can at least own that it is only in my absence that such complaints can have any foundation. But truth is that I did not like to write through Flanders, because the government are by no means deficient in curiosity and not over-delicate in the means of satisfying it. I hereby authorize you, however, to say for me all which I ought to say and to do all which I ought to do. I would depute you to the handling of Madame de C—'s tea-pot, but, since everything now goes by election, I cannot hazard such encroachment upon the *droits de l'homme*. Be persuaded, however, of my perfectly good wishes that you may be found worthy to fill the department. You will lay me at the feet of her R. H. Happy position! there to kneel and there adore. Assure her of my lowliest worshippings. To the charming Comtesse de S—, try to say what I have often felt but could never express. In Madame d'H—det—t's circle, give every assurance which may be proper; I hold myself bound in honor not to belie you. Madame de Lab— will, I hope, always believe in my respectful admiration. You will see then Madame de F—, to whom present my remembrances. Supply on every occasion my omissions, and command me under similar circumstances. I will obey as well as I can."

"The French ambassador tells me the news from Paris to-day [April 1st] at dinner. Things are going on badly. The Assembly have reiterated to the King their refusal to comply with his wish to choose a treasury board out of their body. The pointed opposition to M. Necker becomes now manifest. He seems much affected by the situation of things, and tells me that within the last six months they have done much evil, in which sentiment I cordially agree. The Duchesse de Biron is here and Madame de Boufflers, to which last I present remembrances from the Maréchal de Ségur, but I believe I have mistaken the person who gave me that commission."

"Visit Sir John Sinclair [April 4th], from whom I received a note last evening requesting it. Various conversation. Just before I come away I ask him whether they have made any alteration in their American trade bill and intercourse bill. He says they have not. I ask what are their intentions on that subject. He says they are of

opinion that trade can best regulate itself. I smile, and tell him that I am very much of the same opinion, but that consistently with it we should abstain from all restrictions.”

Almost as a Frenchman Morris mourned over the condition of France, as he saw how feeble her men were, how little fitted for the task suddenly imposed upon them. In the following letters to Colonel Ternant and Mr. Short, who were both in Paris, he expresses his feelings very forcibly. “The present moment,” he wrote to Colonel Ternant, “teems with great events. Would to God that, in a certain city which you have sometimes seen, there were great men established to meet with proper dignity the greatness of those incidents which will be hourly produced.” And later, writing to Mr. Short, he says: “I have very little doubt in my mind either as to the progress or event of things in France. Early in July I formed eventual opinions, and events in August and early in September rendered them absolute. Hitherto facts have shown them to be just. If the two hundred millions given to the municipality of Paris were what they are supposed to be, *value*, the consequences you fear might take effect, but they are among those things whose ultimate basis resolves itself into opinion, and opinion cannot be restored until they shall have undone much of what they have done, and done many things of different complexion. Among those who are now at the helm there is neither the mind to conceive, the heart to dare, nor the hand to execute such things. They will therefore continue to pile up system upon system, without advancing one inch. The dreadful primeval curse is repeated upon them all. Paper thou art, and unto paper shalt thou return. I deeply bemoan these things, for I love France sincerely. . . . It was not from what I found in Amsterdam that I was deterred from pursuing the propositions to M. Necker, but the conviction that his expectations have been so raised as to shut his ears to anything which could with safety be proposed, and I have not enough of the knight-errant in my composition to go beyond that line.”

“If I am not mistaken,” the diary continues, “it will be proper to be intimate at the French ambassador’s, to a certain point. At dinner to-day we have a long conversation on the state of French politics. He tells me that he thinks Lafayette and M. Necker ought to coalesce, as the only means of saving France. I tell him that his idea may be good, but I am sure it will not take effect. He asks if Mr. Jefferson was not much consulted in the beginning of the Revolution. I tell him that I believe he was, and fear that his ideas were in many respects too democratical. He speaks of Jefferson with much contempt as a statesman and as one who is better formed for the interior of Virginia than to influence the operations of a great people. I own that I am rather surprised at this sentiment, because Mr. Jefferson has in general excited favorable ideas of his intellectual faculties. Go from hence to Mrs. Low’s rout; a number of Americans there. Among the guests is Mrs. Mallet, who still looks toward triumph, and has a less unnatural manner than she had about fifteen years ago. She seems not unwilling to extend her dominion, but this will not do for me.”

“A pretty numerous company at Sir John Sinclair’s to-day [April 9th] at dinner—chiefly literati, I believe. A Mr. Irwin of the customs, a statesman, is, I find, decidedly opposed to America, and he is, if an enemy, a dangerous one, because he can always produce just such matter as he pleases. At present his hobby-horse is to force the people of this island, even by *starvation*, to raise as much corn as they want. I foolishly enter into a little argument with him on that subject; ‘twould have been

better to let him enjoy his opinions, and to inculcate them. What I say turns upon the point that the labor applied to husbandry cannot so certainly insure its object as that employed upon manufactures. The favorable or unfavorable season will decide on the harvest, in spite of all human endeavors.”

“Mr. R. Penn tells me [April 11th] that he thinks it probable I shall be appointed minister to this Court. I tell him that if I express an opinion, it will be not to appoint a minister. He expresses his surprise at this sentiment, which I justify on the ground that their present rulers do not wish to form a connection with America. Go from hence to Mr. Church’s. They are just got back; he is from Newmarket, where he has lost money. I promise to meet Charles Fox at dinner on Saturday. Visit Lady Tancred. She seems more indebted for her beauties to art than I had imagined at the first view. I learn that she is sister to my old friend General Montgomery.”

“General Morris calls on me this morning [April 16th] to inform me of a mechanic who can make wooden legs very well. I desire that he may call on me to-morrow. At half-past two Mr. Penn calls, and dines. We then go down to the House of Commons. He endeavors to procure admission for me under the galleries as a foreigner, which the speaker refuses, because I have not been presented at Court. Madame de la Luzerne showed me this evening a letter from her mother, or mother-in-law, mentioning that M. Necker was to be denounced to the National Assembly, and that both parties are violent against him. She tells me also that Lafayette is opposed to him. This I knew before, but appeared not to know it, and even endeavored to account for it on a supposition that they may have differed lately about the taking of a board of treasury out of the National Assembly. My friend the Marquis de la Luzerne is violently opposed, I find, to the Assembly, but in favor of M. Necker. Return home between twelve and one, and sit some time reading the *livre rouge* which M. Barthélemi gave me the perusal of this afternoon.”

“This morning [April 17th] after breakfast a mechanic arrives who is to make a leg. Upon examination of the stump he says that I shall be able to take the benefit of the knee-joint. If this be so it will certainly be an improvement, but he acknowledges that the machinery will be less solid than the simple stick which I now use.” Morris met Charles James Fox at dinner this evening at Mr. Church’s. “Mr. Fox,” he says, “does not arrive till seven. He has been detained by the Duke of York. We sat pretty late after dinner, and I observe that Mr. Fox scrutinizes me closely to see what I am. I give him all opportunity for that purpose. His manners are simple. He speaks lightly of Chatham, who, says he, was a fortunate man, and that the successes in the war were to be attributed to a measure of his father’s, which was the capture of the French ships and seamen before the Declaration; I observe that it was also to be attributed to the great force sent out to America by Lord Chatham. In the course of conversation I ask him what system the present administration have with respect to America. He says that he thinks they have not as yet adopted any; that he does not imagine Mr. Pitt will take any trouble about the matter, but will leave it to Lord Hawkesbury and Mr. Grenville, who are both of them indisposed to us, whereas Pitt himself is rather friendly than otherwise. I ask him the character of the Duke of Leeds. He speaks of him contemptuously, but says he takes upon himself a little lately. He says that he and Burke are now almost alone in their opinion that we should be permitted to trade in

our own bottoms to their islands; that this opinion loses ground daily, though for his part he persists in it. I tell him that it is a solid principle of policy, for that our position renders the islands so materially dependent on us that they should make it our interest to keep them in possession; that further, if we choose to lay them under disadvantages in our ports, we can materially injure their navigation, whereas the admission of our vessels into their islands can do them no harm in that respect. All this is true, but I suspect that we shall be obliged in America to give them the conviction of their senses.”

“This morning [April 20th] I go immediately after breakfast to a leg-maker and have my right leg taken in plaster of Paris, as a model by which to make the left leg of copper. By the awkwardness of the workman I am long detained, and obliged to have a second copy made; in fact, he has not one needful thing, which is a box for taking the model by. Get a model made of the stump also, so as to prevent the necessity of frequent sittings to have the cushions fitted. I am detained under these operations until after four o’clock. Dress, and go to the French ambassador’s to dine. A young gentleman is there who I have often seen at the Baron de Besenval’s. He is just arrived; he came in company with Mr. Crosby. That circle are all in good health. I find that the debates have been very outrageous in Paris, and things seem to be verging fast towards change.”

“To-day [April 23d] I dine with my brother, General Morris. The company are a Lady Cundliffe, with her daughters, Mrs. Drummond Smith and Miss Cundliffe; the Marquis of Huntly, Lord Eglinton, General Murry, Mr. Drummond Smith (who, they tell me, is one of the richest commoners in England), and Colonel Morrison of the Guards. After dinner there is a great deal of company collected in the drawing-room, to some of whom I am presented; the Ladies Hays, who are very handsome, Lady Tancred and her sister, and Miss Byron are here, Mr. and Mrs. Montresor. I am particularly presented to Colonel Morrison, who is the quartermaster-general of this kingdom, and whose daughter also is here. She has a fine, expressive countenance, and is, they tell me, of such a romantic turn of mind as to have refused many good offers of marriage because she did not like the men. I have some little conversation with Mrs. Smith after dinner. She appears to have good dispositions for making a friendly connection, as far as one may venture to judge by the glance of the eye. Visit Mrs. Cosway, and find here Lady Townsend, with her daughter-in-law and daughter. The conversation here (as, indeed, everywhere else) turns on the man (or rather monster) who for several days past has amused himself with cutting and wounding women in the streets. One unhappy victim of his inhuman rage is dead. Go from hence to Drury Lane Theatre. The pieces we went to see were not acted, but instead, ‘Twelfth Night’ and ‘The Spoiled Child.’ This last is said to have been written by Mrs. Jordan. She plays excellently in it, and so, indeed, she does in the principal piece.”

“Two tickets have been given me for the trial of Warren Hastings. Call upon La Caze [April 29th], and take him with me. We wait till past two before the Lords come down, and then, after a decision against the managers upon a former question, much time is consumed in complaint against that decision. A witness being then called up and a question proposed to him, an objection is raised by the counsel as being within

the decision just delivered. A long argument on this subject from the managers, which the counsel very properly reply to by their silence, and, the opinion of the Lords being clear, the question is given up without a formal declaration of that opinion. Shortly after, another question is proposed to the witness, which is objected to, and hereupon arises a serious argument. The speakers this day are Burke and Fox. The former has quickness and genius, but he is vague, loose, desultory, and confused. Mr. Fox has not the needful self-possession to make a great speaker. He is obliged to abstract himself so much in pursuit of the matter that he is extremely deficient in manner. He is a slovenly speaker, but he is acute and discerns well. He does not sufficiently convey to others the distinctions which he feels; his mind appears like a clouded sun, and this I believe results from the life he leads. Temperance, application, and the possession of competence with moderation to enjoy it, would render him very great, if unhappily his faculties be not at that point when a continuation of former habits becomes necessary to keep them alive. Go to my lodgings and dress, read my letters, and then (but with no proper emotions for that scene) go to Mrs. Church's ball. Things here are really magnificent and well conducted. The royal brothers and Mrs. Fitzherbert are among the guests. The Duke of Orleans also is here, with whom I exchange a few words, and converse a good deal with his two brothers, just arrived from Paris. See Mrs. Damer and several other people whom I had before seen. On the whole, the manner of these persons is very well, considering the haughty coldness of the nation and that I am an American. Stay till after three, and then take Mr. Low home. When I get home it is broad daylight."

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XV.

Reticence of the Duke of Leeds. Morris's letter to the duke. Letter to Washington. Undertakes to negotiate for the sale of American estates. Miss Farren. The impressment of American seamen. Interview with the Duke of Leeds. Presented to Pitt. Long interview with Pitt and the Duke of Leeds relative to the treaty of commerce, non-payment of money due by the English Government to American land-owners, evacuation of the frontier-posts, etc. The Hastings trial. News from Paris. The National Assembly vote the king an allowance. Abolition of the nobility. The Duke of Orleans in a "whimsical" situation. Great fête of the federation. Letter to William Short at Paris. Strictures on the young men of London. Rise of the Jacobins in Paris. Lafayette's position insecure.

It was now late in April, and still the Duke of Leeds maintained a profound silence upon the subject of the conversation Morris had held with him, nor had he returned the copy of the President's letter. "I am still waiting," Morris wrote to Washington on the 28th, "for intelligence from the ministers, who (to judge by appearances) slumber profoundly upon the application made to them. It was not until the 28th of April, and after several notes had been sent to jog his memory, that the duke consented to notice Morris or his affairs. He then pleaded indisposition as the excuse for his long delay.

Morris in his reply [April 30th] expressed himself as happy to receive from such "respectable authority" the sincere wish of England to fulfil her engagements with the United States "in a manner consistent with the most scrupulous fidelity;" though this had never admitted of question in his mind, and he assured his grace of his conviction of the determination of the United States to perform in the fullest manner every stipulation which they had made. He entreated of his grace's goodness to inform him in what respect, and to what degree, he considered the final completion of those engagements to which the United States were bound as having been rendered impracticable, this being to him a new idea. He further asked his grace the nature and extent of the redress expected for British subjects upon the specific points of the treaty. On the subject of a commercial treaty between the countries, Morris expressed a sincere hope that he might be mistaken in supposing that his grace showed a disinclination to securing an amiable intercourse by the force of a treaty, and assured him how unhappy he should be to convey a false impression on this subject, which might be prejudicial to both countries. He begged, therefore, that he might be set right.

The following letter to Washington was sent, with Morris's full reply to the Duke of Leeds, of which a summary only is given above. "I must rely," he wrote, "on your kindness both to interpret favorably what I have done, and to excuse my omissions. I thought it best to heap coals of fire on their heads, and thereby either bring them into our views or put them most eminently in the wrong. It was, moreover, my wish to draw forth specific propositions, because these will admit of discussion, or else, if manifestly unjust, they can not only be repelled, but they will serve to show a predetermined breach of faith by them which will justify whatever conduct we may

afterwards find it proper to adopt. I have some reason to believe that the present administration intends to keep the posts and withhold payment for the negroes. If so, they will cover their breach of faith by the best pretexts in their power. I incline to think also that they consider a treaty of commerce with America as being absolutely unnecessary, and that they are persuaded they shall derive all benefit from our trade without treaty. In the matter of treaties very much will, I think, depend upon the situation of France. From the conduct of the aristocratic hierarchy in the Low Countries, who are instigated and supported by Prussia, I have long been thoroughly convinced that the alternative of war or the most ignominious terms of peace would be proposed to the Imperial Courts. Counting upon the absolute nullity of France, and supposing that this country can at any moment intimidate that into abject submission, Prussia and Poland will, I think, join themselves to Turkey and Sweden against Russia and Austria, which are both exhausted and one of them dismembered. Probably the war will be commenced before the letter reaches your hands, and then Britain and Holland are to be the umpires or, rather, dictators of peace. Perhaps there never was a moment in which this country found herself greater, and consequently it is the most unfavorable moment to obtain advantageous terms from her in any bargain. It appears clearly that the favorable moment for us to treat is not yet come. It is indeed the moment for this country, and they seem determined to let it pass away.”

“This afternoon [May 2d], at the poets’ gallery of paintings, I have pointed out to me Lord Derby and Miss Farren, who are to be married as soon as Lady Derby will make her exit. Miss Farren is one of the Drury Lane company of comedians.”

One of the most arduous of Morris’s undertakings for his friends in America was to negotiate in London and Paris for the sale of their respective estates, in various parts of the United States. There was, of course, a general feeling of distrust of a country so far away and so uncultivated, and a desire to be thoroughly indemnified for losses. Writing to Robert Morris of the difficulties he encountered in this effort, he says: “What can I offer those who *may* wish to purchase? Money I have not. Personal security in this country I have not. In America they will not take it, and if I propose a mortgage of the premises they may reply that these they have already. As to the Fairfax estate, it is somewhat differently circumstanced, but even respecting it, I expect that if I can see and converse with Mr. Martin, he will insist on security here.”* As in Paris, so more or less in London, Morris’s advice was constantly asked about purchases in America, but he found it extremely difficult to bring anyone to the point of a purchase.

“Sir John Miller is at Mr. Wilmots’ to-night [May 5th], and he tells me that great fortunes have been made by borrowing money and purchasing estates in Ireland, which yield an interest of five per cent. upon the purchase money till the old leases fall in, and then yield twice and three times as much. He has himself speculated in this way to the amount of £20,000. In conversation he describes the situation of a gentleman in the country here as far from agreeable, if he resides anywhere in the neighborhood of a peer or a great commoner, ‘because,’ says he, ‘such person must either be the humble servant of the great man or must be borne down by his opposition, in all parish and county meetings and in everything which relates to the

roads.' To-night, when I come in, I find on my table an invitation from Mrs. Church to breakfast to-morrow at twelve. I write the following answer:

Dear Madame, believe me, 'tis not without sorrow
I do not partake of your breakfast to-morrow;
So kind a request it is hard to refuse,
But an envious Demon my pleasures pursues,
Resolved, with the blasts of cold duty, to blight
The blossoms of joy and the buds of delight.
To-morrow, laborious, I write all the day,
To friends who are far o'er the water away,
Who dwell on that soil to your bosom so dear,
Which so oft from your eye draws the filial tear;
That dear natal soil, Freedom's favorite child,
Where bliss flows spontaneous and virtue grows wild,
Where nature, disdainng the efforts of art,
Gives grace to the form and gives worth to the heart.

In plain prose, the packet sails to-morrow night and I must write.”

“Dine to-day [May 6th] with the French ambassador. When dinner is half over two of his family come in from the House of Commons, where the debate was animated, although they were all of one mind. The address has been carried unanimously, and a determination is avowed to obtain from the Spanish Court an acknowledgment that they are entitled to no part of America but such as they occupy. After dinner, attend Mrs. Penn to the play. Henry the Fifth is acted very badly, and with great applause. The monarch makes great exertion ‘to split the ears of the groundlings.’ A translation of the ‘Marriage of Figaro’ is very well done by the intended wife of Lord Derby, Miss Farren. She is said to be perfectly chaste, and his lordship, I suppose, is satisfied on that subject, but the caresses of the stage are not exactly what one would wish to be exhibited on one’s intended bride.”

“This morning [May 13th] M. Bourgainville, one of Lafayette’s aides-de-camp, comes in. I read to him my letter to his General and to Carmichael, and explain as fully as conversation could permit my plan for carrying on a war against this country. He is to write to M. de Lafayette to-morrow for permission to pass over for a few days to Paris. I give him also some ideas upon the constitution which they are now forming, and read an essay written on it last summer which contains many predictions since verified. He tells me that he is an advocate for a single chamber, but that my objections against that form are strong.”

Morris had been several times applied to, to take some steps in regard to the American seamen impressed into the British service, and he prepared a short memorial on the subject, which was sent to the Lords of the Admiralty. Being strongly convinced of the necessity of more action in the matter, in consequence of the cases brought to his notice, he determined, if possible, to see the Duke of Leeds on the subject.

He therefore requested an interview, which was granted for the 20th of May, and which the diary describes as follows: "I stay but a short time with his grace the Duke of Leeds. He apologizes for not having answered my letters. I tell him that I suppose he has been so much engaged in other affairs that he has not had time. He says I misunderstood one part of his letter to me, for that he certainly meant to express a willingness to enter into a treaty of commerce. To this I reply that my present object is to mention another affair, and as to my letter, he will, I suppose, answer it at his leisure. I then mention the impress of American seamen, and observe that their press-gangs have entered American vessels with as little ceremony as those belonging to Britain. 'I believe, my Lord, this is the only instance in which we are not treated as aliens.' He acknowledges this to be wrong, and promises to speak to Lord Chatham on the subject. I tell him that I have already prevented some applications from being made on this business in a disagreeable manner, but that in a general impress over all the British dominions, if the greatest care be not used, such things will happen that masters of vessels, on returning home, will excite much heat in America, 'and that, my Lord, added to other circumstances, will perhaps occasion very disagreeable events. And you know, my Lord, that when a wound is recently healed it is very easy to rub off the skin.' He repeats his assurances. I tell him that I feel the inconveniences to which they may be subjected from the difficulty of distinguishing between seamen of the two countries, and add my wish that some plan may be adopted, founded on good faith, which may prevent the concealment of British seamen while it secures those of America from insult, and suggest the idea of certificates of citizenship from the admiralty courts of America to our seamen. He seems much pleased with this, but I desire him to consult those of the King's servants whose particular department it is, reminding him at the same time that I speak without authority from America, on which score I made an apology in the outset. I then take my leave, but he requests me to call again about one o'clock to-morrow.

"At one o'clock on Friday I again wait upon the Duke. After waiting some time in the antechamber, I am introduced to where Mr. Pitt and he are sitting together. He presents me to the latter, and we enter into conversation. The first point is that of the impress, and upon that subject Mr. Pitt approves the idea of a certificate from the Admiralty of America. I mention that it might be proper for the King's servants to order that certificates of a certain kind should be evidence of an American seaman, without excluding, however, other evidence, and that in consequence the executive authority in America could direct the officers of the Admiralty Courts to issue such certificates to those applying for them. We then proceed to the treaty of peace. They both mention that I had misapprehended the letter of the Duke of Leeds respecting a treaty of commerce. I observe that it may easily be set right as to that mistake, but that it is idle to think of making a new treaty until the parties are satisfied about that already existing. Mr. Pitt then took up the conversation, and said that the delay of compliance on our part had rendered that compliance now less effectual, and that cases must certainly exist where injury had been sustained by the delay. I observe generally that delay is always a kind of breach, being, as long as it lasts, the non-performance of stipulations. But, descending a little more into particulars, I endeavor to show that the injury is complained of by the Americans for the non-payment of money due by this government to the owners of slaves taken away. On the whole, I observe that inquiries of this sort may be very useful if the parties mutually seek to

keep asunder, but that, if they mean to come together, it would be best to keep them entirely out of sight, and now to perform on both sides as well as the actual situation of things will permit. After many professions to cultivate a good understanding, Mr. Pitt mentions that it might be well to consider in general the subject, and on general grounds to see whether some compensation could not be made mutually. I immediately replied: 'If I understand you, Mr. Pitt, you wish to make a new treaty instead of complying with the old one.' He admitted this to be *in some sort* his idea. I said that even on that ground I did not see what better could be done than to perform the old one. 'As to the compensation for negroes taken away, it is too trifling an object for you to dispute, so that nothing remains but the posts.* I suppose, therefore, that you wish to retain the posts.' 'Why, perhaps we may.' 'They are not worth the keeping, for it must cost you a great deal of money, and produce no benefit. The only reason you can desire them is to secure the fur-trade, and that will centre in this country, let who will carry it on in America.' I gave him the reasons for this opinion. 'If you consider these posts as a trivial object, there is the less reason for acquiring them.' 'Pardon me, sir, I only state the retaining them as *useless to you*; but this matter is to be considered in a different point of light. Those who made the peace acted wisely in separating the possessions of the two countries by so wide a water. It is essential to preserve the boundary if you wish to live in amity with us. Near neighbors are seldom good ones, for the quarrels among borderers frequently bring on wars. It is therefore essential for both parties that you should give them up, and to us it is of particular importance, because our national honor is interested. You hold them with the avowed intention of forcing us to comply with such conditions as you may impose.' 'Why, sir, as to the considerations of national honor, we can retort the observation and say our honor is concerned in your delay of performance of the treaty.' 'No, sir, your natural and proper course was to comply fully on your part, and if then we had refused a compliance, you might rightfully have issued letters of marque and reprisal to such of your subjects as were injured by our refusal. But the conduct you have pursued naturally excites resentment in every American bosom. We do not think it worth while to go to war with you for these posts, but *we know our rights, and will avail ourselves of them when time and circumstances may suit.*'

"Mr. Pitt asked me if I had power to treat. I told him I had not, and that we would not appoint any person as minister, they had so much neglected the former appointment. He asked me whether we would appoint a minister if they did. I told him that I could almost promise that we should, but was not authorized to give any positive assurance. We then converse loosely upon the manner of communicating on that subject. In the course of it I tell him that we cannot take notice of their consuls, or anything which they may say, because they are not characters known or acknowledged by us. His pride was a little touched at this."

"I suppose, Mr. Morris, that attention might as well be paid to what they say as that the Duke of Leeds and I should hold the present conversation with you."

"By no means, sir. I should never have thought of asking a conference with his grace if I had not possessed a letter from the President of the United States, which you know, my Lord, I left with you, and which, I dare say, you have communicated to Mr. Pitt."

“He had. Mr. Pitt said they would in like manner write a letter to one of their consuls.

“‘Yes, sir, and the *letter* would be attended to and not the consul, who is in no respect different from any other British subject, and this is the subject which I wished you to attend to.’

“He said, in reply to this, that etiquette ought not to be pushed so far as to injure business, and keep the countries asunder. I assured him that the rulers of America had too much understanding to care for etiquette, but prayed him at the same time to recollect that they (the British) had hitherto kept us at a distance instead of making advances; that we had gone quite as far as they had any reason to expect in writing the letter just mentioned, but that from what had passed in consequence of it, and which (as he might naturally suppose) I had transmitted, we could not but consider them as wishing to avoid an intercourse. He took up this point, and expressed a hope that I would remove such an idea. He assures me that they are disposed to cultivate a connection, etc. To this I reply that any written communication that may be made by his grace of Leeds shall be duly transmitted; that I do not like to transmit mere conversation, because it may be misconceived, and that disagreeable questions may arise; that as to the disposition for having a good understanding between the two countries, it is evidenced on our part not only by the step which the President has taken, but also by the decision of the legislature, in which a considerable majority were opposed to the laying extraordinary restrictions upon British vessels in our ports. Mr. Pitt observes that, on the contrary, we ought to give them particular privileges in consequence of those which we enjoy here. I tell him that I really know of no particular privilege we enjoy, except that of being impressed, which of all others we are least desirous to partake of. The Duke of Leeds observed, in the same style of jocularly, that we were at least treated in that respect as the most favored nation, seeing that we were treated like themselves. They promised to consult together, and give me the result of their deliberations.”

“At eleven o’clock to-night [May 22d] I take Mrs. Phyn to Ranelagh. We do not arrive till after twelve. The room is filled, and it is an immense one. The amusement here is to walk round until one is tired, and then sit down to tea and rolls. The report of the day has been that the National Assembly have denied to the King the power of making war and peace. I met an abbé at the French ambassador’s at dinner to-day, who is a very great astronomer, and who makes several observations on the philosophic credulity of Franklin and Jefferson. Both of them, he thinks, have entertained a higher sense of the force of steam-engines applied to navigation than they merit, and I think so too. I have told Parker long ago that I believe Rumsey’s contrivances will answer only to work up stream in rivers where fuel is cheap. The ambassador seems to me to be in a violent agitation of mind, and I remark it after dinner to his niece, who tells me that he has been so for some days, but she cannot conjecture the reason. In conversing about the news of yesterday, Church, who is here, says that it is reported from M. de Calonne, said to have learned it by express, that the National Assembly have vested in the Crown the right of peace and war. I express my surprise that in the present conjuncture the Comte de Florida Blanca should be removed, and from the state of affairs draw into question the truth of that report. La Luzerne upon this subject declares that in Spain they have no idea of any

such situation as seems to be imagined here; that there is nothing extraordinary in their armaments, etc. This is going too far for his own object, because a certain extent of armament in that country is indisputable, and also that it exceeds the usual measure of peace establishment very considerably.”

“Dine [May 27th] with the Marquis of Lansdowne. It is six when I arrive. He receives me politely, and apologizes for not having invited me sooner. At dinner he sports sentiments respecting the constitution of France to the French who are here, which I believe to be foreign to his heart. Dr. Price* is one of the guests, who is one of the Liberty-mad people. After dinner, being together in the drawing-room a few minutes, the noble marquis advances sentiments to me far less friendly to France, but full of love and kindness for America. I am, however, at liberty to believe just as much as I please. The resolutions of the Assembly are arrived, which say just nothing, as far as I can find. They reserve the right of declaring war to the National Assembly, but permit the King to arm, etc. This, at least, is the account given to me by Lord Lansdowne.

“Dine [May 28th] at the French ambassador’s. He says that the decree respecting war and peace was passed in consequence of the tumultuous meeting of the populace in the neighborhood of the place where the Assembly sit. Bouinville says that Lafayette wants him to concert with me, and then return for a few days to Paris. He thinks that the decree will by no means prevent the administration from engaging in a war, and I think so too.”

“The news from Paris [May 30th] is that everything is again in confusion. The populace have dispersed the Court of the Châtelet, and hanged several persons confined for crimes. The reason of this riot was to prevent an investigation of the excesses before committed at Versailles. Farther, the object of the demagogues, according to rumor, is to remove Lafayette and place La Meth* in his stead. This would be a curious appointment. But France seems now to be governed by Barnave,† Chapelier,‡ the Baron de Menou,§ and Duc d’Aquilon,¶ with others of the same stamp. Unhappy kingdom!”

The trial of Warren Hastings was going on most of the time that Morris had been in London, and although tickets of admission had been offered to him at various times, only once had he gone to Westminster Hall; on June 7th, however, when the trial was nearly over, he again went. “We get,” the diary says, “to Westminster Hall at eleven, and find great difficulty in procuring a seat. About two the court opens, and from twelve we have been pressed hard by those who could not get seats, and are much incommoded by the foul air till near six, when the company is a little thinned. Mr. Fox sums up the evidence with great ability. But he does not get through it at eight o’clock, when the Lords adjourn. It is said that this man is to be acquitted, and from the various decisions as to evidence we would be inclined to think so, but in my opinion this charge of bribery is fully supported. It will, however, depend, I suppose, on the situation of the ministry at the time of the decision, whether he is acquitted or condemned.”

By the middle of June the *bourgeoisie révolutionnaire* in the National Assembly, hoping to insure to themselves a passive king, with all the splendor of a court around

him which he should owe to them, voted Louis ?? an allowance of 26,000,000£ “Out of this sum, however,” Morris says, in commenting on the act, “he is to provide for his household troops, and for the different branches of the royal family. He has asked, though not pointedly, 4,000,000£ for the Queen’s dower, and they have granted it, but not specifically. The forms will, I suppose, be gone through speedily. There is also a plan of confederation to take place between the military and militia, by way of counter-security to the Revolution.”

Ten days after the Assembly had enthusiastically voted the allowance for the king; just as enthusiastically, and “with an inconsequence truly prodigious,” they voted the abolition of the nobility.

“To-day [June 24th] at dinner at the French ambassador’s,” continues the diary, “there are a number of the Corps Diplomatique, and, what suits me better, a fine turtle. Advices from France announce the total abolition of the French nobility, down to the very arms and livery; this upon motion of some of the Whig nobles. There is also a strange address to the Assembly from a junto of all nations. It seems as if the Revolutionists were studying how best to excite a strong opposition to their measures. Heaven knows how this will all end, but I fear badly, unless they are saved by a foreign war. Go from hence to General Morris’s, and sit some time with them. He says there will be no war, and from his manner of speaking I think he has been told so by some person who is in the secret.”

Morris’s keen sense of humor prevailed even at this juncture, which was full of sadness to many of his Parisian friends, and he could not resist the inclination to see the grimly amusing side of the change of names that must ensue from such a decree. “Make a thousand compliments for me,” he wrote to Mr. Short, “to her Royal Highness and to Madame de Chastellux. I suppose that when I return to Paris (which will be soon) I shall have to learn new names for one-half of my acquaintance. Pray, are the friends of the Revolution afraid that its enemies will not be sufficiently exasperated?”

“The Marquis de la Luzerne tells me to-day [July 2d], at dinner, that the Duke of Orleans has taken leave of the King with intention to return. I tell him that I doubt yet his returning, because I think that the slightest circumstance would prevent it, and mention, as an instance, that the receipt even of an anonymous letter announcing danger would terrify him. He says there are many ways, but that they will neither use them nor permit others to do it. He seems rather vexed at this. The decree respecting the nobility, he observes, is not yet sanctioned. I notice the situation of the Duke of Orleans as being whimsical. He cannot go into any country well, nor remain here, when the war breaks out. He asks me why I suppose always that there will be a war? I tell him that I have long been convinced of it, for many reasons. ‘Vous dites toujours les choses extraordinaires qui se réalisent.’ Happening to mention Short, he speaks of him as being *fou*, and rendered so by Jefferson. I tell him that he will probably be appointed minister in France. He seems not well pleased, but says he is probably a very suitable person. He is vexed at Lafayette’s conduct respecting the noblesse, and says that, although he has a good deal of management (*conduite*) in his affairs, he has

done much evil from the want of genius (*esprit*), in which idea he is not entirely wrong.”

On July 14th the great fête of the federation was held, when the world of Paris celebrated the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille, and swore to obey the new constitution. There were three hundred thousand spectators assembled in the great amphitheatre in the Champ de Mars. Here could be seen the courtesan and the chaste maiden, the capuchin and the chevalier of St. Louis, the porter and the dandy of the Palais Royal, the fishwoman and the fine lady, mingled together, and together they swore fraternity. How they kept the oath history tells. At the elevation of the Host by the celebrant, the Bishop of Autun, all that vast multitude fell on their knees. Lafayette placed his sword on the altar, and gave the signal for taking the oath. One moment of intense silence, while he swore to be faithful to nation and king; then all swords drawn, all arms raised, and from all lips came the oath, “I swear.” Then from the king came the words, “I, King of the French, swear to protect the constitution I have accepted.” Frantic enthusiasm greeted the queen, who, with the Dauphin in her arms, said, “The king’s sentiments are mine.” Then the Te Deum gave the amen to the oath. All the while the rain kept falling in torrents on the pageant. In the evening another great fête was held, and on the ruins of the Bastille one saw the sign, “Ici l’on danse.” All night long Paris was *en fête*.

“Your fête is passed,” Morris wrote, July 26th, of this event to William Short; “I trust that no sinister accidents have resulted from it. When we reflect on the incidents which have passed within less than two years, we must be forcibly struck with the mutability of human affairs. . . . I sincerely, nay, devoutly, wish that the constitution may be productive of great and lasting good to France. It is, you know, very far from my ideas of what is right, and it will give me great pleasure should it disappoint my expectations. I had been, as you suppose, apprised of the schism in the democratic party, at which I was not at all surprised. United by common danger, very discordant materials were held together, which from different motives had been thrown together. The danger past, in appearance at least, the different pretensions were brought forward, and (unfortunately, I think) there is no man or set of men who have dared to stop at that point of moderation where alone good principles can be found, and by which alone good government can exist. Those who court the people have a very capricious mistress; a mistress which may be gained by sacrifices, but she cannot be so held, for she is insatiable. The people will never continue attached to any man who will sacrifice his duty to their caprice. In modern days we have, I believe, more virtue than the ancients; certainly we are more decent. But the principles of human nature are the same, and so shall we find the pursuits of man to be, if we can but penetrate that veil of decency by which young ambition is decorated. If we cannot, he will spare us the trouble whenever those barriers are removed which were erected against him by that great ally of virtue, *the law*. In proportion as the Revolution shall appear to be completed, and the new order of things appear to be established, schisms will multiply among the Revolutionists, for each will desire (disinterestedly, no doubt) a share of the good things which are going, and which, from the *droits de l’homme*, you know all are entitled to enjoy. I remember, in one of the early addresses of Congress, something was said about the luxury of being free. Now the French genius may refine as much upon this luxury as they used to do upon the other; but, bating their talents at

refinement, I hardly conjecture what ground those men will take hereafter who would signalize their democratic principles. They will, I fear, be but humble imitators of Sir John Brute, who, in the heat of his zeal and wine, drank confusion to all order. . . . The observation you made upon the dissolute conduct of the *Fédérés*, I had long since made upon the whole nation. It requires the strong stomach of monarchy to digest such rank manners. As to the instinctive love of their princes which you speak of, it is indeed instinctive, and the animal will never get rid of its instinct. The French will all tell you that their countrymen have *des têtes exaltées*, and their manners, habits, and ideas are all up to that standard. A Frenchman loves his king as he loves his mistress, to madness, because he thinks it great and noble to be mad. He then abandons both the one and the other most ignobly, because he cannot bear the continued action of the sentiment he has persuaded himself to feel.”

“Paine tells me that the Comte de Montmorin has applied to the Assemblée,” says the diary for August 8th, “to know whether they will adhere to the family compact. The Spanish ambassador has made a formal demand, accompanied with a threat from his Court. I think I see this in its true light, but do not mention to him my idea. After he has left me some time, Bouinville calls, and from conversation with him I find that I am right. He tells me that the whole of the French administration will go out, but that Montmorin will preserve his place in the council as governor of the children of France; that secretaries will be appointed for the present—young men who can be at any time removed. Ternant has been negotiating (but without effect), to quiet the claims of the German princes, whose feudal claims in France have been annihilated. Barnave is about to desert La Meth, who has lately made overtures to M. de Lafayette, but he replied by a declaration that in the present situation there was no alternative but victory or death. General and Mrs. Morris call upon me. They take tea, and sit till near ten. She tells me that the Duchess of Gordon is, on her report, very desirous of becoming acquainted. She is, it seems, a woman of great wit and full of life. They have dined with her, and she told my sister she would give me a dinner with Mr. Pitt. I express much satisfaction at the idea of being presented to the Premier. In the course of conversation my sister tells me that the fashionable style for young men in London is to affect great *ennui*, and receive advances from the ladies which they hardly deign to notice.”

“To-day [August 15th] Mr. Bouinville dines with me, and communicates all that he knows respecting the situation of affairs in France. He tells me that Lafayette has been very much hurt to find himself so much deceived by those whom he thought attached to him. Mankind always make false estimates on this subject. He tells me much of what passed between him and the Duke of Orleans. He seems not to know, or to be unwilling to mention, the names of those who are intended for the new ministry. He says that things are going very badly in Paris, and, indeed, in all France. The Comité des Jacobins gathers strength daily. Of course, Lafayette becomes insecure. The army is in a state of total disorder, and the navy little better; the finance every hour more deranged than the last. He seems, however, confident that the Assemblée will adhere to the family compact, and that there will be a war with this country, which I incline to doubt, because there seems not to be sufficient energy in the French counsels. Paine, who was with me, had shown a paper which he had written, and which

Lafayette had caused to be translated and published, recommending an attack in the Channel by the combined fleets.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XVI.

Various undertakings in Europe. Dulness of card-playing in England. Washington approves of Morris's communications with the ministers. Letter to Washington on French affairs. Interview with the Duke of Leeds. Continental tour before returning to Paris. Civilities from persons to whom he had letters. Difficulties of travel in 1790. Uncomfortable inns and bad roads. Interview with Baron de Dolberg. Paris again. Flatteringly received by the Comte de Montmorin. Morris presents a dog to the Duchess of Orleans. The Duc de Castries's hotel pillaged. M. de Flahaut wishes to go to America as minister. The play of "Brutus." Much excitement in the theatre. Dines with the Garde des Sceaux. Apprehends a plot of the Emperor for liberating the Queen and restoring the former government. Criticises the new constitution. Gives his opinion of the condition of affairs to Lafayette. The last months of 1790.

During the year and a half that Morris had been in Europe he had unremittingly labored in behalf of his friend Robert Morris, but the delays and difficulties that beset him were unending. A querulous and quite uncalled for letter from Robert Morris drew from him a list of his various undertakings. In all, they numbered twelve separate and distinct enterprises. "Indian voyages, the liquidated debt, debts to Spain and France of the United States, the Fairfax estates, the sale of land in America," so he enumerated them; "and last, but much the most difficult task of all, your various debts and engagements. Here I have had to perform the task of the Israelites in Egypt—to make bricks without straw." Besides all his other responsibilities, he had his farm at Morrisania to think of, for it was at this time more of an expense and care than anything else.

"This evening [August 14th], about nine, I visit the Duchess of Gordon. Presently Lady Chatham comes in, and then the rest of the company. Colonel Lenox and his Lady are here. She is a finer woman than is imagined—quick feelings, I think, and tenderness, which will by and by meet some object more likely to command the heart than the colonel, who seems to be a good-tempered fellow. He speaks to me of my brother with much regard. Dull drudging at cards, which I refuse to partake of. Stay to supper, which, also, I do not partake of, nor, indeed, of the conversation, which turns chiefly on who is and who is not a fine woman. A Mr. Elliot who is here is a very genteel, fashionable kind of man, much beyond the usual English style. I think he must be a Scotchman, although his dialect is pure. Return home at two, well convinced that I shall never do for the tonish circles here, for I will not play, and, indeed, cannot spare time in the morning for such late hours."

Morris constantly spoke of himself as not a cautious man, but rather as one who must speak out the convictions that were in him; but he was at the same time lenient with those whose opinions differed from his, and his common sense always came out, as such a letter as the following to Mr. Short testifies: "It is perfectly natural," he wrote, "that your opinions should differ from mine. It will be very long before political subjects will be reduced to geometric certitude. At present the reasoning on them is a kind of arithmetic of infinity, when the best information, the coolest head, and clearest

mind can only approach the truth. A cautious man should therefore give only sibylline predictions, if, indeed, he should hazard any. But I am not a cautious man. I therefore give it as my opinion that they will issue the paper currency, and substitute thereby depreciation in the place of bankruptcy, or, rather, suspension. Apropos of this currency, this *papier terré*, now *mort et enterré*, the Assembly have committed many blunders which are not to be wondered at. They have taken genius instead of reason for their guide, adopted experiment instead of experience, and wander in the dark because they prefer lightning to light. You are very merry on the subject of personal liberty, but the district has more to say than many are aware of. Is it not written in the 'Droits de l'homme' that liberty is an inalienable property of man inseparable from the human character? and if this be so, what better way of securing personal liberty than to secure the person? You wits may sneer, but you must learn to respect the decrees of the municipalities, which, like those of Heaven, are inscrutable, but not on that account the less entitled to obedience and respect. The lady, I am told, is so far from complaining of the restraint she was laid under that, although an aristocrat, she tells the Assembly, with all becoming humility, that she finds their yoke is easy and their burden light, while the young gentleman ordered on duty in her chamber acknowledges that service to be perfect freedom. Short-sighted man that you are! By way of addition and amendment, I would humbly propose that the male aristocrats should be put into the custody of the female Whigs, and I dare say they would come out much less fierce than they were.

"The situation of France is by no means desperate. A torrent of depreciation may inundate the land, and storms and tempests arise, but the one, you know, fertilizes the soil and the other purifies the atmosphere. Ultimately health and abundance succeed the wintry appearance which seemed fatal to both. Adieu. I shall leave this in a day or two."

In a letter to Washington, dated August 30th, he expressed a hope that in a day or two he might "learn something of their intentions here respecting us. And if I do not hear from them, shall make a final address to His Grace of Leeds. It is very flattering to me, sir, that you are so kind as to approve of my communications with the ministers of this country, so far as they had gone in the beginning of May. I earnestly hope that my subsequent conduct may meet the same favorable interpretation. This you may rely on, that if in any case I go wrong, it will be from an error of judgment. Affairs in France go badly. The national bank which was in contemplation has never taken effect. After deliberating about it and about it, the thing dropped, and they did expect to have made out with their paper currency (the assignats), but my predictions on that subject seem to be verified. Their Assemblée is losing ground daily in the public opinion. The army, long encouraged in licentious conduct, is now in revolt. All the bands of society are loosened and authority is gone. Unless they are soon involved in foreign war, it seems impossible to conjecture what events will take place. For some time past the ministers have been threatened with the *lanterne*, and they would gladly get out of office. We are in hourly expectation of hearing the decision of the Assemblée on the family compact. The Spanish ambassador has required, in pointed terms, a compliance on the part of France. In the meantime both the Spanish and English fleets were out, and approaching toward each other. Probably each side means only to terrify at present."

Morris became decidedly impatient of the long delay on the part of the Duke of Leeds in replying to his questions of April 30th, and on September 10th he again wrote to him, and told him that, in expectation of his reply, "I have patiently waited in this city to the present hour, though called by many affairs to the Continent. But my departure cannot be much longer delayed, and therefore it becomes necessary to intrude once more on your grace's attention." An interview accordingly was fixed for the 15th, and the diary thus reports it: "I see at once by his countenance, when I arrive at his office, that he feels himself obliged to cut an awkward part. Let him begin, therefore, which he does by mentioning that he understands I am going to America. Set him right, by observing that the expression in my letter of going to the Continent, meant the continent of Europe. He says that he is still earnestly desirous of a real, *bona fide* connection, not merely by the words of a treaty but in reality. I reply with like general professions. He says that as to the two points of the treaty, there are still difficulties. He wishes they could be got out of the way, and then hesitates and drops the conversation. Finding from this that he is to hold a conference with me which is to amount to just nothing at all, I determine to learn as much as I can from his looks. I therefore begin by observing that I am extremely sorry for it, but that the affair of the posts seems to present an insurmountable barrier to any treaty, because it will serve as a pretext to ill-disposed persons. This, I see, has some effect. I add, therefore, that it gives serious alarm to persons otherwise well disposed, who say that the garrisoning of those posts, being evidently a great and useless expense to this country, can only be done with hostile views; that every murder committed by the Indians is therefore set down to the account of British intrigues; that I do not presume to judge in respect to the great circle of European politics, but, according to my limited comprehension of the matter, I am led to imagine that they could not act with the same decisive energy towards their natural enemies while they doubted of our conduct. He admitted this. I proceed then a little further, premising that this conversation must be considered as merely from one gentleman to another. In case of a war with the House of Bourbon, which, if it does not happen this year or the next, will probably happen within twenty years—which is but a moment in the age of empires—we can give the West Indian Islands to whom we please without engaging in the war at all, and that we shall certainly in such case consider whether it is our interest that they should be subject to England or France, and act accordingly. He feels this observation, and unwarily lets me see that this point has presented itself forcibly to their consideration. Having gone as far in this line as appears proper, I take a short turn in my subject and tell him that I had waited with great patience during the negotiations which were carrying on here, because I supposed that they would naturally square their conduct towards us by their position in respect to other nations. He did not like this remark at all, having too much of truth in it! I added that as the Northern Courts are now at peace, and I suppose they have come to their final decisions with respect to the House of Bourbon, I thought it probable that they were prepared to speak definitely to us. I wait here for his answer, but he has none to give, being tolerably well embarrassed, and that embarrassment is as good an answer as I wish. He changes the conversation a little, and asks me what the United States will think of the undefined claim of Spain to America; I am very willing to be pumped, and therefore I tell him carelessly that I don't think it will make any impression upon our minds, for that the Spaniards are in fact so apprehensive of us that they are disposed to sacrifice a great deal for our friendship; that the only reason they had for withholding the navigation of the Mississippi River was from the

apprehension of a contraband trade, which was the reason why, in my opinion, they must stake the last man and the last shilling upon the present affair of Nootka Sound, rather than admit the right of selling there by British subjects. He owns that the danger of contraband ought to be considered in dealing on this subject, for that nations, like individuals, ought to treat with candor and honesty. I tell him that if they come to any determination speedily, I could wish to be apprised of it. He says that I shall, and offers to communicate with General Washington through me, and for that purpose to address his letters to me in France; but I tell him that his own packets will give a more direct opportunity, and take my leave. On the whole, I find that my conjectures are just. I think they will rather concede a little than go to war with Spain, if France is in force to join her ally, but they want to be in a position to deal advantageously with us in case they should find it necessary. I believe the debates in council on this subject have been pretty high, and that the American party has been outvoted, or else that in feeling the ground they have found themselves too weak to bring forward the question.”

Morris left London on the 24th of September, but before returning to Paris he took a short run on the Continent by way of refreshment and recreation. Letters of introduction opened pleasant houses to him in many of the towns, and his taste for art led him to halt and at least glance at the best sights that Ghent and other cities on the way had to show. The smallest incidents of this, as, indeed, of all his journeys, are carefully jotted down in the diary. At Ghent he was not a little interested in the superstitions of his guide, “who,” he says, “had served a long time in the French Army, which is not the school of most rigid superstition, and who pointed out to me in my walk—which he took care should be through the streets where the patriots and soldiery fought—the marks of many musket-balls in the wall of a house against which was an image either of the Virgin or her Son—I forget which—and, *miraculously*, not a bullet had touched that sacred spot. Chance might have done this, was the first idea which entered the unbelieving noddle of a Protestant, but, after passing, I looked back, and found that the *miracle* would have been to have *hit* it, for it stood on a corner-house exactly out of the line of fire. I might therefore very easily have explained this miracle; but if I should convince him of the folly of the faith he has held for above sixty years, ‘tis ten to one if he could now find a better, and therefore it is best to leave him in possession of his present property.”

“At Bonn [October 19th] I wait on the French minister with a letter from the Comte de Montmorin. He is at the door when I inquire for him, and takes the letter to deliver it. This is a little whimsical, but I am rather *en deshabillé*, so that he does not, I believe, know what to make of me. However, after reading the letter he is very attentive, which explains itself naturally enough by his urging me to stay to-morrow, that he may comply with the orders of the Comte de Montmorin, qui sont très particuliers. Madame de Chastellux has also mentioned me.”

“Go to dine with the minister the day after my arrival. In the evening there is an assembly, which I find is collected on purpose. The Archduke, late Governor of the Low Countries, is here, to whom I am presented, and converse with him a little about the affairs of Brabant. I have some conversation also with the Minister of the Finances, who is quick and sensible. After the company are gone the Count takes me

into his cabinet to communicate a *mémoire* he has written on the claims of the German princes to feudal rights in Alsace. On the whole, I am persuaded that M. de Montmorin's letter has contained everything which I could have wished."

Travelling all day over decidedly bad roads, with slow horses and obstinate postilions, required patience—particularly when a very bad dinner, cooked for the passengers who arrived an hour before, and *réchauffé*, was to complete the day. The compensation, however, was charming scenery, thoroughly enjoyed because not passed at the rate of forty miles an hour. Morris stopped a night at pretty Schwalbach, nestling in its deep ravine, and already a "watering-place of great resort," he says. Then on through Wiesbaden and Frankfort to Darmstadt. Not unlike Arthur Young, Morris always noted the condition of the soil, and the prosperity of the countries he passed through, but with occasionally a pardonable comparison not unfavorable to America.

"I reach Diebourg to-day [October 25th]. The Baron de Groshlaer and his family receive me kindly. Shortly after the first compliments and a dish of tea, we retire together. I ask him the character of the Emperor. He confirms the idea I had taken up of him. Heaven knows how or why he shares his confidence between Manfredi, the governor of his children, and ———, who was a long time minister to the Court of France. The first is an artful, sensible, sly fellow, and his turn of mind is suited to the temper and character of Leopold. The other is really a man of sense and a man of business. There is a third, whose name I do not distinctly hear, who is of great genius, but indolent and epicurean. Shortly before he left Frankfort, Leopold seemed to give much of his confidence to Colloredo, but this (as the others were gone away) might have arisen as much from the need of counsel as from any preference as to the counsellors. The Baron is of opinion that both England and Prussia will try hard to gain the Emperor, and will offer him French Flanders, Artois, and a part of Picardy, to desert the Northern League. He says that Leopold is sore on account of the insults offered his sister, the Queen of France, but he does not think the German princes who have claims on Alsace and Lorraine will be able to obtain much aid, if any. Indeed, I think so too, for the contest will cost vastly more than the object is worth. He imagines that the Duchy of Juliers will be the desired object of his Prussian Majesty, and this may be the case, because he is not an able man."

"At Mannheim [October 28th] I visit the Baron de Dolberg. He says that the Vicomte de Mirabeau had a long interview with Leopold at Frankfort, and pressed him to undertake a counter-revolution in France, but he smiled, and told him that it was an impracticable project. He thinks the administration in France was so bad as to occasion and justify a revolution, but quære; the Baron tells me that the enmity of Austria to Prussia is at the greatest imaginable height; the Emperor has in his possession the original correspondence for exciting a general revolt in his dominions the instant a war should break out with Prussia. I ask if this will not lead the Emperor to avenge the meditated injury. He says that it will probably fester inwardly till a fit occasion offers. He tells me that the Austrian General says there are forty thousand troops ordered to the Low Countries. He showed him the list. This, with the army already there, will amount to fifty thousand men—too much if other powers stand neuter, and too little if they do not."

“At Strasbourg [October 30th] I learn that the Comte de la Luzerne has resigned and that most of the other ministers will go soon; that the affairs of France are what I supposed they about this time would be.”

“Arrived in Paris on November 6th. I take up my quarters at the Hôtel du Roi. After I am dressed, take a fiacre and visit at Madame de Flahaut’s. She is abroad, but Monsieur presses me much to pass the evening. I go to club, where I find the aristocratic sentiment prevails not a little. Again go to the Louvre. Madame is at the Comédie. She returns, and seems glad to see me. I find that Lord Wycombe is *un enniché ici*. Dine at Madame de Ségur’s. They put me a little *au fait* of what is going on. The Comte de Montmorin gives me a very flattering reception. See M. de Lafayette, who affects to be very well pleased to see me. I promise to dine with him soon.”

“When I go to-day [November 8th] to Lafayette’s dinner, he is so late that he does not sit down till we have half dined; retires soon after, and we have not time to hold the conversation which he wished. After leaving here I meet the Bishop of Autun at the Louvre, and desire him to advise Lafayette to the same conduct which I have done in a very delicate circumstance. He has obtained from the King a promise to choose his guard among the late Garde Française, and the Jacobins are violent on the occasion. He says that he has a right, in talking to the King, to give his opinion as well as any other citizen. I tell him he should put himself on different ground, and say that he has earnestly recommended the measure to the King, it being a tribute of gratitude to those brave men who had so signally distinguished themselves in favor of freedom. The Bishop is entirely of my opinion and will speak, but he observes, very justly, that it is much easier to convince Lafayette than to determine his conduct.”

“To-day [November 9th] I have a long conversation with Short on general matters and matters relating to America. I tell him that Robert Morris’s contract with the farm, which Jefferson considered as a monopoly, was the only means of destroying that monopoly of tobacco in Virginia, by the Scotch factors, which really existed. Give him some reason therefor. We have a few words on Lafayette’s subject. He expresses his astonishment at this man’s inaptitude and imbecility. Poor Lafayette! He begins to suffer the consequences which always attend too great elevation. *Il s’éclipse au premier*. Short also tells me that La Rochefoucault is terribly puzzled about the affairs of impositions. I reply that this is always the case when men bring metaphysical ideas into the business of the world; that none know how to govern but those who have been used to it, and such men have rarely either time or inclination to write about it. The books, therefore, which are to be met with contain mere Utopian ideas. After this I go to the salon of Madame de Flahaut, and stay out the company. The Comte de Luxembourg has, according to custom, much to whisper. I tell him, in plain terms, that the aristocratic party must be quiet unless they wish to be hanged.”

“While in London I bought a large Newfoundland dog for the Duchess of Orleans. To-day [November 10th] I take him to the Palais Royal, where I go to dine and present him to her Royal Highness, who appears much pleased, and the Vicomte de Ségur ‘le prend en amitié.’ *Cela s’entend*. The Count and I take a turn round the gardens together, and then I go to the club, where I murder a little time. It has been a

fine day. I think I never in my life had so many different things agitating my mind as at present, and I cannot commence one affair because another is constantly obtruding. Madame de Bréhan says if the troubles last she will go and live with me in America. I of course agree to the arrangement.”

“After dinner [November 12th], go to the opera. I sit behind my fickle friend Madame de Flahaut, and as, luckily, the music makes me always grave, I keep still in the sentimental style. The Comtesse de Frize is here, to whom I pay my respects in the adjoining box. After the opera luckily I meet Madame Foucault, and luckily she receives me particularly well. I take care, for many reasons, that my countenance shall beam with satisfaction. Luckily she expresses herself to Madame in terms very favorable to me.”

On Saturday, November 13th, the populace pillaged the hotel of the Duc de Castries. This was about the first of this kind of depredation in Paris. The occasion of it, Morris says, “is that the Duc de Castries has wounded their favorite, Charles de la Meth, in a duel, which he had drawn upon himself by insulting the Duke. The history seems curious. M. de Chauvigny comes to Paris for the purpose of fighting with Charles de la Meth, who, as he says, fermented an insurrection in the regiment to which he belongs. All this I learned at M. Boutin’s, where M. de Chauvigny, introduced by his brother, a bishop, related what had passed on the subject. He had called on M. de la Meth, whose friends, at a rendezvous given, told him that M. de la Meth would not fight till the constitution was finished. The other replied that he must in that case, until the completion of it, continue to assert on every occasion that M. de la Meth was a coward. This thing being again in question at the Assemblée, De la Meth declared that he would not have an affair with Chauvigny until he had settled with the Duc de Castries (colonel of the regiment) ‘qui m’a détaché ce spadassin-là.’ De Castries, of course, requires satisfaction, and they proceed to the ground, where the friends of De la Meth, who is an excellent swordsman, object to his fighting with pistols. De Castries, like a true chevalier, agrees to decide the matter *aux armes blanches*, and wounds his antagonist. The populace in consequence destroy the property of his father. This is rare; I think it will produce some events which are not now dreamt of. The Assemblée (in the hands of the Jacobins) have, it is said, sanctioned the doings of this day.”

“This morning [November 14th] the Comte de Moustier calls on me. We discuss his plan of a constitution together, and he tells me that he stands better at court than ever he expected. He says he is personally in favor with the Queen, and he expects to be consulted on affairs by and by. The King and Queen, he tells me, are determined not to abuse their authority if ever they recover it. He tells me incidentally that both the King and Queen have mentioned me to him, the former twice, and that I stand well in their opinion. This may perhaps be useful to my country at some future period.

“Visit Madame de Flahaut. It seems to me from appearances that Lord Wycombe is expected, and I tell her so, but she says it is the Bishop. Company come in immediately after me—Madame de Laborde and Madame de la Tour, after them Montesquiou; and while we are all here enter Lord Wycombe, who is at once established as the person to whom a rendezvous is given. We all go away, but I

presently after return and tell her, ‘Que je lui serai à charge pour quelques moments de plus.’ My Lord is more disconcerted than my lady. He seems not yet advanced to the point which these things tend to. Go from hence to club, where I find there are some who justify the populace for yesterday’s business. M. de Moustier told me that Montmorin had asked for Carmichael as minister at this Court, which might excite opposition to Madison and Short, the present competitors. It is a question in my mind as to this request having been made by Montmorin.”

“I hear to-day [November 15th] at Madame de Chastellux’s the wish of the Garde des Sceaux* to converse with me. I promise to wait upon him. The Duchess of Orleans reproaches me for absenting myself, and I promise to dine with her to-morrow. At eight o’clock I go by appointment to Madame de Flahaut’s. She has not returned from the Variétés, but desires I will wait. I am unluckily obliged to do so, having promised Capellis to spend the evening here. At half after eight she comes in, and Mademoiselle Duplessis* with her. I show more ill-humor than consists with good sense or politeness; at least, such would be the opinion of most observers. She is full of apologies, but I treat both them and her like a Turk. She is very conciliating in her manner and words, and proposes a rendezvous for to-morrow evening, which I refuse to accept of. At length, however, she prevails, but as we go in to supper together I tell her that she will probably fail if a new comedy offers itself.”

“To-day [November 16th], according to my promise, I dine at the Palais Royal, and, as the Princess is alone when I come in, I converse a little with her in a manner to gain somewhat on her good will. After dinner I keep my rendezvous with Madame de Flahaut, but I find her surrounded. Lord Wycombe, the Comte de Luxembourg, M. de St. Foi are there, so I leave. My letters to-day are not pleasant. M. de Flahaut expresses a wish to go as minister to America, and desires me to prevail on his wife to consent to such a step, should it become possible to obtain the place. I promise to speak to her on the subject. Go and sit some time with Madame de Montmorin. She expresses her conviction that Lafayette is below his business, which is very true. She says that the Queen will not consent to make her husband governor of the children of France; that the aristocrats abhor him. At dinner we converse about the play of this evening, ‘Brutus,’ which is expected to excite much disturbance. After six o’clock Bouinville and I go to the play. At leaving the room, as it is supposed that there will be three parties in the house, I cry, in a style of rant, ‘Je me déclare pour le Roi, et je vole à la victoire.’ We cannot find seats, wherefore I go to the *loge* of d’Angivilliers, and find that I was expected, having promised to come and then forgotten it. Lord Wycombe is established here, next to Madame de Flahaut, in the place which I occupied formerly. St. Foi is here, a cunning observer. I determine, therefore, to play them all three, and I think succeed pretty well. Propose to her to make the old fox believe she is attached to the young lord, which she exclaims against. She is, however, resolved, I think, to attach him, and may perhaps singe her wings while she flutters around that flame. The piece excites a great deal of noise and altercation, but the parterre filled with democrats obtains the victory clearly, and, having obtained it, roars for above ten minutes, ‘Vive le Roi.’ After the play a motion is made to place the bust of Voltaire on the stage and crown it, which is complied with amid repeated acclamations. I write, for the amusement of our party, these lines:

See, France, in Freedom's mantle gay,
Her former state disdains,
Yet proud her fav'rite Bard t'obey,
Tho' dead, his spirit reigns.
The common road to power he trod,
Cried, 'Pull all tyrants down,'
And, making of the *mob* a god,
Has gained from them a crown.

I give them to Madame de Flahaut, desiring her to pass them to my lord. He is well pleased with them, and this, as it enables her to magnify her merits by her friends, must of course please her. She wishes to fix an appointment with me for Friday morning, but I desire her to write her hour in season for me to reply, that, if there be anything to prevent my attendance, I can inform her. She is a coquette, and very fickle.”

“Go to dine with the Garde des Sceaux [November 18th]. His domestics know not what to make of me, a thing which frequently happens at my first approach, because the simplicity of my dress and equipage, my wooden leg, and tone of republican equality seem totally misplaced at the levée of a minister. He is yet in his closet. I find in the circle no one of my acquaintance except Dupont the economist, who never took notice of a letter I brought from his son, and seems a little ashamed of it. The reception of the minister is flattering and his attentions great, so that those who had placed themselves next him feel themselves misplaced. After dinner he takes me aside to know my sentiments. I tell him that I consider the Revolution a project that has failed; that the evils of anarchy must restore authority to the sovereign; that he ought to continue a mere instrument in the hands of the Assembly, etc. As to him, the minister, he should, when he quits his place, go directly from the King's closet to his seat in the Assembly, and there become the advocate of royal authority. He approves of my ideas, except for himself, and says he has need of repose. This is idle, and I tell him so. Ask him whether he intends to resign (Madame de Flahaut told me so last evening, having learned it from her Bishop). He says that he knows nothing about it; that he shall retire whenever the King pleases. After our conversation the Abbé d'Andrezelle has a long *entretien*. He tells me of a society formed for a correspondence with the provinces to counteract the Jacobins. I give him some ideas on that subject for which he expresses himself to be much obliged, and asks me to be present at one of their meetings, which I consent to.”

“I am pressed by the Bishop d'Autun to stay to dinner at the Louvre [November 19th], but I go to the Palais Royal. We meet here the Duc de Laval. After dinner I have some conversation with him and the Comte de Thiard, from whence I apprehend that a serious plan is laid for introducing troops of the Emperor in order to liberate the King and Queen, and restore the former government. After dinner go to the Comédie Française, and sit with the Duchess to hear 'Brutus.' Thence to Madame de Ségur's, where I take up Madame de Chastellux. They lament to me that Lafayette has lost his influence. In the way home she tells me that she is persuaded there will be an effort made by the Emperor in favor of his sister. I hinted to the Comte de Thiard the advantages that would result from putting the Dauphin into the hands of governors,

and sending him upon his travels. Many of the discontented nobles and clergy of France are urgent with the chief of the empire to avenge the insults offered to his unfortunate sister. So fair a pretext, such plausible reasons, both public and private, joined to a great political interest and personal territorial claims, might determine an enterprising prince. But he is cautious, trusting more in art than in force. How will it all end? This unhappy country, bewildered in the pursuit of metaphysical whimsies, presents to one's moral view a mighty ruin. Like the remnants of ancient magnificence, we admire the architecture of the temple, while we detest the false god to whom it was dedicated. Daws and ravens, and the birds of night now build their nests in its niches; the sovereign, humbled to the level of a beggar's pity, without resources, without authority, without a friend; the Assembly, at once a master and a slave—new in power, wild in theory, raw in practice, it engrosses all functions, though incapable of exercising any, and has taken from this fierce, ferocious people every restraint of religion and of respect. Here conjecture may wander through unbounded space. What sum of misery may be requisite to change popular will, calculation cannot determine. What circumstances may arise in the order of divine will to give direction to that will, our sharpest vision cannot discover. What talents may be found to seize those circumstances to influence that will, and, above all, to moderate the power which it must confer, we are equally ignorant. One thing only seems to be tolerably ascertained, that the glorious opportunity is lost, and (for this time at least) the Revolution has failed.”

“The Bishop comes in [November 23d] while I am at Madame de Flahaut's to-day, and as my carriage was sent away he is grave. Leave them, and go to the Comte de Montmorin's. Before dinner, the Duc de Liancourt and Montesquiou being there, in the course of conversation on the actings and doings of the Assemblée, I say that the constitution they have proposed is such that the Almighty himself could not make it succeed without creating a new species of man. After dinner I converse a little with Montmorin about his own situation. He feels himself very awkward, not knowing whether to stay or go, or, staying, what to do. Montesquiou comes up, and asks information from me respecting the debt from America to France. In the result of his inquiries it is agreed between him and Montmorin that no proposition shall be accepted without taking first my opinion on it. Go from hence to Madame de Ségur's. A little comedy is acted here by the children, the subject of which is the pleasure derived to the whole family by an infant of which the countess was lately delivered. The play is written by the father to whom I address in the course of it these lines:

For perfecting the comic art,
Let others take a single part—
While you, my friend, with nobler soul,
Embrace at once the mighty whole;
For here we see arise from you,
The subject, play, and actors too.

As soon as the piece is finished I slip away. Madame de Lafayette, who was here, reproaches me a little for deserting them. Monsieur has long been giddy from his elevation. When he is a little sober I will see whether he can any longer be useful to his country or mine. I rather doubt it. Go to the Louvre, and find Madame has

quarrelled with her Bishop, who is jealous of me. In consequence of the quarrel she is very ill, and surrounded by friends and servants.

“After dining with Madame de Foucault [November 25th] I go to Lafayette’s; Madame receives me coolly enough. I stay some time, leaning on the chimney-piece. He comes out, and as soon as he sees me approaches. Asks why I do not come to see him. I answer that I do not like to mix with the crowd which I find here; that whenever I can be useful, I am at his orders. He asks my opinion of his situation. I give it *sans ménagement*, and while I speak he turns pale. I tell him that the time approaches when all good men must cling to the throne; that the present King is very valuable on account of his moderation, and if he should possess too great authority might be persuaded to grant a proper constitution; that the thing called a constitution which the Assembly have framed is good for nothing; that as to himself, his personal situation is very delicate; that he nominally, but not really, commands his troops; that I really cannot tell how he is to establish discipline among them, but that unless he can accomplish that object he must be ruined sooner or later; that the best line of conduct, perhaps, would be to seize an occasion of disobedience and resign, by which means he would preserve a reputation in France which would be precious, and hereafter useful. He says that he is only raised by circumstances and events, so that when they cease he sinks, and the difficulty comes in how to excite them. I take care not to express even by a look my contempt and abhorrence, but simply observe that events will arise fast enough of themselves if he can but make a good use of them, which I doubt, because I do not place any confidence in his troops.

“He asks what I think of a plan in agitation with respect to the protesting Bishops; viz., to withhold their revenues. I tell him that the Assemblée must turn them out of doors naked if they wish the people to clothe them. He says he is a little afraid of that consequence. I reiterate to him the necessity of restoring the nobility, at which, of course, he flinches, and says he should like two chambers, as in America. I tell him that an American constitution will not do for this country, and that two such chambers would not answer where there is an hereditary executive; that every country must have a constitution suited to its circumstances, and the state of France requires a higher toned government than that of England. He starts at this with astonishment. I pray him to remark that England is surrounded by a deep ditch, and, being only assailable by sea, can permit many things at home which would not be safe in different situations; that her safety depends on her marine, to the preservation of which every right and privilege of her citizens is sacrificed; that in all possible governments the first care must be general preservation. He tells me the intended ministers; they are all taken from among the people, and thus, without knowing it, the people will find an additional tie to the great envy of their fellows.”

“Dine with Madame de Flahaut [November 27th]. She tells me that the Bishop is well with the Queen. *Celas ’entend*. She tells me that De Moustier speaks illy of me at Madame d’Angivilliers.* He is wrong. Lord Wycombe calls after dinner, and is seated *à côté, comme d’usage*.”

“At two [November 28th] I visit Duportail,† the new Minister at War, and go from thence to the Louvre. Lord Wycombe is here, and has had the whole morning, say

from ten to two. He goes away, being pressed by Madame to return in the evening. She says he told her that she loved me, which at first she laughed at, but afterward seriously refuted. She insists on my partaking of her dinner. Monsieur seems displeased. After dinner she sends me with Mademoiselle Duplessis to visit Madame de Guibert, who gives me a eulogy on her late husband by one of his friends. When we return, my lord is established *à côté*. The Marquis de Montesquiou is merry at having found them so situated. I leave this society, and visit Madame de Chastellux. The conversation of this last society was quite high in the aristocratic tone. The idea of carrying off the King is mentioned. My fair friend talked to me of presenting to Lord Wycombe the cup formerly given to me, and which I had sent back. I think it probable that she has already bestowed it on him.”

“Dine to-day [November 29th] at M. de Montmorin’s. Lafayette comes in, and Madame de Montmorin observes that he does not seem very glad to see me. She asks the reason. I tell her that I lately told him some truths which differed so much from the style of flattery he has been accustomed to that he is not well pleased with it. Montmorin observes that Lafayette has not abilities enough to carry through his affairs. He says that within a month past things have appeared to him much worse than they were. He seems apprehensive of a visit from foreign powers, and that the Comte d’Artois and Prince of Condé may play a deep game. *Nous verrons*. I go to the play with Madame de Beaumont, and am placed luckily opposite to my fair friend. I know not whether she observes me, but if she does it will be useful.”

Just at this time more frequent applications were made to Morris for advice about American lands, but he felt that it would hardly do for him to bear the responsibility of “exciting French citizens to abandon their native country.” He was therefore anxious that an office should be opened in Paris where maps could be seen and titles lodged. Writing about this to Robert Morris, he says: ‘Purchasers here are for the most part ignorant of geography. So far from thinking the forests a disadvantage, they are captivated with the idea of having their châteaux surrounded by magnificent trees. They naturally expect superb highways over the pathless desert, and see with the mind’s eye numerous barges in every stream. Le Coulteux was afraid to appear in the sale of your lands lest the fashionable system of the ‘lanterne’ should be applied.’

“I go to the Palais Royal to-day [November 30th] to dine with the Duchess, but she dines abroad and I go to the club. The restaurateur is not a good one; his wine is very bad. Call at Madame de Ségur’s. She is in bed. Wishes to know the purport of my conversation with Lafayette. I tell her that I told him many serious truths, which were not to his taste. I take the Vicomte de Ségur to Madame de Chastellux’s, where he reads a little comedy called ‘Le Nouveau Cercle,’ which is not without merit, but he reads too well to judge of it. For the rest, he has made himself the principal character of the piece. Lady Cary is here, an Irishwoman who has, I believe, the merit of keeping a good house in Paris. Leave this at a little after nine and go to the Louvre. My lord is here, of course; an observation which I make on the assignats strikes him very forcibly. If I am not much mistaken, he will quote it. His manner of seizing it shows a discerning mind. Madame de Flahaut apologizes for having been abroad this morning; had I told her I would call she would have staid at home. I reply coolly that I came late, that I might not interrupt her conversation with her new friend. She feels

this cutting sarcasm. She passed the day with the Bishop, whose leg is hurt—a strain of the ankle. I let her make inquiries about the play, where I believe she did not see me, and my answers will be a little disquieting.”

“My letters are extremely disquieting. I rise this morning [December 1st] before day, after a night of sleepless anxiety. Sit down to write by candle-light, and get all my letters finished in season. Receive a note from Madame de Flahaut, desiring me to come between ten and eleven, as she is to visit Madame d’Angiviliers at half-past twelve. I find her ill and complaining. I have not the disposition either to quarrel or enjoy. Monsieur desires me twice to remind her, at a quarter after twelve, that she is to visit her sister. I tell her that every post since I have been here brings me afflicting intelligence. She wishes to know what it is, but I tell her that is unnecessary; I mention it in general, that she may not be surprised at my behavior. At twelve Lord Wycombe calls, and stays. I remind her repeatedly of her engagement to her sister, and stay him out, for which I apologize to her. Go to call on Le Coulteux. He is abroad. Madame is going out, and is half-stripped when I enter. During the few minutes which I stay she mentions a curious anecdote of the Comte de Pilau. He is become devout to a most astonishing degree, and in all the bigotry of the Romish Church; a man who was driven by the priesthood from Spain on account of his religion, or, rather, the want of it; a man who abandoned an immense fortune for the sake of avoiding exterior ceremonies. O God! how weak, how inconsistent, how wretched is man. Go to Mademoiselle Martin’s and buy a pot of rouge to take to my sister in London. I tell the Bishop of Autun to-day that he ought, if possible, to obtain the embassy to Vienna.”

“Sir John Miller visits me to-day [December 6th], and talks of weights and measures. Dine at the Palais Royal. After dinner visit M. de Lafayette. He is in a peck of little troubles. I make my visit short. Madame’s reception is *à la glace*. Return to the Palais Royal, and take Madame de Chastellux to the Louvre. At coming away Madame de Flahaut desires me to take her to Madame de Corney’s. I am quite indifferent to her, and she asks me the reason. I rally her on her connection with my lord, who is to have this evening again, not having had an opportunity to converse as he wished this morning. She offers me a present which he made her, but I tell her I will accept of nothing but a picture of her now in possession of her Bishop, and that I will have it. I tell her when I go away she will forget me. This she has long known. I tell her that my reception when I last saw her was such that, if Madame de Chastellux had not asked me to bring her, I should not have given the trouble of my visit. Arrived again at the Louvre, I hand her out and am about to return, but she insists on my going up. Arrived there, I take leave, but am persuaded to stay a little while. Her pride speaks a high language. She then either is, or pretends to be, ill. Monsieur comes up, and after a few words I again take leave, but she begs me in English to stay. The Bishop comes in; I speak to him again on the subject of an embassy to Vienna, and mark out the means of succeeding. I tell him that at present it is equally dangerous to be either in or out of the Assemblée; that a foreign embassy is the only means of preserving himself *en évidence*, and that if he can make himself the confidential man between the Queen and her brother, he will be in the straight road to greatness, whenever circumstances will render it desirable. After he is gone I stay a few minutes, and then follow him.”

“I receive a letter to-day [December 8th] brought by the English mail urging my departure for London. Go to the Louvre, according to my promise, and find Madame de Flahaut in bed writing to her Lord. . . . In the evening go to the Palais Royal and attend the reading of a tragedy written by M. de Sabran at fourteen years of age. It is very well written, but before it is finished I am called away by M. de Flahaut. Return to the Louvre, and sup. I lend Madame 1,200f. in paper to redeem so much gold, which she has pawned. I do not expect to be repaid.”

These last months of 1790 found Paris in a melancholy way. While the democratic revolution, with heads on pikes, went steadily and surely on, the aristocratic mode of helping a man out of the world went as steadily on in the Bois de Boulogne, turned into a meeting-place for excitements of all kinds; the resort of lovers, duellists, idlers, and tramps of every description. In 1790 a challenge and a rendezvous under the trees there was quite the proper thing, and one word spoken in anger, or the appearance of a cockade, was sufficient pretext for an exhibition of skill with the sword—or the pistol, lately introduced from England, which had met with much applause. In vain the authorities pleaded the aristocratic tendency of this way of settling differences. No one listened. People must be amused. Paris was rapidly emptying; art had gone; the dancer had gone; the *marchands de modes* went, leaving Paris to the mercy of the provinces for its fashions, from whence came strange things—bonnets trimmed with yellow flowers, with the malicious suggestion that they were “au teint de la constitution,” and there seemed in this deserted town to be only “*fagotières*“ left. But the roulette-table and duelling consoled Paris. “Their patriotism,” Goncourt says, “they carried in their white cockade, for they whispered and wrote, ‘The king has abandoned us; we are no longer his subjects.’”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XVII.

Another trip to London. Stiffness of English society. Annoying indifference of the Duke of Leeds to American interests. Returns to Paris. Dines with the Duchess of Orleans. Ternant appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States. Conversation with M. de Ségur. M. de Montmorin wishes Morris appointed Minister from the United States. Asked to confer with the Committee of Commerce. Dines with Lafayette. Dines with Marmontel. Lafayette vexed. Madame de Nadaillac. The “farm” abolished by the Assembly. The tobacco decrees. Desired to write a letter on them. Letter to Washington thereupon. Some details of the affair of October 5th at Versailles. Disturbance in Languedoc. Trepidation of the Bishop of Autun. Great tumult in Paris. Conversation with Madame de Nadaillac. The Château during the riot. Lafayette confesses the guards were drunk. Morris’s advice to him.

In the early part of December Morris again went to London, where very pressing affairs demanded his personal attention, and for some weeks, with what resignation he could muster, he gave himself up to long, dull, and extremely unsatisfactory conversations with city men. Mrs. Siddons was somewhat of a relief from the monotony of business, but he only speaks of seeing her a few times—once in “a very bad piece called ‘Isabella,’ in which she acts very well.” The stiffness of London society manners never suited his taste, and he invariably found the rout and the evening entertainment tiresome, and his only comment was that there was no pleasant intercourse between the men and women. “I go,” he says, “one evening to the Duchess of Gordon’s. Here in one room the young are dancing, and in another the old are gambling at a faro-table. I stay but a little while, for the party is to me vastly dull. The male dancers are very indifferent.”

He again presented himself (December 18th) at the Duke of Leeds’s office, hoping to find that his affairs with the government might have been advanced. He found his grace “in council, but that breaks up while I am here. Mr. Burgess tells me that the Duke is very much engaged. He talks a great deal, but, stripping off the compliment and profession, what he says amounts to no more than that sundry cabinet councils have been held on the treaty with America, and that a reference has been made of the affair three months ago to Lord Hawkesbury, whose report has not yet been received. I answer to all this, very dryly, that I have presented myself to let them know that I am alive; that I shall write from hence to America; that I leave town next week; that I will wait on the Duke at such time as he may indicate; that if I learn nothing more than that things are just as I left them I shall merely say so; that it may be worth their while to consider whether the measures proposed last session in Congress respecting the commerce with this country may not be adopted, and what the consequences would be.”

There is a decided flavor of republican curtness in this message left for his grace which may have had its influence. Certain it is, however, that although he subsequently made two appointments to meet Morris, profuse apologies from Mr. Burgess, and many regrets that “the Duke is by a sudden and severe indisposition

prevented from meeting me,” was all the satisfaction the latter got from his grace. Morris was not slow to make his ideas known with regard to the treatment he—or, rather, his country—had received from the English Government, and he mentioned that, “dining one day with Lord Lansdowne, we have a great deal of conversation upon various subjects. I give them my honest sentiments respecting Britain and America, which are not pleasing, but I do not mean to please.”

Not long after this he was back in Paris again, and making an early visit to Madame de Flahaut to learn the latest news, which was always to be found in her salon. “She complains bitterly,” he says, January 19, 1791, “of the Bishop of Autun’s cold cruelty. He is elected a member of the Department of Paris and resigns his bishopric. He treats her ill. His passion for play has become extreme, and she gives me instances which are ridiculous.* He comes in, and I come away. Visit Madame de Chastellux, and go with her to dine at the Duchess of Orleans’. Her Royal Highness is ruined; that is, she is reduced from 450,000£ to 200,000£. She tells me that she cannot give any good dinners, but if I will come and fast with her she will be glad to see me.”

“At Madame de Staël’s this evening [January 21st] I meet the world. Stay some time in various conversation, altogether of no consequence. This morning Ternant calls and takes breakfast. He was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States last Sunday. We converse a little about his mission. He wishes me to be appointed here. I tell him that I understood from De Moustier that Carmichael has been asked for. He says that if it be not too late he will get that matter altered. He will know more about it, and tell me.

“Go to the Louvre. M. de Flahaut had desired to see me. He talks about sending hardware to America for sale, a friend of his being at the head of a considerable manufactory. I tell him his friend may call some morning and I will speak to him. Go to Madame du Bourg’s. They are at play, and high play, too, in which I of course take no part. Come away early.”

“Madame de Flahaut tells me to-day [January 22d] that she has a gleam of hope in her prospects, and I will try to bring it to some end. Go to see Madame de Ségur, and take her a present of some apples, etc. Monsieur is with his wife, and, the conversation turning that way, the pleasure a man feels in speaking of himself leads him to communicate the history of the war between Russia and the Porte. From his statement, England embroiled those powers. Having taken the history a great way back, and brought it to the peace which concluded the former war between them, he states that the Empress took on herself to be the liege lord (suzerain) of Georgia; that the Afghis Tartars, dwelling about the Caspian Sea, and who are constantly at war with the Georgians, received aid from the Pasha in their neighborhood, and that the Tartars of the Cuban made frequent depredations on the Russian territories and then crossed that fordable river into the Turkish territory; that complaints having arisen on this subject, the mediation of France was asked and accepted, and he and M. de Choiseul-Gouffier employed themselves efficaciously in settling the difference. It was agreed that the Pasha should no longer give aid to the Afghis Tartars, and that those of the Cuban should not be protected after their inroads as before; that Prince Potemkin, having assembled a considerable army to be reviewed by the Empress in that quarter,

and being informed that the causes of complaint continued notwithstanding the treaty, sent immediately through the Russian ambassador, Bulgakow, a menacing message to the Turk; that this being communicated by the Reis Effendi to M. de Gouffier, he, much surprised, advised the Turk immediately to arm and informed him, Ségur, of what was done and doing; that he thereupon spoke in very high terms to the Russian ministry, who laid the blame upon Prince Potemkin. They agreed to submit to any reasonable terms, and although those proposed through M. de Gouffier by the Turk were conceived rather haughtily, to his great surprise they were acceded to. His courier, however, charged with that intelligence, was intercepted by the Turkish robbers, and murdered; when he learned that accident he immediately sent another, but before that messenger arrived the English had been busy in dissuading them from all accommodation. Their ambassador, Mr. —, told the Reis Effendi that he would be powerfully supported by Prussia and Poland; that if Austria should join Russia, a powerful diversion would be made by the revolt in Flanders then in train; that they must not trust to France, whose favorite system it was to support Russia, with whom she had lately formed very close connections, and of course could not be cordially attached to the Porte. ‘The reason of England was (says Ségur) that, being vexed with Russia for forming a treaty with France by which, among other things, the principles of the armed neutrality are acknowledged, and for insisting on a like acknowledgment, in a proposed renewal of the treaty with England, she was in hopes of making a breach between France and her new ally Russia, or her new ally the Turk. In consequence of the British intrigues, the Porte refused to accede to the terms which she had herself proposed, but sent others in a style imperious and dictatorial; that he was much hurt at this, but, to his very great surprise, the Empress acceded to those also, but by the time that her despatches were ciphered, and just as the courier was about to depart, they learned that the Turk had actually commenced hostilities. He says that he long since informed his court that Hertzberg had formed vast projects menacing all Europe, but that no attention was paid to his information, and, on the contrary, he was represented as a firebrand, desirous of general mischief; that he very early proposed the triple alliance of Austria, Russia, and France, which was then rejected and has never been completed because, finally, the French Revolution prevented a ratification by France. He says that the late Emperor Joseph told him, shortly before his death, that the Empress of Russia had permitted him to make a separate peace, and that he might assure the King he would agree to give up Chorzim, and even Belgrade, to effect it. We pass then to the peace of Reichenbach, and I tell him the manner in which Van Hertzberg became the dupe of his own contrivances.’*

“We learn this day some news which, if true, will affect a little the affairs of this country. It is said that the Catholic militia of Strasbourg have all resigned and that a petition is arrived, signed by four thousand persons, to which a much greater number have adhered, desiring that all which has been done in respect to the clergy and nobility may be rescinded; that conciliatory commissioners are named (three) to go thither. Visit Madame de Chastellux who tells me that she is informed by a person lately come from French Flanders that a general apprehension is there entertained of a visit from the imperial troops. I do not believe in this visit.

“Leave her and go to the Louvre. I find Madame de Flahaut in conversation with a deputy from the Islands, who wishes a particular person nominated to the Department

of the Colonies, and that, in the demarcation of limits with Spain, a tract should be ceded in St. Domingo, for a part of which a plantation will be given of which she shall have one-half. I sup here. She is very sad, and it is in vain that I try to remove that sadness. But her prospects are very bad.”

“La Caze repeats again to-day [January 23d] that Jefferson has made Robert Morris a promise on my subject which is impossible. He tells me that he learned from Colonel Smith the only objection to placing me in this Corps Diplomatique would be my other pursuits. At half-past three I call on Madame de Flahaut. The Bishop of Autun is with her. Take a note of the person that the Colonists want for their Minister, and then go to dine with M. Montmorin. Meet Ternant. Montesquiou comes in after dinner, and says he wishes to see me. Ternant and I come away together. In the carriage he tells me that, on entering the court at Montmorin’s, he took occasion to observe, on seeing my carriage, that it would be a good thing I were appointed the Minister from the United States; to which Montmorin replied that he should like it much. Ternant then told him it would be very easy to get it done, since nothing more would be necessary than to signify a desire of the kind to Mr. Jefferson. Montmorin then said there was another person who desired it, namely, Carmichael. He asked if it was he or his friends who desired it, but before any decisive answer could be obtained they entered the salon. Afterwards go to take tea with Madame de Chastellux, and sup with the Princess. A very fine day, but drizzly evening. The news of Strasbourg, Montmorin told me, is unfounded.”

“This morning [January 25th] Ternant comes in. He tells me that the appointment of a Minister for the Colonies will experience considerable delay. He wishes me to confer with the Committee of Commerce. I promise to do so, if they desire it. He wishes me to tell Montmorin the sum which I conceive to be needful for a French minister in America, which I will do when he tells me the appointment is really made. At three o’clock go to dine with Madame de Staël, who is not yet come in. Meanwhile I visit at the Louvre, where they are at dinner. Madame de Flahaut is ill, and goes to bed. Return to dinner. The Abbé Siéyès is here, and descants with much self-sufficiency on government, despising all that has been said or sung on that subject before him, and Madame says that his writings and opinions will form in politics a new era, as that of Newton in physics. Go from hence to Madame du Bourg’s. She advises me to pursue rather the attractions of society than any serious attachment. Company come in, which puts an end to that matter.”

“This morning [January 26th] I am prevented from doing anything almost. First, M. de Flahaut presents to me by appointment his friend, who is a chief of the works of Amboise. He wants vent for hardware in the United States. Then Colonel Walker comes to communicate the perplexed state of the affairs of the Scioto Civilization Company. He asks my advice, but I can give no advice, not knowing sufficiently all the facts; some of the most important he remains ignorant of. Before he is gone Colonel Swan arrives, and tells me that his plan for the debt has fallen through by the misconduct of Cantaleu. He wishes me to visit Montesquiou. I tell him that if Montesquiou wishes to see me he can call on me. Dine with Lafayette, who is tolerably well content to see me. Ternant is here; he thinks a few weeks will drive things to a decision. I think not. After dinner we have an interesting conversation

together. He tells me that he had arranged a plan for restoring order by the exertion of force, in which De Bouillie and Lafayette were to co-operate, but the latter failed while he was in Germany. He is now at work to bring about the same thing. I see that he is desirous of being in the ministry here, and would play at heads for kingdoms. They want some person of this sort, of a rank sufficiently elevated to run no risk unnecessarily, and whose temper will not avoid any which may be necessary or proper. The Bishop happening to be at the Louvre to-day, I ask him what kind of place he has got, what is the income, whether it will support him, etc., and observe that unless it will place him in an independent situation he has done wrong in accepting. He says that it is the only door which was open.”

“Dine with the Duchess of Orleans to-day [January 27th], and go thence to the Louvre. Madame de Flahaut has her sister with her, who is arrived in great penury at Paris, and to whom she has sent money, notwithstanding the misery of her own situation. Leave them, and visit Madame de Staël. Return early, after drinking much weak tea.”

“This morning [January 29th] write, and at noon take up Madame de Chastellux. We go together to Choisy, and dine with Marmontel. He thinks soundly. After dinner he mentions his mode of contesting the new-fangled doctrines of the *droits de l'homme* by asking a definition of the word *droit*, and from that definition he draws a conclusion against the asserted equality of rights. He admits, however, that all are equal before the law and under the law. I deny this position, and make him remark that, where there is great inequality of rank and fortune, this supposed equality of legal dispensation would destroy all proportion and all justice. If the punishment be a fine, it oppresses the poor but does not affect the rich. If it be corporal punishment, it degrades the prince but does not wound the beggar. He is struck with deep conviction at this observation. I draw only one conclusion, that in morals every general position requires numerous exceptions, wherefore logical conclusions from such positions must frequently be erroneous. I might have pursued (as I have sometimes done) my remark a little farther, to the legal compensation of injuries where the varieties are greater, because the party committing and the party suffering wrong may each be of different rank in society. I might go farther and notice those different varieties of sentiment which the manners of different nations introduce into social life, for it is a fact that the ‘ill we feel is most in apprehension.’ The legislator, therefore, who would pare down the feelings of mankind to the metaphysical standard of his own reason, would show little knowledge though he might display much genius. We return to the Palais Royal, where I set down Madame de Chastellux. Go to the Louvre. Madame de Flahaut is alone and in sorrow. Complains of the cold insensibility of her husband’s relations. He is ill, very ill. The Baron de Montesquiou comes in, and asks if her dower is secured. It is not. M. d’Angiviliers has paid his brother’s debts; quære, whether he will pay this as a debt *privilégié*.”

“To-day [February 1st] I hear that M. de Rouillière is dead suddenly, and as he was writing the history of the times, and was not friendly to the powers which are, their adversaries say that he was poisoned.

“Paul Jones calls on me, and wishes to have my sentiments on a plan for carrying on war against Britain in India, should she commence hostilities against Russia. At half-past three go to dine with De la Rochefoucault, and later visit Madame de Ségur, and sit for some time. She is just returned from attending on her princess at Bellevue. The two old ladies, Mesdames Adelaide and Victoire, are about to start for Rome. Ternant came this morning and desired me to go to Lafayette this evening, and thence to the Committee of Commerce. He said that he should have caused the committee to write me a note, but that Lafayette, who chooses to seem (*the omnis homo*) to do everything, preferred taking me along with him. After dining I go to Lafayette’s. Converse some time with Ternant, and when Lafayette comes up I tell him that I cannot go to the committee but at their request; that what I say will have less weight; that I think it better for him to go this evening with Swan, and then, if the committee signify a desire to see me, I will wait on them to-morrow evening; that in the meantime he can signify to me what he wishes should be done. He agrees to the propriety of all this in words, but I can see that he is devilishly vexed. Be it so. Better he be vexed than carry me about in his pocket.”

“This morning [February 3d] Ternant calls and tells me of what passed last evening. He says that Lafayette agreed to the free culture of tobacco; that it is an affair of party entirely. He says that he proposed inviting me to the committee, but that M. Raymond objected, as I was interested. Colonel Swan told me this morning, apropos of the tobacco question, that there is a knot of men in the Assembly who dispose of all things as they list, and who turn everything to account. He speaks of their corruption with horror. I dress and go to M. Mory’s to dinner. There has been, it seems, a mistake, and instead of finding Chaumont I meet two kept mistresses. Chaumont and his wife come in presently after. It is ridiculous enough. However, she goes home. We stay, and dine late. M. de Flahaut, I hear, is getting better. His malady arises from his misconduct in pecuniary affairs. He is a wretch, and the best thing he could do would be to die.”

“I dine with M. de Montmorin to-day [February 4th]. We have a numerous collection at dinner. Madame de Montmorin shows me an almanac from England, sent her by the Duke of Dorset, in which, among other things, is a table of weights and measures. She says that it is one among many things which will be useless to her. I write in a blank leaf opposite to it:

A table here, of weight and measure,
In times like these it *is* a treasure;
For each one measures now the state,
And what his reasons want in weight,
He makes up, as a thing of course,
By the abundance of discourse.”

“This abundance of discourse” never ceased to amaze Morris, so often was the mountain delivered of the mouse. This day finished with a musical party at Madame de Chastellux’s, and an hour spent at Madame de Staël’s. “Some advances are made to me by Madame. We shall see.” More music at the Palais Royal, and a call at the Louvre, “where Madame de Nadaillac sups, to see me; she is an aristocrat *outrée*, and

has heard that I am of her sect. She is mistaken. She is handsome, and has a good deal of *esprit*. Her aunt, Madame de Flahaut, tells me she is virtuous and coquette and romantic. *Nous verrons*. Madame de Nadaillac assures me that there are many virtuous and religious *young* women in Paris. She says she will give me a supper with the Abbé Maury.”

“The Assembly have abolished the farm, etc., of tobacco, permitted the culture, and laid on a large duty.*

Dine [February 13th] with M. de Lafayette, and speak to him about the enormous duty on tobacco brought in American vessels. He wishes me to give him a note about it. I tell him that I do not choose to meddle with matters out of my line. He says that Mirabeau has promised him to speak about it, and he expects that both the tobacco and the oil will be taken up by the Diplomatic Committee. I ask him whether it would not answer for the King to suspend that decree, and give his reasons. He says that he would rather the Americans should be obliged to the nation than to the prince. I tell him that I learn from some persons well informed that if he had spoken the question would have been differently decided. He says that, on the contrary, it was so carried to spite him, and that the aristocrats in particular opposed it merely on that ground. Madame de Ségur, whom I meet, confirms to me that the aristocrats lost the tobacco question. I think an additional reason for their vote is a hatred to America for having been the cause of the Revolution. M. de Montmorin assures me that he is doing everything in his power relating to the tobacco decrees, and I ask him if I shall write him a letter on the subject. He expresses a strong wish that I would, and pressed me earnestly to do so the next day, as he was then to meet the Diplomatic Committee.”

Morris was extremely anxious to keep himself out of sight, “not wishing to be quoted in any of the deliberations of the committee,” and therefore, he says, speaking of the note afterwards in a letter to Mr. Jefferson, “I stated the observations as being made by American citizens. I am endeavoring, if possible, to obtain a duty on the culture equivalent to the import duty. There is little hope of success to any proposition for alleviating, much less removing, the burdens they have laid upon us. The greater part have adopted systematic reasoning in matters of commerce as in those of government, so that, disdaining attention to facts, and deaf to the voice of experience, while others deliberate, they decide, and are more constant in their opinions in proportion as they are less acquainted with the subject, which is natural enough.”

In a private letter to Washington, written about this time, Morris says of the late decrees, that the “laying a heavy duty on oil, and giving a great preference of duty on tobacco imported in French ships, and declaring that none but those built in France shall be reputed French bottoms, will excite much ill-humor in America. Those who rule the roast here seem to think that because the old government was sometimes wrong, everything contrary to what they did must be right. Like Jack in the ‘Tale of a Tub,’ who tore his coat to pieces in pulling off the fringe and trimmings that Peter had put on, or like the old Congress in its young days, which rejected the offer of valuable contracts and employed a host of commissaries and quarter-masters because Great Britain dealt with contractors—but, really, in the present effervescence very few acts of the Assembly can be considered as deliberate movements of national will. There

still continue to be three parties here. The *enragés*, long since known by the name of Jacobins, have lost much in the public opinion, so that they are less powerful in the Assembly than they were; but their Committees of Correspondence (called Sociétés Patriotiques), spread all over the kingdom, have given them a deep and strong hold over the people. On the other hand the numerous reforms, some of them unnecessary, and all either harsh, precipitate, or extreme, have thrown into the aristocratic party a great number of discontented.

“The military, who as such look up to the sovereign, are somewhat less factious than they were, but they are rather a mob than an army, and must, I think, fall either to the aristocratic or Jacobin side of the question. The middlemen are in a whimsical situation. In the Senate they follow the Jacobin counsels rather than appear connected with the other party. The same principle of shamefacedness operates on great occasions out-of-doors, but as the aristocrats have been forced down by a torrent of opinion from the heights of their absurd pretensions, and as the middlemen begin to be alarmed at the extremities to which they have been hurried, those two parties might come together if it were not for personal animosities among the leaders.

“This middle party would be the strongest if the nation were virtuous, but, alas! this is not the case, and therefore I think it will only serve as a stepping-stone for those who may find it convenient to change sides. In the midst, however, of all these confusions, what with confiscating the church property, selling the domains, curtailing pensions, and destroying offices, but especially by that great liquidator of public debt, a paper currency, this nation is working its way to a new state of active energy which will, I think, be displayed as soon as a vigorous government shall establish itself. The intervening confusion will probably call forth men of talent to form such government and to exert its powers.”

About a week later Morris dined with Montmorin, when they discussed the decrees. “He tells me that he is well pleased with my reflections, but he does not expect to do anything in the tobacco affair, the Assembly are so violent and so ignorant. I mention to Mr. Duport, who is here, my plan, to which he gives but little heed, for the same reason which M. de Montmorin assigns. This last tells me that a M. Pinchon, who it was said killed himself in July, 1789, was murdered; that it was shortly after he had deposited his *portefeuille* with the Duc d’Orléans, which he had been persuaded to do on account of the troubles; that the Duc de Penthièvre had been first proposed as his *dépositaire*, but this meeting with difficulty, his son-in-law was fixed upon; that the unhappy man was brought home, and declared that he was murdered. He lived to sign several papers. There was found in his house two millions, and his estate is bankrupt for fifty millions. M. Duport mentions that from a state of the Duc d’Orléans’ affairs, published by his chancellor, it appears that he is in arrears about fifty millions more. Time will unravel these things, if the suspicions be founded.”

“I dine to-day [February 22d] with Madame de Foucault, and meet there by appointment the Abbé Ronchon. Madame is kindly attentive. I bring the Abbé away with me, and he tells me that in the memorable affair of Versailles, as it was known that the King was that day to hunt in the forest of Meudon, a party of the populace, in number about a thousand, went thither, and among them were some assassins whose

object was to kill him, and that a reward of a thousand guineas was to be given to the wretch who should perform that deed. He says that the Comte de St. Priest, being informed of this, sent to urge His Majesty to come immediately on important business to Versailles; that this message made the violent party so much his enemies as they afterwards appeared to be. The Abbé believes all this, which I must acknowledge that I do not. I think there is enough of little villainy about them, but I question whether there be bold criminality.”

“The Marquis de Favernay tells me [February 23d] that there is the devil to pay in Languedoc. A kind of religious war is there kindling between the Catholics and Protestants. He says that the latter, who are rich, have purchased over the national troops, and turned their swords against the Catholics, under pretence of supporting the new Constitution. I suppose others give a different account of the affair, but it seems pretty clear at Nimes and Uses they are actually come to blows. I go at nine to the Louvre to take Madame de Flahaut to sup with Madame de Nadaillac. According to custom, she is not ready. We do not arrive till ten. Our hostess is very pleasant. Insists that I shall be an aristocrat, whether I will or no. She gives me assurances of her religion and morality, etc., but she is a coquette, and she is enthusiastic and romantic.”

“Go to the Louvre [February 24th]; see Madame de Flahaut. She is ill in bed; play sixpenny whist with her. The Bishop of Autun is horribly frightened for his life. When she got home last night she found in a blank envelope a will of her Bishop making her his heir. In consequence of some things he had dropped in conversation, she concluded that he was determined to destroy himself, and therefore spent the night in great agitation and in tears. M. de St. Foi, whom she roused at four o'clock in the morning, could not find the Bishop, he having slept near the church in which he was this day to consecrate two bishops lately elected. At length it turns out that, pursuant to repeated threats, he feared that the clergy would cause him to be this day destroyed, and had ordered the letter not to be delivered till the evening, meaning to take it back if he lived through the day.”

“I learn [February 27th] that Paris is in great tumult, of which I had indeed observed some symptoms this morning. Go to the Louvre; the Bishop is here. I return home, and find the Place du Carrousel full of soldiers. See Madame de Chastellux who tells me that the Princess is much alarmed at what is passing in Paris. There is a deal of riot conjured up, but there seems to be no sufficient object, so that it must waste itself.”

During the early weeks of 1791 rumor was fulfilling her agitating mission, ably assisted by Camille Desmoulins, who faithfully kept alive the fear that the continued emigration of aristocrats meant a counter-revolutionary plot, the end of which would be a general massacre. The roads were guarded to prevent the queen from escaping, as the people were led to believe she intended doing, dressed as a jockey. The king had been supplicated by a deputation from the sections of Paris to prevent the journey of mesdames his aunts to Rome. But his majesty had only made answer that in his opinion the ladies had as much right to go as any other citizen. Deeply incensed by this answer, Camille Desmoulins wrote that they had no right to go off with their pensions, or, as he expressed it, to eat French millions on Roman soil. But on the 19th the old ladies quietly slipped off—leaving the Assembly rather startled, and extreme

emotion and excitement among the people, who were fully persuaded that the entire royal family meant to follow suit. Of the departure of these ladies, Madame Campan speaks as follows: "I know from the queen that the departure of mesdames was judged necessary in order to leave the king's action free from the constraint put upon him by the family." *La Chimique de Paris*, a journal under the influence of the constitutional party, expressed great surprise, in a sarcastic article, that two sedentary old ladies should be suddenly possessed with a desire to run over the world. "C'est singulier, mais c'est possible. Elles vont, dit-on, baiser la mule du pape—c'est drôle, mais c'est édifiant."

"The Comte de Provence, quietly dining with Madame de Balbi, found himself suddenly surrounded by the *femmes de la Halle* and an immense crowd of people of all professions, who, in a fever of excitement, demanded to know if he meant to quit the King's person, or, if the King went, should he go too? To which last question he replied in such a way as to silence and disperse, for a time at least, even this mob. 'Osez-vous,' he said, 'le prévoir?'"

The riot which Morris particularly mentions was in consequence of some false news spread through the town that arms and ammunition had been transported to the donjon of Vincennes, and that there existed in the Tuileries a secret passage through which the royal family intended to make their escape. Lafayette, at the head of the National Guard, saved the fortress of Vincennes from being demolished, and forced the assailants to retreat—which they did, and tumultuously rushed into Paris, with the formidable brewer Santerre in the midst of them. Morris speaks of going to the court of the Tuileries immediately after these riots, but "not being permitted to walk in the gardens; try the quay, but the mud is impassable; go home and dress, and then go to Madame de Foucault's to dine. After dinner visit Madame de Nadaillac. She and her husband are tête-à-tête. We talk religion and morality. Monsieur observes, with much vehemence, that the man who, under pretext of the former, induces a woman to violate the latter's laws is worse than an atheist. Madame tries to mitigate a little this denunciation. Now as Monsieur is of cold temper and temperament, and Madame very enthusiastic, it seems to me that there is in this a remote relation to the Abbé Maury, who is much considered by Madame. He is a *mauvais sujet*, and she is very religious and duteous, etc. I part with her upon a pretty good *ton*, and Monsieur is also content. Return home, and, according to appointment, Mr. Swan and M. Brémond call on me. The affair of the tobacco is adjusted with the controller so that we are to have a decided preference. The government are to furnish a million and a half, and the interested on this side of the water are to make it up four millions, the business to be carried on on equal and joint account."

"To-day [March 2d] I dine with Lafayette. I communicate to him some facts respecting American affairs, and, as he is desirous of taking them all up together, I tell him that he had better, in such case, get a resolution or decree empowering the administration to act, for that otherwise he will have so many interests opposed to his plan that it must certainly fail. I think he will not follow this advice, because he wants to appear the Atlas which supports the two worlds. I ask him to tell me what passed the other day at the Château. He acknowledges that the Garde Nationale was drunk, and himself so angry as to have behaved indecorously to the gentlemen there; but he

says, at the same time, that M. de Villequière was much in fault, who, notwithstanding he had given his word of honor not to suffer any persons to come into the King's chamber except his usual attendants, had suffered a crowd to get thither, many of them of the worst kind of people. Having heard his story, I tell him (which is very true) that I am sorry for it, but as the thing is done he must now bear it out with a high hand, and turn M. de Villequière out of office, assigning publicly as a reason that he permitted certain persons (to be named) to come into the King's chamber on such an occasion, contrary to the promise made on his honor. He finds this advice very good. He must be preserved yet."

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XVIII.

The queen intriguing with Mirabeau. Morris's impressions of the Abbé Maury. Madame de Nadaillac's salon. Madame de Tessé converted to Morris's political principles. Vicq d'Azyr's eulogy of Franklin. Morris takes supper with Condorcet. Paris illuminated. First introduction to Lady Sutherland. Conversation with the Abbé Maury. Death of Mirabeau. Discusses with Montmorin Mirabeau's successor. Mirabeau's impressive funeral. Strictures on his character. Robespierre comes to the front. Morris predicts to M. de Montmorin the speedy dissolution of the present Assembly. A visit from Paine. Madame de Nadaillac talks of religion and duty. Madame de Flahaut asks advice as to marriage. Morris prepares a note for the king on the rations for the French marine. Madame de Staël reads her tragedy "Montmorenci." Morris gives her some advice. Brilliant society in her salon.

"Walk about the Champs Elysées to-day [March 3d] with Madame de Flahaut and Mademoiselle Duplessis. Propose to M. de Favernay, whom I meet, to go to the restaurateur's, but Madame proposes that we should bring our dinner to her. We go to the Hôtel des Américains, and, having made our provision, return and eat it there. After dinner I return home, read a little, and dress. M. Brémond* and M. de Bergasse come in. We have much conversation on public affairs, which form the object of their visit. They tell me that the Queen is now intriguing with Mirabeau, the Comte de la Marck, and the Comte de Mercy, who enjoy her confidence. They wish to visit me again. They tell me that Mirabeau, whose ambition renders him the mortal enemy of Lafayette, must succeed in ruining him by the instrumentality of his compeers in the department. I incline to think, however, that Lafayette will hold a good tug, being as cunning as anybody. Mirabeau has much greater talents, and his opponent a better character. When the two gentlemen leave me, I go to Madame de Nadaillac's. We have here the Abbé Maury,* who looks like a downright ecclesiastical scoundrel, and the rest are fierce aristocrats. They have the word 'valet' written on their foreheads in large characters. Maury is formed to govern such men, and such men are formed to obey him, or anyone else. Maury seems, however, to have rather too much vanity for a *great man*. Madame de Nadaillac is vastly attentive, and insists that I must be *un aristocrat outré*. I tell her that I am too old to change my opinions of government, but I will to her be just what she pleases."

"To-day [March 5th] the Comte de Ségur calls on me. I ask him the character of the Comte de la Marck† and the Comte de Mercy.‡ He tells me that the former is a military man who understands his business, and that in the affairs of Brabant his plan was to raise a popular party which, in case of the independence of that country, should be considered as the French party; or, at any rate, by sowing dissension, facilitate the re-establishment of imperial authority. The Comte de Mercy is, he says, one of the ablest statesmen in Europe. Visit Madame Dumolley, who is very desirous of my visits, because she finds I keep company that she cannot reach. Leave her, go to the Palais Royal, and sup with the Duchess. Madame de St. Priest, who is here, wishes to know my opinion of what has lately passed at the Louvre. I evade it handsomely, and Madame de Chastellux tells me so, being a little vexed, because she says that they

will quote against her what I have said, and which they will understand very differently from the true meaning. I ask her about the Comte de la Marck, and find that I am acquainted with him. He is intimately united with Mirabeau, is devoured by ambition, and of profligate morals. *Nous voilà donc au fait*. M. d'Agout comes in. He is just arrived from Switzerland, and brings me many civil sayings from Madame de Tessé, who is become a convert, she says, to my principles of government. There will be many more such converts."

"This morning [March 7th] I write, being still unwell. In the evening Madame de Flahaut calls at the door, and sends to know how I do. She will not come up, although her husband and nephew are with her. Go to Madame de Chastellux's, where we take tea; a trio, of which the Duchess makes the third. Visit Madame de Nadaillac, who has been ill. We converse about her malady, afterwards upon religion, and she wishes to know whether I have the virtue of an American, which she doubts, because she is pleased to say I have the amiableness of a Frenchman. I leave that matter a little doubtful, but she seems a little displeased that her husband comes in, which is a good sign. Make my visit neither long nor short, and I perceive that both are content."

"I go to the Louvre [March 12th] to take Madame de Flahaut to drive; but the Baron de Montesquiou is here, who wants to get into office, and then comes the toilette, and then Mademoiselle Duplessis, so I go to call on Madame de Chastellux. Swan calls and tells me what I had hinted to him; viz., that Roederer's motions and resolutions have cut up the *régie* by the roots. Ternant calls, with whom I converse a little on those things. Dine with the Comte de Montmorin, and, as Montesquiou comes in after dinner, I mention those things to him. He wishes me to have a *mémoire* drawn. Go, after dinner, to the Academy of Physicians, where Vicq d'Azyr* pronounces the eulogium of Doctor Franklin."

"I go [March 17th] to supper to-night at Madame d'Angivilliers. Madame de Condorcet is here. She is handsome, and has *un air spirituel*. Talk with Condorcet† after supper on the principles of the *économistes*. I tell him, which is true, that once I adopted those principles from books, but that I have since changed them from better knowledge of human affairs and more mature reflection. In the close of our discussion I tell him that if the *impôt direct* be heavy, it will not be paid. Madame de Flahaut was taken ill to-day while she and Mademoiselle Duplessis were driving with me. We returned to the Louvre, put her to bed, and played whist by her bedside. Vicq d'Azyr comes in, and we have a little conversation respecting the conduct to be pursued by the Court. I give him some hints as to the past by way of elucidating the future, and he is equally surprised at the information and at the force of my reasons. I see this in his countenance."

"Spend the evening [March 20th] at the Louvre. Several persons come in and go out. At length we divide into parties to see the illumination of Paris for the King's recovery. It is a dreadful night, the wind very high indeed, from the westward, with rain. The illumination was the poorest, barest thing imaginable. M. de St. Foi comes in between ten and eleven, and tells us that the Pope has laid the kingdom under an interdict. This must produce some movement as soon as it is known. The Duchess of Orleans to-day, when I dined with her, is so kind as to reproach me with absenting

myself. After dinner, I visit Madame de Nadaillac. Her reception is rather that of a coquette than a *dévoté*.”

“I cannot work in my apartment to-day [March 25th] because my servants want to clear my chambers for the reception of company. I therefore go to see Madame de Flahaut. The servants being out of the way, I announce myself. Madame is tête-à-tête with M. de Ricy. She cries out, with suddenness and alarm, ‘Qui est-ce là?’ Upon naming myself, ‘Je vais vous renvoyer tout de suite;’ I turn and leave them. I have to dine with me Mesdames de Lafayette, Ségur, Beaumont, and Fersensac. The Abbé Delille is one of the gentlemen. I tell Short, who is one of the guests, that he has but little chance of being appointed to this Court; that Jefferson wishes him to return to America, and that the appointment rests entirely in Washington’s bosom; that it is to be made this session. I show him the *mémoire* and notes I have made about tobacco. Speaking about the actings and doings of the Assembly in this regard, he says that the Duc de la Rochefoucault is led by Roederer and Condorcet, who are both rascals. I remind him that I had judged the latter long since by his countenance.”

“Visit Madame de Chastellux [March 26th]. The Duchess, to whom I mention the reason why I did not ask her to breakfast, expresses a great inclination to come some day or other. Madame de Montmorin to-day shows me the letter of General Washington* to the Assembly printed in one of the public papers. It is not what the violent Revolutionists would have wished, and contains a hint respecting Lafayette which his enemies will not fail to notice. Hence to Madame de Ségur’s, who presses me to stay and dine, which I refuse. Dine, as I had promised, with the Duchess of Orleans, to see her daughter. It is a pretty little princess and has an air *très fin*. Go from thence to Madame de Foucault’s. The conversation is immediately turned upon love. In the course of it I observe that I have remarked ‘deux espèces d’hommes. Les uns sont faits pour être pères de famille et les autres pour leur faire des enfants.’ She is delighted with this observation. Chaumont reads me a part of Laforêt’s letter to him, giving a very exalted idea of the situation of America and counselling purchases of land and stock.”

“At Madame de Chastellux’s [March 28th] there is a breakfast. The English ambassador* and his lady are here. If I might judge from her manner, I have made a little progress in her esteem. We shall see. This morning I got a fall in the street which barks my stump a little. Go to sup with Madame de Nadaillac. Tell the Abbé Maury that I expect he will get the hat the Cardinal de Lomenie has sent back. I tell him also that the Holy Father has done wrong in not laying the kingdom under an interdict. He answers that opinion is no longer with the Saint Siége, and that without an army to support the interdict it would be laughed at; that the instance of England makes Rome cautious. I reply that the cases are somewhat different, but, further, as the Assembly have left the Pope nothing he might play a sure game, since he can lose no more, and at any rate he had better have done nothing than only one-half of what he might do, because mankind may, by degrees, be habituated to everything. He agrees to the truth of this, and owns that he should have preferred extremities. I tell him that, from the moment when the church property was seized, I considered the Catholic religion at an end, because nobody would be priest for nothing. He agrees fully.

“To-night, at the Théâtre de la Nation, there is a dreadful representation of monastic vengeance and guilt. See Madame de Chastellux, who tells me that the British ambassadress is much pleased with me. She says the poor Princess is very ill at ease.”

“I dine [April 1st] with the Duchess of Orleans. After dinner go to the opera, and leave it early to take Madame de Flahaut to Madame de Laborde’s. In the way, we call to inquire about Mirabeau’s health. Guards stop us, lest the carriage should disturb his repose. I am shocked at such honors paid to such a wretch. On this subject I quarrel with Madame de Flahaut. I stay at Madame de Laborde’s till eleven, and then go to Madame de Staël’s. The English ambassadress is here, and receives me very well.”

“Madame de Lafayette tells me to-day [April 2d] that I am in love with Madame de Beaumont. I own it, though it is not true. She says that her company must be insipid, after such agreeable people. *Que veut dire cela?* Go to M. de Montmorin’s to dine. After dinner go to the Louvre. Mirabeau died this day. I tell the Bishop d’Autun that he should step into the vacancy he has made, and to that effect should pronounce his funeral oration, in which he should make a summary of his life, and dwell particularly on the last weeks in which he labored to establish order; then dwell on the necessity of order, and introduce properly the King. He says his thoughts have run much upon that subject this day. I tell him he has not a moment to lose, and that such occasions rarely present themselves. I spoke to the Comte de Montmorin about a successor to Mirabeau this day, but he tells me that he cannot easily see who shall be put into his place. He owns that Mirabeau was determined to ruin Lafayette, and says that he had held him back for some time. He says that Lafayette is a reed, good for nothing. He thinks that there is no chance now left but to convoke the next Assembly as soon as may be, excluding the members of the present, and that the meeting should be far from Paris. The theatres are shut this day. The weather is fine.”

But of what use was it, if Mirabeau was dead—so all Paris and the Assembly felt, as they sat and stared at the vacant chair, where the immense athletic creature, with “a vast forehead which seemed made to carry the burden of thought,” had so lately sat. During this day of mourning, amusements were forbidden. A marquise dared to give a ball. The furious crowd besieged the house, and maltreated some of her noble guests, who were obliged to take out their swords to defend themselves. For eight days all the departments were in mourning, as for a national calamity. The Bishop of Autun administered ghostly consolation to the dying Mirabeau, and the people mourned him dead. Nothing like it had been known before, not even when lamentations rent the air, and ringing bells sounded through the streets with the cry, “Le bon Roi Louis, père du peuple, est mort.”

“A wonderfully fine day [April 3d]. I go to Marli. Madame du Bourg receives me with the joy of one who wishes something from a city to vary the sameness of the lane. After dinner we walk much about the garden, and we see many scenes of rural love. The shepherds and shepherdesses seem to care but little for the appearance of strangers, but pursue their gambols as freely as their flocks and herds. This furnishes the matter of our conversation. Return to town, and spend the evening with the

Duchess of Orleans. Madame de Looange is here. There is a violence of aristocracy in her, as in many others, which is diverting. She is handsome.”

“To-day [April 4th] I go along the boulevards as far as the convoi of Mirabeau will permit; then go back to the Marais, where I visit M. and Madame de la Luzerne. They receive me *d'autant mieux* as that, being no longer minister, my attention cannot be suspected. Visit Madame de Nadaillac, where I am led into an altercation *un peu vive* with monsieur, who, among other ridiculous notions of aristocratic folly, expresses a wish for the dismemberment of France. I call on Madame de Chastellux for a few minutes. She is to inform me to-morrow whether the expedition to Sceaux takes place the day after. I cannot wait for her Royal Highness, but make a short visit to the Louvre. It has been a prodigious fine day. The funeral of Mirabeau (attended, it is said, by more than one hundred thousand persons, in solemn silence) has been an imposing spectacle. It is a vast tribute paid to superior talents, but no great incitement to virtuous deeds. Vices, both degrading and detestable, marked this extraordinary creature. Completely prostitute, he sacrificed everything to the whim of the moment. *Cupidus alieni, prodigus sui*; venal, shameless, and yet greatly virtuous when pushed by a prevailing impulse, but never truly virtuous, because never under the steady control of reason nor the firm authority of principle, I have seen this man, in the short space of two years, hissed, honored, hated, mourned. Enthusiasm has just now presented him gigantic; time and reflection will shrink that stature. The busy idleness of the hour must find some other object to execrate or to exalt. Such is man, and particularly the Frenchman.”

Marat alone was violent against the dead man, and called upon the people to give thanks that Riquetti was no more. In less than three years the Convention of the Revolution decreed that, “Le corps d'Honoré Gabriel Riquetti Mirabeau sera retiré du Panthéon français, celui de Marat y sera transféré.” In 1794, in the silence of the night, coldly and strictly was this *arrêté* executed, and the man who had been so fêted was put, near the meeting of many streets, into a nameless grave, over which daily the hurrying crowds pass.

Lafayette told Morris that he thought the Bishop of Autun would replace Mirabeau in the Diplomatic Committee; but the man whom Mirabeau had contemplated with apprehensive curiosity for so long, the man whose words were so carefully prepared and arranged and whose attitude was so grave, was the man who was to take his place and go far beyond him. When Mirabeau disappeared, Robespierre almost immediately came to the front.

“Dine with M. de Montmorin to-day [April 8th]. After dinner, take him aside and express my opinion that a speedy dissolution of the present Assembly would be dangerous. Their successors would be chosen by the Jacobins, whereas, if some months are suffered to elapse, the Jacobins and municipalities will be at war, because the latter will not brook the influence of the former. He says that he fears the municipalities will be entirely under the guidance of the Jacobins. This is, I think, a vain fear. He thinks that more of the present members should be reeligible. I differ in opinion, because he knows the character and talents of the present set and can buy such as, after reëlection, may suit his purpose. He says they are not worth buying, and

would, for the most part, take money, to act as they please; that if Mirabeau had lived, he would have gratified him to the extent of his desires. He says they must now work in the provinces to secure the elections; but I ask how he is to know the inclination and capacity of members elect. He owns this to be difficult. Speaking of the Court, he tells me that the King is absolutely good for nothing; that at present he always asks, when he is at work with the King, that the Queen be present. I ask if he is well with the Queen. He says that he is, and has been for some months. I am sincerely glad of this, and tell him so.

“Spend an hour with the Duchess of Orleans. She gives me the relation of some new horrors attending the Revolution. She has been this morning to visit a sick bishop. Return home, and read the answer of Paine to Burke’s book; there are good things in the answer as well as in the book. Paine calls on me. He says that he found great difficulty in prevailing on any bookseller to publish his book; that it is extremely popular in England, and, of course, the *writer*, which he considers as one among the many uncommon revolutions of this age. He turns the conversation on times of yore, and as he mentions me among those who were his enemies, I frankly acknowledge that I urged his dismissal from the office he held of secretary to the Committee of Foreign Affairs.

“Madame de Chastellux tells me that the Duchess of Orleans sets off to-morrow, under pretence of her father being indisposed, to visit him, but, in fact, to bring about a separation with her husband, whose conduct is become too brutal to be borne. Poor woman, she looks wretched! Visit Madame de Nadaillac, and by a rambling conversation get more ground than she is aware of. She talks of religion, duty, and conjugal vows before there is any occasion, but to her surprise I agree that these vows should be held sacred. Tell her that it is a happy circumstance for her that she loves her husband, because that otherwise she could not but entertain another passion, which would prove at length too strong.”

“This morning [April 9th] M. Brémont calls on me. In the course of conversation I mention the claims of the German princes upon France for supplies furnished a long time ago. He opens this matter up to me, and says that he has agreements already made with them, and wants only about 1,200,000£ to complete the affair, which will give at least twelve millions. In the course of conversation, he asks if I will propose the matter to M. de Montmorin. I am to consider of it, and he is to call to-morrow and furnish me with the proper materials to converse upon. Mr. Short and I have a long conversation on American finance, and I endeavor to show him that the proposition made in the name of Schwitzer, Jeanneret & Co. is a good one for the United States, provided they abate the commission. This is my sincere belief. I tell him also that from what the parties have said to and shown to me, I am convinced that they have great strength both with the Court and in the Assembly; that an operation of this sort would be so much the more useful, as the United States might make use of all this credit to support their domestic operations. The conversation is long, and he is a little changed in his opinions. I tell him some things which may render him a little cautious respecting Mr. Swan, who is, I find, in the habit of using both our names for his particular purposes.

“I take Mademoiselle Duplessis to Madame de Flahaut’s, where we dine at her bedside, and afterwards visit Madame de Nadaillac. Her friend the Abbé Maury is with her, and I leave them together. She desires to see me again, which I promise. She is at Gros Caillou, to attend the inoculation of her children. Madame de Flahaut asks me to-day whom I would recommend, in case of widowhood, to be her husband. I tell her that I understand that it is in contemplation to permit the marriage of the clergy. She says she will never marry the Bishop, because she cannot go with him to the altar without mentioning first her connection with another. Visit Madame Dumolley, who wants to know why the Duchess of Orleans is gone to the town of Eu. I pretend ignorance.”

“At ten [April 13th] I call on M. de Montmorin. Enter fully with him both into his situation and that of the kingdom. Propose the affair of the rations, and offer him the interest agreed on. He declines being interested, and after much conversation agrees to push it on account of the King, provided the matter be secret. He says he can rely on me, and that His Majesty will, he believes, have the like confidence. I am to give him a note this day to be laid before the King. Go to Jeanneret’s and inform Brémond of Montmorin’s refusal, and at the same time give him to understand that the business will be done. Prepare the note for His Majesty. Go to dine with M. de Montmorin, and after dinner give him the note. He tells me that he must communicate the affair to the Comte de la Marck. Their *political connections* are such that he cannot avoid the communication. He will give me a definitive answer on Monday morning.

“Go to Madame de Staël’s. Converse here with the Duchesse de la Rochefoucault. Madame de Staël reads her tragedy of ‘Montmorenci.’ She writes much better than she reads. Her character of the Cardinal de Richelieu is drawn with much ability. The society is small, and we have no small reprehension of the Assemblée Nationale, who, it must be confessed, act weakly enough. *N’importe*. Call at the Louvre, where I find M. de Curt making verses and love to Madame de Flahaut.”

“Call on Madame de Nadaillac, [April 15th], whose children begin to sicken with the small-pox. We talk of religion and sentiment, but I am much mistaken if she does not think of something else. Leave my name for the British ambassadress, and go to dine with Madame Foucault. She tells me that her husband has abandoned his project of going to England, which she was delighted with, and says that my description of it has deterred him. I must endeavor to put this to rights. Her physician, also, has agreed to advise the jaunt as needful for her health. Shortly after dinner I go to the Louvre. We are presently interrupted by Vicq d’Azyr, with whom Madame de Flahaut has a conversation about the Bishop. I presume that it is to put him well with the Queen. After this, another interruption by her sister and a M. Dumas, who brings disagreeable tidings respecting an affair in which she was concerned. Then comes M. de Curt, full of amorous declaration and protestation. I leave this scene at eight, and go again to Madame Foucault’s. She tells me that her husband has taken it into his head to go to Nantes, and in that case she is resolved to go to England with one of her friends or with me. She says he is a very bad fellow-traveller. At ten M. Stebell comes in. A Mademoiselle Chevalier, about fifteen, plays on the forte-piano admirably well a piece of her own composition, which has great merit. Her brother, younger than herself, plays another piece very well. After that M. Stebell, who is wonderful. This

man makes from five to ten guineas per day. He receives for his visit here this evening fifty livres. It is said that he wastes with levity what he acquires with so much ease.”

“This morning [April 16th] I visit Paine and Mr. Hodges. The former is abroad, the latter in the wretched apartments which they occupy. He speaks of Paine as being a little mad, which is not improbable. Visit Madame de Trudaine,* who being denied, I ask for paper and commence a note to her, but before it is finished a servant asks me up. She is dressing, and St. André comes up. Nothing here. Madame receives me well, and we are to be *un peu plus liés ensemble*. Call on Short, and take him to Madame de Staël’s. After dinner we have a fine scene of vociferous argumentation between her and an abbé. I tell her that when she gets to Switzerland she must let her head cool, and then digest her ideas of government, which will become sound by her own reflections. Go from thence to Madame de Beaumont’s, where we make a long visit, and then go to the Louvre, and after a while Madame goes into the bath, and the society wait on her there. I stay till after supper, and then take Mademoiselle Duplessis home. In the way I am sprightly, and she is pleased. Ternant, whom I saw at M. de Montmorin’s, tells me that Fleurieu, the Minister of the Marine, is about to quit his post, and that he thinks he will be replaced by M. de Bougainville. Montmorin reminded me that I am to call on Monday.”

“Go [April 17th] after dinner to the Louvre. We visit together Madame de Nadaillac, whose son is ill with the small-pox. Madame de Flahaut, after returning home, takes again her bath. I go to Madame de Staël’s; a brilliant society. The British ambassadress, who is here, is much *entourée* by the young men of fashion. At coming away the Comte de Montmorin, who is here, tells me that he cannot give me an answer to-morrow, not having been able to speak to the King this day. It has been fine weather.”

“This morning [April 18th] Swan and Brémond come. I converse with them respecting the supply of rations to the French marine. We have this day very much of a riot at the Tuileries. The King intends for St. Cloud, but is stopped, not merely by the populace, but by the national militia, who refuse to obey their general. It seems that His Majesty, having sanctioned the decree respecting the clergy, and afterwards applied to one of the non-jurors to perform the ceremonies enjoined at this season, has incurred the charge of duplicity. I am a long time in expectation of a battle, but am at length told that the King submits. Call at the Louvre, where I find M. de Curt established. Go away directly, and visit Madame de Nadaillac. As she urges me to prolong my visit, and as it is late, I send to the *guinguette* for a matelote, and dine in her chamber. She makes many façons, but we get along. We shall see how things go, by and by. . . . M. Vicq d’Azyr shows me the letter written by the department to the King. It is dictatorial in the extreme. Madame de Flahaut had already informed me of it, but I am obliged to disapprove of it.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XIX.

Shows M. de Montmorin draught of a letter devised as an answer from the king to the department. The *entours* of the king resign. Resignation of Lafayette. Sketch of European politics in a letter to Mr. Inglis, of London. A republic becoming fashionable. Lady Sutherland's graciousness. Lafayette accepts the position of head of the National Guards. Montesquiou asks Morris how to amend the constitution. Celebration of the suppression of the *octroi*. Conversation with Montmorin. Madame de Nadaillac's coquettish character. Morris suggests to several ladies positions near the queen. Madame de Flahaut expects one soon. Montmorin weary of the situation. Visit to Madame de Nadaillac.

“This morning [April 20th] M. Brémond and M. Jaubert call. Set them to work to bring the Jacobins to the King's relief in the attack of the department. I dress and visit the Comte de Montmorin, to whom I show the form of a letter I had devised as an answer from the King to the department. He tells me that these last were frightened into the step they have taken. This is, I know, partly true, but it is also true that the step is bold and, if successful, decisive. After conversing upon the present state of affairs, we have one word on business. He has not been able to attend to it, from the circumstances of the moment. Visit Madame de Montmorin, and sit some time; she is much distressed by the fear of pillage and insult, the Baron de Menou having denounced her husband last night. I laugh at this denunciation as ridiculous, and endeavor to quiet her apprehensions. Go from thence to the Gros Caillou and visit Madame de Nadaillac, who disserts a great deal upon politics with much heat and absurdity. It fatigues me. Dine with Mr. Short. Ternant, who is here, tells me that he urged Lafayette to resign, and that he agreed, but found afterwards various reasons for not doing it. This is like him. M. de Châtelet has brought hither Lord Dare, who is the son of Lord Selkirk, and who meets here by accident Paul Jones. He acknowledges the polite attention of Jones in the attack on his father's house in the last war. Go from hence to the Louvre, but Mademoiselle Duplessis is here. Madame tells me that the *entours* of the King have resigned, that those of the Queen will resign, and that she has hopes of being placed near Her Majesty. I wish this may happen. She tells me that she has written to d'Angeviliers to travel, having obtained the assurance that in such case it shall be no question of him. De Curt comes in, and after staying a little while I come home, and read till Messieurs Brémond and Jaubert call. The Jacobins are in treaty with the Quatre-vingt-neufs* for an alliance. The object is to prevent a decree rendering the present members ineligible for the succeeding Assembly. After they leave me I go very sleepy to bed.”

“M. Brémond comes [April 21st] to tell me what had passed at the Jacobins', etc. Dress, ride with Mr. Short, and then call on Madame de Flahaut, with whom I have some conversation on political affairs. Dine with the British ambassadress. We are *en famille*. She is a very pleasing woman. Visit Madame de Nadaillac. Everything here is filthy. The weather is rainy. Lafayette's resignation makes much noise. It is probable that he will reaccept, in which case he will be worse than ever. At the Louvre, Madame de Flahaut has with her a confidant of De La Porte, who comes to

communicate the intention of the King to employ monsieur; but she will write a note to decline it, containing very good advice for His Majesty. I tell her she must give me a copy of it. The King's intention arose from the request of d'Augviliers. Go to M. de Montmorin's, and sit some time with Madame de Beaumont and Madame de Montmorin. A rising thunder-storm induces Madame de Montmorin to express some wishes not favorable to the disturbers of the public repose. As it is a question whether Lafayette will reaccept, she expresses very just opinions on his subject: that his weakness has done much mischief and prevented much good, but that it is better to be swayed by weakness than by wickedness, and that his successor would probably be one of those who mean most illy. After dinner I speak to Montmorin, who has done nothing in the business. I communicate to him the cause of the intended coalition between the Quatre-vingt-neufs and Jacobins. He tells me that he could have got the exclusive decree passed long ago if he would, but he was afraid of the four-years decree, which has been nevertheless adopted. I tell him that if he can get the former now passed it will be the means of splitting the Jacobins and Quatre-vingt-neufs, after which they will both be more tractable. I give him, further, my opinion that the King must endeavor to join the populace. He agrees in this."

A slight sketch of European politics—from Morris's point of view—given in a letter to Mr. John Inglis, of London, just at this time, is not without interest. He says:

"You ask my opinion of politics. It is difficult to form an opinion, because much depends on the opinion of others, which is fluctuating. Your Court are in honor bound to support the Turk, because you egged him on to the war in which he has been so abominably mauled. The Empress can hardly, I think, wish to possess herself of Constantinople, because she would hardly dream of holding such extensive dominion, not to mention the blood and treasure she must expend for the acquisition. I think, however, that she must be more or less than human if she does not wish to make you repent of your various aggressions. I think she can do this with infinite ease. A declaration of war will necessarily put you to great expense. She has no trade. Many thousand beggars and vagabonds will joyfully accept her permission to pillage. The idea of going to Petersburg seems to me ridiculous. The risk is great and the object small. To acquire Thun and Dantzic for Prussia by tricking the Pole will do you no good, and, as far as I can look forward to futurity, it would tend first to invigorate the government of Poland, and then to dispossess Prussia of all that tract of country which lies between Russia, Poland, and the Baltic, for it would be the interest of Russia and Austria to give these to Poland. A war with Russia will deprive you entirely of what is called the carrying trade, and will lay from eight to ten guineas per cent. tax upon your other trade. The first mischance that happens will change your ministry, and you will easily get peace, because just now nobody can get anything by the war. I think further that the manifold blunders here open for you a fair chance to be intimately connected with America, if your rulers could make use of the opportunity. But prejudice and profit sometimes stand in the way of each other."

"In going [April 23d] to the Louvre, one of my wheels comes off, and by that means my carriage gets much injured. When I reach the Louvre M. de Flahaut meets me, and complains that madame is going to the Assembly with M. Ricy. She tells me that she is in a great hurry; M. de Montmorin is to read his instruction to the foreign ministers,

informing them that the King has put himself at the head of the Revolution. I do not see that this can be a matter of much moment to her. Go home and write till three, and then dine with Madame de Trudaine. After dinner monsieur expresses himself in favor of a republican government, which is growing now to be very fashionable. Endeavor to show him the folly of such an attempt, but I had better have let it alone. Go from hence to Madame de Guibert's, where, of course, I meet the *esprit jacobin*. Thence to Madame Laborde's. She complains much of the republican party, and asks me why I do not express my sentiments to the Bishop of Autun. I tell her that they would have no weight, which is true. Call on Madame de Staël, who is denied to me; but, her servant being in gala, I am sure she is to have company, and Montmorency is admitted at the same moment. Go to visit the British ambassadress. They have had many English to dine, and among them General Dalrymple. After a while they go to the play, and I take an opportunity to ask her ladyship when she is most visible. She says that Wednesday was her day, but she has none now in particular; I may rely, however, that I shall always find her at home when she really is at home. In this I am sure, by her voice and manner, she is sincere, and I reply in according accents. She is a charming woman. Go from hence to the Comte de Montmorin's, and have a long and interesting conversation with his wife on public affairs. Urge, among other things, the advantage to be derived from changing the *entours* of the Queen."

"This morning [April 25th] Paine calls and tells me that the Marquis de Lafayette has accepted the position of head of the National Guards."

The dramatic side of this apparent devotion to Lafayette was intense and thoroughly French. Through the rain and on foot the Corps Municipal went to him and on their knees took oath to meet him again at the head of the National Guards. But the blow had been struck, this oath of blind obedience was soon turned into ridicule, and the battalion which first took it was called in derision "Le battalion des aveugles." Lafayette's power, under the aspersions of Marat, the cries of some to beware of "Cromwell," and the warnings of Camille Desmoulins, mingled with his despairing wail that "Paris, à bien meilleur droit que la ville des États-Unis, pourrait s'appeler Fayetteville," was on the downward road. Lafayette, said *L'ami du Peuple*; was to be seen, in the hat of a simple grenadier, going through the cabarets and cafés trying to reanimate the soldiers and his dying popularity.

"Madame de Flahaut, I find [April 26th], has not declined the plan proposed for her husband. Her Bishop advises otherwise, because the King may make such a choice as that M. de Flahaut will not be unsuitable to the rest, and because the refusal may offend a weak mind though founded on reasons which should attach. I add a reason which had arisen in my mind, viz., that when once taken up the Court cannot again let them fall, so that it will be a kind of provision for her in all events. Go and sit with Madame de Ségur some time. She shows me the letter from the Duke of Orleans to Madame de Chastellux, with the answer of the latter. I find Lady Sutherland at Madame de Staël's. She tells me that the Duke of Leeds has resigned. I express a hope, should I stay some time in Europe, to see her at the head of the Foreign Affairs. She says she should like it very much, but Lord Gower is yet too young. I tell her that two or three years hence he will have acquired the tact, and then—. He comes in just before I leave this place, and mentions also the resignation of the Duke. I ask if

Hawkesbury is to succeed. He does not know. He seems so anxious to prove that the Duke's health is the cause of the resignation that I cannot help assigning it in my mind to some difference in the administration. Visit Madame de Nadaillac, from whom I had received a note complaining of neglect. We laugh and chatter and toy, and she complains of my want of respect, but I think I must be less respectful to be more agreeable; in the course of a little amorous conversation she tells me that I must not expect she would capitulate, for she feels too much her religious and moral duties; that if she should, however, be frail, she should poison herself next morning. I laugh at this. Go hence to M. de Montmorin's to dinner. After dinner I have a long conversation with him, partly on political affairs. He promises to speak to the King on the business in the course of the week. He has mentioned it to the Comte de la Marck, who approves. Among various other things I suggest an act of oblivion by the Assembly and thereon another revolution letter. He approves much of this, telling me that he is now preparing a letter from the King to the Prince of Condé. I come home, to meet M. Brémond and set him to work among the Jacobins to get the decree or act of oblivion moved by them.

“Conversing with Madame de Flahaut on affairs to-day, from what she says, but more from what she does not say, I find there is a plan on foot to force all power from the King into the hands of the present leaders of the Opposition. While I am at the Louvre, Montesquiou comes in, and I remind him of what I said respecting their constitution. He begins to fear that I was in the right. He asks how the evil is to be remedied. I tell him that there seems to be little chance for avoiding the extremes of despotism or anarchy; that the only ground of hope must be the morals of the people, but that these are, I fear, too corrupt. He is sure they are. Madame told me this morning that M. de Curt is to be Minister of the Marine, if the decree of *quatre ans* is revoked. M. Monciel* comes to see me, and gives me an account of what he has done with the chiefs of the Jacobins. He is to have a further conference. They think it will be best to act in concert with the Court, without appearing to do so, lest thereby they should lose their popularity. I agree in the propriety of this, and urge conformably to what I suppose their views to be, a repeal of the decree *des quatre ans* and the decree of re-eligibility. He is to propose this to them and to obtain, if he can, a list of the articles they desire; also, if possible, of the places they aspire to.”

“We are *en famille* at the British ambassador's to-day [April 30th] at dinner. Cubières comes with Robert, and they have a collection of the portraits of Petite in enamel, which are very fine. Go from hence to the Louvre. Madame de Flahaut is dressing. She tells me that she has good hopes of succeeding to the place she aims at. Sit a long time with Madame de Foucault and Madame de Ricy; afterwards sup. When we get into the salon we have a deal of metaphysical conversation; a gentleman who has read Locke on ‘The Human Understanding’ shows off.”

Firing of cannon and processions of shouting people, giving expression to their feelings, were of such common occurrence in Paris that Morris does not even allude to the “Kermesse de la Révolution,” which took place on the 30th of April, to celebrate the suppression of the *octroi*, when boats and troops of wagons, laden with merchandise and wine, which had been waiting outside of Paris, came in decorated; their drivers and men in charge, crowned with branches, having liberally partaken of

the wine and beer that they were bringing free into the town. It was calculated that each tax-payer gained about one hundred livres by the suppression of the *octroi*, and the people were more content with life on a cheaper basis. Commerce, however, “the commerce of luxury, of useless things, of nothing,” was dead. The carnival was forbidden, and with it went the support of a vast army of workers on costumes, notably in the house of the famous costumers, Lambert et Renaudin. There was no longer a nobility able and longing to gratify every whim in art, dress, and the nameless things that money could be wasted on. The Abbé Maury—and a host like him—could no longer indulge in the possession of eight hundred farms, and delicious breakfasts which he partook of reclining in the most beautiful and luxurious of fauteuils. The rich bourgeois were reduced to living on the proceeds of what they could sell. The Place Vendôme was full of people demanding work, and caricatures were not wanting to enforce the destitution of artisans upon those in power. The patriots tried in vain to revive commerce, the papers talked in vain; commerce had passed into other countries. Vice grew like a rank weed, the uncertainty of everything fostered a general demoralization, and the police, deeply engaged in political affairs, allowed the streets to swarm with immorality and misery in the most revolting forms.

It might seem that Paris had reached the lowest depths when the Council of the Commune in 1793 cleaned the streets and forbade the selling of indecent books, pictures, and bas-reliefs; but there were lower depths to reach. Good manners and morality might be decreed, but vicious manners and immorality were more attractive, and steadily increased. Some excitement was necessary, and the caricaturist was kept busy turning the aristocracy into ridicule in the most indecent pictures—which were exposed in the windows to a delighted public. The *Veto* was represented as a giant, light coming out of his mouth. The priest, not more exempt than the noble, could be seen in the barber-shop, with the legend: “Ici on sécularise proprement; on me rase ce matin, je me marie ce soir.” The Assemblée des Aristocrats of course came in for their share of the public scorn. But to enumerate the squibs and caricatures would be an endless task which it evidently did not occur to Morris even to enter upon, and he rarely mentions this phase of the Revolution, and was doubtless too preoccupied with its political to notice much its picturesque side.

“I have a long conversation after dinner,” says the diary for May 1st, “with M. de Montmorin, in the course of which I show him a note I have made on their situation. He begs me to let him have it, and I give it, but with the injunction that none but their majesties shall know from whom it comes. He has not yet had an opportunity to resume again the affairs of the rations. I inform him of what has been done with the chiefs of the Jacobins. He tells me how the ministry stand in that respect. He assures me that they can do nothing with the King but through him. He mentions a wish to have commissaries appointed by the Crown to keep the peace in the different Departments, etc. I reply that all officers concerned in keeping the peace should be appointed by the Crown, but that it is too early to propose anything of the sort. Experience must first demonstrate the necessity. He tells me that he has indisputable evidence of the intrigues of Britain and Prussia; that they give money to the Prince of Condé and the Duke of Orleans. He says that he will resign the place of Foreign Affairs, because he can no longer act in it with dignity. I advise against this, assuring him that his letter will be viewed by foreign nations in its true light. He says that he

would, if in office, bring on a war next year. I tell him that he should provoke it as soon as possible, but that it should be a land war. He says that a sea war with Britain is alone practicable, and in that case they would be alone, for Spain will not act with them. I ask him how the Emperor is disposed. He tells me that he is feeble and pacific; that he will take no great part for or against anybody, and if he interferes at all, it must be to get his share of the spoil. I tell him that I have a different view of things from him; that the war should be by land and general; that Poland should be tempted by the country which lies between her and the Baltic; Austria to have Silesia and, in exchange for the Low Countries, Bavaria; France to have the Low Countries, and to make an incursion into Holland; Constantinople to be given to the Order of Malta for the joint use of all Christendom. He starts at this, which is too great for his mind, but I think it may be brought about. It would cost France her islands, in all probability, but I have a different plan for them, which I do not communicate. We agree on the language to be held with the *chefs des Jacobins*.

“M. Brémond visits me. He shows a new proposition from Lamerville respecting the German rations. He gives me, also, the list of articles desired by the chiefs of the Jacobins. Dine with Montmorin. Bouinville is here. He is just returned from England. He tells me that Paine’s book works mightily in England, and he says that Pitt dares not hazard a war with Russia, it is so unpopular; that he has again begun new negotiations, which will probably last until the season is spent. M. Brémond and M. Jaubert call again on me. They communicate some information of little value, and ask my opinion as to the propriety of bringing the latter forward to the chiefs of the Jacobins. I tell them I think there is danger of alarming those gentlemen. Show how alone it can be done without great hazard. These people are too precipitate. Brémond tells me he has taken measures to be employed in digesting the decrees of the Assembly and selecting those which are to form the Constitution from the mass. I approve of this.

“Visit-Madame de Nadaillac, who does not admit me for some time. I perceive afterwards that she was in too sluttish a trim, and has to go into bed to conceal it. We chat in such manner as I think most fitting for a little coquette, and such as leaves it always doubtful with her whether she has or has not possession of my heart. If she does not take care she will, in trying to catch me, find herself caught. Madame de Flahaut tells me that d’Angiviliers, her brother-in-law, has resigned, and is set off for Italy by way of avoiding the accusations against him. This is a cruel stroke to her, who has no means of existence but through him. I take her home and stay a little while; then call, at her instigation, to inquire if a place about the Queen will be acceptable to Madame le Coulteux. My friend, Laurent le Coulteux, answers in the negative.”

“Call on the Baron de Besenval, and sit with him a while [May 3d]. Then go to the dairy of the ‘Enfant Jésus,’ where cream, butter, and eggs are to be had in great profusion. Take some of each, and go to the Louvre, where there is a confidant of M. du Porte, the Minister of the Civil List, with whom madame has a long conversation apart. During that period monsieur confides to me his griefs, his hopes, and fears. M. de Leinou tells me that he is well informed the secretary of the Prince of Condé has taken a large bribe and come over with his master’s papers. He says, also, that news

just arrived from England show that a war between that country and this is unavoidable. His first news may be true, but his last must, I think, be false. I tell him so, and add that in a war between France and England, single-handed, I would stake my fortune in favor of France, if tolerably governed. Dress and go to dine with Duportail, where I see, after dinner, Jouvion, and converse with him respecting the future commandant of the Garde Nationale. I think he must be the man. Go from hence to the Comte de Montmorin's. He has not yet mentioned the affair of the rations to the King. He promises to speak about the affair to-morrow; is afraid of the thing being known. I mention to him some political points, particularly the necessity of changing the household of their majesties; ask him who is to succeed Lafayette, and observe that he should look round for a proper character. He mentions Jouvion. I leave him, and walk with Madame de Beaumont. I find that her father has communicated something of the object, if not of the substance, of my conversations with him. At the request of Madame de Flahaut, I speak to Madame le Coulteux, to know if she will accept of a place near the Queen. She would like it much, but is afraid that it will not be agreeable to her husband and his family. She is to write to me to-morrow after consulting him. She wishes the place for her sister, in case she does not take it."

"Walk [May 9th] with Madame de Beaumont, who says she would not like to be one of the Queen's women, but will do whatever her father desires. After dinner converse with him. The King agrees to the affair of the rations, provided he can be sure above all things of the secret. In a few days he will reform his household. Montmorin quits the Foreign Affairs. He is to be succeeded by Choiseul-Gouffier, who is now at Constantinople. He says he will continue in the Council, but will not have a department. Everyone who may now get into place he considers *un être éphémère*, and justly. At Madame de Foucault's M. de Fauchet reads an excellent comedy which he has written. Bouinville is here. I take him home, and *en route* he complains of Duportail's ingratitude to Lafayette. He says that Montmorin was very low-spirited this morning. I tell him what I had told Montmorin—that things must grow worse before they can mend. The weather is grown milder, but during my walk this morning I observe that the vines have suffered by the frost. At table they say that no mischief was done in the open country, owing to the wind. M. Brémond calls, and I tell him that I am in hopes of getting the money which may be needful for the rations. He tells me that he is to be employed by the Jacobin chieftains to form a selection of constitutional articles, and also to consult on the means of restoring order. Visit Madame de Ségur, and she gives me the talk of the society, and that is very near the truth. So much for the secrecy of this Court."

"Madame de Flahaut tells me to-day [May 15th] that she expects soon to be placed as the first woman of the Queen, who will reserve the education of her daughter. The Dauphin is to go into the hands of a man. This place is, I think, Montmorin's object, for he told me he would accept an office in the household. Dine at M. de Montmorin's and communicate what I had learnt at Madame de Guibert's from M. Toulangeon; viz., that the Colonists are defeated in their view of excluding the mulattoes from a share in the government. This will occasion much heat among them. I find that it is very disagreeable here. After dinner converse with him apart. He fixes next Tuesday for a meeting with Duport about the rations, but expresses his fear that the Assembly

will not agree. I tell him that as he retires from foreign affairs he should secure the civil list, which is the only real source of authority. He says he is not fit to manage money matters; that he is weary of the state he is in; that if he could realize his fortune he would go to America. He says that nothing would keep him near the Court except his desire to serve, or rather save, the King and Queen; that he has already occasioned to them a vast expense for an object which has not succeeded. I tell him that the attempt to buy the members of the Assembly was a bad measure. He says it was not in that he occasioned the expense. He is called away before we can go further. I go to the British ambassador's, and on entering Lady Sutherland apologizes to me for being denied the other afternoon I called. She says there are so many Frenchmen who break in upon her that she is obliged to give orders for shutting her door, but I may depend that it will not happen again. I make a very long visit, and then wait at the Louvre till the return of Madame de Flahaut from Versailles. M. Duport is here and is disposed to talk with me. De Curt comes in, and is outrageous about the decree of this morning. He says that the deputies from the Colonies will all retire to-morrow. They ought never to have gone into the Assembly, and if they quit will become ridiculous. I come away early, leaving the two sisters at piquet with the Bishop and St. Foi."

"This morning [May 16th], immediately after breakfast, I dress and go to Versailles. Dine with M. de Cubières, who gives us an excellent repast. He has a pretty large society. He has a very pretty little cabinet of natural history and many little productions of the fine arts. I tell him that, with his knowledge of chemistry and mineralogy, he would make his fortune in America. I come away at five, instead of walking in his garden, and visit Madame de Nadaillac, who persists in her design to leave Paris tomorrow morning. M. de Leinou is with her, who tells me that he thinks the separation of the Duke and Duchess of Orleans will be amicably adjusted. Leave her with the Abbé Maury and Bishop de Caudon. I learn that the West Indies have retired from the Assembly, and that a decree has been passed to prevent the re-eligibility of the present delegates. I am well pleased with both of these events, for the West Indians have hitherto run into every extreme to obtain popularity, that thereby they might carry their favorite measures, and, being indifferent about France, have contributed much to the mischiefs which have been occasioned. Sup with Madame Foucault, where there is a large party. Bouinville, who is here, looks like a lover, and as I take him home he owns that he *was* one, but he was not happy. I tell her that I will endeavor to see her at Spa. This delights her, less from any interest in what concerns me than from the sacrifice which that step would imply to her charms."

"According to my appointment go [May 17th] at one to M. de Montmorin's, and meet there M. Duport. I find that M. de Montmorin is, or seems, much disinclined to engage in the affair of the rations. He doubts much, he says, of the success, and says the King has great repugnance to it. He had told me before that he was well inclined; this seems mysterious. He says that the principal fear is the fear of discovery. I show him that there is no danger of that sort. He desires to meet on Saturday. I tell him I will, but that I cannot promise for the patience of the parties interested. He says they may do as they please. I tell him that the thing will be done in spite of any opposition he can make. It is in itself a just claim. This is a strange, undecided creature. Duport seems to be better disposed toward the operation. See M. Brémond, and tell him that the affair of the rations is postponed till Saturday. He is not at all pleased. Visit

Madame de Ségur, where, the conversation turning on the means of saving property from the confusions now apprehended, I mention the purchase of lands in America. The Count and his brother-in-law incline much to adopt this measure. Brémond calls again, and tells me he has information from Muller, the confidant of the Elector of Mayence, that the French agents act as if they did not want to adjust matters with the German Princes. He says that if the Court do not mean to settle that affair amicably, he supposes they will not adopt the affair of the rations. He is right in this conjecture, but I reply only by repeating what I had already said—that the affair is extremely delicate. Madame de Chastellux's servant comes and tells me that she goes to-morrow to accompany her son to the Ville d'Eu. I send for the child, and write to its mother. Sit a while with the Baron de Besenval, who, in the fervor of his zeal in the cause of despotism, tells me that all the princes of Europe are allied to restore the ancient system of French government. This idea is ridiculous enough, but yet there are thousands who believe it and who are not fools either; but it is the lot of man to be forever the dupe of vain hope or idle apprehension. We are too apt to forget the past, neglect the present, and misconceive the future. From hence go to dine with Madame de Trudaine, and after dinner monsieur enters into a dispute with St. André about the rights of those princes who owned fiefs in Alsace. Monsieur is a very honest man, but he holds a very dishonest opinion, which is very common with weak men in regard to public affairs. This controversy reduces itself to one point of right and another of fact. By various treaties the princes have stipulated that the fiefs in question shall be held as heretofore by the German Empire. The point of right, therefore, is whether this tenure does not exempt them from the general decisions of the French nation respecting that species of property. The point of fact is whether the chief of the French or German Empire be, by those treaties—*quoad hoc*—the liege lord. This, being matter of interpretation, must be decided by publicists, but the whole question being between sovereign nations, it is probable that the decision will depend on everything except the real merits.

“Madame de Flahaut is denied when I call, but I find it is to sleep. She tells me that her husband is gone abroad. She invented that to be alone, in order to receive the Bishop and another person at dinner, and was denied in consequence of her general orders to that effect. I give her a hint respecting the Bishop at which she is, or pretends to be, offended. See M. de Montmorin, who tells me, as I expected he would, that the King will not agree to the affair of the rations. I am persuaded that there is some underwork in the business. *Nous verrons*. Montmorin tells me that he considers the Assembly as finished, and this gives me a very mean opinion of his sagacity. A few days ago he was in trepidation and now in a kind of security, both unfounded. He fears, however, yet for the person of the King. He says that different people are urging him to do different things, but that he sees nothing to be done. I tell him to remain quiet, for the Assembly are now doing everything they can for the King, with the intention to do everything they can against him. I ask him whereabouts he is with the claims of the German princes. He says that he thinks the Emperor will become the intermediary. He says that he fears the Comte d'Artois and the Prince of Condé. I treat this lightly, as supposing they will only act in favor of the royal authority, but he says they will form a party for themselves, by which I understand only that they will oblige the King to drive away all his former advisers. Visit Madame de Guibert, who says that I must court her for years before I could make an impression. I laugh, and

tell her that a few days, or even six weeks, might be reasonable enough, but the price she sets is really too high. This remark furnishes a deal of ridiculous conversation. M. Brémond calls on me. I tell him that the affair of the rations is abandoned, at which he is of course both mortified and disappointed.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XX.

A visit to St. Cloud. Departure for England. Visit to the Duchess of Orleans at Eu. London. The escape from the Tuileries and capture at Metz. Morris returns to France. The Assembly intend to cover the king's flight. Madame de Lafayette greatly excited. Conversation with M. de Montmorin. Dinner with the Americans in Paris on the Fourth of July. The *fête* of Voltaire. The king's nature discussed. Decree passed declaring the inviolability of the king. Lady Sutherland's drawing-room. What passed in the Champ de Mars. The mob fired on. Society frightened and within doors. Letter to Robert Morris. The king's aunts harangue the people of Rome on the king's escape. Morris meets Lord Palmerston. Pronounces the French Constitution ridiculous. Consultation between M. de Montmorin and Morris. Morris draws up a *mémoire* for the king. Madame de Staël and the Constitution. Her opinion of the *mémoire* Morris had prepared for the king. The Constitution presented to the king.

“Call [May 22d] on M. Grand, and walk a while in his garden with him conversing on the state of public affairs. The Kingdom of Poland has formed a new constitution which will, I think, change the political face of Europe, by drawing that kingdom out of anarchy into power. The leading features of the change are: An hereditary monarch, the enfranchisement of the peasants, and a share of the government given to the towns. These are the great means of destroying pernicious aristocracy. After dinner go with Chaumont, his wife, his mother, and sister to see St. Cloud. The situation is fine, and the garden would be delightful if laid out in the style of nature, but it is a perfectly French garden. The view from hence is very fine. We return along the Seine to the Bridge of Neuilly, and thence to Paris. Visit Madame de la Luzerne. M. de Méripoix speaks very harshly of Necker, and I defend that ex-minister. Go to M. de Montmorin's, and announce my departure for England. Make same announcement to the British ambassador and ambassadress.”

“Write all this [May 26th] morning. Mr. Swan calls, and I tell him my surprise at hearing that I am considered in America as speculating in the debt to France. He assures me that he has never said or done anything to raise such an idea, and that he will exert himself to remove it. Dine with the British ambassador, and after dinner we go together to visit M. de Montmorin. I tell him that the *enragés* are in despair. He says he could give them the *coup de grâce* if he pleased, for that he has reason to believe they are in pursuit of the affair of the rations. I tell him that I do not know, but that I shall know. He asks me if I shall be back from London during the month of June. I tell him that I shall. We have an interrupted conversation, and I promise to dine with him to-morrow.”

On Sunday (May 29th), Morris left Paris and journeyed toward London, stopping *en route* at Eu, to visit the Duchess of Orleans. “I wait upon the Duchess this morning,” he says, “and breakfast in her chamber, with Madame de Chastellux. She sends to her father to announce my arrival, and desire of visiting him. The old gentleman returns a very polite answer, and we agree that I shall dine with them. I find there is much restraint and etiquette here. After breakfast she reads me her letters to and from the

Duke, and then we walk till near dinner-time. She tells me the history of their breach from a long time back, and the manœuvres used by him and those about him. He is a mighty strange fellow. She tells me that what the world attributed to fondness in her was merely discretion. She hoped to bring him to a more decent and orderly behavior, but finds at length that he is to be governed by fear only. She tells me of her difficulties in bringing her father to act. He is nervous and trembles at everything like exertion. We have an excellent dinner, and in the conversation at and after it I gain a little upon the old gentleman's good opinion. They embark after dinner in a large carriage to take an airing, and I go to my hotel. Having nothing to do, I order horses and get off at a quarter past six and at half-past nine I reach Dieppe."

A dirty vessel, a calm sea, a scarcity of provisions, and an odd assortment of fellow-passengers, rendered a channel passage of several days and nights anything but agreeable; but this uncomfortable episode finally ended, and Morris soon reached London.

"The Russian dispute is, I find, very unpopular," says the diary of June 3d, "but I do not see how the Minister is to get out of the scrape. The French ambassador tells me that the ministry of this country will go on arming and threatening till the season for action is past, and then disarm in part. I think this very likely. He tells me that the Assembly have determined to form a new treaty of commerce with the United States, and that Ternant has departed."

"We hear [June 25th] that the King and Queen of France have effected their escape from the Tuileries and have got six or seven hours the start of their keepers. This will produce some considerable consequences. If they get off safe a war is inevitable, and if retaken, it will probably suspend for some time all monarchical government in France. I dine with Dr. Bancroft where is Dr. Ingenhoup. He mentions a late discovery he has made respecting the inflammability of metals, and offers to show me a rod of iron burning like a candle. It is only necessary to place it in vital air."

In a letter of this date to a friend, Morris mentioned that "the King and Queen of France have made their escape, but we do not yet know whether they are out of the kingdom. This event makes me very anxious to get back to Paris, for I think the confusion will work favorably to the sale of American lands.—Eleven at night: Intelligence is received that the royal fugitives are intercepted near Metz."

On receipt of this news, Morris set off at once for Paris. Crossing the channel, he says: "I find Lord Sheffield with his family are my fellow-passengers, with whom I make acquaintance; his lordship, who supposes me to be an Englishman, gives free scope to his sentiment respecting America, as all other countries. Am attentive to his family, being a wife and two daughters, and the attentions are well received. His lordship asked my house or place of abode in London, and she reminds me of it when I go to pay my respects to her ladyship after landing. I promise to see them at Paris. Arrived at Paris [July 2d], I employ myself reading the various details which relate to the King's flight and arrest. Go to see M. de Lafayette, who is not come in, but I converse with his wife, who seems to be half wild. I visited this morning the Count de Ségur also, and saw the whole family except the maréchal. The intention of the

Assembly is, I find, to cover up the King's flight and cause it to be forgotten. This proves to me great feebleness in every respect, and will perhaps destroy the monarchy. M. Brémond calls and communicates what has been done respecting the debt to France. He tells me also that he has had an interview with the Comte de Montmorin respecting public affairs, and desires me to ask his interference with M. Tarbet, the Minister of the *Impositions*, to give him some material respecting the finances. He gives me the secret history of many things that have taken place during my absence. Dine with Lafayette; then go to M. de Montmorin's. Apply to him for what Brémond wanted, and he promises his aid. I converse with him on the state of affairs, observing that it appears to me almost impossible to preserve both the monarchy and the monarch. He says there is no other measure can be attempted, and this leads us to discuss the different characters who may be appointed either Regent or to a Council of Regency; and here I find insurmountable difficulties. Of course they must go on with the miserable creature which God has given. His wisdom will doubtless produce good by ways to us inscrutable, and on that we must repose."

"Madame de Flahaut [July 4th] cannot keep an appointment made with me because of a previous engagement to hear the Bishop read his plan of education. This suits me very well. I dine at Mr. Short's with the Americans in town, and the Marquis de Lafayette. Paine is here, inflated to the eyes and big with a letter of Revolutions. I learn this day that about sixty of the aristocratic party have resigned, and this under a declaration which stipulates, as a condition of their future agency, those things which have been communicated to them by the Committee of the Constitution as previously determined on. This is a poor trick, and the measure is a dangerous one. The weather has been fine this day. Vicq d'Azyr says that the Queen's hair is turned gray by her late adventures. Paul Jones called on me this morning. He is much vexed at the democracy of this country. The evasion of the King and Queen has, among other things, produced a decree against emigration which damps the sale of lands."

"Take Madame de Flahaut and Mademoiselle Duplessis to ride to-day [July 6th]. We go to the upper end of the Isle St. Louis, from whence there is a beautiful view of the Seine. Then we go on the south side of the river and turn up till we get to the boulevards above the King's garden. We then pursue the boulevards round to the Invalides. I set them down at the Louvre and return home to write. The weather is very fine. I saw this evening a part of Paris which I had never seen before. It is not much inhabited, but there are many fine gardens. Spend the evening with Madame de Laborde, where I see, for the first time, the declaration signed by a number of members of the Assembly, declaring their adhesion to the cause of Royalty. It is diffuse and weak; they might easily be caught in their own trap. Brémond tells me that Bergasse has prepared his work on the French Constitution, which will be shown to me, and he proposes some measures in relation to it which I decline a concurrence in till I shall have seen the object they mean to pursue. As usual, there is a political conversation at Madame de Ségur's to-night, and I find that the opinions are getting round."

"Brémond calls this morning [July 11th], and desires me to go to see Bergasse. The treatise of Bergasse will be short, clear, and elegant. I think it will have great merit, but I fear the public mind will not be well prepared for it. Call on Le Coulteux. He is

gone to see the procession of Voltaire. I go to M. Simolin's for the same purpose. It is so late that we return to the Louvre and eat a hasty dinner, after which we go again to Simolin's and see the fête. It is very poor, and not at all bettered by the rain. Go to M. de Montmorin's. He is shut up with company. I stay a good while with the ladies. Short comes in, and we get into a dispute. He insists that religion is both absurd and useless, and that it is unfriendly to morals. I hold a very different opinion. Call on Madame de la Suze, and condole with her on the death of her friend the Baron de Besenval. His death forms, of course, a subject of conversation, and her connection with him enters as a thing of course also. She is much afflicted. It is, according to Parisian manners, equivalent to the loss of a husband in America."

Always on hospitable thoughts intent, Mr. Morris wrote to apprise Mr. Constable of the arrival in America of Lord Wycombe, the son of the Marquis of Lansdowne. "Had I been in London," he writes, "when he took up his resolution, I should have given him letters. Let this serve in lieu of it. Show him all kind of attention which he is deserving of. He may perhaps wish to see Morrisania, in which case you will, I trust, procure him the means of eating a mutton chop there. Tell him that I am vexed to find that he did not communicate to me his determination. ... My friend M. Grand being desirous of propagating in his garden the white Indian corn, I have promised him some for seed. Pray direct Gibson, my overseer, to put up a barrel of it, in the husk, and with holes in the barrel, winter it, and ship it to Havre."

"To-day [July 14th] there is a great multitude assembled in the Champ de Mars when I go there, to celebrate by a mass, the anniversary of the capture of the Bastille. In the Assembly the republican party have treated the King very harshly, but the report which insists on his inviolability will pass. M. de Trudaine mentioned as having heard from young Montmorin that the King is by nature cruel and base. An instance of his cruelty, among others, was that he used to spit and roast live cats. In riding with Madame de Flahaut, I tell her that I could not believe such things. She tells me that when young he was guilty of such things; that he is very brutal and nasty, which she attributes chiefly to a bad education. His brutality once led him so far, while Dauphin, as to beat his wife, for which he was exiled four days by his grandfather Louis ?? . Until very lately he used always to spit in his hand, as being more convenient. It is no wonder that such a beast should be dethroned."

"To-day [July 15th] I dine at M. de Montmorin's. Montesquiou is there, who asks me if I am not to be appointed minister here. Tell him, no; that Mr. Jefferson wishes much that Mr. Short should be appointed, etc. He says he is persuaded that he could bring the Treasury Board into any reasonable measures respecting the debt from the United States to France. I tell him that difficulties would now arise on the part of the United States.

"Paris is in uproar this evening on account of the decree passed almost unanimously by the Assembly declaring the inviolability of the King. The weather has been clear and very warm. There is a great disposition for riot among the people, but the Garde Nationale are drawn out and so posted as to prevent mischief.

“As I lodge near the Tuileries, at the Hôtel du Roi,” wrote Morris to a friend at this time, “it is far from impossible that I shall have a battle under my windows. The vanguard of the populace is to be formed by two or three thousand women. A good smart action would, I think, be useful rather than pernicious, but the great evil rises from a cause not easily removed. It will, I think, be scarcely possible to confer authority on, or, in other words to obtain obedience for, a man who has entirely forfeited the public opinion; and if they lay him aside, I do not see how they can manage a regency. His brothers are abroad, and so is the Prince of Condé. The Duke of Orleans is loaded with universal contempt, and if they should name a council of regency, they would be obliged to take either feeble or suspected characters. Add to this the struggles which must arise in a State where there is a king dethroned, and that for trivial causes. At the same time, the state of their finances is detestable and growing worse every day.”

To-day [July 13th], at eleven, I go to breakfast with Lady Sutherland, and afterwards attend her to M. Houdon’s to see the statue of General Washington. She is a charming woman. Call on Madame de Ségur. The count is in bed, ill with a fluxion on his jaw. Puisignieu and Berchini are here. The former has resigned, but the latter holds his regiment because he cannot afford to relinquish it. He has just left Count d’Affri, who has received orders from the Swiss Cantons to insist on specie payment to the troops of that nation. These gentlemen declare that the discipline of the army is gone, and that is, I believe, very true.

“Madame de Flahaut and I ride to-day, and take up, first, Vicq d’Azyr, who tells us that M. Pétion, one of the three commissioners despatched by the Assembly to accompany the King, behaved in the most beastly as well as most unkind manner. Sitting in the carriage with the royal family he permitted himself to behave in the most unseemly way, and amused himself by explaining to Madame Élizabeth the means of composing a council of regency. I received a note from Madame de Montmorin recommending an unfortunate Irish gentleman. I gave him a guinea, and spoke to the British ambassador to send his children to Dublin. It is a little extraordinary that an American rebel should be instrumental in procuring the return, at His Majesty’s expense, of those who descend from Irish rebels. But such are the vicissitudes of human life.”

“To-day [July 17th] I visit the British ambassadress, who receives me with a charming cordiality. Colonel Tarleton and Lord Selkirk are here, and the conversation accidentally falls on American affairs, which is diverting, as they do not know me. Tarleton says that once on the outposts he obtained a list of General Washington’s spies, and that Clinton, after putting them in the provost, after a few days let them all out, from weakness or compassion. I blame this weakness, etc. Go from hence to the Louvre and in my way meet the municipality, with the *drapeau rouge* displayed. At the Louvre we get into the carriage of Madame de Flahaut, and, stopping to take my telescope, go to Chaillot, but the time lost there in taking up Madame de Courcelles brings us too late on the heights of Passy to see what passed in the Champ de Mars. On our return, however, we learn that the militia have at length fired on the mob, and killed a few of them. They scampered away as fast as they could. This morning, however, they massacred two men, and this evening they have, it is said, assassinated

two of the militia in the street. This affair will, I think, lay the foundation of tranquillity, although perhaps a more serious affair is necessary to restrain this abominable populace. Go to Madame de Ségur's to pass the evening. Her company are still frightened, and stay away, except the Chevalier de Boufflers. Ségur tells us what passed between the Queen and him, and how he has been deceived by her. He desires me to dine with him on Thursday, to meet the Comte de la Marck at the request of the latter. I think I guess the reason, *mais nous verrons*. I think one of the finest views I ever saw was that which presented itself this evening from the Pont Royal. A fine moonshine, a dead silence, and the river descending gently through the various bridges, between lofty houses, all illuminated (for the sake of the police), and on the other side the woods and distant hills. Not a breath of air stirring. The weather has this day been very hot."

There had been a general summons to the friends of liberty, requesting them to meet in the Champ de Mars, Morris wrote to Robert Morris of the affair of Sunday the 17th, "and the object of this meeting was to persuade the Assembly, by the gentle influence of the cord, to undo what they had done respecting the imprisoned monarch. As the different ministers and municipal officers had received it in charge from the Assembly to maintain peace, and see to the execution of the laws, they made proclamation and displayed the red flag. In coming from the Dutch ambassador's, about seven in the evening, I met a detachment of the militia with the red flag flying, and some of the civil officers. I went shortly after to a height to see the battle, but it was over before I got to the ground, for the militia would not, as usual, ground their arms on receiving the word of command from the mob. This last began, according to custom, to pelt them with stones. It was hot weather and it was a Sunday afternoon, for which time, according to usage immemorial, the inhabitants of this capital have generally some pleasurable engagement. To be disappointed in their amusement, to be paraded through the streets through a scorching sun, and then stand, like holiday turkeys, to be knocked down by brickbats was a little more than they had patience to bear; so that, without waiting for orders, they fired and killed a dozen or two of the ragged regiment. The rest ran off like lusty fellows. If the militia had waited for orders they might, I fancy, have been all knocked down before they received any. As it is, the business went off pretty easily. Some of them have since been assassinated, but two men were lanterned and mangled in the Parisian taste. This occasioned some little stir. Lafayette was very near being killed in the morning, but the pistol snapped at his breast. The assassin was immediately secured, but he ordered him to be discharged. These are things on which no comment is necessary. I think we shall be quiet here a little while, but it is possible enough that, seizing some plausible occasion, a violent effort will be made, and then, if the militia succeed, order will be established. You will have heard, through the various channels, of the King's escape from the Tuileries. By the bye, he was said to be in perfect liberty there, but yet our friend Lafayette was very near being hanged because he got away, and his justification tends to show that His Majesty, besides his parole given, was so closely watched that he had but little chance of getting off unobserved. This step was a very foolish one. Public affairs were in such a situation that if he had been quiet he would have soon been master, because the anarchy which prevails would have shown the necessity of conferring with authority, and because it is not possible so to balance a single assembly against a prince but that he must prove too heavy for the other or too

light for the business. The Assembly also, very strongly suspected of corrupt practices, was falling fast in the public estimation. His departure changed everything, and now the general wish seems to be for a republic, which is quite in the natural order of things. Yesterday the Assembly decreed that the King being inviolable, he could not be involved in the accusations to be made against those concerned in his evasion. This has excited much heat against them. The people are now assembling on the occasion, and the militia (many of them opposed to the king) are out. They have passed a law against emigrations, although by their bill of rights every man has a right to go where he pleases; but this, you know, is the usual fate of bills of rights. How long the restriction may continue is uncertain, but while it lasts no lands can be sold in detail.”

“Dine to-day [July 21st] with the Comte de Ségur, where I meet M. de la Marck and M. Pellin. This last has, I find, nearly the same ideas of a government that I have. Walk with Madame de Ségur after dinner in the gardens of the Palais Bourbon. She asked me this afternoon (I presume with a view to judge for her husband) whether, if the place of minister was proposed to me, I would accept it. I told her, ‘Yes, if they would give me authority.’ She asked then whether I would take the chance of acquiring it if the King and Queen would promise to act according to my advice? I told her that in such case I would consider. Brémond says that it is necessary to have Camus* for sundry affairs, and desires me to contrive it. He and Pellin are to dine with me to-morrow. Dine with Madame de Flahaut. We go to the opera together: ‘Œdipe,’ followed by the ballet ‘Psyché.’ The music of the opera is excellent—by far the best I ever heard—and upon pressing this idea, they tell me it is the best on the French theatre. The ballet is prodigiously fine. Madame de Flahaut tells me that she wants small assignats for M. Bertrand, and that she will gain by it. I of course promise my assistance. M. de Ségur told me to-day that he wished me to fix a day for dining with the Comte de Montmorin, in order to converse with him on the state of public affairs. I promise to do so, but avoid naming the day. I told Madame de Flahaut that I had always known how to appreciate the conduct of her friend the Bishop respecting me; that his manner, which she made me observe, is not therefore surprising, but I mention it to her now because hereafter it may become necessary to remind her of it. She tells me that M. de Montmorin is given up now entirely to Barnave* and Lameth.† This I am not at all surprised at. Montesquiou and he have had a scene *une peu vive* on the occasion.”

“This morning [July 28th] M. Brémond calls, and tells me that I may make what terms I please in order to have Camus. Go to the Louvre before M. de Montesquiou comes, on an invitation from Madame de Flahaut, to whom I have promised 100,000£ if the business, which she is ignorant of, succeeds. I communicate to Montesquiou the necessity of having Camus, and he promises to try him. I tell him that madame is ignorant of the business. He asks me if I have mentioned it to the Bishop. I tell him that he has been long acquainted with it, but not from me; that I have never conversed with him, neither do I mean to do it, on that subject. I speak to M. Brémond respecting M. Camus, and the promise I have made. Madame de Ségur tells me that Madame Adelaïde has been haranguing the people of Rome on the subject of the King’s escape, about which she was under a little mistake, having been informed that he was at Luxembourg. Visit Madame du Bourg’s, where there is a table of *rouge-et-*

noir. Chat with the British ambassadress, and play for trifles, so as neither to gain nor lose. Tell Madame de Beaumont that Ségur and I shall dine with them to-morrow, and that I want to see her father beforehand. Tell Madame de Ségur that I will not meet her husband there, but that he must introduce the conversation.”

“Dine [July 30th] with M. de Montmorin. Converse with him a few minutes before dinner, to prepare him for a conversation with the Comte de Ségur, who is to meet me here, but he does not come. M. de Montmorin says that he has recommended Swan’s memorial to the Minister of the Marine, and indorsed thereon that recommendation; but I would bet that he never has read the memorial. I call on the British ambassadress, and I find that with attentions I should gain the confidence of her lord, who has more abilities than people in general suppose.”

“This morning [July 31st], send to M. de Montesquiou, who calls a little before twelve. Propose to him operations with Camus, and offer him interest therein. He startles at the idea of selling his vote, but I observe to him that it is only disposing of that of M. Camus. He tells me, which I knew before, that he is very much in want of money, and he promises to operate disinterestedly with Camus for the good of the affair. I tell him that I intend to secure for him a share in the ration business. Dine with M. Grand, and as we all find the weather to be very hot, he places a thermometer in the shade, which amounts to 28° of Réaumur, or 89° of Fahrenheit. This is pretty well. At Madame de Ségur’s the Comte de la Marck, who is here, seems desirous of being well with me, and yet of concealing that desire—a sort of male coquetry. He communicated, I find, to M. de Montmorin our dinner at M. de Ségur’s. Thus there seems to be a thread of design running through the whole web. Brémond comes and tells me that Camus has been softened by the golden tincture in the affair of Malta; so that there can be no doubt of him in other things, if the application be properly made.”

“To-day [August 4th] I dine with the British ambassador. As I arrive too early and find pen, ink, and paper on the table, I write for her [the ambassadress]:

’Tis said that kings, with wild ambition fired,
To pow’rs despotic always have aspired,
Like untam’d coursers, whose indignant soul
Spurns at restraint and scorns all weak control.
Hence British Senators, with patriot skill,
Have strove to check and curb the monarch’s will;
But Gallic statesmen take a wiser course,
And make the bridle stronger than the horse.

Lord Palmerston dines here, who is a very pleasant companion. Go to Madame de Montmorin’s, and find there the Comte de la Marck, whose countenance shows still, I think, the desire of further acquaintance. I observe that he and M. de Montmorin take different routes to meet in the cabinet of the latter. I see the Comte de Berchini. He receives a complaint from the militia camp in the plain of Grenelle, who find the ground too hard and rough to sleep upon. This is quite in character. He gives a description of this corps, which resembles, I find, any other corps of militia, with the

single difference that the individuals here differ essentially from each other in point of fortune, and have in general the most profligate manners.”

“Yesterday [August 6th] Brémond brought me the French Constitution to read. Short asks my opinion of it. I tell him it is a ridiculous one. Dine with M. de Montmorin, and converse with him on affairs. He has a pretty just opinion both of himself and others. He repeats what has passed this morning with the King; the recital of the tale brings tears both in his eyes and mine. Poor man, he considers himself as gone, and whatever is now done must be for his son. Go out to Auteuil to see Madame Helvetius. A raving mad democracy forms the society. The Constitution forms now the general subject of conversation, in which I take the least possible part.”

“Call on the Marquis de Montesquiou [August 7th] and converse with him on business. He tells me that a bribe has been offered to Amelot,* who has communicated the matter to the committee; that it was for the affair of the rations; that Camus opened on the subject, and it was decided to call a meeting with the Diplomatic Committee for Tuesday. This morning Brémond brings with him Pellin, and, as he is to be one of our council, I show him the observations I am making as far as I have gone. He seems desirous that they should be speedily completed, in order that such as circumstances will permit may be adopted. Sup with the British ambassadress, where I meet Lord Fitzgerald. He is just returned from America, having made a long tour through the interior part of it. He is a pleasant, sensible young man. Our party, which has only the addition of his brother and Lord Gower, is one of the most pleasant I ever remember. M. Jaubert calls with the small part which he has translated of my work,† and it employs a long time to correct it and bring it up to the force of the original. I call on M. de Montmorin and, in consequence of what Brémond told me this morning, mention the rations. He says that affair is ruined in the committee, which is directly the contrary of what Brémond told me. I find that Montmorin begins to be much mounted against the Constitution. Madame de Flahaut is extremely distressed at the Bishop’s coldness on the score of her interests. I tell her that I am not at all surprised at it, and our conversation leads me to give her his true character.

“It is diverting to hear some people complain that the republican party are getting the upper hand in the Assembly. It would seem as if their opponents, the makers of the Constitution, were a monarchic party.”

“Dine [August 16th] with the Comte de la Marck, who tells me that our meeting at M. de Montmorin’s, intended for to-morrow, is postponed till Friday, at which time Pellin will have prepared a plan also. The Constitution they tell me has been this day adopted. The Prince de Poix, whom I meet, talks aristocratically in the most pointed manner, and though a weak man, yet, as Dr. Franklin says, ‘Straws and feathers show which way the wind blows.’”

“As usual [August 18th] M. Brémond calls, and I make further corrections in tables of finance, the effect of which will be considerable, I think. When I call on M. de Montmorin, he imprudently quits a circle of ambassadors to come to me and mention to-morrow as the day of meeting. He says he has desired Pellin to collect all the

popular traits of the King's conduct since he came to the throne, and put them into his speech. This is very wrong, and I hint as much to him, but a foolish vanity will doubtless prevail on the subject. After dinner we consider the report of M. de Beaumetz on the manner of presenting the Constitution to the King. I wish them to take up the great question of His Majesty's conduct, but in vain. I find that feeble measures will most probably be adopted."

"M. Brémond and I to-day [August 20th] go into the discussion of the question, 'What kind of connection with her colonies is suited to France, and what intercourse can she allow them with foreigners, particularly the United States?' As we agree in opinion on this subject, we next proceed to the ways and means of effecting our object, and fix on a plan of operation in this respect which will probably succeed. He is to prepare a *mémoire*, which he is to show me, and in the meantime to procure a resolution referring generally to the colonial, agricultural, commercial, and fiscal committees to report on the powers and authorities to be given to the commissioners who go out to Santo Domingo. These are to be induced to report generally on authority to consult with the colonial assemblies and adjust a plan of union, connection, and commercial regulation with them, to serve as a basis for future determination. And then these commissioners are to do the rest. After fixing this plan I converse with him on matters of private interest, and as he relishes them, he will of course work hard to accomplish the object. He has some notes of reflections on the state of the finances which he says will frighten M. de Montmorin into the adoption of my measures. I show him that these reflections would indeed frighten him, if just, but it would be to a purpose directly contrary to what I wish. The British ambassador and Prussian minister tell me that a convention was signed between the Empress of Russia and the Grand Turk on the 26th of last month, upon the exact terms which she had always insisted on. Bergasse corrects what I had written this morning. He says he will write to the King to-morrow on the state of affairs, and tell him that, having obtained the communication of my plan in order to correct the language, he communicates it to His Majesty, but under the strictest injunction of secrecy. Go with M. Brémond to M. de Montmorin's, and meet there M. de la Marck. We examine Brémond's tables and afterwards I give M. de Montmorin my ideas on some part of this business, and at the same time reproach him for not having made me previously acquainted with the opinions of M. de Beaumetz.* M. Brémond requests me to take part in a speculation in the funds, which I decline, on the principle that this gambling, ruinous to some and dangerous to all, becomes unfair when a knowledge of facts enables an individual to bet with a certainty of gain. Dress and go to the Louvre. Madame de Flahaut tells me she is convinced the King will soon commit another folly, and gives me the reasons. Visit Madame de Staël, who receives me well. She is getting over the illusion she was under about the Constitution. Go from hence to Madame de Guibert's, where I spend the evening. The amusement is Colin Maillard, or blind Buck and Davy, or blind man's buff."

"The Comte de Ségur tells me [August 25th] that one reason why he went into the country is that he expected to be called on to advise the King, and then he tells me the advice he would have given. I think he is mistaken in his motive, for he has at different times shown a strong disposition to be councillor. Make an early dinner with Madame de Flahaut, and go to the Academy. Nothing very extraordinary, but I

observe that among the auditors there is more of religion than I expected. This is a good sign. Return to the apartments of Madame de Flahaut, who brings with her the Abbé Delille, who recites to us some charming verses. Go to M. de Montmorin's, and tell him that I have some reason to apprehend that the King means to make another *coup de théâtre*. He says he thinks not. We then discuss pretty fully what he is to do, and find that he is getting a little up towards the right point. He expresses much anxiety about a minister of the finances. I tell him that whenever there is sufficient authority I will give him a plan for the finances. Return home early, having paid a visit on my way to Laborde. He is very melancholy about the King's situation. I tell him that there is no danger, and point out in general the conduct which His Majesty ought to pursue. He begs me to give it to him in writing. This I decline, for the present. He says that the King understands English well, and that he will be perfectly secret, of which I may be certain, as he has been so many years a valet de chambre to Louis the Fifteenth."

"I am bidden to dinner [August 26th] by Madame de Staël. She requests me to show her the *mémoire* I have prepared for the King. I am surprised at this, and insist on knowing how she became acquainted with it. She tells me pretty nearly. I read it for her and the Abbé Louis, through whom she gained her intelligence, and they are, as I expected, very averse to so bold a tone. I am well persuaded that a poor conduct will be adopted. The British ambassadress comes in during our *lecture*, which interrupted it to me very agreeably. Arrive late at M. de Montmorin's, and we retire into his closet and I read to him the plan I have prepared of a discourse for the King. He is startled at it; says it is too forcible; that the temper of the people will not bear it. We have much discourse on this subject. I leave the thing with him. We are to confer further on it, and he is to show it to the King on Monday. I give him leave (which otherwise he would have taken) to show it to his daughter. I know that she will encourage such a step, having previously mounted her imagination to that point. I go to the Louvre, having so promised. Madame de Flahaut tells me that the Bishop has spoken to her of my work, Madame de Staël having told him that I had showed it to her. She finds it very weak. Madame de Flahaut told the Bishop that this is false, for that, on the contrary, Madame de Staël feared only from its being too strong. A good deal of this sort of chit-chat. I expected that conduct from Madame de Staël, and am not therefore surprised. Go to sup with the British ambassadress. She and her husband are sitting together. We have some agreeable conversation before the arrival of Madame de Coigny. We have some little compliments together, Madame de Coigny and I, and I think it possible we may be friends, but this depends on the chapter of accidents, for she must be at the trouble of bringing it about."

"Madame de Beaumont [August 29th] tells me that Madame de Staël has told her father that she has seen my work. She is a devilish woman, but I tell Madame de Beaumont the whole story. It is clear that M. de Montmorin cannot and will not make use of my draft. Go to Madame de Staël's. She is at her toilette yet. I am disappointed here in the expectation of meeting Lady Sutherland. The conversation is dull. I have not an opportunity of saying to Madame de Staël what I intended, for she seems a little conscience-struck and avoids me, but I tell the Abbé Louis that I renounce all interference in the business and shall desire that my plan may not be followed. Brémond wishes me to get him appointed one of the commissioners of the treasury.

Give M. de Montmorin a *mémoire* of the present state of things. He tells me that Madame de Staël once took him in as she did me, and that her father told him it was a common trick with her to pretend to know in order to learn. I tell him that I have caused her to believe that I have given up the idea entirely, and desire him to speak of it lightly, as of a thing I had abandoned. He says that it is now in the King's possession, who found the discourse prepared for him difficult to swallow, because it acknowledges the loss of the crown; but he replied to this that it was only defective because he had not the command of 150,000 men."

"The Comte de Montmorin tells me [September 2d] that the peace between Russia and the Porte is concluded, and that he is well informed that different bodies of troops are now on their march, so that, the Emperor and King of Prussia being in a good understanding together, it seems probable that something will be attempted against this country. I tell him that, if this be so, it appears to me the more necessary to make the King declare at least the outlines of the Constitution he desires. He says the Emigrants will hear of nothing but the ancient system. If this be insisted on we shall, I think, have warm work. Visit at the British ambassador's. Converse a little here with the Comte de la Marck, who either is, or pretends to be, of my opinion respecting the Constitution and the conduct to be pursued by the King in that regard. Madame de Staël, who is here, is in violent disputation with the Abbé de Montesquiou,* and the Bishop d'Autun is in part the subject, to the great edification of M. de Narbonne, who is just arrived from Italy. Montesquiou at supper gives a picture of the finances of this country which is very like the original and which, of course, is not handsome. The Constitution has been presented this evening to the King, who has promised to return an answer speedily. Go to the British ambassador's, and stay a while at the hazard table, in the joys and sorrows of which I do not participate. Go to Madame de Staël's. Ask the Abbé Louis what news there is. He says (I think with a view to pumping) that the King's discourse will consist partly of mine and partly of other material. I tell him there will be nothing of mine in it, and I really believe so. I tell him further that I give up all idea of directing his conduct on the present occasion, and so I do. I follow Lady Sutherland and Madame de Coigny out, and Mr. Short follows me. Lady Sutherland, in getting into the carriage, urges me to come more frequently to see them, and expects me to dine on Sunday, and send in the morning to ask for dinner. She takes no notice of Mr. Short, who stands next to me, and, in turning round to speak to him after she is gone, I find his countenance discomposed and his voice broken. Thus he will go home with ill-will rankling in his heart against me, because he is not taken notice of. This is hard, but this is human nature. He is chargé d'affaires, and I am only a private gentleman. He therefore expects from all, and especially from the corps diplomatique, a marked preference and respect. I wish him to receive it, but that is impossible in this quarter for the present."

"To-day [September 7th] I dine with M. de Montmorin, where Madame de Staël and her cortège also dine. I find that she and the Bishop d'Autun press him very hard on some subject or another. See Mr. Short, whose countenance is not yet cleared up. Sup with the Comte de la Marck, who tells me that the object of Madame de Staël and her Bishop was to obtain a revocation of the decree which excludes him and others from the ministry, and thereby reduces him to the rank of a *très petit intrigant*. We have here the Archbishops of Aix and Lyons, that is, ci-devant Archbishops, and we have

Madame d'Ossun, one of the Queen's *dames d'atours*. The Archbishop of Aix tells me that he is engaged in drawing up a protest against the Constitution on the part of the nobles and clergy, the former of which desire to object against the natural equality of mankind because Kings are of divine appointment, but the latter object to it. I suggest to him that it might be proper to render this protest subordinate to the King's speech, but he thinks differently. Madame d'Ossun is so attentive that I think a good impression is made in my favor. I went to the *Salon* to-day to see the exhibition of painting and statuary not yet opened to the public, but which the Bishop d'Autun, charged with this business by the municipality, admits strangers to see. There are some very good pieces.

“The Comte de la Marck, whom I saw at the British ambassador's, tells me that the King's observations will be made to-morrow or next day. He seems a little cool and shy on this subject. This morning Brémond calls, and tells me that the King objected to the speech prepared for him by Pellin in consequence of a *mémoire* he had received in English. Mr. Short tells me that on Friday last in council, M. de Montmorin produced observations written by Pellin, but the King preferred mine, and on this he felicitated me. I lead him off the scent, but he tells me that he is informed of this in such a manner as admits of no doubt, and also that M. de Montmorin is vexed at the preference. He said that he was asked by what channel I could get at the King, and that he said if I had done anything of the sort it must be through M. de Montmorin.”

“To-day [September 8th] the King goes to the Assembly and accepts in form the Constitution. I call at the Louvre. Dine with the Comte de la Marck, where we discuss the declaration (about to be made public) of the Emperor and King of Prussia. Learn at the Louvre the purport of the King's letter, which is meagre enough. It would seem that intrigue has at length succeeded, and caused the poor monarch to adopt a middle party, which is good for nothing. Go to the opera, which is execrable, but the ballet of ‘Télémaque’ compensates for that ennui.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XXI.

Convinced that Montmorin withheld the *mémoire* until the king had accepted the Constitution. Lady Hamilton. Festival of the adoption of the Constitution. The opera. The king and queen received with applause. Paris illuminated. Letter to Washington on the king and the Constitution. A coalition dinner with Madame de Staël. The current of opinion against dropping the king's titles, Sire and Majesté. A reaction in favor of the king. Supper at Madame de Guibert's. Long conversation with Montmorin, who says he can trust no one but Morris. M. de Moustier attests Morris's favor with their majesties. What passed between the King of Prussia and the Emperor at Pilnitz. The Duke of Orleans declares his bankruptcy. Much struggling for offices in Paris. Moustier thinks Morris mistaken about the Constitution. M. de Montmorin declares war against the newspapers.

“Seem. de Montmorin to-day [September 16th] and ask him for the different papers I have given him. He tells me that the last is in the King's hands, being intended to regulate his future conduct. On inquiry I find that he did not deliver it till after His Majesty had accepted the Constitution. This is wrong, but it is too late to do any good by saying so. The first paper, being a discourse intended for the King, he says the King has returned; but as I gave it to him he wishes to keep it. I ask him what became of Pellin's work. He says that was only a *mémoire*. I tell him what Short told me; he says that it is a fabricated story, but from what he afterwards tells me I find that Short's account and Brémond's are different editions of the same thing, and I am now pretty well persuaded that the poor King has been prevented by an intrigue, in which M. de Montmorin is a party, from acting as he ought. I ask him if it is true that they are like to suffer for want of corn. He says there would be enough if there were authority sufficient to cause an equal distribution. I hint to him the advantage of providing a quantity of flour to distribute gratis to the poor of this city in a moment of distress, and point out both the means and the consequences. Desire him to think of this, and be secret.”

“Brémond complains to me [September 17th] that he cannot get Montesquiou's accounts, and suspects that the publication of them is stopped. He tells me that the King has had for some days the manifesto of the princes. *Qu.: de hoc.* After dinner go to the British ambassador's, where I see Lady Hamilton,* a very extraordinary woman of the town who went to Italy in keeping, and here became so much the passion of Sir William Hamilton that he has married her. She is a fine creature to appearance.”

“This morning [September 18th] is introduced by peals of artillery. It is a high festival on the adoption of the Constitution. As no carriages can move, I walk out at one and go to the Palais Royal; thence to the Louvre. Stay and dine with Madame de Flahaut. Return home and, having deposited my watch, purse, and pocket-book, walk through the Rue St. Honoré to the Champs Élysées, thence to the Tuileries. The illumination of the Château and avenue is superb. Having had enough of the crowding and squeezing and walking, I return home. The weather is grown cool and threatens rain. While at the Louvre a balloon, let off in the Champ de Mars, passed over our heads.”

“Madame de Montmorin and her daughter and Mrs. Villars, together with Mr. Villars and Mr. Franklin, breakfast with me [September 19th]. M. de Montmorin comes in and gives me the *mémoire* I had written for the King. He shows me at the same time a note in which he desires a translation of it. I ask him if he has thought of the affair of the flour; he says that he has not. As I proposed that we should have some further conversation about it, he wishes me to make a small note on the subject, to be delivered together with the *mémoire*. I promise to do so. Go to the Louvre and read my *mémoire* to Madame de Flahaut, telling her that she is to assist me in the translation in order that, at a future day, I may let the King know that she is in his secret. Promise to speak to M. de Montmorin on her subject. Visit at the British ambassador’s. The Prussian minister asks me whether I was one of the men who advised the King’s letter. I tell him, no, and tell him further what I would have written. The British ambassador is present, and tells me he did not believe the story. Gouvernay afterwards speaks to me on the subject, and says that he defended me against that imputation. I tell him in general terms what I would have done and add that if, at last, it should become necessary, from the despair of doing good through the means of the King to apply to the princes, I have thought of him as the proper person to be employed therein. Lady Hamilton sings, and acts in singing, with a degree of perfection which I never yet beheld. She is truly a most charming woman, but she has a little the air of her former profession. Lady Anne Lindsay, who is here, reminds me that we met at the Duchess of Gordon’s. At five, go to the opera, ‘Castor and Pollux.’ The King and Queen are here; they are received with vast applause, and the parterre prohibit all applause except to them. See M. de Montmorin, who tells me that it will be impossible to take measures respecting subsistence for a sum greater than what may be furnished by the civil list. We are to converse further about this. I go to the Louvre, and thence to the Fontenelles’,* where there is much company and play. I read here the letter to the King from his brothers, which is well written.”

“Brémond tells me [September 21st] that St. Foi, Rayneval, etc., have set on foot an intrigue to detach the Emperor from the King of Prussia, by the means of M. de Metternich, and that all the original pieces have been communicated to him. He also tells me that Duport begins to gain an ascendancy over the King and Queen. Call at the Louvre at five, and desire Madame de Flahaut to assist me by correcting my translation to-morrow morning. She is engaged; and as this is a very paltry engagement, which nevertheless is to be kept, I testify in a short manner my dissatisfaction. Speak to M. de Montmorin about the flour business. He is grown cold on the scent. His difficulties may be real, but I grow tired of a man who has always difficulties. He tells me that the King is urgent for my translation, which he (Montmorin) supposes is in order to communicate it to the Queen. Talk with the Prince de Poix about lands. Sup with the Comte de la Marck. *Rien de manquant* here.”

“Send this morning [September 22d] for Bergasse to come and correct my translation. Tell him what to write in consequence, and at three, having finished the copy of my work, I go to the Louvre and submit it to the perusal of Madame de Flahaut, consequent on which I make one or two corrections; refuse, however, to soften one part which is very strong. Dine at M. de Montmorin’s, and after dinner give him the translation as he goes out to the Council, having first mentioned to him that the strong traits are, I fear, dangerous just now, as His Majesty has accepted the Constitution in a

different manner from what I expected. He tells me that there is no such danger. He promises to return me my discourse. Go hence to Madame de Laborde's, and spend the evening. Speak to Laborde and set him to work to give me the facts respecting the King's acceptance, and promise to give him a letter for the King. Speak also to Duport respecting a purchase of flour for Paris."

"Go [September 24th] to see M. de Montmorin. Give him a letter on the flour plan, and ask for my discourse, which he will not yet give. I think he means to copy it, but is so lazy that it will not be completed in a long time. Return to the Louvre, where I pass the evening. The Bishop d'Autun, who is here, *me fait sa cour*, from whence I conjecture that he has learned, from some quarter or other, *que je me suis un peu vanté*. We shall see. I receive his advances *ni mal ni bien*. He tells me that the consideration of his report is postponed till the next legislature. He is sore under this. Madame de Flahaut tells me, some time after, that she is much hurt at this circumstance. Call on Laborde and give him a letter for the King, which he promises to deliver immediately."

"To-day [September 25th] I dine at the Louvre. In the evening we walk out to see the illuminations, which are splendid; that is, the Château and Gardens of the Tuileries, Place Louis Quinze, and Champs Élysées. M. Windham, who is with us, seems attentive to Mademoiselle Duplessis, but I think he is too young and too old to be taken in."

"At the Louvre [September 28th] we have a deal of English company: Lord Holland, Lady Anne Lindsay, etc. The Bishop d'Autun tells me that Moustier is appointed, and asks if I am *lié* with him. I answer, tolerably well, which leads to a discussion in order to know the ground. I see that he is forming designs on him. Probably it is Moustier's appointment which brought the Bishop d'Autun forward towards me. He tells me that Montmorin communicated it on Thursday last. Going home I take the Chevalier de Luxembourg with me, and *en route* he tells me how far he was in the affairs of Favras. It seems that, when it began to take wind a little, Mirabeau and others endeavored to make him the catspaw, that, in case of need, he might be converted into the scape-goat. I sup with the Comte de la Marck, who is shortly to leave town. I ask him whether he intends for Germany and as far as Vienna. He says that he does. He says that he means to go to his *terres*, and spend some time in hunting and in meditating on what he has seen for the last three years. He does not incline to buy American lands. The British ambassadress is here and complains a little of neglect, which I assure her arises from business. This is true, but, besides, I think she is a little *préoccupée* just now."

"The King goes this day, in about an hour hence, to close, or rather to bid farewell to the session of the National Assembly," Morris wrote to Washington on Thursday, September 30th. "You will have seen that he has accepted the new Constitution, and been in consequence liberated from his arrest. It is a general and almost universal conviction that this Constitution is inexecutable; the makers to a man condemn it. Judge what must be the opinion of others. The King's present business is to make himself popular, and, indeed, his life and crown depend upon it; for the Constitution is such that he must soon be more or less than he is at present, and, fortunately, he

begins to think so, but, unfortunately, his advisers have neither the sense nor spirit which the occasion calls for. The new Assembly, as far as can at present be determined, is deeply imbued with republican, or rather democratical principles. The southern part of the kingdom is in the same disposition; the northern is ecclesiastical in its temper; the eastern is attached to Germany, and would gladly be reunited to the empire; Normandy is aristocratical, and so is part of Brittany; the interior part of the kingdom is monarchical. This map is (you may rely on it) just, for it is the result of great and expensive investigation made by Government, and I think you will be able, by the help of it and of the few observations which precede it, fully to understand many things which would not otherwise perhaps be so easily unriddled. You doubtless recollect that the now expiring Assembly was convened to arrange the finances, and you will perhaps be surprised to learn that, after consuming church property to the amount of one hundred millions sterling, they leave this department much worse than they found it, and the chance now is (in my opinion) rather for than against a bankruptcy. The aristocrats, who are gone and going in great numbers to join the refugee princes, believe sincerely in a coalition of the powers of Europe to reinstate their sovereign in his ancient authorities, but I believe that they are very much mistaken. Nothing of consequence can be attempted this year, and many things may happen before the month of June next, were the several potentates in earnest. I am led to imagine that their views are very different from those which are now assigned to them, and it is very far from impossible that the attempt (if any) will, so far as France is concerned, be confined to a dismemberment. The weak side of the kingdom, as matters now stand, is Flanders, but were the Provinces of Alsace-Lorraine, French Flanders, and Artois rent away, the capital would be constantly exposed to the visits of an enemy. These provinces were, as you know, acquired by an immense expense of blood and treasure, and if Louis ?? could have succeeded in making the Rhine his boundary from Switzerland to the ocean, he would have obtained the advantages almost of an insular position. Indeed, it is difficult to abstain from the wish that the countries included within that boundary were united under a free and efficient government, since it would, in all human probability, be the means of dispensing the blessings of freedom in no distant period to all Europe. But on this subject it is now permitted to a rational being to form rather wishes than hopes, much less expectations. I will enclose herein a note, just received, of the latest intelligence from Coblenz; it is written by the Prince de Condé to his confidential friend here, and is accompanied by the request that all French gentlemen capable of actual service will immediately repair to the standard of royalty—beyond the Rhine—or, rather, on the banks of that river. To the troops mentioned in this note are added, by the counter-revolutionists here, 15,000 Hessians and 16,000 French refugees; so that, exclusively of what the Emperor may bring forward, they muster an army, *on paper*, of 100,000 men. The Emperor has about 50,000 in the Low Countries. But all these appearances, and the proposed Congress of Ambassadors at Aix-la-Chapelle, do not in the least change my opinion that nothing serious will be attempted this year of our Lord.

“M. de Montmorin has resigned, and the Comte de Moustier is named as his successor, but whether he will accept seems to be very doubtful. He is now at Berlin, and as he is an intimate of M. de Calonne, who is one main-spring of the counter-revolution, he is, I presume, in the secret of what may be really in agitation. This on one side, and on the other an office the power and authority of which is just nothing at

all; for you will observe that by the new Constitution every treaty and convention whatsoever must be submitted to the investigation of the Assembly, to be by them accepted or rejected. You will have seen what has been done here respecting the colonies. Their commerce, which involves their existence, is left to the mercy of the Assembly, which will not be over-attentive to their interests when they fall into competition with those of the mother country. I send out to Mr. Morris a bundle of pamphlets written by M. de Coméré, according to hints and observations which I furnished to him. Mr. Morris will give you one, and you will see that it was calculated to produce a liberal system of colonial government, beneficial to them and to us. In order to bring it about, it was proposed that commissioners should be sent out with full powers to treat with the colonial assemblies; and, could that have been carried, this pamphlet would have been the groundwork of the instructions to the commissioners. The proposition was rejected. I do expect that at length this government must come into some such measure and a useful treaty be established between France and the United States, and a road laid open for solid connection with Great Britain. In all cases we have the consolation that, if the powers of Europe, by their excluding principles, deprive us of the needful vent for our produce, which becomes daily more and more abundant, we shall, from the cheapness of living and of raw materials which result from that circumstance, make great and rapid progress in useful manufactures. This alone is wanting to complete our independence; we shall then be a world by ourselves, and far from the jars and wars of Europe. Their various revolutions will serve merely to instruct and amuse, like the roaring of a tempestuous sea, which at a certain distance becomes a pleasing sound.”

Speaking of Lafayette’s position, in a letter to Robert Morris at this time, Morris says: “You will see in this appointment of Moustier, that our friend Lafayette has no kind of influence. He is about to retire into Auvergne, to spend the winter on his estates. The King and Queen detest him, and the nobles hold him in contempt and abhorrence, so that his sun seems to be set, unless he should put himself at the head of the republican party, who at present are much opposed to him. All this results from feebleness of character and the spirit of intrigue which bring forward the courtier, but ruin the statesman. I am very sorry for him, because I believe he meant well.”

“I dine to-day [October 1st] with M. de Montmorin. After dinner ask him again for my discourse; he promises, on his honor, to give it to me. I desire him to give the King my letter about subsistence; that I care nothing for the event, but it is his duty to lay the matter before His Majesty. I ask him who made the King’s speech,* which was excellent. He assures me that the groundwork is by the King himself. I desire him to make the King observe the difference of effect between this and those long stories which they made him tell heretofore. He says that he has already done so. At the Louvre I meet Short. The Bishop d’Autun, who comes in, takes him aside and holds a long conference, which I conjecture relates to the debt from America to France, which the pious bishop wishes to make something out of. Visit Madame de Staël, who has a motley company, which, she says, have partaken of a coalition dinner. There is Beaumetz, the Bishop d’Autun, Alexandre Lameth, the Prince de Broglie, etc. Malouet comes in, and also the Comte de la Marck, who converses with madame. I observe in particular, as to the others who dine with her, their coalition seems natural enough. Ségur is here, who tells me he has asked for the *ambassade de Londres*, and

is told that it will meet with no difficulty, but must be left to the successor of M. de Montmorin. Visit Lafayette, who receives me very coldly. I am not surprised at this.”

“Sup at the Comte de la Marck’s [October 5th]. He assures me that he is concerned in no party or coalition of parties; that he despises every man almost, in the country, and means to enter the service of some foreign prince. The Bishop d’Autun sups here and I cannot help thinking there is some mystery in all this, but what I think I can perceive clearly is that he is much disappointed in his expectations. The members of the late Assembly are all high-toned in their reprehension of this day’s work of their successors, which is too little respectful towards the King. Are they indignant that any others should exceed them in marks of indignity?”

“The National Assembly, which had yesterday determined not to address the King by the title *sire* or *votre majesté*, and to place him on a level with their president, etc., have this day [October 6th] rescinded all those resolutions, as they find the current of opinion in Paris to be against such measures. I find that the Comte de Montmorin has not yet presented to the King my letter on subsistence. This is ill done, and I think he will live to repent it. At Madame de Staël’s there is *rien de marquant*, except that, from the manner in which she mentions the King’s speech, I am led to believe that it is not written by his particular friends. Madame de Laborde asks me what the Queen is to do to become more popular. I tell her, after considering a little, that she must write a letter to the Emperor, and contrive to have it intercepted, etc. This is an excellent little stroke if well executed, but otherwise it is wretched.”

In his letters to friends in America Morris generally entered more fully into the details of events than he did in his diary, though the latter seems to bring the reader more *en rapport* with the incessant movement and agitation of Paris. A few days after (October 10) the National Assembly had revoked their determination to abolish the title of Sire, by which the king had heretofore been addressed, Morris wrote to Robert Morris commenting on the sudden accession of affection for the king among the masses: “The people of this city are become wonderfully fond of the King and have a thorough contempt for the Assembly, who are in general what used to be called at Philadelphia the blue-stockings. There is, however, this difference between the two capitals, that with you virtuous poverty is respected but here splendor is indispensable. Judge the consequence. And, to enlighten that judgment, know that at this moment they stand on the brink of bankruptcy, which can only be avoided by increasing the vigor of the executive magistrate. This becomes daily more and more apparent, and Paris exists, as it were, on the interest of the national debt. These facts will enable you to understand why the other evening, at the Italian Comedy, as it is called, the parterre or people cried out continually: ‘Vive le Roi, Vive la Reine, Vive la famille royale, Sire, Vive votre Majesté.’ These words *sire* and *majesté* were, you know, proscribed by the Assembly, which was obliged, by a strong expression of the popular sentiment, to retract that decree the very next day. A patriot in the midst of this acclamation took it into his head to cry ‘Vive la Nation,’ but the rest silenced him immediately. Now, my dear friend, this is the very same people which, when the King was brought back from his excursion, whipped a democratical duchess of my acquaintance because they heard only the last part of what she said, which was: ‘Il ne faut pas dire, “Vive le Roi.”’ She had the good sense to desire the gentleman who was

with her to leave her. Whipping* is, you know, an operation which a lady would rather undergo among strangers than before her acquaintance. The provinces are not as yet in the same disposition with the capital. I must speak of M. de Favras, who was hanged very unjustly. I believe it to be true and, indeed, almost certain, that he was concerned in a plan with the 88, 604, 211, 490, to sustain the Revolution, yet there was no existent law to render this criminal, much less capital—and the crime was never duly proved (supposing it to be a crime). M. de Lafayette, who followed the business from the beginning, and was eventually the prime cause of the catastrophe, invariably meant well in it, but at last was rather overthrown by the popular torrent of the moment. His enemies now number it among what they call his crimes. Apropos of M. de Lafayette: He went to Auvergne, I am told, the day before yesterday, and this morning I am told that it is in contemplation to choose him for Mayor of Paris.”

“I tell M. de Montmorin after dinner to-day [October 14th] that the republicans mean to begin their attack by the civil list, and suggest to him the means of preventing it. He says nothing can be done for supplying provisions to Paris. I tell him that I am very glad not to be charged with that business; that mischiefs will arise of which neither he nor I will have anything to accuse ourselves, *as we have done all in our power*. I think he has not. I send in a blank cover 500£ to Mademoiselle Duplessis, with precautions of every kind to prevent discovery; her pension is stopped, and she knows not what to do. Poor girl, she spends her days and nights in tears. Spend the evening at Madame de Guibert’s. After supper I am *un peu aimable*, and as I come away have a curious conversation with Lady Anne Lindsay, who is desperately in love with Mr. Windham and tortured by jealousy. I tell her that if she wishes to bring back a lover she must alarm his fears, and if she chooses to make use of me, I am at her orders. Tell her how she ought to act, and she says that if it becomes necessary she will apply to me.”

“This morning [October 18th], immediately after breakfast, I dress and go to the Comte de Moustier’s. He appears very glad to see me, and we converse about the state of affairs. He seems inclined to accept the office of Foreign Affairs. We go together in my carriage as far as the Comte de Ségur’s, where he takes his own, and in the way I communicate to him the means of changing the French Constitution, and making at the same time a considerable acquisition of territory. He shows an attachment to the interests of Prussia. Pay a long visit to the Comte de Ségur. He is intriguing to the very eyes, while he declares his determination to be quiet. It is very possible, however, that he tells the truth, for man deceives himself much oftener than he deceives others. After dinner I pay a visit to M. de Montmorin, and find him much agitated. After staying some time in the salon we retire together, and he gives me at last the speech I had prepared for the King. He then tells me that his heart is full and he must disburden it; that, La Marck being gone, he has nobody but me whom he can trust. He then proceeds to tell me that the King, after appointing Moustier, and after Moustier’s acceptance, wishes to be off, because he fears his reputation as an aristocrat, and especially the inconsequent conduct of Madame de Bréhan, both of which he, Montmorin, had apprised him of before. He tells me that Moustier is, at the hour we are talking, in conversation with the King and Queen, and he feels much wounded that he is not of the party. He says that he has proposed two things: one, to have a council formed of persons devoted to the royal interest who would pursue the Constitution strictly, but with the view to destroy it; and the other, to leave the

ministry as it is, but with the change only of his own place and to have a private council, to consist of himself, M. de Moustier, Malouet, and the Abbé de Montesquiou, or if he, from respect to his patron Monsieur, should decline, then the Archbishop of Aix; that they will do nothing; that he finds his measures are disconcerted, and he knows not what to count upon; that he supposes this to come from the Comte Mercy d'Argenteau, who gives the Queen counsels well calculated to serve the interests of Austria. I tell him that perhaps some persons have done him ill offices at Court. He says no, that he is well received, perfectly well, but he declares that he will quit, let what will happen. I see, however, that he will not quit entirely, if he can help it. He tells me that he has not force enough of character to pursue the measures which he knows to be right. This I well know. He gives me a history of what passed respecting the *Cour plénière*, in regard to which, having first opposed the plan as dangerous and afterwards insisted on vigorous measures to carry it through, as the slightest symptom of retreat must prove fatal, he found a different plan adopted, and then, when the King was about to take M. Necker, he told His Majesty that he would give himself a master whom he must obey; that, subsequent to this appointment, he took a course different from that which he had formerly pursued, and adopted M. Necker's lenient modes of proceeding. I remind him that I had frequently pointed out the fatal consequences of those half-way measures. He acknowledges this and says that he also saw them, but he had not sufficient vigor of mind to pursue the course which appeared to himself to be right. I ask him what situation the King and Queen are in with respect to the princes. He says that there is no understanding between them. I tell him that I am informed that the King receives letters from his brothers which he does not communicate. He says that this is true, but he reads to him such parts as relate to public affairs. I tell him that the Queen, I understand, receives letters from the Emperor respecting affairs here. On this subject he seems to be not quite clear, and says again that he apprehends the late change to arise from Austrian counsels. He recommends to me the greatest secrecy, in a style which seems to beg my pity for so much of human weakness."

"This morning [October 19th] the Comte de Moustier breakfasts with me. He tells me what passed yesterday with the King and Queen. He tells me that I stand high in their opinion, as well as in that of M. de Montmorin. He says the King has offered him the embassy to England, and that he is to stay there until a proper opportunity shall offer of placing him in the ministry, which would at present be dangerous. He wishes me to persuade Montmorin to stay longer, which I promise to attempt. He says he will urge the sending to America for a supply of provisions, or rather of flour, according to my proposal to M. de Montmorin. He has some scheme of finance in his head which I must discover, if I can."

"The Comte de Moustier calls [October 21st], and tells me he asked an audience of the Queen on the subject of flour. Her Majesty told him that she has never yet seen my letter to M. de Montmorin, and she thinks it is of a nature not to have escaped her attention. He desires me to give him a copy. He then tells me that the King of Prussia will furnish money to assist in putting the finances of this country to rights. He tells me what passed with his Prussian Majesty on that subject, and that he intended to head his armies for re-establishing the French monarchy. He communicates a number of queries which he put to M. d'Écrue respecting finance, and he tells me that

D'Écrue assures him there is not a man in this country capable of managing the finances, there being no one who joins a knowledge of money matters to that of state affairs. He tells me what passed between the King of Prussia and the Emperor at Pilnitz, as related to him by the King. Leopold began to higggle, but the King told him at once that, however different their dominions, he would send an equal force with the Emperor, which astonished the latter. I give him many hints and outlines of a plan for the finances of this country, and he desires me to write on the subject. I tell him that a good constitution is a previous requisite; that this is the moment for forming one, so as to obtain the royal consent, and I give him some ideas on this subject. I tell him that my plan is, at present, to persuade M. de Montmorin to continue in place until he, Moustier, can be properly admitted, and then to be made President of the Council; that the King must press M. de Montmorin to continue, and he must make the removal of Duportail a condition, by which means, if Delessart can be brought about, there will be a majority in the council. I am to press this plan on M. de Montmorin, and Moustier is, on his side, to urge the Court. I dine at Madame de Staël's, and say too much against the Constitution, to which she provoked me by fishing for the praise of her father. I did not swallow the bait."

"Dine to-day [October 22d] with M. de Montmorin. Before dinner I go into his closet, and there urge him to continue for some time longer in office, then to retire as President of the Council. He will not agree, first, because it is impossible to manage the department well; and, secondly, because he has so pointedly declared his determination to retire that he cannot retract. I think this last is the strongest reason. I mention to him St. Croix as being recommended by the Garde des Sceaux, in the name of all the ministers. He says that if there were not particular reasons against admitting him (and I find that these bottom on pecuniary foundations), he would be the fittest person in the world, in order to render the Ministry contemptible. He says that if Ségur will not accept, Barthélemi would answer. M. de Molleville, the Minister of the Marine, gives us at dinner the account of a dreadful insurrection of the blacks at Santo Domingo. I trust that the account (which is not official) is exaggerated. After dinner he tells me that he had a long conversation with Moustier about me this morning, and wishes to know my success with Montmorin. This leads to a conversation on the subject with Madame de Beaumont, in which I communicate the plans of the King's enemies as they have been communicated to me. They urge me to renew the attack on M. de Montmorin. I do so, and he tells me that his difficulties are insurmountable, that the affair of the princes having possessions in Alsace is ready to be reported, and he is persuaded that the Assembly will not do what is right; that the affair of Avignon also involves a very disagreeable dispute with the Pope, which he is certain will be improperly treated by the Assembly. I tell him that these objections are trivial. He is only to communicate the whole truth to the Assembly, and let them decide as they please; that as to the treatment of French subjects in foreign countries, which forms a second head of complaint, he must remonstrate firmly on the part of the nation and communicate the result, which will, I acknowledge, be unsatisfactory, but for that reason desirable. I then tell him that he has done so much to injure himself with his order as a nobleman that he must continue in office till he can recover his reputation with them, to which effect the sending of the Abbé de Montesquiou to the princes, to know what constitution they wish for, will greatly operate. I had opened this chapter to him in the morning, as well as the negotiation to be made with the

Emperor. I find that this last idea of his order works; I add, therefore, that he must stay and thereby defeat the designs of his enemies. He recurs then to his declarations so publicly made that he would retire. I tell him that these may be easily obviated, because the King can desire him to continue until he can find a suitable successor. As I am about to leave M. de Montmorin, madame takes me aside to know the success of my application to her husband. I tell her that he does not absolutely agree, but I think he will. I think, however, that he has at bottom some reason which he will not communicate as yet.

“Call on Madame de la Suze. Here I am told that the Duke of Orleans has declared his bankruptcy, and put his affairs into the hands of trustees, who allow him a pension. I did expect to have met the Comte de Moustier here, but am disappointed. Return home and read. M. de Montmorin repeated to me this morning what he had once mentioned before, viz., that he considers it indispensably necessary that the Queen should be present at the discussion of affairs of the Cabinet, and that for this purpose there should be a Privy Council, to which Malouet* should be admitted. I do not see the use of this, neither do I conceive his reason. If he expects, through Malouet, to govern that little council, he mistakes his man; at least, I think so. I told M. de Molleville that it appeared to me most fitting to remove Duportail at present and place there some brave, honest soldier, without much regard to his abilities, and then, when Moustier comes forward, to place him (Molleville) as Garde des Sceaux, and Bougainville as Minister of the Marine. He approves of this, but wishes to stay where he is until he shall have gained some reputation by putting the affairs of that department in order.”

“I find Messieurs de Malouet [October 25th] and Moustier at Madame de Staël’s to-night. The former tells me that he has advised M. de Montmorin to quit his post. He says that the Garde des Sceaux keeps the King in constant alarm, and governs him by his fears, so that M. de Montmorin has very little influence left. He says that I am mistaken in my idea that this Constitution will crumble to pieces of itself; that the resources from the assignats will hold out a considerable time; that, by delaying the liquidations, they can procrastinate the moment of distress; that the taxes are tolerably well paid, etc. I persist in my opinion, notwithstanding, that it is now evident that foreign powers will do nothing. Indeed, I am persuaded that their efforts would have tended rather to support than to destroy the new system, because mankind generally resist against violence. Moustier shows me a note he has made and transmitted to the Queen, relative to subsistence. He says he has reason to believe not only in a coalition of the different parties which divided the last Assembly, but that they are interested in the great speculations of grain made in the neighborhood of Paris.”

“M. Brémond calls [October 26th] and tells me that the republican party count with certainty on an attempt of the King to escape; that they mean to facilitate it, and then, laying the blame of all events upon the monarch and his nobles, they will stop payment and be ready to meet any attack whatever. At twelve I go by appointment to the Comte de Moustier’s, where I meet M. Tolozan. This meeting is at his request, and to confer on the subject of subsistence, but from what passes I do not see what can have been his object. I find that Ségur is ready to accept the place of M. de Montmorin, although he does not avow it.”

“Spend the evening [October 28th] with the Baron de Grand Cour; a very large company, and, of course, no society. Lord Gower tells me that he has quitted play, on which circumstance I very sincerely congratulate him. M. Brémond tells me that he has been to solicit the interest of Alexandre Lameth, to get placed. This was by the recommendation of Pellin. Lameth has promised him, and while there he saw Duportail’s man come in with a list of officers for his inspection and approbation, and as he was busied with the examination, Brémond asked to have a friend appointed sub-lieutenant, which was immediately promised.

“Wait on M. de Molleville, and open Mr. Swan’s business. I tell him that the making contracts with the lowest bidder will not answer in this country as in England, because there the articles always exist within the power of the government; and consequently, if the contractors fail in their performance, pecuniary damages set everything right; but here a failure may be of the most dangerous consequence, and it would frequently be the interest of an enemy to occasion that failure, and to pay the stipulated penalty. Hence I infer that there should be a moral security in addition to the pecuniary, and conclude that any contract he may make should be conditional on the approbation of the parties concerned in America, by the Minister Plenipotentiary there. I next suggest to him that it would be advantageous to fix a price for provisions, deliverable either in Europe, America, the Isle of France, or the West Indies, so that only an order need be given for the quantities and places. Show him the advantages that would result therefrom. I then suggest that it would be proper to have always on hand sufficient for six months’ provisions to fifty ships of the line, and to have every month a month’s fresh supply, so that, after deducting what was consumed, the balance of the provisions in store beyond six months’ supply should be sold. I tell him that if his contract be on good terms it will be but a trifling loss, if any, to the marine, and that the commerce will gain what the marine loses; but that by this means they will always be prepared for war. I conclude by telling him that I am, before all things, an American, and therefore he must consider what I say accordingly, but that it may not be amiss to consult Moustier. He is very well pleased with all this, and I think desirous of forming some such plan. He desires to have a sample of the provisions sent to him, which I promise shall be done if any of them be left. Communicate to him the tricks of his enemies, who are sold to the *régisseurs*. He tells me what passed this morning with the King relative to M. de Montmorin. His Majesty is a little vexed with him, and says that he has been pestering him for six months to name a successor, etc. M. de Molleville’s brother, who is just returned from Coblenz, tells him that M. de Montmorin is detested there, but that *his* appointment is approved of.

“Dine with M. de Montmorin. He shows me the report he intends making to the Assembly. It is wonderfully little, considering the time he has consumed in making it. Propose to him some amendments, which I think he will not adopt, and he will repent it if he does not. He declares war against the newspaper writers, and these are sometimes troublesome and sometimes dangerous enemies. He says that Ségur has been with him this morning, and accepted. He tells me that the King has not asked him to stay. To this I reply that it is his own fault, because he had declared so pointedly his determination that the King was exposed thereby to the mortification of a denial, but if he would have consented to stay on such application being made, it would have been made. He says that he does not know whether he shall continue in

council. He has told the King that he will stay if he desires it, but wishes His Majesty to consider the matter well beforehand, because if hereafter he should find it convenient to send him away it would be injurious to both of them. Malouet comes during the dinner, and we converse afterwards. He confirms to me that M. de Montmorin is without influence.”

Bertrand de Molleville gives Montmorin credit for great fidelity to the king, and says of him, “that he has been judged with great severity, and perhaps he is the least known of all the men who took part in the Revolution. He was a true loyalist, and no personal fear kept him from trying to aid the king, and this he did by concealed though dangerous correspondence, which was paid for out of the funds of his department. Much of his weakness, which he frankly acknowledged, had its source in a delicate constitution.”

The diary continues: “I have a long conversation with Madame de Beaumont at Madame de Staël’s [October 29th]. She suffers exceedingly from her father’s removal from office. The British ambassadress tells me that both she and Lord Gower have quitted playing, and that she thinks I like them well enough to be pleased at it. I assure her of my attachment more in tone and manner than by words, and I think the seed is not sown on barren ground. Brémond calls me out to tell me that the emigrants expect to enter in January next, and that the Queen is at length agreed to act in concert with the princes. This, he says, is arrived direct from the Prince of Condé this day. I am afraid that the Court have some underhand scheme, and if so, they bet a certainty against an uncertainty.

“The news from Hispaniola are very bad, and I think exaggerated, but the negroes are in revolt, and employed in burning the plantations and murdering their masters. Moustier says he imagines M. de Montmorin has a mind to secure to himself the British embassy, and have him sent to Switzerland. He is therefore determined to push the Queen on that subject. I advise him to let that alone, and tell him the news brought to me this morning.”

“Visit Madame de Ségur [October 30th], who tells me that her husband has this morning resigned the office of Foreign Affairs, which he had accepted yesterday. I congratulate her on this event. He has grounded his refusal on the treatment the ministers met with yesterday from the Assembly. M. de la Sonde told me that he has further intelligence from M. Metternich, and he tells me that M. de La Porte is this evening to submit to the King a plan, sent at His Majesty’s request by M. de Muries, who, he says, is a little fellow of sense, information, and unconquerable spirit. I am to know whether His Majesty adopts it.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XXII.

Desired to converse about subsistence at a royalist dinner. M. de Molleville tells him he has proposed him as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Distress of the Montmorin family. Narbonne, Madame de Staël, and the ministry. Supper at Lady Sutherland's. Morris gives a dinner. M. de Narbonne finally appointed Minister of War. Vicq d'Azyr says the queen wishes Morris's ideas in writing on the decree against the princes. Dinner at the British ambassador's. Prévile at the Comédie Française. Sketching a form of government for France. Writes a philippic against the *chefs des républicains*. Letter to Robert Morris on the failure to effect a commercial treaty with Great Britain. Washington nominates Morris for the mission to France. Confirmed by a very small majority in the Senate. The king in high spirits. Letter to Washington on the paper circulation of France and the general anarchy. The Bishop of Autun to go to England. The Jacobins discover a plan for violent change of the Constitution. Morris prepares for a journey to England. Message from the queen.

“We have a staunch royalist dinner to-day [November 1st] at M. de Tolozan's, consisting of the Count de Moustier, M. de Malouet, De Vériex, Mallet-Dupin and M. Gilet. At coming away M. — follows me, to desire I will stay and converse about the subsistence. I tell him that it is unnecessary; that I should ask for six months, which I am sure they cannot furnish. Go to see M. de Molleville. He has not yet tried the provisions sent. He says that many objections are being made against being supplied from America, such as the distance, the uncertainty, etc. He has desired that they should be detailed in writing, and will place his observations on the margin. He tells me that he is determined not to wait for the attack of the Assembly, but will always find them in work. For this purpose he has already proposed to them a great number of decrees, and of such nature that they will be in the wrong if they do not adopt them. He is to send me a copy. He tells me that he proposed *me* the other day at M. de Montmorin's as Minister of Foreign Affairs. I laugh at this. Discuss with him the manner of treating their colonies, if they mean to secure their fidelity.”

“Madame de Beaumont tells me [November 3d] that her father has nothing, and seems to be very uncertain about his future destiny. There is over this family an air *lugubre et très sombre*. M. de Montmorin says that no successor is yet appointed to him, nor has the King at all made up his mind. I ask him what is to become of himself, and tell him that if he has any doubt of the King's intentions I will write to His Majesty on the subject. He says he should be ashamed both of the King and himself, if he thought him capable of neglecting him. Dine with the British ambassadress. The Princesse de Tarente* is here, who tells me that the Queen often talks to her of me when they are riding together. I reply only by a bow. She repeats it, and dwells on the subject, but I make only the same reply. I give Lady Sutherland some verses, which I think she will be pleased with. M. de — tells me that they have a year's supply of grain for the troops. I ask him how much bread they give, and of what quality. He tells me that the ration is a pound and a half, of which three quarters are wheat, one quarter rye. The bran is not separated. He says this makes an excellent bread, which many of

the officers prefer to the bread of fine flour. It soaks well in soup, which, considering the mixture of rye, is a little extraordinary.”

“Sit awhile [November 8th] with M. de Montmorin. He tells me that his objection to appointing Narbonne Minister of Foreign Affairs is his connection with Madame de Staël. I ask him if the King is fully apprised of the double dealing of his present minister. He tells me that he is. I give him some hints respecting a constitution for this country, and the means of restoring its finances. Visit Madame de Beaumont, and talk poetry and literature instead of politics. Just before dinner I announce myself and it to Madame de Montmorin. After dinner M. de Rayneval comes in, who is in much choler against the Assembly. He says the Diplomatic Committee have it in contemplation to address His Majesty for the removal of the whole Department of Foreign Affairs, clerks and all. He is determined, he says, to defend himself; that he cares nothing for his place, but will struggle for his reputation. Visit for a moment Madame de Ségur, and promise to return and give her the news I shall collect. She is in great anxiety about the colonies, and with her is a person who declares himself to be totally ruined. His spirits are quite broken. At Madame de Laborde’s the same thing presents itself in the Duc de Xeres. I return to Madame de Ségur’s and give her the news, which are yet tolerable as to Port-au-Prince, where her husband’s property lies. Go to the British ambassadress’s. Her countenance shows me that the verses are not thrown away. Afterwards she tells me that she was ashamed, flattered, and delighted. *Tant mieux*. Tell the Abbé de Montesquiou a part of what I told M. de Montmorin this morning of the means of establishing a constitution for this country. His mind opens to these ideas. We have all the world and his wife here. Madame de Tarente tells me that she loves me because I love the Queen, and her reception proves that my conversation is not disagreeable. I make it short. During supper I observe to the ambassadress that she does not eat, but is merely a dish at her own table, and that not the worst, but that she has not the politeness to ask one to partake of it. Madame de Montmorin wants to know the subject of our conversation, which is in English. Lady Sutherland tells her, ‘Il me dit des méchancetés.’ ‘Ah, il en est bien capable!’ Madame de Staël comes in late, and Madame de Tarente makes mouths at her.”

“I urge M. de Montmorin [November 10th] to prepare a reply from the King to the decree against the emigrants, and leave him engaged in it. Dine with Madame de Staël where I meet the Abbé Raynal.* He makes many advances towards me. I receive them but coolly, because I have no great respect for him. After dinner Madame de Staël asks my opinion as to the acceptance of the office of foreign affairs by her friend Narbonne. I give her my opinion so as not to encourage the idea, but yet not to offend.”

M. de Narbonne, with so able a supporter as Madame de Staël, was quite capable of presenting himself before the queen, and with becoming modesty, suggesting himself as the man in whose hands the king might, with entire confidence, place the government. What wonder that Her Majesty burst out laughing, and only said these words: “Êtes-vous fou, M. de Narbonne?” But there seemed to be no other man for the place, and the king, much against his will, placed him in the ministry as Minister of War.

“To-day [November 12th], at three, M. and Madame de Flahaut come to dinner, the Minister of the Marine shortly after, M. and Madame de Montmorin towards four, and Madame de Beaumont, who was at the Assembly, at half after four, when we dine. A pleasant party, and Madame de Flahaut exerts herself to please; of course, she succeeds. The Minister of the Marine mentions to me again an affair which one of the colonists mentioned at his request the other day, and which I gave the go by. It is to combine the payment of the American debt with the assistance to be given to the Colony of St. Domingo. Promise to attend to it. M. de Montmorin tells me that he wrote to the King his opinion as to the decree against the princes, and offered to prepare a work for him on that subject; that he went afterwards to his council, but he never opened his lips. I find that my poor friend is dropped, but he must not be abandoned.”

“Sit down to cards [November 15th] with Madame de Flahaut while the hair-dresser renews her coiffure. From here I go to see Madame de Staël. She is angry with me. I told M. de Molleville that she had consulted me relative to Narbonne’s acceptance, and he has used it as a pretext against his appointment. I tell her that I see nothing in this to make a handle of; that everybody knows M. de Narbonne has been in contemplation for that office, and therefore it is natural enough to ask the opinion of different people whether, in case the post is offered, he should accept. I then add that he had better not think of it; that the object is merely to fill a gap for a few months and then to drop the person who may have been appointed. She tells me that the ministry is stronger than is imagined, and is about to give me her reasons, which she delivers in part, when M. de St. Léon arrives, and puts an end to the conversation. After him comes M. de Montmorin, and then M. de Chapelier. M. Pétion is, it seems, appointed Mayor of Paris, and this alarms a good deal *la bonne société*, but I think it is not amiss, provided other people are wise. Moustier has pressed me hard to write on the finances, which I evade for the present, telling him that things change too rapidly and too much. Delessart, it is said, is to become Minister of the Marine. Brémond tells me that, under the auspices of the triumvirate, Duport, Barnave, and Lameth, he and others are about to publish a journal. I tell him not to connect himself too much with them.

“Dine at the Louvre. M. Vicq d’Azyr tells me that he repeated to the Queen the conversation he had with me respecting the decree against the princes, and that she desired to have it in writing, telling him that she knew how to value everything from that quarter. He thinks that this contributed in some degree to the rejection. I don’t believe a word of the matter. He desires me to give my advice as to the conduct they should pursue respecting the decree against the priests. I desire to have the decree and the constitutional acts relating to those unfortunate men before I give my opinion.”

“I see M. de Montmorin [November 20th], and tell him the purport of my letter to the King on his subject. Speaking again of his continuance in office, he says that it was impossible; that he will tell me the reason, one of these days; that the King ought to be obliged to him for concealing it. I tell him that I always supposed he had some reason which he did not mention, because those which he gave were insufficient. Call on the British ambassador. He compliments me on the verses given to his wife. There is here

one of the Queen's women, who desires to be acquainted with me. She turns the conversation upon politics, and I make my visit short."

"I have a small dinner party to-day [November 25th]. It is whimsical that my little dinner, consisting of three things, is drawn from an immense distance; oysters from Colchester, trout from the Rhine, and partridges from—quære."

"Mr. Tolozan calls [November 26th], and talks about the situation of public affairs; the union of able, honest men necessary to save the kingdom. I agree to this, but tell him that unless the King and Queen will give their full confidence to such men it will answer no purpose. See Montmorin, who says the King never answers his letters, and asks if he answers mine. I tell him no, and that I do not expect it, because I wish nor want nothing from him. He says he lately communicated the assurances that one of the provinces, with all the troops in it, would be depended on as adhering to the royal cause. He does not tell me which it is. He tells me that the real cause why he quitted the ministry was that he had not the full confidence of their majesties; that they were governed sometimes by counsels from Brussels, and sometimes from Coblantz; that he urged them to adopt a privy council to decide in all cases, and endeavored to convince them that unless they fixed a plan of conduct they would be greatly injured, but in vain. Brémond comes to see me, and I work with him at a pamphlet on the finances. I dictate, and he writes. At four go to dine with the British ambassadress. After dinner, as there are none but the family, we chat together very freely. He puts Mr. Short on the carpet, and she opens against him. I assure her that he is a very sensible, judicious young man, and very attentive to his business. She asks me where he is; that he has not appeared lately at Court. I tell her that he was in the country with the Duc and Duchesse de la Rochefoucault, and is now gone on business of the United States to Holland. She asked if he is Ambassador to all the nations of Europe, and laughs heartily at the idea. I tell her that the business he is employed in there does not require an ambassador. She says he has not the look and manner which such a character requires. I reply that he might not do well in Russia, but at any other court I do not conceive figure to be very important. She puts an end to the conversation by telling me that if I wish to give foreigners a favorable impression of my country, I must get myself appointed. A bow of acknowledgment for the compliment is the only reply which it admits of. She appeals to the Ambassador, and of course he answers, as usual upon such appeals, in the affirmative."

"Take Madame de Laborde [December 1st] to the Comédie Française, where I have the pleasure to see Prévile* perform in the 'Bourreau bienfaisant.' He is truly an actor; nothing below and nothing above the part, no false ornament, but the 'naked nature and the living grace.' The Queen is here, and is perfectly well received. I sit directly over her head, and somebody, I suppose, tells her so, for she looks up at me very steadily so as to recognize me again; this, at least, is my interpretation. My air, if I can know it myself, was that of calm benevolence with a little sensibility. A letter from the Empress of Russia to the Prince de Condé is shown to me, which is very encouraging to the emigrants. Brémond tells me that the secret council of the King consists of M. de Molleville, M. de Fleurieu, and M. de la Porte. He brings several materials on which to ground an attack of the republican party."

“Go to see Madame de Staël [December 3d]. While she is dressing, we have some conversation which is not displeasing to her. We have here a large company. Delessart has been denounced this day by the Abbé Fauchet, and the Bishop d’Autun, who dined with him, tells me that he was so sick he was obliged to leave the table.”

“I send Brémond to Lameth [December 4th] to advise that Delessart retire because he has not firmness enough for the situation in which he is placed. Go to Madame Tronchin’s to a *thé*, and to M. de Montmorin’s, and while there prepare a little paragraph for him contradicting the report that he has absconded. Madame de Flahaut has been correcting a work of the Bishop d’Autun’s which is an address to the King from the department against the decree inflicting penalties on the non-juring clergymen. She thinks the step improper, and so do I. She says it is well written.”

“This morning [December 6th] I dictate to Brémond a philippic against the *chefs des républicains*; employ myself in preparing a form of government for this country. At half-past four go to dine with M. de Montmorin. Find him employed in reading the address to the King by the members of the Department of Paris. It is well written in many respects, but the style is rather that of a popular manager than of an address to a monarch. In order, also, to excuse their interference, they inveigh much against the emigrants, and prove that while they talk big they tremble. M. de Montmorin tells me that the Bishop d’Autun pressed Pétion, the mayor, to sign it, who refused, saying that he approved of the thing but would not fall out with the *fous* and *enragés*, because it is they and not the reasonable people who support revolutions, and, for his own part, he does not choose to be hanged for the sake of giving triumph to reason. I think he acts wisely, and the other, who constantly places himself between two stools, will never have a secure seat. Call on the Minister of the Marine.* He shows me a sketch of a speech to be made by the King to the Assembly. We converse on public affairs and the means of establishing a constitution in this country which may secure the just rights of the nation under the government of a real king. He promises to sound the King and Queen, and I promise to sketch out some hints.”

“To-day [December 7th], in conversing with M. de Laborde, we go from one thing to another, till at last he communicates to me a journal he is writing and which is distributed at the King’s expense to the lodges of free-masons in the kingdom. He says that the King and Queen, M. de la Porte, and he are the only persons in the secret. I tell him that by the same means he may feel the pulse of the nation and determine from thence what can be attempted with a prospect of success. He prays me to give him a list of the questions which I propose, and I promise to do so. I leave him, to repent of this confidence, for that is the nature of man. M. de Narbonne has been to the Assembly this morning to announce his appointment. I shall be surprised if he succeeds, for, though he is by no means deficient in point of understanding, I think he has not the needful instruction, that he has not acquired the habits of business, and that he is totally void of method in affairs. *Nous verrons.*”

“Continue [December 8th] preparing the form of a constitution for this country, when a person comes in who tells me that he sent, in July last, the form of a constitution for America to General Washington. He says that he has made such objects his study for above fifty years; that he knows America perfectly well, though he has never seen it,

and is convinced that the American Constitution is good for nothing. I get rid of him as soon as I can, but yet I cannot help being struck with the similitude of a Frenchman who makes constitutions for America and an American who performs the same good offices for France. Self-love tells me that there is a great difference of persons and circumstances, but self-love is a dangerous counsellor. After dinner go to the French comedy to see Prévile. He is seventy-five years of age and his action is perfect. The best of the others may be said to act well their parts, but he represents his. I find that I had formed just ideas on this subject, for he is free precisely from those faults which had struck me in the others.”

“Yesterday I finished the copy and correction of a plan of government and of general principles to accompany it. To-day [December 14th] we have a good dinner and as much company as the table will hold, at the house of the Minister of the Marine, De Fleurieu. I tell him that I have prepared some notes on a constitution to show him. He says he has sounded the King on the subject, who has recommended him to attend to it. He has recommended to His Majesty the most profound secrecy, and taken occasion to inculcate the necessity, from seeing in a gazette what had passed in council. After dinner go to the French comedy; Prévile, in the part of *Sosie*, in Molière’s ‘Amphitryon.’ It is wonderful. He would be considered an excellent actor, his age out of the question, but, all things considered, he is a prodigy.”

It will be proper here to mention the fact that severe criticisms were made in America on Morris’s failure to effect a commercial treaty with Great Britain, the affairs of which had occasioned several visits to London, many detentions waiting upon the pleasure of the Duke of Leeds, and the consequent loss of much valuable time. He wrote on December 14th to Robert Morris very fully of his feelings on the subject, he says:

“I am by no means surprised that my conduct should be severely criticised, because those who wish to promote their friends generally find fault with every person and thing which may stand in the way of their wishes. It would seem also that they have set down to the account of vanity the act of which they disapprove, for this is the inference to be drawn from what you say—although your delicacy spares me the mention. Believe me, I am not wounded by this imputation. If my errand had become public, if *even my brother* had known it, I should have been hurt by their charge. You say the French ambassador posted immediately to communicate my business to the Duke of Leeds. There was no harm at all in any communication he could make, for he only knew that I was ordered to call for performance of the treaty, and you will recollect that, if ever we quarrel on that subject, it may be proper to ask the interference of France. You say that the British Ministry have complained, and drawn the conclusion that they can expect little good from negotiations connected previously with France. This is really pleasant. Certainly nothing but their confidence in that English party which Lord Hawkesbury mentions as existing in our councils, and which I flatter myself does not exist, could ever have permitted a complaint so idle. The French ambassador could mention nothing about a treaty of commerce, for he knew nothing about it, and, of course, the only possible inference from what he did say was that he and his court were strangers to that part of the negotiation which was truly interesting to Great Britain—of course, that I did *not* consult him. And so the

fact is; for we never exchanged one word on the subject after the first interview. The reason is plain. He was afraid of being called on to support the demand made, and I chose only to let him know as much as would account for my interviews with the Duke of Leeds, which his spies in the public offices could not but make him acquainted with. But there is another trait in this affair which is still more diverting, and which makes me desirous of having (if possible) this same complaint of theirs authenticated. I will suppose it to be a very good reason to be given to America for not conferring a favor on her, that the man sent to ask it was disagreeable, no matter from what cause—but I trust that they will never avow to the British nation a disposition to make sacrifice of their interests to please a pleasant fellow. It will remain, therefore, for them to justify the refusal of an advantageous connection because not presented in an agreeable manner. Is it not a very sensible sort of speech, ‘I am very hungry, and the victuals are good, but I cannot eat off earthenware?’ If anyone should say so to me, I should conclude either that he wanted appetite or did not like his dinner.

“Seriously, my friend, the obstacle to a treaty was in the British Cabinet. The opposers have since found out that they committed a fatal error, and wish to get clear of the blame. They would have been very glad of any excuse to tread the ground back again, but, unfortunately, none was given, and they have therefore, in fear of French influence, sent you a minister—and they will make a treaty with us as soon as the people are ripe for it and the mercantile interests feel the necessity. All the rest is mere palaver. If you mean to make a good treaty with Britain, support your pretensions with spirit, and they will respect you for it. You must give them visible reasons, because they will have to justify their conduct, and it will not do to say to a House of Commons, ‘The American Minister was such a charming fellow that we could not resist him.’ I rather think it would be at least as good ground to say: ‘The American Legislature would have greatly injured our navigation and commerce if we had not, by this treaty, induced them to repeal their laws; and there was reason, also, to apprehend that the United States would connect themselves still more intimately with France, who, for the sake of such connection, would doubtless support them in their claims as soon as the state of her domestic affairs would permit her to look abroad.’ Place yourself in the position of a British Minister, and ask yourself whether these latter motives would not be most likely to prevail. At the next session of Parliament the administration will be hunted hard, and they will be very glad to shelter themselves from blame on the American business, ere it be long.”

It was to be expected that political enemies in America would be on the alert to magnify the ill-success of the negotiations in England. The abrupt manner with which Morris was reported to have treated the British Ministry, the knowledge of his opposition to the Revolution, and his well-known position in aristocratical circles, were all exaggerated into some grave offence. When, therefore, during the session of 1792, Washington nominated him for the position of Minister, and his name came before the Senate for approval, there was considerable opposition to his being appointed to the Court of France, and he was chosen by only a small majority to be one of the first representatives under the new Government.

While these arrangements were making in America, and Morris was exerting every effort in behalf of order and stability in France, he found plenty of time, without compromising the seriousness or the sincerity of his services, to enjoy what there was of amusement. This centred principally in the theatres, of which there was no lack in variety or number. The demand for that sort of recreation was enormous, to judge from the fact which Goncourt mentions, that nearly each day of 1791 saw a new theatre opened. The life of a large number of them was very brief. "Ouverts vendredi, tombés samedi," was not inappropriately said of some of the last that were opened. At the Théâtre Français Prévile was delighting his audiences, and Morris speaks of the difficulty of getting a ticket. "I wait half an hour at the Théâtre Français," says the diary for December 19th, "before my servant can get a ticket, and afterwards I get a very bad place, but still I think myself recompensed by Prévile, who is truly formed to hold the mirror up to nature and to show to the very shape and body of the time his form and pressure. I meet M. de Bougainville, who has served in Canada in the war of '59. We converse on the public affairs of this country. He tells me that I am mistaken in my idea that he is in amity with St. Foi, the Bishop d'Autun, etc.; that he considers them as a pack of rascals, and the King views them in the same light and detests them. He assured Bougainville that he accepted the Constitution merely to avoid a civil war. I tell him that the King is betrayed by the weakness, if not the wickedness, of his counsellors. He says that he is of the same opinion. I ask him what he thinks of Fleurieu. He tells me that he is a poor creature. The Bishop of Autun observes to me at the Louvre to-day that the Jacobins have not been able to raise a riot about their address. I tell him that since the frolic at the Champ de Mars there is little danger of riots, because the people are not very fond of them when they find that death is a game which two can play at. He says that the King is in wondrous high spirits since his vetoes have gone off easily, and says that he will apply them every now and then. Poor King!"

"Dine [December 21st] with Madame Tronchin, and meet here Madame de Tarente. Ask her to procure for me a lock of the Queen's hair. She promises to try. I think Her Majesty will be pleased with the request even if she does not comply with it, for such is woman. Call at Madame de Staël's. She is in bed and is glad to see me, and tells me all the news she knows. The Abbé Louis comes in, who is *flagorneur au possible* (Hibernicé, blarney). Delessart, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, is at Madame de Montmorin's this afternoon, and as we turn a good many things over in conversation after dinner, I conclude in going away by telling him that the King is the only piece of wood which will remain afloat in the general shipwreck. He says that he begins to think so. I recommend to the Minister of the Marine the bringing of Swiss troops to Paris, under the pretext that they are too aristocratic to be trusted on the frontiers. They will preserve order here in the general confusion which may be expected. Recommend that under similar pretexts the cavalry be brought to an interior circle. He approves of this."

"As to the state of things here," Morris wrote to Washington on December 27th, "I would convey it to you as fully as propriety will admit, but I know not yet by what opportunity this letter will go and the Post Office was never more abused under the most despotic minister than it is at present, notwithstanding the decrees to the contrary. Every letter I receive bears evident marks of patriotic curiosity. This anxious

spirit of pettifogging villainy proves the fear of those who make use of it, and truly they have reason to fear, for every day proves more clearly that their new Constitution is good for nothing. Those whom I had warned in season of the mischief they were preparing, endeavor, now that it is too late, to lay the blame on others by way of excusing themselves. But the truth is that, instead of seeking the public good by doing what was right, each sought his own advantage by flattering the public opinion. They dare not now propose the amendments which they perceive and acknowledge to be indispensable. They have, besides, no confidence in each other, for everyone feels a reason against it, and meets, moreover, with daily proofs that his compatriots are no better than himself. The Assembly (as you who know such bodies will naturally suppose) commits every day new follies, and if this unhappy country be not plunged anew into the horrors of despotism it is not their fault. They have lately made a master-stroke to that effect; they have resolved to attack their neighbors unless they dissipate the assemblies of French emigrants who have taken refuge in their dominions. These neighbors are members of the German Empire, and France threatens to carry into their country, not fire and sword but *la liberté*. Now, as this last word does not, in the acceptance of German courts, mean so much *liberty* as *insurrection*, you will see that the *pretext* is given for hostilities without violating the law of nations. Add to this that three French armies of 50,000 men each are ordered to assemble on the frontiers—one under your old acquaintance Rochambeau in Flanders, one under our friend Lafayette in Lorraine so as to penetrate by the Moselle River into the Electorate of Trèves, and one under a M. Luckner in Alsace. This last has, I am told, but slender abilities, and the other two you are acquainted with. Putting all other things out of the question, it is self-evident that the Empire must bring force to oppose force thus ordered, and in consequence it is not to be doubted that 50,000 Prussians and 50,000 Austrian troops will make their appearance as speedily as circumstances will permit. You have no idea, my dear sir, of a society so loosely organized. America at the worst of times was much better, because at least the criminal law was executed, not to mention the mildness of our manners. My letter predicting their present situation may perhaps have appeared like the wanderings of exaggerated fancy, but, believe me, they are within the coldest limits of the truth. Their army is undisciplined to a degree you can hardly conceive. Already great numbers desert to what they expect will become the enemy. Their Garde Nationale who have turned out as volunteers are in many instances that corrupted scum of overgrown populations of which large cities purge themselves, and which, without constitution to support the fatigues, or courage to encounter the perils of war, have every vice and every disease which can render them the scourge of their friends and the scoff of their foes.

“The finances are deplorably bad. The discontent is general, but it does not break out, partly because the antipathy to the aristocrats and the fear of their tyranny still operates, and partly because no safe opportunity offers. Everyone is bewildered in his meditations as to the event, and, like a fleet at anchor in a fog, no one will set sail for fear of running foul. If they come to blows on the border a curious scene will, I think, present itself. The first success on either side will decide the opinions of a vast number who have, in fact, no opinion, but only the *virtuous* determination to adhere to the strongest party; and you may rely on it that if the enemy be tolerably successful, a person who shall visit this country two years hence will inquire with astonishment by what means a nation which, in the year 1788, was devoted to its kings, became in

1790 unanimous in throwing off their authority, and in 1792 as unanimous in submitting to it. The reasons given to you in my letter of the 29th April, 1789, and my fears expressed in that letter seem now to be on the eve of reality. The King means well, and may perhaps, by his moderation, finally succeed in saving his country. I hope much from this circumstance, but, alas! the moderation of one who has been so wounded and insulted seems to be but a slender dependence, and yet I verily believe it to be the best, and, I had almost said, the only dependence.

“A courier arrived last night with despatches, which are to be communicated to the Assembly this morning. The Emperor informs the King that he has given orders to General Bender (who commands in the Low Countries) to protect the Electorate of Trèves with all his forces. I did not mention, as I ought to have done, that the Courts of Berlin and Vienna have concluded a treaty for the protection of the German Empire and maintenance of its rights. You will have seen that the Emperor, having adopted the determinations of the Diet respecting the claims of those princes who have certain feudal rights, preserved to them by the Treaty of Westphalia, in Alsace and Lorraine, reminded the King that the dominion of France over those provinces is conceded by that treaty. The Dutch Government has proposed a treaty with the Emperor, as sovereign of the Low Countries, for mutual aid and protection in case of insurrections, which offer is accepted. All this is explained by the intrigues of France to excite revolt in Holland and Flanders, and the completion of such a treaty will place the Emperor at ease, should he operate against this country next spring.”

“This morning [December 31st] Brémond comes, and presents M. de Monciel, the newly appointed Minister to Mayence, who wishes me to point out to him his line of march. I tell him that it will be necessary to have a confidential person at that spot. Show him how he may acquire useful intelligence, and point out the insufficiency of the present administration. Close by telling him that he will do well to have a correspondence by which he will convey useful intelligence to the King. He is very desirous of this, and at his instance I promise to sound His Majesty on that subject. Dine with M. de Montmorin, and desire M. de Molleville to mention the matter to the King, and let me know the result. Delessart communicated this day to the Assembly a message from the Emperor which is decisive of his sentiments. He has ordered his general, Bender, to defend the Electorate of Trèves.”

“The society to-day [January 3d] at Madame le Coulteux’s, receives me with an air of strangeness not pleasant. Stay late at the British Ambassador’s, and have a little sparring match with Madame de Staël, who is vexed at it. Brémond tells me that the King is well pleased with the idea of receiving intelligence direct from M. de Monciel. I inform M. de Monciel that the King accepts of his proposal. He is to show me a *mémoire* upon Switzerland before it is presented. I tell Madame de Flahaut that I shall go out to America in the spring. This news distresses her, and she exclaims, ‘Then I shall lose all my friends at the same time;’ that the Bishop leaves her in a few days, but as yet she cannot tell me whither he goes. Dine here. The Bishop of Autun comes in, and eats a cold dinner. We play and the women sleep. He observes that the assignats have reduced France to a deplorable condition, which is true enough. I have lived through one paper system and one revolution, and I find myself here in the midst of another revolution and another paper system. I have had occasion to consider the

subject for nearly twenty years (for it excited my attention in the year 1772), and therefore, with a moderate share of understanding, must by this time have made some progress. My situation and connections here give me a pretty near view of what passes, and in combining what I see with what I have seen, I have no shadow of a doubt but that the paper money will continue to depreciate. I hear that the Bishop goes to England soon.”

“This morning [January 10th] M. Brémond and M. Monciel call on me, and breakfast. After they are gone I read and write till my carriage is ready, then go to the Minister of the Marine, with whom I have a conference on the Bishop d’Autun’s mission, and on other public affairs. He tells me he has communicated to the Queen his sentiments on the very impolitic step now taken, and that she is sensible to this confidence. He says the King spoke of me in very favorable terms the other day, when he communicated to him the plan of a correspondence with M. de Monciel. I tell him it is time to arrange matters with the Emperor, etc. He says (and justly) that unless he were sure that the King and Queen make no imprudent confidences, he dare not risk himself. The risk is indeed great. Dine with the British ambassadress. She asks me whether in London I favor the ministerial or opposition party. I tell her that when a measure is proposed my sentiment depends on the thing, and not on the proposer. Consequently I am for or against, according to my judgment; but if they will make Lord Gower Minister of Foreign Affairs I shall then wish success to his measures for her sake.

“Tell Madame de Tarente to inform the Queen from me that M. de Molleville is the only minister in whom she ought to have confidence. Go to the Porcelaine with her. We exchange little presents of *amitié*; she shows me a great deal, and I find it more convenient to give china than time. M. Monciel tells me that he has conversed with M. Barthélemi upon the Bishop d’Autun’s errand to London. He informs me that the object is to make an alliance with England in order to counterbalance Austria, and the offer to England is the Isle of France and Tobago. This is a most wretched policy. Brémond tells me that the Jacobin party have got hold of a plan of their enemies to work a violent change in the Constitution, and brings me a newspaper which contains it. There is reason to believe that some such thing was in agitation. It is very absurd.”

“Madame de Flahaut asks me in a very serious tone if I have advised M. de Molleville to oppose the Bishop d’Autun’s embassy. I tell her that I have. She is very angry at this, and we have a tartish conversation. After this I am very easy and unembarrassed in a conversation both with madame and the Bishop. Marbois told me that he was in hopes the Bishop’s embassy would be stopped. The Ambassador of Venice wished to know my opinion of the state of affairs. I tell him that I know very little about them, and that I choose to know but little. He seems much surprised at this. He tells me that De Staël has leave of absence, and that he thinks the embassy to Britain will be stopped.”

“This morning [December 13th] M. Brémond and M. Monciel call on me. The former sent me last night a piece written by Duport against Mr. Pitt. It is a very poor piece of stuff. They (the triumvirate^{*}) have given it to Brémond to get it printed, and he wishes to correct some of its badnesses, but I tell him not to change a letter; to have it

printed immediately and to keep the original, by which means he will have the author in his hands, for it is written by Duport and corrected by Lameth. Brémond and Monciel had a conference with these gentlemen yesterday on the subject of the Bishop d'Autun's embassy and, on mentioning the terms to be proposed, Brémond asked how such a treaty could be presented to the Assembly. The others answered that the author would be hanged, and really I think so too. Moustier comes in, and Monciel tries to make acquaintance, but in vain, till I tell Moustier in English that he must be acquainted. M. de Laborde consults me on a proposition made by Beaumarchais to give his only daughter (a most charming girl) to Laborde's son. He mentions to me Beaumarchais' fortune, which is very great, and he, Laborde, is ruined. I tell him that Beaumarchais has a very bad reputation, but that is nothing to the girl, seeing that she cannot help it; that in my country such a marriage would be detestable because we do not marry for money, but in this country, where money is everything, if his son behaves well afterwards the world will not complain.

“Madame de Flahaut I find ill in bed to-day [January 14th], so I stay here the afternoon and evening. The Bishop, who is here part of the time, goes off to-morrow. The Assembly have this day, upon a report of their Diplomatic Committee, determined to attack the Emperor unless he begs pardon by the 10th of February. The Bishop says that the nation is *une parvenue* and, of course, insolvent. He says that their situation is such that nothing but violent remedies can operate, and these must either kill or cure. St. Foi says the Emperor will be angry, but, having more fear than anger, must submit. I ask them what is to become of their finances. The Bishop says that at a certain day, to be fixed, the assignats will be no longer a forced currency and the holders will be left to lay them out in lands as they may. I think that I never heard more absurdity from men of sense in all my life.”

“Call on M. de Montmorin [January 16th], and converse on the strange state of affairs. Advise him to write a *mémoire*, the heads of which I mention. He promises to do it. He tells me that while the Duke of Orleans was in England he tried hard to obtain an authority to offer a treaty to England, which was, of course, not granted. He tells me the conversation which he had on that subject with the Bishop d'Autun, who hopes, he says, to turn out Pitt, and thinks his success certain if he could have the aid of the Duke of Biron. This is curious enough. Dine with the British ambassador and his wife. We are quite snug, being but four at table, his private secretary being the fourth.* We converse very freely. She again brings up Mr. Short (I know not why she dislikes him so much), and asks if he will ever be a great man among us. I tell her that I think not, as he is not a public speaker, but he may, notwithstanding, be a very useful man here. I say this in a tone which ends that part of the conversation. I find that in this house there is a profound contempt, mixed with abhorrence, for my friend the Bishop d'Autun, and I think the letters written from it will not facilitate the object of his mission.”

“Mr. Short tells me to-day [January 18th] that by his letters he finds that the foreign appointments are undoubtedly made at this moment in America. He declares himself to be totally ignorant of the persons to be named, but at the same time he talks of buying plate and employing a *maître d'hôtel*, whence I conclude that he is pretty certain of being fixed here. I tell him that I would bet two to one against my being

appointed anywhere, and I think it most probable that, if both he and I are named, it will be to the courts opposite to those we had conjectured, and that because the unlucky events are generally those which happen. He says he thinks it possible that he may be appointed to Holland, which would disappoint him cruelly, and he knows not whether he would accept it. Bravo! M. Brémond comes, and tells me that Delessart has sent an express yesterday to assure the Emperor that the embassy of the Bishop d'Autun and the violent speeches in the Assembly mean nothing at all. Molleville confirms this, because they have now no hope from England.”

“This morning [January 22d] I settle my accounts with my coachman and prepare for my departure for England. Vicq d'Azyr comes in while I am at the Louvre and tells me that he has been to my lodgings, at the request of Her Majesty, to desire that, if I learn anything in England interesting to them, I would communicate it.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XXIII.

Morris goes to England. Suspicions aroused by the suddenness of his departure. A political significance given to it. Letter to Washington from London. Morris hears in London of his appointment as Minister to France and receives his credentials. Letter to Robert Morris on the difficulties attending the mission to France. Dines with the Count de Woronzow. Paine's new publication. An evening with the Duchess of Gordon. Conversation with Woronzow. Bishop of Autun's mission to England. Letter to Washington on this subject. Mrs. Damer's studio. She is at work on a statue of the king. Morris writes a verse on her art.

Affairs of a strictly private character demanded Morris's attention in London during the early part of 1792, and forced him rather suddenly to leave Paris. Suspicions were at once aroused that his journey had some political significance, and it was asserted in a French gazette, and copied into an English paper, that he had gone over as "agent for the aristocrats." News of his nomination as Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of France reached him shortly after his arrival at London. It was rumored, however, that the Senate had not confirmed it.

But it is best to return to his own narration of events, both in England and France, for he was kept apprised of the latter, and his advice in regard to them was sought throughout his stay in London by those men with whom he had worked in Paris. The comparative safety of letters in England made it possible for him to send to America much fuller accounts of the affairs of the European world than he could from Paris, and he availed himself of the opportunity.

To Washington he wrote on the 4th of February the following letter:

"Dear Sir: I wrote to you on the 27th of December, but there were many things which I did not write, and some of them I will now communicate. At the close of the session of the National Assembly a coalition was brought about between the Jacobins and the Quatrevingt-neufs. It is proper to explain these terms. The Jacobins, so called from their meeting at a convent or church of that name, were then the violent party; the others, who took their name from a club instituted in the year 1789, were those who termed themselves moderate men. The death of Mirabeau (who was beyond all controversy one of the most unprincipled scoundrels that ever lived) left a great chasm in the latter party. He was then sold to the Court, and meant to bring back absolute authority.

"The chiefs of the Jacobins were violent for two reasons: First, that the Quatre-vingt-neufs would not join with them seriously and heartily—wherefore, not being able to make head alone, they were obliged to use the populace and therefore to sacrifice to the populace; secondly, that the objects of their desire were much greater, though more remote, than those of the first party—for these last had never sought in the Revolution anything else than to place themselves comfortably, whereas the Jacobins

did really at first desire to establish a free constitution, in the expectation that sooner or later they should be at the head of it.

“The aristocrats, you will observe, were reduced to insignificance before the others divided. You will remember that the first Assembly had decreed that their members could neither hold any office under the Crown, nor yet be chosen to represent the people. The first decree was of Jacobin parentage, to disappoint their enemies, who were on the point of succeeding to office; the second decree was carried against the secret inclinations of both. But the consequence was that each was seriously disappointed, and, as the Constitution was clearly unable to support itself, they began to perceive that its ruin might involve their own, and therefore they formed a coalition in which each determined to make use of the other for its own purposes.

“But you will say, perhaps, that both together would be of little use, and this is true, in a degree; for, if the Constitution had been a practicable thing, those alone who were in power under it could have any real authority. But that was not the case, and therefore the plan of the allies was to induce a belief in the Court that they alone had sufficient popularity in the nation to preserve the monarchical authority against the republican party, and, on the other hand, to convince the Assembly that (having in their hands the royal authority) all favors, offices, and grants must come through them. Thus they constituted themselves, if I may be allowed the expression, the ‘government brokers’ of the nation.

“I have mentioned the republican party. This naturally grew up out of the old Jacobin sect, for when the chiefs, finding that all was nearly ruined by the want of authority, had set themselves seriously to work to correct their own errors, many of their disciples, who believed what their apostles had preached, and many who saw in the establishment of order the loss of their consequence, determined to throw off all submission to crowned heads as being ‘unworthy of a free people, etc.’ Add to this the number of ‘moody beggars starving for a time of pellmell, havoc, and confusion.’ It was this coalition which prevented the King from accepting the Constitution in a manly manner, pointing out its capital faults, marking the probable consequences, calling on them to reconsider it, and declaring that his submission to their decisions arose from his belief that it was the only means to avoid the horrors of civil war. They saw that this conduct would render them responsible, and although it was the most likely means of obtaining a good constitution at a future day, and would have bound the King down to the principles he should then advance, yet they opposed, because such good constitution would be established, not only without but even against them, and would, of course, deprive them of those objects which they were in pursuit of. The King contended strongly for that kind of acceptance which I have just mentioned, but he was borne down, being threatened with popular commotions fatal to himself and his family, and with that civil war which he most wished to avoid, as the necessary result of such fatal commotions.

“Shortly after his acceptance it became necessary to appoint another Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. de Montmorin having insisted so strongly on retiring that the King could no longer with propriety ask him to stay. The state of the ministry was then as follows: M. Duport, the Keeper of the Seals, a creature of and sworn adherent

to the triumvirate; which triumvirate is another Duport, Barnave, and Alexandre Lameth—being the chief of the old Jacobins. I say the *old* Jacobins, for the present Jacobins are the republican party. This Keeper of the Seals constantly communicated everything that passed in council to his coadjutors. The Minister of the Interior, M. Delessart, was a wavering creature, one of those of whom Shakespeare says that they ‘renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks with every gale and vary of their masters.’ He had been one of M. Necker’s underlings, was brought forward by him, and had connected himself with the triumvirate, M. Necker’s enemies, as being the strongest party, but still kept up a good understanding with the others. Duportail, the Minister at War, of whom I formerly spoke to you when he was appointed and foretold the conduct he would pursue toward his creator, M. de Lafayette, was also completely subservient to the triumvirate. But at that time he was so much embroiled with the Assembly that his speedy resignation seemed unavoidable. M. Bertrand de Molleville had just been appointed to the Marine, an office which M. de Bougainville had refused to accept. He was pushed to it by the Quatre-vingt-neufs, whom he despises, and told the King that he would not be a member of a ministry many of whom he knew to be unfaithful to him. M. Bertrand was brought forward by the same influence, but he is really attached to the Crown, wishes ardently to obtain a good constitution for his country, is an intelligent, sensible, and laborious man—formerly of the robe—and the particular friend of M. de Montmorin. I mentioned to you formerly that M. de Choiseul* had refused the office of Foreign Affairs. While it was in question who should be appointed to succeed M. de Montmorin, the King, of his own head, named the Comte de Moustier, and wrote him a letter on the subject which Moustier has since shown to me. He had the prudence to write from Berlin to decline accepting until after he should be in Paris. When he arrived in that city the King told him that he could not give him the office, because he was considered as an aristocrat. You will observe that the coalition had been at work to get rid of him, and here I must make a digression. The plan was that, as soon as circumstances would permit, a Minister at War should be appointed, faithful to the King, and then Bougainville take the Marine, Bertrand be appointed Keeper of the Seals, and Delessart either kept in or turned out as he should behave. This plan was not known to the coalition at all, but they well knew that if Moustier got into place it would be a step towards the destruction of their influence and authority; they therefore assured the King that they could not answer for consequences, threatened him with popular commotions, with opposition in the Assembly, and the like, so that at last he gave up his nomination and explained the matter to Moustier. A long interregnum ensued in that office, and as M. de Montmorin absolutely refused to continue any longer, the *portefeuille* was given to M. Delessart, and after some time the Comte de Ségur was appointed. He accepted in the belief of two things, in both of which he was mistaken: one that he had the confidence of the King and Queen, but he had never taken the right way to obtain either their confidence or that of others; the second article of his creed was that the triumvirate (his patrons) commanded a majority in the Assembly. He was undeceived as to the latter point immediately, and therefore threw up the office and went out of town.

“Under these circumstances M. de Narbonne tried hard to obtain that place, and as I have mentioned his name and that of M. de Choiseul, I will in this place mention that of the Abbé de Périgord, afterwards Bishop of Autun. These three are young men of

high family, men of wit, and men of pleasure. The two former were men of fortune, but had spent it. They were intimates all three, and had run the career of ambition together to retrieve their affairs. On the score of morals neither of them is exemplary. The bishop is particularly blamed on that head; not so much for adultery, because that was common enough among the clergy of high rank, but for the variety and publicity of his amours, for gambling, and, above all, for stock-jobbing during the ministry of M. de Calonne, with whom he was on the best terms—and therefore had opportunities which his enemies say he made no small use of. However, I do not believe in this, and I think that, except his gallantries and a mode of thinking rather too liberal for a churchman, the charges are unduly aggravated. It was by the bishop's intrigues *principally* that M. de Choiseul was formerly nominated to the office of Foreign Affairs, but he preferred staying at Constantinople till he could see which way things would settle, and to that effect he prevailed on the Vizier, or, rather, the Reis Effendi, to write that he thought it much for the interest of France that he should stay for three years longer in that city. M. de Narbonne is said by some to be the son of Louis the Fifteenth by Madame Adelaïde his own daughter, and one of the present King's aunts. Certain it is that the old lady, now at Rome, has always protected and befriended him in the warmest manner.

“In the beginning of the Revolution he, a great anti-Neckerist though the lover *en titre* of Madame de Staël, M. Necker's daughter, was not a little opposed to the Revolution, and there was afterwards some coldness between him and the Bishop, partly on political accounts, and partly because he (in common with the rest of the world) believed the Bishop to be too well with his mistress. By the by, she tells me that it is not true, and of course I, who am a charitable man, believe her. This coldness was however at length removed by the interference of their common friends, and the Bishop labored hard to get his friend Narbonne appointed to the office of Foreign Affairs. But the King would not agree to this, because of the great indiscretion of Madame de Staël. M. Delessart was therefore appointed, he being very glad to get rid of the Department of the Interior, where he had everything to apprehend from want of power, want of order, and want of bread. The next step was to bring M. de Narbonne forward to fill the place of M. Duportail, and to this M. Delessart gave his hearty assistance by way of compensating for the disappointment in the other department. Finally the Interior or Home Department was filled by a M. Cahier de Gerville—of whom I know very little, nor is it necessary that I should.

“This ministry, extremely disjointed in itself, and strongly opposed by the Assembly, possesses, on the whole, but a moderate share of talents; for though the Comte de Narbonne is a man of wit and a very pleasant, lively fellow, he is by no means a man of business; and though M. Bertrand de Molleville has talents, yet, according to the old proverb, ‘One swallow never makes a summer.’ Such as it is, everyone of them is convinced that the Constitution is good for nothing; and unfortunately there are many of them so indiscreet as to disclose that opinion, when at the same time they declare their determination to support and execute it, which is, in fact, the only rational mode (which now remains) of pointing out its defects. It is unnecessary to tell you that some members of the National Assembly are in the pay of England, for that you will easily suppose. Brissot de Warville is said to be one of them, and, indeed (whether from corrupt or other motives I know not), his conduct tends to injure his own country and

benefit that of their ancient foes in a very eminent degree. The situation of their finances is such that every considerate person sees the impossibility of going on in the present way, and as a change of system after so many pompous declamations is not a little dangerous among a people so wild and ungoverned, it has appeared to them that a war would furnish some plausible pretext for measures of a very decisive nature, in which state necessity will be urged in the teeth of policy, humanity, and justice. Others consider a war as the means of obtaining for the government the eventual command of a disciplined military force, which may be used to restore order; in other words, to bring back despotism, and then they expect that the King will give the nation a constitution which they have neither the wisdom to form nor the virtue to adopt for themselves.

“Others, again, suppose that in case of a war there will be such a leaning from the King towards his brother, from the Queen towards the Emperor, from the nobility (the very few) who remain, towards the mass of their brethren who have left the kingdom, that the bad success naturally to arise from the opposition of undisciplined mobs to regular armies may be easily imputed to treasonable counsels, and the people be prevailed on to banish them altogether and set up a Federal Republic. Lastly, the aristocrats, burning with the lust of vengeance, most of them poor and all of them proud, hope that, supported by foreign armies, they shall be able to return victorious, and re-establish that species of despotism most suited to their own cupidity. It happens, therefore, that the whole nation, though with different views, are desirous of war; for it is proper, in such general statements, to take in the spirit of the country, which has ever been warlike.

“I have told you long ago that the Emperor is by no means an enterprising or warlike prince. I must now, in confirmation of that, inform you that in the famous conference at Pilnitz* he was taken in by the King of Prussia, for he came prepared to higgler about the nature and extent of the succor to be given and forces to be employed; but the King cut the matter short by telling him that the difference in the extent of their respective dominions, and a variety of other circumstances, would justify him in demanding greater efforts on the part of the Emperor, but that he would meet him on the ground of perfect equality. In consequence of this the Emperor was obliged to accede, but he did so in the view and the wish to do nothing. When, therefore, the King accepted the Constitution, he chose to consider that as a reason why foreign princes should not interfere. The King of Prussia, however, gave to the King personal assurances of his good will and *brotherly* attachment, and of this offered *substantial proofs*. The King’s true interest (and he thinks so) seems to consist in preserving the peace, and leaving the Assembly to act as they may think proper, which will demonstrate the necessity of restoring in a great degree the royal authority. The faction opposed to him are very sensible of this, which forms an additional reason for driving everything to extremity, and therefore, with a view to destroy every root and fibre of ancient systems, they have imagined to court the alliance of Great Britain and of Prussia. In consequence the Bishop of Autun has been sent to this country, and, if my information be good, is authorized to propose the cession of Islands of France and Bourbon, and the Island of Tobago, as the price of an alliance against the Emperor. This has a direct tendency to break the family compact with Spain, who has long been courted by Britain; for it is evident that this country will not embark in a contest

which is to do France any good, and therefore the game of Mr. Pitt is as clear as the sun, and suits exactly his temper and disposition. He has only to receive the offers made, and send copies to Vienna and Madrid by way of supporting his negotiations, particularly with the latter. He can offer them also the guarantee of their dominions and rights against us, and by this means we should find ourselves all at once surrounded by hostile nations.

“The Minister of the Marine opposed violently in council this mission, stated the consequences, and obtained some useful restrictions. M. de Warville proposed in the Diplomatic Committee the cession of Dunkirk and Calais to England as pledges of the fidelity of France to the engagements which she might take. You will judge from this specimen of the wisdom and virtue of the faction to which he belongs, and I am sure the integrity of your heart will frown with indignant contempt when I tell you that among the chiefs of that faction are men who owe all to the personal bounty of the King.

“This mission of the Bishop d’Autun has produced something like a schism in the coalition. The party of Lameth and Barnave are strongly opposed to it. M. Delessart, who had adopted the scheme on the representation of the Bishop (with whom it originated) and his friends, abandoned it on the representation of the others, and, two days before I left Paris, express was sent to assure the Emperor that, notwithstanding appearances, they meant him no harm. In effect, they were again going to endeavor at an alliance *of the nation* with him upon a plan which was set on foot about three months ago by those who afterwards fell into the plan of an alliance with Britain. You may judge from hence how much dependence is to be placed on these new-fangled statesmen. The King and Queen are wounded to the soul by these rash measures. They have, I believe, given all needful assurance to the Emperor and the King of Spain. A confidential person has desired me to assure you, on their behalf, that they are very far from wishing to change the system of French politics and abandon their old allies, and therefore, if any advantage is taken of the present advances to Britain, that you will consider them as originating merely in the madness of the moment, and not as proceeding from *them*, or as meeting with *their* approbation, but the *contrary*.

“I shall send this letter in such way as promises the greatest safety, and I must entreat you, my dear sir, to destroy it for fear of accidents. You will feel how important it is to them that this communication be not disclosed. It is merely personal from them to you, and expressive of sentiments which can have no action until they have some authority.”

On the 6th of February Morris says in the diary: “Mr. Constable calls on me this morning, and tells me I am appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of France. Mr. Penn, where I dine, congratulates me on my appointment, but expresses his regret that it is not to this country.” How he regarded his appointment himself appears in the following letter to Robert Morris, dated February 15, 1792:

“I feel, as I ought, the honor conferred by the President in making the nomination, and, whatever may be its fate in the Senate, I shall always count the suffrage among the most flattering events of my life—as a mark of confidence from the person in the

world whose good opinion I consider as most estimable. I find that no decision was made down to the morning of the 23d of December, being, in the whole, eighteen days that it had hung by the eyelids. A mischievous consequence of the delay is that foreign powers will suppose there is a great division of sentiment, and, of course, the minister will have less weight, at least for some time, and if a bare majority should eventually approve, that circumstance also will operate in the same way. To obviate this evil so far as the other gentlemen may be concerned, I have declared here to those who have wondered at the delay that I believe the exceptions, if any, are against me. It has been reported that the exception was to making any appointment whatever. But I have declared my belief that this was not the case, for you will observe that such opinion presupposes that the President was precipitate, whereas the law passed on that subject is of long standing. On the whole, I have thought it best to make myself the scape-goat of the flock, because if disapproved of it will then appear all natural enough, and if appointed I must work through the difficulties as well as I can. They will be less important to my country the other side of the channel, and my great object is her interest.

“The mission to France must be a stormy one, let it fall on whom it may. You will have seen that every character both in and out of their country is very rudely handled by their journalists. You will observe that it was not in the nature of things to make an appointment from America which would have been unexceptionable, and to have made none would have been offensive, for the conclusion would have been that America looked with contempt at their present situation. That kingdom is split up into parties whose inveteracy of hatred is hardly conceivable, and the royalists and aristocrats consider America and the Americans as having occasioned their misfortunes. The former charge it upon us as ingratitude, seeing that it was the King who stepped forward to our relief. Should this party get the better in the struggle there are very few Americans who would (for the present) be well received. On the other hand, the republicans consider everything short of downright democracy as an abandonment of political principle in America. To stand well with all parties is impossible, but it is possible, and merely so, to stand well with the best people in all parties without greatly offending the others, and in order to do this a man must make up his mind to hear the virtuous traduced by the wicked, and to listen unruffled to calumny, folly, and even to insanity. I am in hopes, however, that things will ere long come to some more steady bearing, though the present prospect is by no means flattering or fair.”

As soon as Jefferson’s despatches and his credentials as minister reached him at London, Morris set about making purchases and arrangements for the furnishing of his official residence in the style and completeness which he deemed it necessary that a minister from the young republic to the old monarchy should assume. A coach and four horses, and all the trappings thereunto appertaining, were among his purchases, together with large supplies of silver and pipes of Malmsey and Madeira wine.

“I dine with the Russian minister, Count Woronzow,* to-day,” resumes the diary for February 19th. “After dinner the count tells me that he is persuaded that Great Britain will court the United States, in order to deprive France of the West India Islands. He says that Mr. Pitt’s force consists in finesse; that the Spanish ambassador managed

wretchedly in the course of the armament against his country, and that the Comte de Florida Blanca, though an able courtier, is a wretched minister, all which he promises to explain to me at another time. He is a sensible, well-informed man. He tells me that it is impossible that the Emperor and King of Prussia should agree; that the Cabinet of the latter power is deeply intriguing, and will, in concert with Mr. Pitt, do everything that is possible to prevent the French affairs from being settled. He speaks well of the Emperor, and, as he says, from personal acquaintance, and from observance of his administration in Milan and his conduct since the death of his brother.”

“I read Paine’s new publication to-day [February 22d], and tell him that I am really afraid he will be punished. He seems to laugh at this, and relies on the force he has in the nation. He seems to become every hour more drunk with self-conceit. It seems, however, that his work excites but little emotion, and rather raises indignation. I tell him that the disordered state of things in France works against all schemes of reformation both here and elsewhere. He declares that the riots and outrages in France are nothing at all. It is not worth while to contest such declarations. I tell him, therefore, that as I am sure he does not mean what he says, I shall not dispute it. Visit the Duchess of Gordon, who tells me that she supposes I give Paine his information about America, and speaks very slightly of our situation, as being engaged in a civil war with the Indians. I smile, and tell her that Britain is also at war with Indians, though in another hemisphere. General Murray observes that the prosperity of a nation can best be determined by the state of the funds, and that ours are very high. I confirm this observation, which silences her grace. She asks me afterwards what the Americans think of Mr. Pitt. I tell her that there can be but one opinion on that subject everywhere, viz., that he is a very able man. She says she understands that he is very high in France, which even wishes an alliance, but that cannot be, and then asks my opinion of Bishop d’Autun, who is, she is told, a very profligate fellow. I tell her he is a sensible, pleasant man, his morals not exemplary, but that matter much exaggerated.”

“Dine with the Count Woronzow *en famille* [March 6th]. He tells me that it is impossible the King of Prussia should join heartily with the Emperor. He had informed me last Sunday that the King was offered by the emigrant princes a considerable *arrondissement* on the Lower Rhine, from the Elector Palatine’s dominions, and to make that Electorate whole by the cession of Alsace. He sent immediately to the Emperor, and his messenger, Bischoffswerder, offered to join in procuring the addition of French Flanders to the Imperial Low Countries, but the Emperor replied that if he did interfere in the affairs of France it should be as a friend and not for the spoil. He tells me that the Bishop d’Autun has offered a cession of the Island of Tobago, the demolition of Cherbourg, and an extension of the treaty of commerce, if England will, in case of a war with the Emperor, preserve a strict neutrality. He received for answer that England could not take any engagement whatever respecting the affairs of France. He adds that the Bishop is not now received, because he boasted of a credit for £40,000, which was to do wonders, and because he has frequented constantly the Dissenters. He tells me that young Laborde has written a letter, which he saw, mentioning that they would try the Cabinets of London and Berlin. He says that the British Cabinet mean to establish the independence of Santo Domingo and the other French islands, wherefore the offer of

Tobago does not weigh; that they expect the demolition of Cherbourg by the sea in its present unfinished state, and, at any rate, are indifferent about it while the marine of France remains in its present condition; and as to a treaty of commerce, the want of one is now supplied by contraband, which is vastly easy. But the possession by France of the Low Countries is of the greatest moment, and not to be permitted. The Comte de Woronzow inveighed against M. de Lafayette in the strongest terms I ever heard. He said that though bred a military man, and obliged sometimes to order punishments, he never could behold an execution, his nature recoiling from the view of human misery; but yet if Lafayette and the Duke of Orleans were to be broken on the wheel at Falmouth, and he had no means of seeing it done but by going thither on foot, he would set out immediately. This is strong language.”

“This morning [March 13th] M. Jaubert breakfasted with me. He came from Paris to consult me on the part of M. de Monciel, whether he should accept a place in the ministry and which I opine is for the Foreign Affairs *comme la seule faisable*. He tells me that Narbonne has been guilty of notorious peculations, and, after having sold contracts for the army, has allowed to the contractors the depreciation of their money. He is to be turned out, and M. de Graave is among the persons talked of to replace him. Delessart will go out as the price of his duplicity, and Cahier de Gerville for impotence. Monciel has refused any place until, through M. Bertrand, he was sure that the King approved personally, and then he preferred rather the Department of the Interior, but waits for my opinion and advice. We have a good deal of conversation respecting the state of parties, etc. He tells me that the Assembly is very low, and would have been quite down but that Narbonne’s intrigues have contributed to give them a little lift, at the expense of order and good government, in order to feather his nest. He is well with Brissot and the rest of that wretched and pernicious faction. They desire to know of me what conduct is to be pursued in order to arrive at a good government. I do not choose to enter deeply into this subject for the present, because so much depends on circumstances, but say, in general, that the first step is to produce a general conviction that the present Constitution is good for nothing. He says that this is already done, and that people in general seem to think that the kingdom is ruined past redemption. I do not, however, think that opinion is even near to the needful point. I tell him that they must have for Minister of War a very determined fellow; that such a man will, like any other, work his own ruin, but he will effect the beginning of good. The Chevalier de Graave will do no good in that place; at least, I think not.”

“Visit Lord Lansdowne [March 16th]. He speaks of peculations in ministers as a thing of minor importance, although he himself detests it, and observes that even in my virtuous country it prevailed to a great extent. I assure him very seriously and very truly that he is misinformed. He says that Mr. Pitt and the King are not well together, and have not been so for a long time past. The cause is the Prince’s debts. He gives me two versions of that story, one of which is that Mr. Pitt, having been pressed by the sovereign on this subject, had declined with some offensive expressions. This wounded the father and the mother, who declares it to be the great and only object of her life to conciliate the family differences. Mr. Pitt’s friends, on the contrary, declare the whole story to be an abominable falsehood, and add that if there be any one subject more particularly offensive than another to His Majesty, it is the mention of

the Prince; that it never was a question with the King to pay those debts; that the Chancellor did indeed once say something of the kind, but he is a strange sort of man and nobody minds him.”

The Bishop of Autun’s mission to England formed the subject of a letter from Morris to Washington, dated March 17th. Referring to a former letter in which he had spoken of the measures pursued by different parties, including the mission of the Bishop of Autun, Morris continues: “As the Bishop d’Autun has now got back to Paris, it may be well to communicate the result. His reception was bad, for three reasons: First, that the Court look with horror and apprehension at the scenes acting in France, of which they consider him as a prime mover; secondly, that his reputation is offensive to persons who pique themselves on decency of manners and deportment; and, lastly, because he was so imprudent when he first arrived as to propagate the idea that he should corrupt the members of administration, and afterwards by keeping company with leading characters among the Dissenters, and other similar circumstances. He renewed the impression made before his departure from Paris, that he meant to intrigue with the discontented. His public reception, however, furnishes no clue to decide on the success of his mission, because the former might have been very bad and the latter very good. The fact, however, is that he could offer nothing worthy of their acceptance, and that what he asked was of a nature not to be granted. His offer was confined to a cession of Tobago, a demolition of the works of Cherbourg, and an extension of the commercial treaty. He asked a strict neutrality in case of a war with the Emperor. Now you will observe that no Court could prudently treat with France in her present situation, seeing that nobody can promise in her name otherwise than as godfathers and godmothers do at a christening, and how such promises are kept everybody knows. Convinced of this, the Bishop never told his errand to Lord Gower, the British ambassador at Paris, who mentioned that circumstance to me as extraordinary, but yet as so far agreeable in that he was glad not to have been called on for letters of introduction.

“Respecting Tobago, I must make a digression. It is now a long time since it was mentioned to me, in Paris, that some of the colonists of Santo Domingo had come hither to make overtures to Mr. Pitt. Since that period I learnt that the French ministry were in possession of documents to prove not only that he fomented the disturbances in France, but that he was in deep intrigues with regard to that colony. The particular proofs are not known to me, so that I cannot speak positively. Neither can I vouch for what I have learnt further on that subject within this month, but I am assured that it is Mr. Pitt’s intention to bring about, if he can, the independence of Santo Domingo. Mr. Clarkson, the great negro advocate, is mentioned to me as his agent for this business at Paris, and the conduct of a part of the Assembly in opposing succor to that island seems corroborative of such idea. This then being the case, or supposing it to be so, the offer of Tobago was too trifling to attract Mr. Pitt’s notice, even if unconnected with other circumstances. By the bye, my informant tells me also that Mr. Pitt means to coax us into the adoption of his plan respecting Santo Domingo; and I learn from another quarter that he means to offer us his mediation for a peace with the Indians. If all this be true, his game is evident. The mediation is to be with *us* a price for adopting his plans, and with the *Indian tribes* a means of constituting himself their patron and protector. It may be proper to combine all this with the late division of Canada and the

present measures for military colonization of the upper country, and, above all, with what may come from Mr. Hammond.

“I return to Santo Domingo. If such be Mr. Pitt’s scheme, although we shall not, I presume, engage in or countenance it, yet the success will be entirely for our advantage, and a mere preliminary to something of the sort which must happen to Jamaica on the first change of wind in the political world. The destruction of the port of Cherbourg is no present object with the British ministry, because they suppose it will be ruined by the elements before it can be completed, and because the French marine is, from want of discipline, an object more of contempt than apprehension. The proffered extension of the commercial treaty amounts to nothing, because at present any part of France is open to contraband commerce, and because there is little reason to believe that the stipulations in a treaty now made would be of any long duration. Thus it happens that neither of the objects offered was worthy of notice. But the neutrality required was of a most important nature. By leaving the Austrian Low Countries exposed to French invasion, it would have been a violation both of ancient and recent treaties. Nor is this all, for (as I have already had occasion to remark) the annexation of those provinces to the French monarchy would prove almost, if not altogether, fatal to Great Britain. And when we consider that they are almost in revolt already, and that it is, in fact, their interest to become one with France, there is reason to suppose that a union might have been effected in case of a war with the Emperor. So much, then, on the ground of good faith and good policy. But there is still a further cause which, as the world goes, may be equal in its operation to all others. It seems to be a moot point whether it is the British or Russian Cabinet which directs the other. Perhaps there may be a little of both, but, be all that as it may, this much is certain: that neither feels disposed to counteract the views of its ally in any open manner. Now, putting aside the personal feelings which naturally agitate the sovereign of this as well as of other kingdoms in regard to the French Revolution, it is notorious that, from the very dawn of it, agents were employed to foment a spirit of revolt in other States, particularly in Prussia. The King of Prussia therefore feels for the French Revolutionists all the enmity of a proud, passionate, and offended German prince. Add to this that the Elector of Hanover, as such, cannot wish for a change in the government of Germany. If, therefore, it had been the interest of Great Britain to establish a free constitution in France (which it certainly is not), I am perfectly convinced that this Court would never have made a single effort for the purpose.

“I stated to you, in my last, the French ministry as being extremely disjointed. It was too much so for any durable existence; besides which, the members took effectual means to precipitate each other’s ruin. M. de Narbonne wished to get into the office of Foreign Affairs. This was desirable to him, it is said, on many accounts, but particularly so because it gives command of large sums without account. Whatever may have been his motives, the following seems to have been his conduct. He stood forth the advocate of all violent measures. This would naturally have excited suspicions with thinking men, but not so with the Assembly. He associated himself to the partisans of democracy, and while, by this means, he secured himself against their clamors, he took great care of his pecuniary affairs. This, at least, is affirmed to me, but with the addition that he had the independence to pay off his debts, although it is notorious that his estate (which is in Santo Domingo) is among the many which are

laid waste. It is further asserted that, in order to quiet the clamors of contractors who had given him money and found themselves in the road to ruin, he agreed to compensate the depreciation of the assignats. In order to remove a great obstacle to his proceedings he joined in the intrigues against M. Bertrand de Molleville, and at the same time fostered the other intrigues against M. Delessart with a view of getting his place. The proofs of all these things are said to be in the King's hands. M. Delessart's conduct I have already in part communicated. I must add that afterwards, imagining that Brissot de Warville and Condorcet were omnipotent in the Assembly, he violated his engagements made with the triumvirate, and wrote some despatches conformably to the views of those two gentlemen. In consequence of this it was resolved to displace him, and they were looking out for a successor. The person applied to was actually deliberating whether he should or should not accept at the moment when Brissot brought about his impeachment and arrest. In this same moment M. de Narbonne was dismissed, and with him was to go M. de Gerville. The Chevalier de Graave succeeds M. de Narbonne. When I left Paris he was attached to the triumvirate. He does not want for understanding, but I think it almost impossible that he should succeed. M. Bertrand, against whom an address from the Assembly was at length carried, has, I find, resigned. There is something at the bottom which I cannot discover without being on the spot, but you may rely upon it he goes out with the full confidence of the King and Queen. My informations from Paris were previous to the news of the Emperor's death, which has probably occasioned the violent proceedings against poor Delessart, by removing the fears of those who (in the midst of all their big words) were confoundedly frightened. What may be the consequences of this event it is impossible to determine, or even to conjecture. Much, very much, depends on the personal character of his successor, which I am not yet acquainted with.

“It is supposed by some here that Mr. Pitt is not strong in the Cabinet, although the majority in Parliament was never more decisive, and this is said to arise from his refusing to ask money for payment of the Prince of Wales's debts, which the King (it is said) was desirous of, and which his minister declined with some offensive expressions. Mr. Pitt's friends insist, on the other hand, that the whole story is false from beginning to end. For my own part, I do not think he will be turned out, because I believe him to be a very cunning fellow, and although he has conducted foreign affairs but poorly, he manages all the little Court and Parliamentary intrigues with consummate address.”

The diary for March 25th resumes: “Take a ride in the park and dine with the Corps Diplomatique at the Count de Rœderen's. The French Assembly have pardoned the assassins of Avignon. This is dreadful. Go from hence to Madame de la Luzerne's and sit there some time. The society here, who are all aristocrats, say that not one in a hundred of the French nation is attached to the present government. *Quære*: It is certain that many priests who had taken the oath retract, so that religion seems to be embarked in the quarrel, and if at the same moment the artillery of an enemy and the thunders of the Vatican shall be directed against them, many will be staggered; if, in addition, a good constitution be proposed, it may work a wonderful and happy change, which God grant.”

“An express arrived last night,” Morris wrote to Washington on April 6th, “bringing an account of the assassination of the King of Sweden the 26th of last month at a masquerade, and thus another crown falls on the head of a young sovereign. Those who conceive the French Jacobins to be at the bottom of a great king-killing project, approach the deaths of the Emperor, the King of Sweden, and the movements making against France, from whence they infer that the King of Prussia should take care of himself, and be cautious of his *looks* and companions. Such sudden deaths in so critical a moment are extraordinary, but I do not usually believe in enormities, and cannot see how a club can pursue a path of horrors where secrecy is essential to success. The young King of Hungary has made such reply to the peremptory demands of France as to cool a little the extravagance of joy manifested on his father’s death. I am told that he is a disciple rather of his Uncle Joseph than of his father, and if this be so he will not long remain idle. The death of his Swedish Majesty will, however, make some derangement in the plan of operations. How all these things will end God only knows.”

“Dine [April 8th] with Count Woronzow. We are *comme tête-à-tête*. We have much conversation after dinner. He says that Mr. Pitt was well enough inclined to a connection with America, but Lord Sheffield’s book banished that idea. He says that for a long time he believed him to be an honest, candid man, but that he had at last detected him in seriously asserting on his own honor things absolutely false; that the British Government have spread all over Europe the most unfavorable impressions respecting America. Desires to have Hamilton’s Reports to Congress. He says the object of Lord Macartney’s* mission to China is to get some exclusive right to the trade, and that money well employed at Peking will insure success, the Chinese being the most corrupt, as well as the most cowardly wretches in existence. He says that a leading character in the administration of India affairs was heard to say, in the time when they expected to learn every hour of the fall of Seringapatam, that now was the time to turn their arms against China. He mentions the insolence of Mr. Pitt’s menaces to him (in the late armament, finding that he would not basely betray his sovereign, he had the insolence to threaten him with the loss of his place) and the meanness of his subsequent indirect apologies. He says, also, that the Marquis del Campo was so much a tool of this administration that he kept entirely secret from the French ambassador all his proceedings, and that when the Spanish Minister at the Hague published, in the *Gazette* of Leyden, some observations which had, in the course of that negotiation, been made by Del Campo, they gave him a severe rap over the knuckles and drove him to entreat of the Minister at the Hague that all further publications should be suppressed. He tells me that the removal of Florida Blanca and advancement of d’Aranda has given them very great concern. He says that Lord Elgin is certainly sent over to France for the purposes of intrigue. The conduct they have observed on the taking of the Resolute is, he says, the most impertinent imaginable; that Lord Grenville told Mr. Hertinger he must be sensible that they had a right to act as they had done by the commercial treaty, to which the latter replied only by expressing his astonishment. Mrs. Church and I go to visit Mrs. Damer. She is at work on her statue of the King, and it is a curious spectacle to see a delicate and fine woman with the chisel and mallet chipping a huge block of marble. She shows me two heads which are very fine. Lady Lyttleton had formerly condemned in strong terms her pursuit, and dwelt on the indecency of those nudities which form a

necessary appendage to every statuary's study. I thought then of a few lines on the subject, and with a very bad pen now write them.

Why so sternly condemn my pursuits, noble dame,
And say that my cheeks should be crimsoned with shame?
Can the learned or lovely object to a plan
Whose motive is taste, and whose subject is man?
A numerous offspring, all sages declare,
Are the gems the most precious a matron can wear;
And you, once so blest by connubial love,
The truth of that maxim will surely approve.
Since, then, 'tis your praise the live subject to bear,
Need *I* blush who in stone the cold copy prepare?"

"I dine with Mr. and Mrs. Church *en famille* to-day [April 24th], and sit with him after dinner. The King of Sweden is dead of his wounds, and Church tells me that on Lord Elgin's return despatches were sent off to inform the King of Hungary that, let the declaration of war come from whichever side it may, he is the aggressor, and that this Court, notwithstanding their treaty of guarantee of that country to the House of Austria, are determined, if possible, to stand neuter. Church tells me, which, indeed, I suspected before, that he was concerned with the late French ambassador in stock speculations during the Spanish armament. He says that Del Campo made regular communication of all his despatches to La Luzerne. But yet they made little or nothing by the speculation, and should have made a plum apiece if the thing had ended in the time and manner which was expected. He says that Mr. Pitt is a very great rascal, as great as his father, though not by any means so great a man; that, far from being a daring Minister, he is timid, and therefore false; that he is an unblushing promise-breaker, and will descend to any meanness in order to carry a favorite point."

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XXIV.

Morris returns to Paris. Hears rumors that he will not be received in his diplomatic capacity. Makes arrangements to fulfil the requirements of his position. News from the armies. Madame de Tarente asks of Morris advice for the queen. Interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Conversation with Moustier. Disorder in the armies. The king disarms his guard. Morris is presented to the king. Letter to Jefferson. Dines with Dumouriez. Sudden change in the ministry. *Jeu de la Reine*. Much movement in Paris. Guard marching under Morris's windows. Monciel asks his advice in this crisis. The deputation from the faubourgs fill the Château and insult the queen. Morris goes to Court. The king receives a part of the militia. Lafayette arrives at Paris. Addresses the Assembly. The queen polite to Morris.

Morris had not been many days in Paris, where he arrived on the 6th of May, before he heard rumors that there were doubts as to his being received in his diplomatic capacity.

“Madame de Flahaut,” he says [May 11th], “tells me that M. Dumouriez will not receive me as Minister from America; so, at least, she is told by a member of the Assembly. We shall see. I tell M. Brémond and M. Jaubert what M. Crèveœur has said, and they determine to pump La Sonde on the subject. Mr. Swan comes to see me, and insists that the idea of not receiving me was started by Short, but I do not believe it. He tells me that La Forêt has written to the ministry to be on their guard lest I should outwit them.”

“Dine at Madame Foucault's [May 12th], where there is a large company of aristocrats. They have letters from the different armies, which all concur in stating the discipline to be complete. As I come away Tronchan, who is a great revolutionist, expresses to me his apprehensions and asks my opinion. I tell him that it seems probable that despotism will be re-established as the necessary consequence of anarchy. I have hired a house in the Rue de la Planche at 3,500£ per annum. Go to the manufacture of Angoulême and order some porcelain. My servant Martin says he cannot serve me as maître d'hôtel unless I will take a *frotteur* under him, and wishes his account, which I make out. The Baron de Grandcour stops me as I go out to tell me the news. He says that two and a half regiments of cavalry are gone over to the enemy; that the troops are everywhere in mutiny, and Lafayette's army without necessaries of every kind, the horses dead, the soldiers sick and weary, and the officers apprehensive and discontented. Go later to the British ambassador's. They consider the affairs of France here as brought to a close almost, and that a few weeks must terminate the business. Madame de Montmorin expresses the wish that Lafayette's army may be thoroughly beaten, which she considers as necessary to destroy the hopes of the revolutionists. Madame d'Albani tells me, among other things, that her relation, Madame de Tarente, is glad I am got back. It is the gladness in that quarter which indisposes the others to receive me; at least, such is my interpretation.”

“M. de Favernay breakfasts with me [May 14th]. He asks my advice as to his future conduct, which I decline giving. He says there are a great number of stanch friends to the King in Paris, who wait the favorable moment to act. I tell him they had better be quiet, for the people will certainly oppose the measures which they espouse. Go to Madame de Tarente’s, who has foolishly been playing the aristocrat at her section. She wishes very much to have my sentiments, and I tell her that I have formed none. She wishes some kind of advice for the Queen; I tell her that in my present situation I can give none, but, further, I think their Majesties should not only march in the line of the Constitution, but should not permit any person in their presence to jest on that subject, much less seriously to blame the ministers or their measures. Dine at the Louvre. Madame de Flahaut takes me aside to tell me, as a happy thing just heard from M. de Ricé, that the old Jacobins are willing to adopt a second chamber. I tell her that it is too late, they are now of no sort of consequence; arms must decide the controversy. She is convinced at last, and thereby much distressed.

“It is true that the two and one-half regiments of cavalry have deserted, and M. de Favernay tells me that the regiment of cavalry which he belongs to have signified to him at Coblenz that they are ready to join them at the first word. He mentions another, which was in the affair of Biron and which ran away on purpose. It is whispered that the corps under Gouvion has had a dressing, and M. de Flahaut tells me that a commissary is come from the Département du Bas Rhin, to tell the Minister that there is such a scene of plunder and disorder there that he cannot answer for the supply of the army.”

“My interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs [May 15th] is very short. I tell him that I have a small favor to ask of the King, which is that he will receive me without a sword, because of my wooden leg. He says there will be no difficulty as to that matter, and adds that I am already acquainted with the King. I reply that I never saw His Majesty but in public, nor ever exchanged a word with him in my life, although some of their gazettes have made of me one of his ministers, and that I am persuaded that he would not know me if he should see me. Upon this he says that, since I have mentioned it, he will acknowledge that such is the general idea. I tell him that I am naturally frank and open, and therefore do not hesitate to say that in the time of the Constituent Assembly I endeavored, being then a private individual and prompted by my regard for this nation, to effect certain changes in the Constitution which appeared to me essential to its existence; that I was not successful, and being at present a public man, I consider it as my duty not to meddle with their affairs. I ask him then when I shall wait on him to be presented, and he says he will let me know, but he thinks the sooner it is done the better.”

It was not with any feeling of pleasure or satisfaction that Morris made preparation to fulfil the duties imposed upon him by his government, as may be gathered from a letter written at this time to his friend Carmichael at Madrid, in which he mentions his appointment as “Minister Plenipotentiary being unexpected, and it must for some time to come be unpleasant.”

A crisis in the history of France was at hand. The plans for a European coalition against the Revolution, and the invitation to foreign powers to co-operate in restoring

a sound government to France, which had been formulated at Pilnitz in August, 1791, irritated the Constitutional Royalists, who availed themselves of the opportunity to raise a war cry, with the hope of increasing the strength of the throne. The Jacobins hoped for the destruction of the monarchy in a great national struggle, while both parties united in demanding the dispersion of the army formed on the Rhine by the emigrant princes. Other points at issue also tended to precipitate the impending crisis, and in April, 1792, the Assembly declared war against Austria, and thus commenced the tremendous struggle in which sooner or later nearly every country in Europe was to take part, and which was destined to last for twenty-three years.

Morris very forcibly expressed his opinion of this crisis in national affairs when, writing to Carmichael on May 14th, he said, "France is on the high-road to despotism. They have made the common mistake that to enjoy liberty it is necessary only to demolish authority, and the common consequence results, viz., that the most ardent advocates for the Revolution begin now to wish and pray, and even cry out, for the establishment of despotic power as the only means of securing the lives and properties of the people. This is terrible. The war in which they are engaged furnishes a dreary prospect; there seems to be but one ground to hope for success, which is, that improbable things are those which usually happen."

"Visit M. de Moustier [May 17th]. His sister, Madame de Bréhan, tells me that by taking away his appointments they have reduced him to 2,000£ per annum, in consequence of which he has turned off his household. It is said that the Prussian troops move very slowly, and will not be at Coblenz before the 1st of July. M. de Moustier calculates on a secure co-operation of Prussia, and states at 160,000 men the combined army. He says, further, that the Prince of Condé has a corps of 7,000 cavalry which is excellent. This evening I have a long conversation with M. de St. Croix, who says he does not believe the foreign powers will attempt Paris, but confine their efforts to Alsace and Lorraine. According to him, the army will be very great. He calculates the Austrian troops now in the Low Countries at 60,000, and the Prussians in that neighborhood at 20,000. He states the Prussian army in March at 36,000, and the troops of Hesse and Brunswick at 14,000. He supposes in the Brisgau, with those now near that destination, 20,000, and states the contingent of the Empire, which ought to be 50,000, at 30,000. Thus he says there is an army of 200,000 men, without counting the second line of Austrian troops or the French emigrants, which last may amount to 20,000 men."

"I hear nothing [May 20th] from M. Dumouriez,* although yesterday I wrote him a note enclosing a copy of my credence and asking when I am to be presented. Look at my horses, which have just arrived from England, and then go to M. de Montmorin's, where I dine. The Comte de Goltz comes in, who is to leave this city in a few days with M. Bloomendorf, the Imperial Chargé d'Affaires, and others of the Corps Diplomatique. He says the Prussian troops will be all arrived by the middle of June. Go from thence to the British ambassador's, where we learn that the good news from India was fabricated in the Alley. We learn, also, that the Assembly has accused the Juge de Paix, who has in the course of his duty brought forward some of the members. To-day Roubit the tailor brings me livery lace to look at, and, as he is an officer in the Garde Nationale, he talks politics. He says the *garde* is *très montée*. He speaks of the

present administration as a set of scoundrels and the Jacobin Club as being the most abominable tyranny. The *ancien régime*, so much complained of, never, he says, affected him or others in his line of life, but the present system renders the whole community miserable either by real injury or by the constant apprehension of evil.”

“The Assembly have decreed a permanent session,” says the diary for May 28th, “and, it is thought, will dismiss the King’s life guard and overturn the Constitution. I think they are actuated more by fear than by any regular plan or principle. The officers of the Northern Army have, it is said, all resigned and everything seems to be fallen into confusion. M. de Favernay tells me that Luckner has written to the Minister of War that the disorder is so great in his army that, joined to the absolute want of necessaries, he thinks it impossible to do anything.”

“M. Brémond and M. Monciel call on me this morning [June 1st] and tell me that M. Dumouriez, in order to show his sincerity, read in the Council a plan for overturning the Jacobins, but was outvoted. He has since promised to turn out Clavière and Servan. This latter is to be replaced by M. —, a Jacobin. They are on the lookout for a Minister of Contributions, and they think M. Semonville is to be the successor of Dumouriez. I urge Monciel to put himself in that place. They are to let me know tomorrow which train they are in. They are to forward the advice not to reinstate the King’s guard, according to the plan which I gave them. The Justices of the Peace are to pursue the plaint of MM. de Montmorin and Bertrand. I hear this evening that the King’s guard were disarmed this day by His Majesty’s own orders.”

“M. Spardow breakfasts with me [June 3d], and we go together to the Château of the Tuileries. I am presented to the King, who, on receiving my letter of credence, says, ‘C’est de la part des États-Unis,’ and his tone of voice and his embarrassment mark well the febleness of his disposition. I reply, ‘Oui, Sire, et ils m’ont chargé de témoigner à Votre Majesté leur attachement pour elle, et pour la nation française.’ I am afterwards presented to the Queen, who shows me her son, and says, ‘Il n’est pas encore grand.’ I reply, ‘J’espère, madame, qu’il sera *bien* grand, et *véritablement* grand.’ ‘Nous y travaillons, monsieur.’ I then go to mass. There has been a *fête civique* this day, in honor of the Mayor d’Estamps, massacred by a mob in doing his duty. Visit M. Dumouriez, where I dine. The society is noisy and in bad style, the dinner is still worse. I converse with M. illigible, and give him reasons why they should repeal the decrees respecting our commerce. He says he is fully in opinion with me, but nothing can be done till they have brought the Assembly into greater consistence. I observe that Dumouriez is anxious to converse. Give him the opportunity, and begin by delivering the letter from the President of the United States to the King on his acceptance of the Constitution. He says that he cannot attend to the affairs of the United States until after his return from the frontier. He says that if the negotiators in England have made any considerable offers since he came into the administration it is without authority. He is against all treaties other than those of commerce. He thinks there is no danger to the Constitution at present, that it will triumph over every obstacle, and must amend itself. I think he cannot believe one-half of what he says.”

“This morning [June 10th] I pay my visits to the Corps Diplomatique, and go to Court. The King seems less afflicted. Dine and pass the evening at the Louvre. Tell Vicq d’Azyr that the King and Queen must persuade themselves that they are out of danger. He asks me if that is my opinion. I assure him that it is, and that the present troubles are but coruscations which succeed a storm.”

On June 10th Morris commenced a series of letters to Jefferson, then Secretary of State of the United States, in which he kept him informed of all events as they occurred. These letters were forwarded as opportunities presented themselves; but for obvious reasons he refrained from speaking of persons in Paris. That of June 10th is as follows:

“Thomas Jefferson, esq., Secretary of State.

“Sir: In my interview with M. Dumouriez on the 15th of May, he told me that he thought it was best I should be presented to the King immediately, but yet my first audience did not take place until the 3d of this month. He apologized for this delay as proceeding from the state of public affairs, which kept him continually occupied and agitated. I will not trouble you with repeating what passed at my reception by the King and Queen. On the next day I dined with M. Dumouriez, and delivered the letter from the President to the King on his acceptance of the Constitution, of which letter I had previously made a translation, to avoid mistakes of their agents, which are not uncommon. By the bye, several members of the Corps Diplomatique have spoken to me on the subject of this letter, which has given them a high idea of the President’s wisdom. I took occasion, according to your instructions, to mention the obnoxious act of the late Assembly both to M. Dumouriez and to M. Boncarère, his confidential secretary. The latter told me that he coincided with me in opinion fully on that subject, but that nothing could be done till they brought the Assembly into more consistency; that they could, indeed, command a majority, but that they could not bring that majority into a support of other measures than those of the moment; that (however) we might digest the business and put it in train. M. Dumouriez told me that his system of politics was extremely simple; that a power so great as France stood in no need of alliances, and therefore he was against all treaties other than those of commerce. You are already informed, I suppose, of the reasons which led to a declaration of war against the King of Hungary, and you know that the hope of an insurrection in the Austrian Flanders was among those reasons. Indeed, the intention to excite it, and the efforts made to that effect, have (for the first time, I believe, in modern days) been publicly avowed. This hope has hitherto proven fallacious, and, indeed, as far as can be judged from the temper and character of the Flemish people, and from the information I have been able to collect, it seems to be the better opinion that, however they may feel an aversion to the Austrian Government, they are still less disposed to that of France. There is therefore no probability of any capital diversion in that quarter, and the chance of it is daily decreasing from two natural causes: first, that the French troops are extremely undisciplined, and, secondly, that the force of their enemies will soon receive very considerable additions. Having combined all the intelligence that can be relied on, it results that about the middle of next month the allied armies will be one hundred and eighty thousand strong, exclusive of the French emigrants. It is doubtful whether these last will be permitted to act, and for the

following reasons: First, it is not to be supposed that twenty thousand gentlemen volunteers, serving at their own expense, can be well disciplined; consequently, it is to be apprehended that they will be more injurious to their friends than to their enemies. Secondly, it is next to impossible that in such a number, all irritated by injuries, either real or supposed, there will not be some who will act more from motives of private vengeance than regard to public good, and it is certain that acts of cruelty and injustice will rather tend to prolong than terminate the contest; at least, to give it that termination which they wish for. Thirdly, it is notorious that the great mass of the French nation is less solicitous to preserve the present order of things than to prevent the return of the ancient oppressions, and, of course, would more readily submit to a pure despotism than to that kind of monarchy whose only limits were found in those noble, legal, and clerical corps by which the people were alternately oppressed and insulted; and this observation leads naturally to the object of the combined powers, which I conceive to be the establishment of a military government on the ruins of that anarchic system which now prevails, and in the continuance of which no power but England has any interest. The others, seeing that without a counterpoise in the marine scale, Britain must possess the empire of the ocean (which, in the present commercial state of the world, is a kind of universal empire), cannot but wish to re-establish this kingdom.

“But a great question occurs. What kind of government shall be established? The emigrants hope for their darling aristocracy; but it can hardly be supposed that kings will exert themselves to raise abroad what they labor incessantly to destroy at home, and more especially as the French Revolution having been begun by the nobles, the example will be so much the more striking if they become the victims of it. But if the allied monarchs have an interest in destroying the aristocracy, they have a much stronger and more evident interest in preventing a free and well-poised system from being adopted. Such system must inevitably extend itself, and force the neighboring powers to relax from their tyranny. If the Court of Berlin could have been insensible to this truth, in which it is so deeply interested, the zealous reformers here would not have permitted the Prussian ministers to slumber over their danger. The desire to propagate and make converts to their opinions has led them so far that the quarrel, which might have been only political, has become personal, and I have good reason to believe, notwithstanding the profound secrecy which is preserved respecting the designs of the grand alliance, that it is in contemplation to put all power into the hands of the King. Things have been prepared for that event by the inconsiderate partisans of liberty. In their eagerness to abolish ancient institutions, they forgot that a *monarchy* without intermediate ranks is but another name for anarchy or despotism. The first, unhappily, exists to a degree scarcely to be paralleled; and such is the horror and apprehension which licentious societies have universally inspired, that there is some reason to believe the great mass of French population would consider even despotism as a blessing, if accompanied with security to person and property such as is experienced under the worst governments in Europe. Another great means of establishing despotism here is to be found in that national bankruptcy which seems to be inevitable. The expense of the last month exceeded the income by about ten millions of dollars. This expense continues to increase, and the revenue to diminish. The estate of the clergy is consumed, and the debt is as great as at the opening of the States-General. The current expense has, by taking away the property of the church,

been increased about a sixth. The dilapidation in every department is unexampled, and they have, to crown all, an increasing paper money, which already amounts to above three hundred millions of dollars. From such facts it is impossible not to draw the most sinister presages. The country-people have hitherto been actuated, in a great measure, by the hope of gain. The abolition of tithes, of feudal rights, and burdensome taxes was so pleasant that a cold examination of consequences would not be admitted, still less an inquiry into the strict measure of justice. Next to the abolition came on those philosophical and mathematical arrangements of the fisc, which are very beautiful and satisfactory, and to which there lies but one objection of any consequence, which is that they are in-executable. Now I have frequently observed that, when men are brought to abandon the paths of justice, it is not easy to arrest their progress at any particular point, and therefore, as the whole kingdom (Paris excepted) is interested in the non-payment of taxes, the question will be decided without much difficulty if once the legislature gets out of this city. They are already preparing for a march, and it is intended to take the King with them, to which effect a decree has already passed to disband his life guard, and another to collect twenty thousand men to the northward of this city. An opposition will be made by the Parisian militia to the latter decree, because they begin to perceive the object; and as it seems to be a pretty general opinion among them that no capital opposition will be made to the Austrian and Prussian troops, they consider the person of Louis ?? as forming the most solid alliance they have, to protect them from plunder and outrage. This decree may therefore occasion either a schism between the militia and the Assembly, or among the inhabitants of Paris, or both. Already there exists a serious breach between the members of the present administration, and part of them must go out. I have the best reason to believe that the whole will be changed before many weeks, and some of them within a few days. There exists, also, a mortal enmity between different parties in the Assembly. At the head of the Jacobin faction is the deputation from Bordeaux, and that city is (as you know) particularly indisposed to our commercial interests. It is this case of universal hostility, or rather confusion, to which Dumouriez alluded when he apologized for delaying my audience. And it was this, also, which his confidant had in view when he mentioned the necessity of waiting for a greater consistency in the legislature before anything could be done. M. Dumouriez told me that he was perfectly easy in respect to Prussia, whose only object was to get the House of Austria fairly engaged, and then to take advantage of its embarrassments. I told him that he must, of course, be well informed on that subject, but that since the departure of the Prussian minister without taking leave, I could not but suppose the intentions of that court were more serious than he imagined. He gave me many reasons for his opinion, which I should have supposed to be only an ostensible one if his intimates had not on another occasion quoted it to me, and if I did not know the principal channel through which he derives his intelligence.

“A late circumstance will tend rather to establish than remove this opinion—I mean the attack on Poland by the Empress of Russia, to overturn the new constitution. Whether this movement be in concert with the Austrian and Prussian Cabinets, or not, is doubtful. I cannot as yet make up any tolerable judgment on the subject, but I believe that in either case those cabinets will pursue their object in regard to this country. The details I have entered into, and the information which you will collect from the public prints, will show that in the present moment it will be very difficult to

excite attention to other objects than those by which they are so strongly agitated. The best picture I can give of the French nation is that of cattle before a thunder-storm. And as to the government, every member of it is engaged in the defence of himself or the attack of his neighbor. I shall, notwithstanding, pursue the objects which you recommend. The obstacles to success form but incitements to the attempt. It must, however, be made with caution, because any sudden change of affairs may bring forward persons who would oppose a measure merely because their predecessors had approved of it. You desired me, among other things, to send you the *Moniteur*, but the editor of that paper does not give so faithful a report of what passes in the Assembly as you will find in the *Logographe*. If there be any one of the gazetteers who is impartial, it is the author, or, rather, transcriber of this.

“I send you, of course, the *Gazette* of France, which says, you know, whatever the ministry order it to say. The *Patriote Français*, written by M. Brissot, will give you the republican side of the question, as the *Gazette Universelle* does that of the kind of monarchy proposed by the Constitution. The paper called the *Indicateur* is written by a party who wish a more vigorous executive, although (strange to tell) this party consists of the persons who in the beginning of the late Assembly did everything to bring the kingdom into the situation now experienced. The journal of the Jacobins will give you what passes in that society. The *Gazette* of Leyden, which I transmit according to your request, will convey a kind of digest of all these different sentiments and opinions. Thus, sir, if you have the patience to look over these several papers, you will have a clear view not only of what is done, but of what is intended.”

“I dine to-day [June 14th—to resume the diary] with Dumouriez. He is more at his ease than usual, having opened himself to the King and Queen and given them assurances of his attachment; this Madame de Flahaut has learned through St. Foi. I say many things to him *avecconnaissance de cause*, which the other members of the Corps Diplomatique cannot comprehend, and which they are therefore surprised at. At Court I observe that the King and Queen were more at ease than usual. The change of ministry has gone off very quietly, notwithstanding the noise of the moment. M. de Montmorin tells me that Dumouriez and Brissot had a conversation and were about to unite together. In consequence, the decrees for twenty thousand men and for transportation of the priests were to be sanctioned, and M. de Clavière was to be brought back into the administration. The King refused to sanction these obnoxious, unconstitutional decrees, and thereupon Dumouriez resigned.”

“This morning [June 17th] M. Monciel calls, and tells me that the Lameth party have pressed him hard to accept the place of Minister of the Interior. I advise him to take nothing but the office of Foreign Affairs, and he quits me with that intention, but says they have offered him the Interior as a step towards the other office. Dress and go to Court; we have here a list of ministers in which Monciel stands for the Interior. The Assembly have received and referred a petition of the Jacobin Society for suspending the King.”

The sudden change in the ministry was a surprise to Morris, at least as to the totality. Dumouriez, who had dismissed Servan, Roland, and Clavière, had filled the places with his particular friends but failed to prepare himself beforehand for all

consequences. In the second of the series of letters to Jefferson, dated June 17th, Morris says: “The King, much to Dumouriez’s surprise, accepted his resignation, and, in consequence, all his newly appointed friends go out with him. The Jacobins were busy all last night to excite a tumult in the city, but the precautions taken to prevent it have as yet proved successful, and I am told that M. Luckner and M. de Lafayette still persist in their determination not to risk an action. If so, the present state of uncertainty may continue some time. If they fight and gain a victory, it is not improbable that we may witness some outrages of the most flagitious kind. If, on the contrary, there is any capital defeat, the Jacobin faction will be a little moderated. On the whole, sir, we stand on a vast volcano. We feel it tremble, we hear it roar, but how and when and where it will burst, and who may be destroyed by its eruptions, it is beyond the ken of mortal foresight to discover. This new ministry will be purged (at any rate) of some of its members, but one great doubt exists—whether it will not be driven off by the Jacobin faction. It is in contemplation to make a serious effort against that faction in favor of the Constitution, and M. de Lafayette will begin the attack. I own to you that I am not sanguine as to the success. Very much is to be done, and there is very little time to do it, for the foreign enemy will soon be greatly superior in number, and it seems now to be ascertained that Alsace and Lorraine are disposed to join the invaders. Thus while a great part of the nation is desirous of overturning the present government in order to restore the ancient form, and while another part, still more dangerous from position and numbers, are desirous of introducing the form of a federal republic, the moderate men, attacked on all sides, have to contend alone against an immense force. I cannot go on with the picture, for my heart bleeds when I reflect that the finest opportunity which ever presented itself for establishing the rights of mankind throughout the civilized world is perhaps lost, and forever.”

“Go with Lord Gower to the *Jeu de la Reine*,” says the diary for June 19th, “which is a mighty stupid kind of amusement to all parties. Madame de Staël had invited me to supper, and is not at home. This is some mistake, but it is fortunate, because it gives me room to be off another time. Brémond tells me that Monciel has accepted. M. de Lafayette’s letter to the Assembly has been read, and has produced some little effect. Brémond says that Monciel will call on me early to-morrow. He has had a long conversation with the King and is well pleased with him. There is to be a sort of riot to-morrow about fixing a May-pole before the Château.”

“There is a great movement in Paris, and the guard is paraded [June 20th]. While I am writing, the mob and the National Guards are marching and countermarching under my windows. I don’t think they will come to blows. Dine with the Baron de Blome; after dinner we learn that the deputation of the Faubourgs has forced the unresisting guard, filled the Château, and grossly insulted the King and Queen. His Majesty has put on the *bonnet rouge*, but he persists in refusing to sanction the decrees. ‘This is neither the form in which it ought to be demanded of me, nor the moment to obtain it,’ he calmly told the surging crowd of angry people who pressed upon him, almost to the point of suffocation. Spend this evening at the Louvre. The Constitution has this day, I think, given its last groan.”

“Early this morning [June 21st] M. Monciel and M. Brémond call on me. The former asks my advice in this critical state of affairs. I recommend the suspension of M. Pétion and the prosecution of the ringleaders of yesterday’s tumult. He leaves me. After breakfast Brémond calls again, and shows me a letter from the Victualling Department, by which it seems that the resources of Paris for butcher’s meat will be soon curtailed very much. Go to Court. Mr. Swan came in just as I went out, and told me that the National Guards are outrageous about yesterday’s business. The King behaved perfectly well yesterday. This morning a M. Sergans, one of the municipality, is kicked and cuffed by the Garde Nationale in the court of the Château for his vile conduct of yesterday. M. Pétion also is received with very contumelious language. Thus the riot turns out differently from what its authors expected. Visit, after dinner, at M. de Montmorin’s. He takes the merit of what is done and doing, ‘for,’ says he, ‘Dupont called on me and went from my house to see Monciel,’ etc. Now Brémond told me that he found Dupont fast asleep, and made him get up and go to Monciel’s after they left me this morning. After dinner we walk in the garden, he, Malouet, and Bertrand meditating on the state of things. In order to see what stuff they are made of, I tell them what measures would put an end to all troubles, but those measures are deep and dangerous, and when we go into M. de Montmorin’s closet he sickens.”

“Brémond calls this morning [June 24th], and tells me his conversation with Servan, the late Minister of War, who is about to take command in the South of France. He expects that a great republic will be established there, and invites Brémond to manage its finances. Brémond expects by degrees to become master of their secrets. Digest an answer to the Assembly for Monciel. Their order is captious, and if they do not blush at the inconsistency of their conduct they will push the ministers hard. Go to Court. The King receives this day a part of the militia. The Dauphin is in the uniform of the Garde Nationale. The King has received an offer of assistance from Picardy. Give Brémond some hints, and he writes under my dictation a plan to be given by the King to the Assembly, and does not finish till after midnight.”

“This morning [June 26th] Brémond calls, and tells me that Monciel will give the note prepared last night to the King this morning. My tailor, who is a captain in the militia, tells me that things go very badly; that the militia is much divided in opinion. I go to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and mention to him several things which I had to communicate. I am to make notes thereof. While I am here Monciel comes in, but we do not know each other.”

“M. de Lafayette is arrived [June 28th], Monciel comes to tell me, and is to go this morning to the Assembly. The King, on receiving the project prepared for him, said it would be very good if they could count on the Garde Nationale.* I tell him that Lafayette’s visit can produce nothing, and therefore he must exert himself to bring forward the Picards. He thinks Lafayette may be rendered instrumental to the sortie of the King from Paris, and he counts on the Swiss. This latter part of the plan is most reasonable. Dress and go to Court, but find that the reception of the Corps Diplomatique is postponed till tomorrow. Dine at the British ambassador’s, where I meet Madame de Staël. She gives us an account of M. de Lafayette’s reception and

address to the Assembly. She is not satisfied, but says that this may be owing to her fondness for eloquence.”

“At Court to-day [June 29th] Madame Elizabeth and the Queen refer to the mistake I made yesterday in coming to Court, when the Corps Diplomatique were not received. I tell the latter that it was the fault of the post, for so Sequeville told me, and the remark seems directed against him and Lalive. Lafayette speaks to me at Court on the *ton* of ancient familiarity. I tell him I should be glad to see him for a few minutes. He says he is going out of town this evening, but gives me rendezvous at M. de Montmorin’s. I tell him that he must return soon to his army or go to Orleans, and that he must determine to fight for a good constitution or for that wretched piece of paper which bears the name; that in six weeks it will be too late. He asks what I mean by a good constitution; whether it is an aristocratic one. I tell him yes, and that I presume he has lived long enough in the present style to see that a popular government is good for nothing in France. He says he wishes the American Constitution, but an hereditary executive. I tell him that in such case the monarch will be too strong, and must be checked by an hereditary senate. He says it goes hard with him to give up that point. Here ends our colloquy. Return home. Dictate to Brémond a further counsel to be given by Monciel to the King. The principal object is to get a decision.”

“The King has neither plans, money, nor means, Brémond and Monciel tell me [July 2d], and the Lameth faction are all as naked as he. Monciel says he is afraid of falling into the hands of the constitutionalists. ‘The French,’ says Monciel, ‘are, I am afraid, too rotten for a free government.’ I tell him that the experiment may nevertheless be tried, and despotism still remains as a last shift. Brémond stays till after twelve o’clock, and my time is consumed for nothing.”

“Brémond gives me an account of what is doing [July 6th]. I suggest to him a decree to be adopted respecting the foreign ministers. Sup at the Louvre. Danton has said to-day publicly, *à propos* of the intrigues of the Court, that they would get rid of the whole the 14th. The different parts of the Assembly are united, and all is love and kindness [July 7th]. This arises from fear among the Republicans. Dine with M. de Montmorin, and visit after dinner Lady Sutherland at the Louvre. I see Vicq d’Azyr, and tell him I had prepared a letter for his mistress, but I will not send it. He urges me, but I refuse. The King has been to the Assembly, which I disapprove of.”

“Brémond tells me this morning [July 8th] that Monciel intends to resign. He opposed in council what was done yesterday, and spoke privately both to the King and Queen, but without effect. Go to Court. Her Majesty is in good spirits, and very affable. I am not pleased, however, with her conduct.”

“Spend the evening [July 9th] at Madame d’Albani’s. The Venetian ambassador, who had expressed great hopes and expectations yesterday from the reconciliation scene, is quite done over to-day. Brissot has pronounced a fiery discourse against the King. Tronchin is heartily sick of the Revolution.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XXV.

Condition of Europe in July, 1792. Letter to Jefferson. Morris opens his house. Tells Montmorin that the king should leave Paris. Morris prepares *mémoires* for the king. Paris terrified by riots. The king and queen distressed and in great apprehension. They expect to be murdered at the Château. Morris goes to Court. Very hot weather. Great agitation in Paris. Musketry ushers in August 10th. The Château undefended is carried and the Swiss guards murdered. The king and queen are in the National Assembly. Morris's house filled with frightened people. The ambassadors leave Paris. Morris stays at his post. He tells Clavière that he has no powers to treat with the new government. Morris's house searched. Murders continue. Letter to Jefferson describing the Revolution.

Early in July the Ministers reported to the Assembly the disposition of the powers. Russia had acceded to the Treaty of Pilnitz and was at the moment treating with Esterhazy and Nassau; the Pope was preparing his thunderbolts; England, Denmark, and Venice were neutral; Spain seemed willing to adhere to the family compact; France was at war with the Court of Turin. The Assembly solemnly pronounced the country in danger. Cannon were fired. The National Guards put themselves in motion, and the enrolment of volunteers, to the number of fifteen thousand in one day, was rapidly pushed forward. On the 7th of July the members of the Assembly swore an oath of everlasting fraternity; the most inveterate enemies, clasped in each other's arms, annihilated all distinctions. By the evening, however, of this auspicious day, all reconciliations were forgotten in the proceedings taken against Pétion for his action on the 20th of June, and party feeling ran high.

Morris, in his fourth letter to Jefferson, written on the 10th of July, speaks as follows of the action of the Assembly on the 7th: "On Saturday, the 7th, a farce was acted in the Assembly, in which the principal performers played well their parts, the King was duped according to custom, and things are verging fast to the catastrophe of the play. For some weeks the adverse party, I mean the Court and Jacobins, have been laboring each to cast on the other the odium of violating entirely the Constitution and commencing the civil war. The party which calls itself independent and which, in fact, is the fearful party, begs hard for peace and seizes eagerly whatever bears the appearance or the name. It was to catch these gudgeons that the scene of Saturday was exhibited. The King and Queen, believing that the actors were in earnest, and knowing that their lives had been at stake, were overjoyed, and their timid counsellors, trembling under the tyrannous powers of the Assembly, seized with eagerness the bait of reconciliation which had been thrown out without any hope that they would swallow it. One of them, whom I have already mentioned to you as a very worthy man, saw through the thin veil of deception, and opposed the opinion of the others, but in vain. Events, in justifying him, have fixed his predominance. This day the King will commence a new career, and if he goes *through* I think he will succeed. I have every reason to believe that this letter will go safely, but yet I cannot justify saying more on the subject, because otherwise the confidence reposed in me might, in the course of events, prove fatal to my informant."

“The Ministers have all resigned,” the diary records, July 11th. “Brémond tells me that their Majesties flashed in the pan, which was the occasion of the resignation of the ministry. This I expected. He says they have reproached Monciel, who retorted smartly. On the ground of these reproaches we prepare heads of a discourse for Monciel, in the view, if their Majesties come round, to strike a still more important stroke. I think there is a want of mettle which will ever prevent them from being truly royal.

“The present intention of the King is to secure the liberty of France. I doubt whether he will be sufficiently master of his own party to execute such purpose; whether he will live through the storm is uncertain. It will blow hard. The exterior enemy hovers over his prey and only seems to wait the moment which he has fixed to himself for his own stroke. New parties to the Grand Alliance daily show themselves. The Palatinate has declared. Holland seems on the point of adhering, and doubts in regard to England begin to appear. The force which France can oppose to her numerous assailants does not exceed one hundred and eighty thousand undisciplined men, some of whom wait but the opportunity to desert. Against her are collected two hundred and fifty thousand of the best troops in Europe, under the command of the ablest general in this hemisphere. The intention was not to enter before the harvest, in order that subsistence might be easily procured. Whether this plan will be changed in consequence of what is like to happen here, I cannot say. I rather think it will. I understand that the manifesto* which precedes attack will disavow the Constitution, and claim for the King (what it calls) his *rights*, for the clergy its *possessions*; that this city will be rendered responsible for the royal family; that the Garde Nationale will be considered as armed peasants, meddling with business not their own, and therefore not under the protection of the laws of war. The allied monarchs are to declare themselves in arms, not against France but against the *révoltés*. It will be easily seen that these broad terms will mean whatever power may choose to explain them to.”

“I go to Court to-day [July 12th]; the countenances of their Majesties are a little down. Brémond tells me that Pellin blames Monciel for precipitation, and says that things may yet be arranged. Monciel is to have an interview with the King and Queen this morning. Go to Lady Sutherland’s, and find her alone. We talk of love and love’s despot, till an old man comes in to give the history of his gout. I leave her in this society, so as to make a relief of his ennui.”

By the 12th of July Morris’s house, No. 488 Rue de la Planche, Faubourg St. Germain, was ready for occupation, and, to judge from the allusions he makes to furniture, porcelain, and hangings, to his garden, and the general arrangement of the house, it must have been eminently fitted for the entertaining and lavish hospitality which characterized it. Nothing had been forgotten—certainly not the wine-cellar, which seemed, in its completeness, not to disgrace the rest of the establishment, with a “tun” of sauterne, and “a ‘tun’ of the best claret, not the wine prepared for English consumption,” to say nothing of pipes of Madeira and port. A series of dinner parties began on the 17th, when, he says:

“M. and Madame de Montmorin and Madame de Beaumont, Lord Gower and Lady Sutherland, and Huskisson, secretary to Lord Gower, the Venetian Ambassador, and

Spanish Chargé d’Affaires dine with me. In the evening M. de Montmorin takes me into the garden to communicate the situation of things and ask my opinion. I tell him that I think the King should quit Paris. He thinks otherwise, and fosters a thousand empty hopes and vain expectations.”

“This morning [July 18th] M. Brémond does not come, and his friend Monciel is fairly out of the administration. A message from Paul Jones that he is dying. I go thither, and make his will, which the Frenchmen will not witness. Send for a notary, and leave him struggling with his enemy between four and five. Dine *en famille* with Lord Gower and Lady Sutherland. Go to the Louvre, and take Madame de Flahaut and Vicq d’Azyr to Jones’s lodgings—but he is dead, not yet cold. The people of the house ask me if they must put a *scellé* on his papers. I answer in the affirmative.”

“This morning [July 20th] Brémond calls, and tells me that in consequence of the *mémoire* which he made up from my hints, and which Monciel presented to the King, a conversation has taken place between him, M. de Montmorin, and M. de Bertrand. He gives me the heads of the manifesto which is to appear, and desires to know what step the King is to take in consequence of it. He tells me that Mallet du Pin is sent by Bertrand to be the secretary of the Duke of Brunswick. I have a large company to dinner.”

“The *Fédérés* begin to insult the Assembly [July 22d]. Monciel will be with me tomorrow, Brémond tells me. Dress and go to Court. There are fresh accounts of murders and assassinations from the South of France.”

“Monciel brings me the King’s money [July 24th] at His Majesty’s request, who tells him at the same time that I have always given him good advice and he has the greatest confidence in me. We consider what is to be done in case of a suspension. Monciel is to dine with me.”

For obvious reasons, Morris never does more than intimate that he was assisting to form a plan for the king’s escape. Events moved rapidly towards the climax after which no scheme for the king’s safety could be of any use. But that a plan was matured there is every reason for believing, from the following letter found amongst Morris’s papers, in his own handwriting, but undated, unsigned, and only addressed to “Son Altesse Royale.” There is also every reason to believe that this letter was written at Vienna in December, 1796, for on Tuesday, the 20th, Morris says in his diary: “This morning I go to Court for the purpose of paying my respects to the Princess of France, and in the hope that an opportunity would offer of saying a word of business which concerns her, but find that she has a large circle. I am therefore led to mention the subject concisely to the Bishop of Nancy, who undertakes to open the affair to the *grande maîtresse*, through whom it may pass to her Royal Highness.” A week later, when about to leave Vienna, Morris again saw the Bishop of Nancy. “He tells me,” he says, “that the Princess has given no private audience to anyone since her arrival, and found it proper to refuse it even to Count Fersen, who had been so long and so intimately associated with the Queen. Her Royal Highness prays therefore that I will send her a note in writing, and, if afterwards a few words should be necessary, I can take leave of her, and then, without breaking in on the established rule, such short

conversation can take place. I tell him I shall write as much as my time will admit, but as for an audience of leave, I consider that as improper, because I shall not take leave of the Imperial family; but that her Royal Highness may decide as she thinks proper.”

There is no mention that the leave-taking ever took place, but the following letter undoubtedly contains that which Mr. Morris wished to communicate to the Princess:

“Son Altesse Royale recevra ci-jointe la copie du seul compte que les circonstances aient permis de tenir. Il lui en faut une explication. M. M—, qui s’était permis quelquefois de faire passer ses idées sur les affaires publiques à Leurs Majestés, confia aux soins de M. le Comte de Montmorin, lorsqu’il s’agissait d’accepter l’acte fatal qu’on nommait la Constitution française, un mémoire en anglais accompagné d’un projet de discours en français. Le premier, qui était le plus essentiel, en ce qu’il devait servir de base à l’autre, ne fut présenté au roi qu’après son acceptation. Sa Majesté désirait en avoir une traduction, et M. de Montmorin pria l’auteur de s’en charger. Il le fit en effet, mais il l’envoya directement au roi, en s’excusant des expressions qui devraient paraître trop fortes. Sa Majesté avait conçu des idées semblables à celles énoncées dans le projet de discours, détaillées et appuyées par le mémoire, et elle ne les abandonna qu’à regret; ainsi elle vit, dans la conduite de M. de Montmorin, une finesse qui altéra beaucoup sa confiance. Sa position affreuse l’avait pourtant mise dans la nécessité de se servir de personnes qui lui étaient à peine connues. Parmi ceux que les circonstances avaient portés au ministère, se trouvait M. Terrier de Monciel, un homme que M. M— avait connu pour être fidèle au roi, quoiqu’il eût des liaisons à juste titre suspectes. Il crut donc devoir dire à Sa Majesté qu’elle pouvait s’y fier. Il en résulta qu’il fut chargé par elle de l’affaire la plus importante, c’est à dire, d’aviser aux moyens de tirer le roi de sa périlleuse situation. Il eut à cet effet des consultations fréquentes avec M. M—, et parmi les différents moyens qui se présentèrent, celui qui leur parut le plus essentiel fut de faire sortir la famille royale de Paris. Les mesures étaient si bien prises à cet effet que le succès en était presque inmanquable, mais le roi (pour des raisons qu’il est inutile de détailler ici) renonça au projet le matin même fixé pour son départ, alors que les gardes suisses étaient déjà partis de Courbevoie pour couvrir sa retraite. Ses ministres, qui se trouvaient gravement compromis, donnèrent tous leur démission. Le moment était d’autant plus critique que Sa Majesté tenait déjà les preuves de la conspiration tramée contre sa personne. Il ne lui restait alors qu’un seul moyen. Il fallait remporter la victoire dans le combat qu’on allait lui livrer aussitôt que les conspirateurs se trouveraient en force. M. de Monciel, après avoir eu une explication avec Leurs Majestés, consentit à les servir encore, quoiqu’il ne fut plus au ministère. On s’occupait de lever à la hâte une espèce d’armée royale, chose extrêmement délicate, et qui ne pouvait que compromettre ceux qui s’en étaient mêlés, si les ennemis du roi avaient le dessus. M. de Monciel associa à ses travaux M. Brémond, un homme courageux, zélé, fidèle, mais emporté, bavard et imprudent. Cette dernière qualité était presque essentielle, puisque la situation de la famille royale éloignait ceux dont le zèle pouvait être refroidi par les dangers. Vers la fin du mois de juillet, Sa Majesté fit remercier M. M— des conseils qu’il lui avait donnés, et lui témoigna son regret de ne les avoir pas suivis—enfin le pria de surveiller ce qu’on faisait pour son service et de devenir dépositaire de ses papiers et de son argent. Il répondit que Sa Majesté pouvait toujours compter sur tous ses efforts, que sa maison ne lui paraissait pas plus sûre que le palais

des Tuileries, puisqu'il était en but depuis longtemps à la haine des conspirateurs, qu'ainsi ni les papiers ni l'argent du roi ne seraient en sûreté chez lui. Mais comme cet argent ne portait aucune marque de propriété il consentirait, si Sa Majesté ne pouvait pas trouver une autre personne, à en devenir le dépositaire et à en faire l'emploi qu'elle voudrait bien lui indiquer. En conséquence du consentement ainsi donné, M. de Monciel lui apporta, le 22 juillet, 547,000 livres, dont 539,005 livres étaient déjà là, le deux août, en train d'être employées conformément aux ordres du roi. La somme de 449,750 livres, payée le deux août, devait être convertie par Brémond en louis d'or. Il en acheta effectivement 5,000, et les mit en bourses de 20 louis, car il s'agissait d'en faire la distribution à des personnes qui devaient se transporter avec des affidés aux endroits qui leur seraient indiqués et s'y battre sous leurs chefs. Et pour rendre ces contre-conspirateurs encore plus utiles, il s'agissait de prendre par préférence des Marseillais et autres agents des conspirateurs. Aussi, afin que le roi ne fût pas trompé, il était convenu que le paiement ne se ferait que lorsque les services auraient été rendus. En attendant, les 5,000 louis restèrent chez M. M—. Les événements du dix août sont trop connus pour qu'on puisse se permettre d'en faire le pénible récit Ce jour-là, M. de Monciel apporta 200,000 livres, en se réfugiant avec sa famille chez M. M—, ainsi que plusieurs autres personnes. Après quelques jours, il se trouva dans la nécessité de se cacher. Brémond l'avait déjà fait quelque part ailleurs, et Madame de Monciel fut chargée de faire les démarches nécessaires pour sauver les personnes qui étaient compromises, et qui pouvaient d'autant plus compromettre le roi qu'elles étaient connues et que leurs opérations étaient fortement soupçonnées.

“D'Angrémont fut pris et sacrifié, mais il eut le courage de se taire. À force d'argent, on trouva moyen de faire évader les uns et cacher les autres. Sur ces entrefaites Brémond envoya une personne, qu'il avait initiée au secret, chercher les 5,000 louis, qui lui furent payés, d'abord parce qu'il ne fallait pas donner occasion à un homme du caractère de Brémond de dire ou de faire des folies, mais principalement parce qu'on croyait que de concert avec M. de Monciel, il allait employer cette somme à quelque service essentiel, mais il n'y avait aucun projet de cette espèce. Au contraire, Brémond, avec une légèreté inconcevable, avait trahi un secret important, afin de mettre une assez forte somme entre des mains d'où, jusqu'à présent, on n'a pas pu en tirer un sou. Lorsque le duc de Brunswick fut entré en France, M. M—, persuadé que s'il arrivait jusqu'à Paris les assignats ne seraient que d'une mince valeur, et sachant d'ailleurs les projets extravagants de ceux qui régentaient la France, fit la remise, en Angleterre, de 104,800 livres, valant alors £2,518, afin de mettre cette somme à l'abri des événements. Il en fit payer à peu près le quart (600 livres sterling) à M. de Monciel, qui se trouvait alors à Londres, et négocia des traites pour le reste, afin de faire face à une demande que lui faisait Madame de Monciel. Enfin il resta la somme de 6,715 livres, qu'il conserva toujours à sa disposition jusqu'à ce qu'il eût enfin la satisfaction d'apprendre que tous ceux dont les aveux auraient pu être employés par les ennemis du roi pour motiver leur inculpation, étaient en lieu de sûreté. Il est vrai que ces accusations étaient fausses et calomnieuses, puisque le roi n'avait eu d'autre objet que celui de se défendre. Mais le succès était pour eux, et les conspirateurs n'auraient pas manqué de faire valoir les faits ci-dessus énoncés. L'appoint de 6,715 livres a subi le sort des assignats et a perdu de sa valeur, mais on peut estimer le change à raison de—; et c'est cette somme que M. M—aura l'honneur de payer à la

personne que Son Altesse Royale voudra bien avoir la bonté de lui désigner. Au moment de la remise, le change était 17½. Il était parti de Londres pour aller en Suisse y travailler à la rentrée des 5,000 louis, pour venir les verser entre les mains de Son Altesse Royale. Mais les circonstances lui bouchèrent le chemin de la Suisse. Il est donc venu à Vienne, n'y ayant d'autre objet que de communiquer les faits ci-dessus mentionnés. Il vit avec regret, non seulement que les démarches faites pour la restitution ont été jusqu'à présent infructueuses, mais aussi qu'on commence à manifester, à ce sujet, des prétentions extraordinaires. Le récit minutieux en serait trop volumineux, d'ailleurs, le résumé d'une partie de ce que M. M—désirait dire à la princesse, se trouve écrit ci-dessus, et son bon esprit en devinera le reste. Elle apprendra facilement combien il est essentiel de tenir secret, autant que possible, des faits qui regardent de si près le meilleur et le plus malheureux des rois. Il supplie Son Altesse Royale d'agréer l'hommage de son inviolable attachement.”*

But to return, after this long digression, to events in Paris, and to the diary.

“To-day [July 25th] I have several visitors, among the rest Mr. Francis, who is just arrived by the way of Valenciennes. He says that things are in the most deplorable situation; that the Austrians speak of spending the winter at Paris with the utmost confidence; that the French seem totally discouraged. I go to the Louvre for a moment. Find there M. de Schomberg, and the Bishop d'Autun comes in soon afterwards. I meet him on the stairs, and he expresses politely his misfortune to come always as I go away. He will have frequently that misfortune. At a little after two M. Monciel, and then M. Bertrand de Molleville, come. I read the *mémoires* written for the King at the time of his acceptance of the Constitution. We dine, and after dinner read the plan of a constitution; then discuss the steps which the King is to take. M. Bertrand is a stickler for the *ancien régime*, but we drive him a little out of his opinion, which he will, I think, come back to again. He is to prepare to-morrow the form of a letter to accompany the manifest. Monciel is to be with him, which is right.”

“Dine at the Louvre [July 26th]. Madame de Flahaut mentions a conspiracy against the life of the King, but will not name her informant. I talk to her very seriously and near to scolding. Come home at six, and meet Monciel, who tells me that Bertrand de Molleville has begun his work by mention of the *cahiers*, which is idle enough. He is to see the King at eleven and give him the result of the measures which I have proposed, and which we have discussed.”

“Brémond, Monciel, and I work all the morning [July 27th] to prepare some *mémoires* for the King.”

“We finished the form of a letter from the King to the Assembly yesterday, and to-day [July 29th] we make an addition to the letter. Brémond tells me that he is to accept the place of Minister of Foreign Affairs.”

“To-day [July 30th] M. Monciel called to tell me that he has delivered to the King the letter, and one from M. Bertrand de Molleville, on which he has communicated his observations. I go in the evening to Madame d'Albani's. When I arrive there I find them all terrified at a riot in which the Marseillais* have killed one or two of the

Garde Nationale. There is a great stir in Paris, but I think the business is over for the evening.”

The riots of July 30th were not the least of the many events of the eventful year 1792, which terrified Paris. Under pretence of guarding Pétion’s life against a supposed attack, he being at the moment the popular hero, having been dismissed from his position of mayor after the affair of July 20th, the Jacobins proposed to get together three hundred men whose instructions would be to murder the royal family. The Jacobin placard calling for three hundred men was printed in blue and numbered 41. Bertrand de Molleville unearthed the plot to murder the king, and hastily caused papers to be printed announcing the discovery of “A horrible plot to destroy Pétion; a conspiracy against the national representative. The false *sans culottes* unmasked.” These he had numbered 42, and pasted over those numbered 41. The imitation of the violently patriotic style of the *Sentinelle* was successful, immediately attracted attention, and, before the Jacobins and the owner of the *Sentinelle* had time to pull down the placard, all Paris had read the notice, and the result was a free fight between the men with the fraudulent placard and the others.

“This morning M. Monciel and M. Brémond call to tell me what passed yesterday, and what is doing to-day [July 31st]. Brémond is furious, but after he is gone we agree not to permit any of those horrible things which his indignation would lead him to. In the evening I meet Monciel again, and he gives me the bulletins of last evening. Agree on what is to be done, and on the message to be sent by M. Bourceau de Pazy to M. de Lafayette.”

In his letter to Jefferson, under date of August 1st, Morris says:

“In my letter No. 2 I mentioned that M. de Lafayette was about to commence an attack upon the Jacobin faction, and my apprehension that it would not be successful. I verily believe that if M. de Lafayette were to appear just now in Paris unattended by his army he would be torn to pieces. In the present state of things, it seems evident that if the King be not destroyed he must soon become absolute. I think the prime movers of the Revolution see no other mode of establishing the affairs of their country on any tolerable footing, and will therefore declare their adherence to His Majesty, grounded on the abolition of the Constitution by the Assembly, and their masters, the Jacobin Club. Should my letter miscarry, it would occasion much of that noise and nonsense in which it is unpleasant to find one’s name, and the wrongheaded people cannot distinguish between a person who has obtained exact information of what is doing and those who are actors in the business. For this reason I must decline mentioning the plans in agitation, at present, to establish a good constitution. I dare not say that I *hope* this will take place. I *ardently wish* it, but I have doubts and fears, because I have no confidence in the morals of the people. The King is anxious to secure their permanent happiness, but, alas! they are not in a state of mind to receive good from his hands. Suspicion, that constant companion of vice and weakness, has loosened every band of social union, and blasts every honest hope in the moment of its budding.

“Some persons have spoken to me of the disposition of the United States in a tone of irony, but I assured them very sincerely that our grateful sentiments for the conduct of this nation would be demonstrated by our conduct whenever occasion should require; that the changes they might make in their own administration would by no means affect our regard for them, nor diminish our attachment. As this language was not ministerial, but held in the sincerity of social life, it surprised those who, unfortunately for them, can find for the conduct of nations no motive but interest, and are so short-sighted as not to perceive that a virtuous and honorable conduct is the truest interest which a nation can pursue. In respect to other objects which are committed to me, it is hardly necessary to say that nothing can be done in the present moment. Such time as the Assembly can spare from the discussion of party disputes is necessarily engrossed by the Departments of War and Finance. The determination to suspend the King has been a little pallid by the information that their armies would immediately revolt, and particularly the Southern Army, on which they made their greatest reliance. This circumstance has greatly deranged the plan of operations, and the more so as many instruments specially convened and collected for that grand stroke are at present no small incumbrance to the contrivers of it. Among these are the Bretons and Marseillais, now in this city. Some of the chiefs of the Jacobins have, I am told, prepared the means of their escape to America, and among them your old acquaintance, M. de Condorcet. They are to embark at Dunkirk and St. Valery.”

“This morning [August 2d] M. de Monciel calls on me and tells me that they are trying to send him to Orleans. We agree on the conversion of the King’s paper into specie. I go to Court; afterwards call on the Minister of the Marine, who is gone abroad, although he promised to be at home. St. Croix is appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs.”

“Monciel dines with me [August 3d], and we prepare an address to the Marseillais. I complain of the appointment of Boncarère to Philadelphia, and promise to speak to the King on the subject. Go after dinner to the Louvre, and Madame de Flahaut tells me that the King proposed this embassy by way of getting rid of M. Boncarère; that St. Croix objected he would not be received, but His Majesty said, ‘So much the better. Let us but get rid of him.’”

“M. Brémond brings me this morning 5,000 louis d’or, which he has purchased. He is to have the correspondence of the Jacobins for 1,000. M. de Monciel calls, and we complete a letter to be written by the King to the President of the Section of the Faubourg St. Marceau, about the River Bièvre, which will, it is supposed, give His Majesty that faubourg. Monciel tells me that the King and Queen are much distressed, and in great apprehension. I dine at the British ambassador’s. We walk after dinner to the Champ de Mars, where we see a few ragamuffins who are signing the petition for the *déchéance*. I call at M. de Montmorin’s, where I find a family in deep distress. At my return I find Lady Sutherland at my door. She comes to obtain an interview between me and the Chevalier de Coigny. I tell her that I will be at home if he will call on me to-morrow. He wishes to give my ideas direct to the Queen, without passing through the medium of M. de Montmorin. They expect all to be murdered this evening at the Château. The weather is very warm.”

“Go to Court this morning [August 5th]. Nothing remarkable, only that they were up all night, expecting to be murdered. Come home to meet M. St. Croix. He comes late. Tells me what he is about. Mr. Constable dines with me, and Mr. Livingston, whom I have taken as my private secretary. After dinner I go to visit Lady Sutherland, and stay some time conversing with Lord Gower. The weather is still hot.”

“M. de Monciel comes [August 6th], and tells me how things are. M. and Madame de Flahaut dine with me. The Bishop d’Autun and M. de Beaumetz are of the party. The weather continues very hot. I have a long conversation with the Chevalier de Coigny on the state of affairs. Monciel also comes, and tells me that the King would not listen to the intrusting his secret to St. Croix. The public mind is much better than it was, and will mend. We digest a petition for the Marseillais, calculated to make the King declare himself. M. de Coigny is to push the same point with the Queen.”

“This Wednesday morning [August 8th] Monciel tells me that things are going well. The King seems to hold the proper opinions also, which is a desirable thing. I dine with Madame de Staël, and after dinner, the gentlemen desiring to drink, I send for wine, and let them get preciously drunk. Go to the Louvre and take Madame de Flahaut to ride. After I set her down I go to Lady Sutherland’s and pay her a pretty long visit. She will be at Court to-morrow. The weather is very warm still.”

“Paris is in great agitation this morning [August 9th]. M. de Monciel calls, and brings me some money. I dress and go to Court.”

“This morning [August 10th] Monciel calls, and his report is tranquillizing; but shortly after he leaves me the cannon begin, and musketry mingled with them announce a warm day. The Château, undefended but by the Swiss, is carried, and the Swiss, wherever found, are murdered. The King and Queen are in the National Assembly, who have decreed the suspension of his authority. Madame de Flahaut sends her son, and comes afterwards to take refuge. I have company to dine, but many of those who were invited do not come. Mr. Huskisson, the secretary to the British ambassador, comes in the evening. He gives a sad account of things. The weather continues very warm, or, rather, extremely hot.”

“A sleepless night renders me heavy during this day [August 11th]. The King and Queen remain at the Assembly, which goes on rapidly under the *dictée* of the Tribunes. We are quiet here. Things are taking on their new order. The weather continues to be very hot. M. de St. Pardou calls in the evening, and seems torn to pieces by affliction. I desire him, if he sees the royal family, to tell them that relief must soon arrive.”

“This morning [August 12th] M. de Monciel and his wife come before I am up. I have my time full all day, and am heartily fatigued this evening. I called in the morning on Lady Sutherland, who is *un peu abattue*. The Venetian Ambassador was abroad, and so was Madame d’Albani. She and the Comte Alfieri come about three o’clock. She is violently affected and afflicted. The weather is very warm still and oppressive. The state of the air is evidenced by some perch alive in the morning at six o’clock, and spoiled at dinner. So rapid a state of putrefaction I never saw.”

“Four men, among them a naturalized Frenchman, come for passports [August 13th]. Mr. Amory calls for the same purpose, and M. Montflorenc to get a passport for Mrs. Blagden. Madame d’Albani dines with me, and requests me to ask a passport for her from the British ambassador. I go, after dinner, and he, as I expected, refuses to grant it. The weather is somewhat cooler this evening, having had rain.”

“Write all the morning [August 14th], but I have many interruptions. Among others who call on me, Mr. Francis gives a dreadful account of what he saw on the 10th, and says that he shall not dare to tell it in America. General Duportail calls on me. He wishes to get away from hence, should things grow more serious.”

In a letter, dated August 16th, to young Robert Morris, Morris says: “Mr. Constable is well, and was a witness to the fight, being lodged near the Tuileries. Tell your friend Jones that if he were here just now his ‘Ha! ha!’ would be changed into ‘Ho! ho!’”

To Thomas Pinckney, then United States Minister at London, Morris wrote, a few days after the affair of the 10th of August: “We have had here within the last few days some serious scenes, at which I am not surprised, because I foresaw not only a struggle between the two corps which the Constitution had organized, viz., the executive, so called, and the legislative, but I was convinced the latter would get the better. It is nevertheless a painful reflection that one of the finest countries in the world should be so cruelly torn to pieces. The storm which lately raged is a little subdued, but the winds must soon rise again, perhaps from the same quarter, perhaps from another; but that is of little consequence. A man attached to his fellow-man must see with distress the woes they suffer, but an American has a stronger sympathy with this country than any other observer, and, nourished as he is in the bosom of liberty, he cannot but be deeply affected to see that in almost any event this struggle must terminate in despotism.”

“To-day [August 17th] I take my distressed friend Madame de Flahaut to ride to the Bois de Boulogne, where we walk till she is tired. Americans dine with me. After dinner visit Lady Sutherland, and after her *monde* is gone we take tea. It rains this evening and is somewhat cooler. M. de St. Foi, who was here this evening, says that the treatment of the King, Queen, and royal family is extremely ignominious. He gives details which are painful. Lord Gower is abundantly cautious. Several of the Corps Diplomatique are going off. The weather is grown cooler.”

Writing to Mr. Jefferson, on the 18th of August, Morris says: “Since my last letter of the 1st, another revolution has been effected in this city. It was bloody. A very considerable party is deeply interested to overturn the present order, and the men who compose the party are the moderate, or middle men. I have long been convinced that this middle party, who, by the by, were the prime movers of the Revolution, must fall to the ground, and that those who compose it must join one of the great factions. The aristocratic faction is still split into two or more. Some are for absolute monarchy, some for the ancient régime, some few desire a mixed government. The framers of the late Constitution had got up to this last ground, but the idea of an *hereditary* senate stuck in their throats. The King, who has an uncommon firmness in suffering and who has not the talents for action, and who is besides a very religious man, found himself

fettered by his oaths to the Constitution, which he in his conscience believed to be a bad one, and about which, indeed, there is now but one opinion in this country, because experience, that great parent of wisdom, has brought it already to trial and condemnation—the King, from the causes just mentioned, would not step forward, and of course there was no standard to which the adherents of the two Chambers could repair. The republicans had the good sense to march boldly and openly to their object, and, as they took care not to mince matters nor embarrass themselves by legal or constitutional niceties, they had the advantage of union, concert, and design against the disjointed members of a body without a head. If, under these circumstances, the foreign force were out of question, I should have no doubt that the republican form would take place quietly enough and continue as long as the morals of the country would permit. You know the state of morals here and can, of course (if it be necessary), form the calculation for yourself. The circumstance of foreign force is, however, on the present occasion, a preponderant object, and I think its effects will depend on its activity. Should the Duke of Brunswick advance rapidly he will be joined by great numbers, even of the armies opposed to him, because the late change will furnish to some a reason and to others a pretext for abandoning the cause they had espoused. If, on the contrary, his progress be cautious and slow, it is probable that those who are now silent from fear will habituate themselves by degrees to speak favorably of the present government, in order to lull suspicion, and that thus a public opinion will appear which, once pronounced, governs the generality of mankind. If by this means the new republic takes a better root, foreign powers will, I believe, find it a difficult matter to shake it to the ground; for the French nation is an immense mass, which it is not easy either to move or to oppose. You will observe, sir, that matters are now brought to a simple question between an absolute monarchy and a republic, for all middle terms are done away. This question also must be decided by force, because on one side it is in the hands of the people, who cannot treat for themselves and who will not permit others to treat for them, in respect to the important interests which are now at stake. If, as in former times, some factious nobles are at the head of a party, they would, as formerly, take the first opportunity to stipulate for themselves at the expense of their party; but without entering here into a question of relative integrity, I do not think that the people are so attached to any particular men as to have what may be called leaders, and those who appear as such are in my opinion rather instruments than agents. I do not go into the history of things, nor trouble you with a recapitulation of events. I enclose and shall send by the present opportunity the gazettes since my last, which will communicate all particulars which you may desire to know. Since the operations of the 10th the *Logographe*, *Gazette Universelle*, and *Indicateur* are suppressed, as, indeed, are all those who were guilty of *feuillantisme*, that is, adherence to the clubs ‘des feuillants soi-disant constitutionels.’ You must therefore make allowances for what you find in the other gazettes, written not only in the spirit of a party but under the eye of a party. The first must influence the most honest printer in the coloring of some facts, and the second will restrain the boldest printer in the publishing of other facts.

“You will find that M. Boncarère had been appointed to the United States as Minister. This man’s character is as bad as need be, and stained by infamous vices. By what influence he was introduced into the office of Foreign Affairs I know not, for I was then in England; but I have reason to believe that it was the poor experiment of the

feuillants to watch and check, and perhaps to betray, the Jacobin Ministry. While the King was pressing M. St. Croix, an eight-day minister, to accept the Department of Foreign Affairs, this last declared that he would not serve if Boncarère was retained, and to get rid of him they invented the expedient of sending him to America. I considered this step as a kind of insult, and transmitted my sentiments on the subject to the King, who thereupon told M. de St. Croix that I was angry at that appointment, and he must arrange the matter with me; that he wished I would prevent his being received. The minister apologized for the thing as well as he could, admitting always that it was wrong, and added that his embarkation should be delayed, and I was at liberty to prevent his being received. To this I replied that he must not be allowed to embark at all. The minister refused to sign the *bon* for his appointment. Then the new revolution took place, and the history of M. Boncarère's ministry is at an end. Notwithstanding my utmost efforts, I have not been able to bring the Minister of Foreign Affairs to consider the question relating to our debt. Indeed, the executive of the late Constitution has been at the last agony for this three months, and has thought more of saving itself than of doing its business. The present executive is just born, and may perhaps be stifled in its cradle."

Mr. Morris very earnestly requested the President's orders respecting his line of conduct in the circumstances about to arise. He felt, he said, in a "state of contingent responsibility of the most delicate kind," and, not wishing to avoid any fair and reasonable risk, he wished to have his line of conduct marked as exactly as possible. But to resume the diary.

"This morning [August 19th] I take Madame de Flahaut to see her sister-in-law at Versailles. I have some difficulty as to a passport. Go to the municipality of Versailles, which is very polite."

"Visit Lady Sutherland in the afternoon [August 20th]. They have received orders to come home, and at the end of the despatch is a threat if they injure the King or his family, 'because that would excite the indignation of all Europe.' This despatch, turned into plain English, is shortly that the British Court resent what is already done, and will make war immediately if the treatment of the King be such as to call for or to justify measures of extremity."

"Some English are brought back [August 21st] who were on their way. Visit Lady Sutherland to take leave. They can't get as yet their passports. The Venetian ambassador has been brought back and very ignominiously treated; even his papers examined, as it is said *by him*. This is strong, and raises in my mind a question whether I ought not to show resentment by leaving the country. I have company at dinner, and in the evening I go to sup with Lady Sutherland. They can't get passports. He is in a tearing passion. He has burned his papers, which I will not do. They give me broad hints that honor requires of me to quit this country. The weather is pleasant and I am very gay, which he can hardly bear."

"Visit Lady Sutherland again to-day [August 22d]. They have received a polite letter from M. Lebrun, and expect to get their passports speedily. He is so cautious that if it be not the timidity of which he is accused it is something very like it."

“The different ambassadors are all taking flight, and if I stay I shall be alone,” Morris wrote to Mr. Jefferson on this same 22d of August. “I mean, however, to stay, unless circumstances should summon me away; because, in the admitted case that my letters of credence are to the monarchy, and not to the Republic of France, it becomes a matter of indifference whether I remain in this country or go to England during the time which may be needful to obtain your orders or to produce a settlement of affairs here. Going hence, however, would look like taking part against the late Revolution, and I am not only unauthorized in this respect, but I am bound to suppose that, if the great majority of the nation adhere to the new form, the United States will approve thereof; because, in the first place, we have no right to prescribe to this country the government they shall adopt, and next, because the basis of our own Constitution is the indefeasible right of the people to establish it. It is true that the position is not without danger, but I presume that when the President did me the honor of naming me to this embassy it was not for my personal pleasure or safety, but to promote the interests of my country. These, therefore, I shall continue to pursue to the best of my judgment, and as to consequences, they are in the hand of God.”

“Mr. Henchman, of Boston, calls on me,” says the diary for August 23d. “He says the accounts transmitted to England of what is doing here have created such alarm that he did not dare bring me the despatches with which Mr. Pinckney wished to charge him. He has received, however, along the road all kind of civil treatment. He says that the judgment I have formed as to the conduct which I ought to pursue is just, and that if I should quit France without just cause it would excite much ill-will in America. I dine with the British ambassador, and after dinner the Venetian ambassador comes in with M. Tronchin. This last says the Assembly have permitted the Corps Diplomatique to depart, but not other strangers. I laugh a little too much at the distresses of the Baron Grandcour, and Lord Gower gets a little too much in a passion with Lord Stair. I am very sorry that Lady Sutherland is going, and she is convinced that I am. I have a large company at dinner. Mr. Richard calls, and tells me that M. de la Porte is on his way to the place of execution.”

“Another man is beheaded this evening [August 25th] for crime *de lèse-nation*. He published a newspaper against the Jacobins. This is severe, at least. Call on Lady Sutherland. They are busy packing up. Small company at dinner; bid them adieu—a long adieu, perhaps. It is said here that the former Bishop of Châlons has received a letter, on the part of the Duke of Brunswick, desiring him to mention whether he wishes the episcopal palace, etc., to be respected. They expect soon to be there. If Verdun surrenders, as Longwy has done, the foreign troops will soon be here. The weather is warm, with small rain. I find company at home, which stays late. One of them, St. Croix, comes after I am in bed, to ask an asylum. The municipality are in pursuit of him.”

“Write. Stay at home all day [August 28th]. It is said that Verdun and Metz are both taken; that the Prussian army is at St. Menchond, and that the couriers are all confined which bring the news. I think there can be little use in confining them, because the taking of towns can’t be kept secret. We shall know more by and by.”

“Go this morning [August 29th] to M. Lebrun’s. The Minister of Contributions, M. Clavière, and M. Monge, the Minister of Marine, meet me here at the Hôtel of Foreign Affairs. They wish me to enter into a contract to furnish \$400,000 in America for the use of Santo Domingo. I show them many reasons why I cannot, and, among others, tell them that I am not authorized to treat with them; that I had been authorized to settle with the late government, and that if I should enter into the agreement they wished I should probably be blamed for exceeding the line prescribed to me; that there remained, moreover, another point worthy of their attention, which was that my agreement would be in itself void, because I had no powers to treat with the present government. M. Clavière said the United States would certainly act in a different manner towards the present government than monarchs of Europe did, and demanded peremptorily whether I would, or no, sign the contract. His language and manner were such as naturally to excite some little indignation, and although I would pardon much to a man whose stock-jobbing life had not much qualified him for a station in which delicacy of manner and expression are almost essential, yet I could not submit to an indignity in my person towards the country I represent. I told him, therefore, that I did not understand what he meant to say. My countenance, I believe, spoke the rest of my sentiment, and led him to say, in explanation, that it was necessary for them to have some positive engagement, because otherwise they must make provision for the service from another source; and then he again expressed his conviction that the United States would recognize them. I told him it was not proper for me (a servant) to pretend to decide on what would be the opinion of my masters; that I should wait their orders, and obey them when received; that the present government could collect my sentiments from my conduct; that I could not possibly take on me to judge questions of such magnitude. I add that I will write and recommend the matter strongly to the Ministers of the United States. But that is not what they want. Clavière is much vexed. I have company to dinner; the Dutch ambassador tells me he has received his orders, and shall ask for his passports to-morrow. In the evening a number of persons enter, upon an order to examine my house for arms said to be hidden in it. I tell them they shall not examine, that there are no arms, and that if there were they should not touch them. I insist that they must seize the informer, that I may bring him to punishment. I am obliged to be very peremptory, and at length get rid of them. The scene finished by apologies on their part. Just after they are gone M. de St. Croix comes in. He is a lucky man. He was hidden, but the order to search all houses brings him hither. We are, it seems, to have another visit this night.”

“The news [August 30th] of the aristocrats is that the troops of the Duke of Brunswick make excursions as far as Châlons; that Luckner’s army is surrounded—Verdun taken. St. Foi, who comes in the evening, tells me that the bombardment of Verdun has been heard in the neighborhood. St. Pardou says that six thousand men are ordered for a secret expedition as on Saturday next, and he fears that it is to carry off the royal family. The Commissaire de Section called on me this morning, and behaved very well. The weather is pleasant. I learn that many people have been taken up last night. There was a general search throughout the town for arms, and I presume for people also. It still continues. The Commissary who called upon me to-day, made many apologies and took a note of my reply, so that we parted good friends.”

“I have sufficient cause to take offence,” Morris nevertheless wrote to Mr. Jefferson on the 30th, “and depart, if I were so inclined; but I will stay, if possible, so as to preserve to you the most perfect liberty of action. I do not, indeed, feel offended at what is done by the people, because they cannot be supposed to understand the law of nations, and because they are in a state of fury which is inconceivable, and which leaves them liable to all impressions and renders them capable of all excesses. I shall endeavor, nevertheless, to preserve the proper firmness, and, let what will happen, I hope that though my friends should have occasion to lament my fate, they will never be obliged to blush for my conduct.”

“Just before dinner [August 31st] I receive an insulting letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In the evening the Bishop d’Autun tells me it is written by Brissot, and that their intention is to force me to recognize the present government. He urges me to go away, because all others of the Corps Diplomatique go, and because I shall in staying be exposed to all the insidious malevolence of bad men. He relates a scene which passed in his presence, and which is alike shocking and ridiculous. He tells me that there is a division already among the rulers here. He communicates the views of those who, in the natural course of things, must become strongest. I give him my reasons for thinking that they pursue an impracticable object.”

“I employ the greater part of this morning [September 1st] in making a reply to the letter of M. Lebrun, and copying it. In the evening I read both, or rather show them, to the Bishop d’Autun, who approves much of my answer, and observes that the letter is both absurd and impertinent. I had sent for Swan and told him that his friend Brissot, instead of promoting had spoilt his business, and would drive me out of the country. He says he laments this last point much, as a few days must upset the present establishment. I rather think he is mistaken as to the time, at least, and there may be many overturns before there is a settled government.”

“This morning [September 2d] I go out on business. Madame de Flahaut takes the same opportunity to visit her friends. On our return we hear or, rather, see a proclamation. She inquires into it, and learns that the enemy are at the gates of Paris, which cannot be true. She is taken ill, being affected by the fate of her friends. I observe that this proclamation produces terror and despair among the people. This afternoon they announce the murder of priests who had been shut up in the Carmes. They then go to the Abbaye, and murder the prisoners there. This is horrible.”

“The murdering continues all day [September 3d]. I am told that there are about eight hundred men concerned in it. The Minister of Parma and Ambassadress of Sweden have been stopped as they were going away.”

“And still [September 4th] the murders continue. The prisoners in the Bicêtre defend themselves, and the assailants try to stifle and drown them. A certain M. Bertrand, of the cavalry, comes to my house. Madame had sent for him to give him a compensation for his kindness in saving her husband. I collect from him that Paris waits but the moment to surrender. He does not say so, but, if I may judge from strong indications, the cavalry mean to join the invaders. Several strangers who call on me complain that they cannot get passports. It is said that as soon as the prisoners are

demolished, the party now employed in executing them mean to attack the shopkeepers. The Assembly have official accounts that Verdun is taken, and, it is said, Stenay also. The weather is grown very cool, and this afternoon and evening it rains hard.”

“Mr. P——tells me [September 5th] that the ministry and secret committees are in amaze. Verdun, Stenay, and Clermont are taken. The country submits and joins the enemy. The party of Robespierre has vowed the destruction of Brissot. The Bishop d’Autun tells me that he has seen one of the *Commission extraordinaire, i.e.*, secret committee, who tells him that there is the most imminent danger. I was told that one of the principal Jacobins had expressed his fears, or rather despair, not so much on account of the enemy’s force as of their internal divisions.”

“There is nothing new this day [September 6th]. The murders continue, and the magistrates swear to protect persons and property. The weather is pleasant.”

“The news from the armies [September 7th] are rather encouraging to the new government. The Bishop d’Autun tells me that he hopes to get his passport, and urges me to procure one for myself and quit Paris. He says he is persuaded that those who rule now mean to quit Paris and take off the King; that their intention is to destroy the city before they leave it. I learn that the Commune have shut the barriers, because they suspect the Assembly of an intention to retreat. The weather is very pleasant. The Bishop d’Autun has got his passport. He tells me that he does not think the Duke of Brunswick will be able to reach Paris, and he urges me strongly to leave it. I have, however, received from the minister an indirect apology for his impertinent letter, and therefore I shall stay. The weather is very pleasant. M. Constable has got his passport, but tells me that Mr. Phyn finds great difficulty. Lord Wycombe calls on me this morning, and Chaumont comes in the afternoon to take leave.”

“The prisoners were killed yesterday [September 10th] at Versailles. The number of troops to be opposed to the combined armies seems now to be as inferior as the discipline and appointments. Lord Wycombe dines with me; he says that he hopes the end of the French affairs will cure other nations of the rage for revolutions.”

In his history of the daily events sent to Mr. Jefferson, Morris says, at the end of this “eventful week,” under date of September 10th: “We have had one week of unchecked murders, in which some thousands have perished in this city. It began with between two and three hundred of the clergy, who would not take the oath prescribed by law. Thence these *executors of speedy justice* went to the Abbaye, where the prisoners were confined who were at Court on the 10th. Madame de Lamballe was, I believe, the only woman killed, and she was beheaded and disembowelled; the head and entrails paraded on pikes through the street, and the body dragged after them. They continued, I am told, in the neighborhood of the Temple until the Queen looked out at this horrid spectacle. Yesterday the prisoners from Orléans were put to death at Versailles. The destruction began here about five in the afternoon on Sunday, the 2d instant. A guard had been sent a few days since to make the Duc de la Rochefoucault prisoner. He was on his way to Paris under their escort, with his wife and mother, when he was taken out of his carriage and killed. The ladies were taken back to La

Roche-Guyon, where they are now in a state of arrestation. M. de Montmorin was among those slain at the Abbaye. You will recollect that a petition was signed by many thousands to displace the mayor on account of his conduct on the 20th of June. The signing of this petition is considered as a sufficient proof of the crime of Feuillantism, and it was in contemplation with some to put all those who were guilty of signing that petition to death. This measure seems, however, to be suspended (for the present, at least); but, as there is no real executive authority, the plan may be easily resumed should it suit the views of those who enjoy the confidence of that part of the people who are now active.”

“There is nothing new this day,” says the diary for September 11th, “except that the Camp of Maulde is raised after sending a detachment to Dumouriez. The troops are retired to Valenciennes. This opens the northern frontier. Thionville is besieged, and so, *perhaps*, is Metz. The non-juring priests are murdered at Rheims. The weather is grown cool. The Duke of Brunswick seems to be waiting awhile for the operations of others. It is said that Champagne in general waits the opportunity of joining the enemy, and it is said also that every man is turning out against them. In this, as in other cases, *in medio tutissimus ibis*. A battle is said to be in agitation between Dumouriez and the Duke of Brunswick. We shall know more of this hereafter. The inactivity of the enemy is so extraordinary that it must have an unknown cause. Confessedly the forces opposed were inferior, and it would be extraordinary that great manœuvres should, under such circumstances, be needful.”

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

CHAPTER XXVI.

Lafayette refuses to obey the Assembly. Leaves France and is captured. King and queen are imprisoned in the Temple. Disorder reigns in Paris. Murders continue. Morris hears that the Brissotine faction desire to do him mischief. Letter to Washington. The dangers of living in Paris. Trials of Morris's position. Retreat of the Prussians. Apprehension of a famine. Taking of Nice. Anxious uncertainty of Morris's life. Letter to Jefferson on the state of affairs. Letters to friends assuring them of his well-being. Difficulty of sending letters safely. Letter to Alexander Hamilton. Morris becomes aware that the French Government desire his recall.

To secure the allegiance of the army was the first point to which the Legislative Assembly turned their attention after the overthrow of the throne; and accordingly three commissioners, armed with the new decrees, were sent to Lafayette at Sedan. Lafayette refused to obey the Assembly, and, after a vain effort to influence his troops, threw up his command and fled across the frontier, taking the road to the Netherlands. On reaching the Austrian advance posts, he was arrested and treated as a prisoner of war.

Commenting (September 12th) on the fate of Lafayette to Mr. Short, Minister at the Hague, Morris wrote: "Truly his circle is complete. He has spent all his fortune on a revolution, and is now crushed by the wheel which he had put in motion. He lasted longer than I expected. I have long lamented his situation, and feel more than ever a desire to alleviate his distress. His imprisonment was among the events which appeared to me not improbable. The reasons you urge for his liberation are cogent, and I hope they may be attended to. But supposing that M. de Lafayette were a natural born subject of America, and taken under the circumstances in which he was placed, I do not exactly see how the United States could claim him. If claimed and delivered up, would they not be bound to put him to death for having attacked a neutral power; or else, by the very act of acquitting him, declare war against those who had taken him? But M. de Lafayette is a Frenchman, and it is as a Frenchman that he is taken and is to be treated. I do not feel myself competent to decide on such a question in behalf of my country, and therefore, if I were minister to His Imperial Majesty, I should (I think) confine myself to prayer and solicitation until I received express orders from the President of the United States. But as I am not minister to the Emperor, I rather think that my interference would prove offensive and do more harm than good to M. de Lafayette, and the government of this country might feel itself offended. My opinion is, that the less we meddle in the great quarrel which agitates Europe the better will it be for us, and although the private feelings of friendship or humanity might properly sway us as private men, we have in our public character higher duties to fulfil than those which may be dictated by sentiments of affection towards an individual."

Sudden disappearances and rapid changes were the order of the day in Paris now. People lost their heads; streets and places lost their names in the great whirl of excitement and emotion and the overwhelming desire for change. After the 10th of

August the word *royal* was effaced; citizens named Leroi were requested to take some other that could not suggest hateful royalty to the world. Soon there was to be a protest against the ecclesiastical calendar. The names of the months were to suggest the season they occurred in, so that the Republican years should differ from all other years. Meantime, languishing in the Temple, uncomplainingly enduring the change that had come to them, were the royal family, helplessly submitting to every variety of contumely at the hands of those who had so lately called the King the Defender of his people. Disorder reigned. "The factions seem to be daily more embittered against each other," Morris wrote, September 14th, "and, notwithstanding the common danger, they are far from a disposition to unite. It seems probable that those who possess Paris will dictate to the others. I take an airing in the boulevards to-day."

"I will not pretend to relate, much less to describe, what has lately passed here," Morris wrote to a friend in America during September. "It is too shocking, and among the victims are some whose fate will much affect you. I must not conceal from you that (as I am told) the venerable Madame d'Amville and M. de la Rochefoucault are on their way to this city under guard; the Duchesse de la Rochefoucault remains, I am told, at Roche-Guyon. Poor Charles Chabot is no more." And a few days later he wrote to Mr. Short: "Among the many scenes of bloodshed which have of late been exhibited, you will lament the fate of the Duc de la Rochefoucault, killed in the presence of his aged mother. You seem to shudder at the excesses you had heard of in the beginning of the war. What will be your feelings at the scenes which have lately passed? I will not pretend to describe what I wish to forget, and I fear, also, that a just picture would be attributed rather to the glow of imagination than to the coloring of nature."

"To-day," says the diary for September 14th, "there is nothing from the armies except a confirmation of the raising of the Camp de Maulde, with some circumstances to show that the French have been roughly handled in that quarter. Some people have amused themselves this day in tearing the ear-rings out of people's ears and taking their watches. It is said that some of the violators have been put to death."

"This day [September 17th] accounts arrived from the army to show that Dumouriez has been defeated, or something very like it."

"By the official reports [September 18th] Paris is in a state of imminent danger from the internal movement. The factions grow more inveterate. Everything still wears an appearance of confusion; no authority anywhere. I find, from various channels, that the Brissotine faction are desirous of doing me mischief, if they can.

"Nothing new this day [September 21st], except that the Convention has met and declared they will have no King in France. News are received of the march of the Prussian army towards Rheims, after a long action with the advance of Dumouriez's army, under Kellermann, which was, I presume, to amuse him."

In a letter to Washington, dated September 22d, Morris mentioned that he had hinted at the "dangers attending a residence in this city," in a letter to Mr. Jefferson. "Some of the sanguinary events," he goes on to say, "which have taken place and which were

partial executions of great plans, will point to a natural interpretation thereof; but these were not what I contemplated. Should we ever meet, I will entertain you with the recital of many things which it would be improper to commit to paper, at least for the present. You will have seen that the King is accused of high crimes and misdemeanors, but I verily believe that he wished sincerely for this nation the enjoyment of the utmost degree of liberty which the situation of circumstances will permit. What may be his fate God only knows, but history informs us that the passage of dethroned monarchs is short from the prison to the grave. I discover three capital errors in the conduct of the Duke of Brunswick. First, his proclamation arrogated rights which in no construction could belong to him or his employers, and contained threats which no circumstances could warrant, and which in no supposable success could be executed. They tended, however, to unite the nation in opposing him, seeing that no hope remained for those who had taken any part in the Revolution; and the conduct observed towards M. de Lafayette and his companions was a severe comment on the cruelty of the text. Thus in the same moment he wounded the pride, insulted the feelings, and alarmed the fears of all France; and by his thundering menaces to protect the royal family he plunged them into the situation from which he meant to extricate them. The second error was not to dash at Paris the instant he received the news of the affair of the 10th. He should then have advanced at all hazards, and if in so doing he had declared to the several generals and armies that he expected their assistance to restore their dethroned prince and violated constitution, I am persuaded that he would have met with as much support as opposition. I learn within these two days that the delegates of Lorraine and Alsace had so little hope or, rather, were so thoroughly persuaded that those provinces would join the enemy, that they made unusual haste to come forward lest they should be apprehended. Great activity in that moment would have done wonders; but then he was not ready. The third great error was that, after waiting so long, he came forward at all this season. By menacing the frontiers with great and increasing force vast numbers of the militia would have been drawn to the utmost verge of the French territory. The difficulty of subsisting them there would have been extreme. By taking strong and good positions his troops would have been preserved in full vigor, and the French, wasted by disease, tired of inaction, and stimulated by their natural impatience and impetuosity of temper, would have forced their generals to attack, even if *they* had the prudence to be quiet. The consequence of such attack, excepting always the will of God, must have been a complete victory on his part, and then it would have been next to impossible for them to escape. Then the towns would have surrendered, believing the business to be over, and he might have come as far forward this autumn as the needful transportation of stores would permit. Next spring France would have found it almost impossible to subsist the armies needful for her defence in that part of the country which is most defensible, and of consequence her enemy would have reached the point from which he lately retreated without the smallest difficulty. France has a strong ally in the feelings of those nations who are subject to despotism, but for that very reason she has a mortal enemy in every prince. If (as is very possible) the league should hold firm till next spring it will then have gained considerable auxiliaries, and I am very much mistaken if this nation will make as great efforts as those she is now making. The character of nations must be taken into consideration in all political questions, and that of France has ever been an enthusiastic inconstancy. They soon get tired of a thing. They adopt without examination and reject without sufficient cause. They are

now agog of their Republic, and may perhaps adopt some form of government with a huzza, but that they will adopt a good form, or, having adopted, adhere to it, that is what I do not believe. The future prospect, therefore, is involved in mist and darkness. There is but one sovereign in Europe—the Empress of Russia—who is not in the scale of talents considerably under par.

“I need not tell you, sir, how agreeable it would be to me, and what a load it would take from my mind to have positive instructions and orders from my government. At the same time, I am fully sensible that it may be inconvenient to give me such orders. The United States may wish to temporize and see how things are like to end, and in such case, leaving me at large, the right reserved to avow or disavow me, according to circumstances and events, is for the government an eligible position. My part in the play is not quite so eligible, but although I wish the Senate to be sensible of this, I am far from wishing that any precipitate step be taken to relieve me from it, for I know how contemptible is any private consideration when compared with the public interests. One step, however, seems natural, viz., to say that before any new letters of credence are given it will be proper to know to whom they are to be directed, because the Convention, a mere temporary body, is to be succeeded by some fixed form, and it may be a long time before any such form is adopted.

“Your letter for Lafayette must remain with me yet some time. His enemies here are as virulent as ever, and I can give you no better proof than this. Among the King’s papers was found nothing of what his enemies wished and expected, except his correspondence with M. de Lafayette, which breathes from beginning to end the purest sentiments of freedom. It is, therefore, kept secret, while he stands accused of designs in conjunction with the dethroned monarch to enslave his country. The fact respecting this correspondence is communicated to me by a person to whom it was related confidentially by one of the parties who examined it. You will have seen in my letter to Jefferson a proposition made by Mr. Short respecting M. de Lafayette, with my reply. I had very good reason to apprehend that our interference at that time would have been injurious to him, but I hope that a moment will soon offer in which something may be done for his relief. In reading my correspondence with Mr. Short you must consider that I wrote to the French and Austrian governments, as each would take the liberty to read my letters.”

“I am told [September 26th] that the King of Prussia has made overtures for accommodation with the Assembly. This is, I presume, a military trick. News have arrived that Montesquiou* has broken into Savoy, and is carrying all before him.”

Events since the 29th of August, when he met M. Lebrun and M. Clavière at the Hôtel of Foreign Affairs, had convinced Morris that his suspicions concerning the ministers were correct. “A private speculation was at the bottom of the proposal made to me,” he wrote to Mr. Jefferson, “and this accounts for the wrath I excited by the unwillingness on my part to jump over all bounds of my powers and instructions.”

“There is nothing extraordinary this day [September 30th], except a confirmation of the account that the King of Prussia wishes to treat, and which account I cannot believe.”

“We learn to-day [October 2d] that the Prussian army is retreating. This appears very extraordinary. They are said to be sickly.”

“This morning [October 3d] I have details respecting the retreat of the Prussians. Great sickness and the crafty policy of Austria account for it. This retreat gives room for a long war, should the Allies persist, unless the natural levity of the French should induce them to abandon their young republic in the cradle. There is every reason to apprehend a famine. Accounts arrive of the taking of Spires by General Custine and three thousand prisoners of war. Dumouriez seems extravagantly rejoiced at the retreat of the Prussian army. Re-enforcements are thrown into Lille, so that in all probability that place is saved. The rainy weather is very unfavorable to the sickly troops under the Duke of Brunswick. Everything looks favorably to the cause of the new republic. The weather is mild and pleasant.”

“Confirmations arrive [October 8th] of the taking of Nice, and from every quarter success pours in. ‘Oh mortal, impotent and blind to fate, too soon defeated and too soon elate.’ The weather is very foul. Dumouriez is seriously occupied by the plan of marching into Flanders. He says he will take up his winter-quarters at Brussels. I hear that Worms is taken, in which, by the by, there was no garrison.”

“Some despatches [October 22d], taken by the carelessness of Monsieur, the King’s brother, open up scenes of French good faith, or rather aristocratic folly.”

Of the wearisome uncertainty of his position Morris speaks to Jefferson in a letter of October 23d. He says:

“The unexpected events which have taken place in this country since your letter was written, and of which you will have been informed before this reaches you, will show you that I cannot, until I receive the President’s further orders, take up any of the objects to which it alludes, not having, indeed, the proper powers. I apprehend, also, the United States will wish to see a little into the establishment of the new republic before they take any decided steps in relation thereto. In this case I may be yet a long time without such orders, which is to me a distressing circumstance, because it involves a degree of responsibility for events which no human being can foresee. It may, indeed, be replied that in a position like mine the proper conduct is to preserve a strict neutrality, and, of course, to do nothing; but cases often arise in which to do nothing is taking a part. I had it in contemplation to leave Paris and visit Bordeaux and Marseilles, but I found it necessary to continue here for the sake of such of my countrymen as were in this city, and who might, in the madness of the moment, have been exposed to danger, but certainly to inconvenience; a proof of which is, that the English who remained after Lord Gower went away found it so difficult to obtain passports, though possessed of those he had given, that many, after waiting for weeks in fruitless attendance, went off at all hazards without them.

“As to the domestic affairs here, they are by no means quiet. The great majority of the Convention is united in opposition to a few members who are joined to some chiefs in this city and meditate further revolutions. They aver that those whom they call the Brissotines had no wish to overturn the monarchy, but only to get the loaves and

fishes for themselves and their friends; that the affair of the 10th of August happened not only without their aid, but contrary to their wish; that, having happened, they did indeed take advantage of it to obtain the executive power for their particular friends, but that even then they would not consolidate the Revolution by destroying its enemies—a business, say they, which was effected on the 2d of September and the following days, and which those who now safely enjoy the fruits of it pretend to blame. The Brissotines, on the other hand, contend that they alone are the true friends of republican government, for which they have incessantly labored ever since the second Assembly met; that the attachment they professed to the late Constitution was only simulated, and was necessary to cover their attack upon it; that, in their various decrees, they constantly kept in view the advantage to be gained by obliging the King either to sanction what (though agreeable to the popular wish) was contrary to the Constitution—in which case the Constitution would have become a dead letter and have left the field of contest open between the King and the legislature—or else, if the King withheld his sanction, it turned the voice of the people against him, and left him in consequence exposed to successful attack whenever the favorable moment should present itself; that it was they, in short, who brought forward the plan of an army of twenty thousand republicans under the walls of Paris, and who took private and effectual measures to bring that army into the field if (as was apprehended) the King should put a veto on the decree; that it was owing to these measures that the Bretons and Marseillais and other Fédérés were on the spot to execute the plans of the 10th of August. These are the outlines of the arguments made use of on either side to convince the public that each is exclusively the author of a republic which the people find themselves possessed of by a kind of magic, or, at least, a sleight of hand, and which, nevertheless, they are as fond of as if it were their own offspring. To these main arguments are added a number of subordinate ones, with all the little accessories of time, place, and circumstance. The majority of the Convention, however, uncertain of the people of this city, and apprehensive that they may take it into their heads to make another revolution when they grow tired of the present state of things, have called (privately) for a guard from the different departments.

“This now forms the bone of contention; you will see in the gazettes, the arguments pro and con. I own that I think it a false stroke in politics, though, as a peaceable citizen of Paris and interested in the preservation of order, it is personally agreeable to me. On the ground of argument it is clearly a feature not republican, and *prima facie* implies that the Convention means to do things which a majority of the capital would disapprove; and hence it follows, again, that either the interests of the provinces and the capital are different, or else that the measures in contemplation are contrary to the inclinations of both. But it is not on the ground of theoretic argument that such things are to be tried, but from an examination of probable consequences. A guard of this sort evidently draws a strong, broad line of separation between the city and the Convention. It gives, of course, many means for operating on the people to those who are opposed to the Convention. It is among the things to be calculated on, that the guard, after it has been here some time, should catch the spirit of the city, be that what it may. In such case, instead of protectors they will find enemies in their guard. But admitting that this should not happen, if the guard be feeble it will be overawed; if strong, those who can influence the guard will command the Convention, who in this case will only have changed masters. If any little check should happen on the

frontiers, it will be too unpopular to keep a considerable body of men for parade who might be useful in camp, and as soon as they go the people rise at once to resent the insult offered to them. It seems probable, therefore, that this guard will be among the reasons why the Convention may leave the city, and that would give a very serious shock, and in many ways. It is to be noted, also, that when they take up the report on a form of government, the opposition will find vast resources in the opinions of the majority, let those be what they may.

“With respect to the present temper of the people of this country, I am clearly of opinion the decided effective majority is now for the republic. What may be the temper and opinion six months hence no present sensible man would, I think, take upon him to declare, much less depend on the form of government which shall be presented by the Convention. If vigorous, it is very problematical whether the departments will adopt it, unless compelled by a sense of impending exterior dangers; if feeble, it is (humanly speaking) impossible that it can control the effervescent temper of this people, and that appears sufficiently by the fate of the late constitution. Whether they will be able to strike out that happy mean which secures all the liberty which circumstances will admit of, combined with all the energy which the same circumstances require; whether they can establish an authority which does not exist, as a substitute (and always a dangerous substitute) for that respect which cannot be restored after so much has been done to destroy it; whether, in crying down and even ridiculing religion, they will be able, on the tottering and uncertain base of metaphysic philosophy, to establish a solid edifice of morals—these are questions which time may solve.”

Toward the end of October Morris wrote to various friends in America to assure them of his well-being. To Mr. Samuel Ogden, he said: “The object of this letter is merely to tell you that I am still alive, after all the scenes of horror which have passed in this country, and that I am ever mindful of my friends.” To Robert Morris, he wrote: “If you do not receive my letters, do not hence conclude that I do not write; and even if I do not write, do not hence conclude that I am capable of forgetting my friends. About the time of my arrival in this city I wrote little, having, indeed, no time, because I was obliged to look for a house, furniture, etc.; and to this must be added having to receive and pay visits. But what from that time to this consumes many precious moments is the application of all sorts of persons on all sorts of subjects; and this I must be exposed to, or risk the turning away of some whose objects might be worthy of notice. Others, again, come to tell what they know, and I sit for an hour together hearing patiently what I knew two days before; but sometimes an additional circumstance, sometimes a difference of circumstances, throws new light both upon men and things; besides, if I won’t let them talk when they wish it, they won’t talk when I wish it.

“I think I see you smile and hear you say, ‘What good results from all this?’ I answer, that a man must work at his trade, and I will tell you that I was far the best informed of our corps. This could be of little use to the United States from the distance which intervenes, but is a great means of establishing one’s self so as to bring about the objects of our country, for then it becomes in some sort the interest of the ministers to be well with us. The 10th of August upset all this town, but if I had foreseen the events of that day I should have pursued the same conduct. Seed sown liberally will

produce something, and I think I have pretty good intelligence now of the designs of both those parties which are at daggers-drawing in this country. But there is another reason which at times damps my correspondence, and that is the uncertainty and insecurity of the conveyance.”

In a letter to Rufus King, October 23d, he enters more fully into the conditions of affairs and the difficulties of his position.

“I cannot give you such desirable intelligence respecting the state of things here as I might have done if the late revolution had not taken place, because I find my intercourse of necessity suspended, and until I have orders respecting the new government I am bound to preserve a neutrality of conduct, so that I cannot, as heretofore, peep behind the scenes. Add to this that there is at present no very certain march anywhere, each feeling himself obliged to deviate, according to circumstances, from the course which he might wish. The late revolution has for its remote cause that excess in the human temper which drives men always to extremes if not checked and controlled. For its proximate cause it has the views and defects of the late constitution, and particularly that an executive without power was rendered responsible for events, and that a legislature composed of a single chamber of representatives was secured by every precaution and under no control except some paper maxims and popular opinion; that the people, or rather the populace, a thing which, thank God, is unknown in America, flattered with the idea that they are omnipotent, and disappointed from necessity in the golden prospects originally held out to them, were under no restraint except such as might be imposed by magistrates of their own choice. It resulted inevitably that the executive must be in the power of the legislative, and this last at the mercy of such men as could influence the mob. By reducing the royal authority below all reasonable measure the constitution-makers had created a moral impossibility—that the people should believe the King sincere in his acceptance, even if it had been possible that he should, without regret, have beheld himself reduced from the first place allotted to man to a state as low as to be exposed to insult from the lowest. It was evident, then, the Constitution could not last, and in the overturn three things might happen; viz., the establishment of despotism, the establishment of a good constitution, or the institution of a democracy. The first, under an able and ambitious prince, was inevitable; the second was extremely difficult, not in itself, but because the chiefs of different parties all found themselves committed to different points and opinions. The last was only a natural continuation of the progress of men’s minds in a necessary succession of ideas from the “Bill of Rights.” The advocates for republican government therefore had an easy task, although both to themselves and others it appeared difficult. From the moment that the second Assembly met, a plan was formed among several of the members and others to overturn the Constitution they had just sworn to observe, and establish a republic. This arose in part from the desire of placing themselves better than they could otherwise do, and in part from a conviction that the system could not last and that they would have no share in the administration under a pure monarchy. As they had a strong hold upon the lowest class of people, as the aristocrats and constitutional parties were at open war, as these last avowed openly their wish to amend, in other words, to change the Constitution, which at the same time they assumed to venerate, it was not a difficult matter to assault a monarch who adhered to that form which he could not be supposed to

approve, and whose faults became daily more and more apparent. Add to this that the Court was involved in a spirit of little, paltry intrigue, unworthy of anything above the rank of footmen and chambermaids. Everyone had his or her little project, and every little project had some abettors. Strong, manly counsels frightened the weak, alarmed the envious, and wounded the enervate mind of the lazy and luxurious. Such counsels, therefore (if perchance any such appeared), were approved but not adopted, certainly not followed. The palace was always filled with people whose language, whose conduct, and whose manner were so diametrically opposite to everything like liberty, that it was easy to persuade the people that the Court meant to destroy the Constitution by observing strictly the Constitution. Some persons avowed this tactic, which from the moment of such avowal was no longer worth a doit.

“The King, whose integrity would never listen to anything like the violation of his oath, had nevertheless the weakness to permit those who openly avowed unconstitutional sentiments to approach his person and enjoy his intimacy. The Queen was the more prudent. The republicans (who had also their plan to destroy the Constitution by the Constitution) founded on the King’s personal integrity their operation to destroy his reputation for integrity and hold him out to the world as a traitor to the nation whom he was sworn to protect. They, in consequence, seized every occasion to pass popular decrees which were unconstitutional. If the King used his veto, he was accused of wishing a counter-revolution; if he sanctioned the decree, he was so far lost with those who were injured by the decree, and, of course, became daily more and more unprotected. The success of his enemies was beyond their own expectation. His palace was assaulted. He took refuge with the Assembly, and is now a prisoner of State.”

“You will have seen,” Morris wrote, October 24th, to Alexander Hamilton, “that the late Constitution of this country has upset—a natural accident to a thing which was all sail and no ballast. I desire much to know the state of opinion with us on that subject. The flight of M. de Lafayette, the murder of the Duc de la Rochefoucault and others, with many similar circumstances, have, I know, affected the ideas of some. But what will be the republican sense as to the new Republic? Will it be taken for granted that Louis the Sixteenth was guilty of all possible crimes, and particularly of the enormous one of not suffering his throat to be cut, which was certainly a nefarious plot against the people. Whatever may be the opinions, we are done with kings in France, at least for the present. There are two parties here, who drive hard at each other. The one consists of about half a dozen, and the other of fifteen or twenty, who are at daggers-drawing. Each claims the merit of having begotten the young republic upon the body of the Jacobin Club, and notwithstanding the dispute is very loud and open, the people is as fond of the child as if it were its own. But this has a relation to ancient manners; for there has been a practice here from time to time, whereof there is no memory of man to the contrary, viz., that one set of men were employed in getting children for another set. It is not worth while to detail the characters of those now on the stage, because they must soon give place to others.”

“It is confirmed to me to-day,” says the diary for November 2d, “that the Government have written to America urging my recall. There seems to be much movement in Paris. Robespierre has got through his affairs with *éclat*.”

It was just at this time that Louvet, one of the most resolute men in the Girondist party, accused Robespierre of calumniating the most virtuous patriots, of offering the basest flatteries to a hundred citizens. He described Robespierre's intrigues, his ambition, his great ascendancy over the people, interspersing his vehement philippic with the appalling sentence, "Robespierre, I accuse thee." Morris alludes to the fact that Robespierre, after demanding a delay of eight days to prepare his defence, appeared at the end of that time in the light of a triumphant antagonist, rather than an accused person.

[*]Éléonor-François, the Marquis de Moustier, arrived in America as minister from France at the close of the year 1787. He was rich and close though lavish in display, and showed less tact in dealing with Americans than his predecessors had done, and was consequently less liked. His sister, Madame de Bréhan, with her son, accompanied him to this country. A letter from John Armstrong to General Gates says of Moustier: "We have a French minister here with us, and if France had wished to destroy the little remembrance that is left of her, and her exertions in our behalf, she would have sent just such a minister. Distant, haughty, punctilious, and entirely governed by the caprices of a little singular, whimsical, hysterical old woman whose delight is in playing with a negro child and caressing a monkey." M. de Moustier illuminated his house (in Broadway, near the Bowling Green) splendidly in honor of Washington's inauguration, and gave a grand ball to the President and his suite.

[*]Dulaure: Histoire de Paris

[†]Ibid.

[*]Dulaure: Histoire de Paris.

[†]Ibid.

[†]Ibid.

[§]Arthur Young.

[*]The Duchess of Orleans, wife of the Duke of Orleans, cousin to Louis ??., daughter of the Duc de Penthièvre and sister-in-law of the unfortunate Princesse de Lamballe.

[*]Saint Hérène de Montmorin became Minister of the Interior in 1791. He was condemned by the Revolutionary Tribunal, and executed in September, 1792.

[*]Chrétien Guillaume de Lamoignon de Malesherbes, a judge, philanthropist, and man of letters. In 1775 appointed Minister of the King's Household and of the Police; resigned in 1776. In 1792, when the king was arraigned by the Convention, Malesherbes offered his services, which were accepted, but his act was resented by the Terrorists, and he fell a victim to the guillotine.

[*]Count Arthur Dillon, a French general, chosen a deputy to the States-General in 1789. Later he served under Dumouriez, but was disaffected toward the new régime and was recalled in 1793, imprisoned, and perished on the guillotine in 1794.

[*] Baron de Besenval, lieutenant of the Swiss. The women, owing to his gray hairs, had great confidence in him. He was considered the best raconteur in the salon of Madame Jules de Polignac. He was tried for his life on the charge of being an aristocrat and trying to fly from France, but was acquitted in March, 1790.

[*] The firm of Le Coulteux de Cantaleu, bankers, of Rouen, was of great antiquity even in the time of Louis Fourteenth, who, desirous of encouraging commerce and breaking down the barriers which prejudice had raised against it, offered to give the members of the firm letters of nobility. They refused the offer, saying that they preferred the reputation of old merchants to that of new nobles, and would rather be at the head of one class than at the tail of the other.

[*] Jacques Necker, Prime Minister of France, was a native of Switzerland. The first public exposition of the revenue and expenses of the State was made by him in his famous *compte rendu* published in 1781 and which was received with great favor; but, later, his reforms made for him many enemies at Court and elsewhere. He succeeded Brienne as Prime Minister or Comptroller of Finances about September 1, 1788. He favored the Revolution by granting to the Tiers État a double number of deputies. On the 11th of July, 1789, he was suddenly dismissed, but was recalled on the 21st of July, and remained in office until September, 1790, when, becoming convinced that he was too conservative to satisfy the popular party, he resigned, and passed the rest of his life at Coppet.

[*] The Maréchal de Castries, an able general of France, was Governor-General of Flanders at one time and afterward Minister of Marine. His hotel was among the first destroyed in Paris by the Revolutionists in 1789. He emigrated and found an asylum with the Duke of Brunswick.

[*] M. de Corney, procureur de la ville.

[*] Clermont de Tonnerre was elected by the noblesse to the States-General in 1789. Perished in the massacre of August 10, 1792.

[*] One of the partners in the firm of Le Coulteux de Cantaleu.

[*] Baron de Breteuil, said by Madame Campan to have been the cause of the scandal and result of the affair of the diamond necklace, because of his hatred for the Cardinal de Rohan. The Abbé Vermond threw the entire blame on him. In August, 1789, he was nominated to fill M. Necker's place in the Finances.

[†] Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, Prince of Benevento, a celebrated French diplomatist and wit, born at Paris, February 13, 1754. An accident made him lame for life; and, in consequence, he was required to resign his birthright and enter the church, which profession was very distasteful to him. In 1788 he became Bishop of Autun, and in 1789 member of the States-General, and, enlisting in the service of liberty and equality, he joined the Third Estate. He was proscribed by Robespierre, and took refuge in the United States. In 1799 he co-operated with Bonaparte in the revolution of the 18th Brumaire. He was distinguished for his sarcastic wit and exquisite tact, his

coolness and sobriety, and “masterly inactivity.” He resigned from the cabinet of Louis ?? because he would not sign the humiliating treaty which was concluded with the Allied Powers. He died at Paris in May, 1838, leaving memoirs to be published thirty years after his death.

[*]The Duc de Vauguyon had been the governor of the sons of the Dauphin, who became, respectively, Louis ?, Louis ??, and Charles ?.

[*]Duke of Orleans, cousin of the king and afterward the celebrated revolutionary Philippe Égalité. Never a favorite of the queen, he was tolerated at Court only on account of his wife.

[*]After Louis ??, died the young King Louis ?? pensioned Madame du Barry, besides allowing her the free use of her ill-gotten wealth. She was excluded from appearing at Court and virtually exiled from Paris to the “Château aux Dames.” His forbearance was noticed by her following as more than could have been expected by her, owing to the levity with which she had always treated the Dauphin.

[*]The Prévôts des Marchands were officers of the highest antiquity. The appointment was made by the king, sometimes for two years, or renewed every year at his pleasure, and their jurisdiction extended over the revenues of the Hôtel de Ville, the quays and wharves of the river.

[*]Madame Cabarus was the wife of Count François Cabarus, who in 1782 established the bank of San Carlos, at Madrid. Cabarus was arrested in 1790, but was released, and in 1797 appointed Minister Plenipotentiary at the Congress of Rastadt.

[*]Prince Dimitri Galitzen, a Russian diplomatist and author, at that time Resident Minister at the Hague.

[*]Madame Leray de Chaumont was Miss Grace Coxe of Philadelphia. M. Leray de Chaumont met her while he was in America after the peace. She is reported to have fallen in love with the Frenchman, and declared that if he refused to marry her it would break her heart. He thereupon told her that his attentions to her were marked by no more fervor than were those he paid to others of her sex, but that if she felt so strongly on the subject, he would write to his parents for permission to marry her. Morris escorted her back to America in 1798, and the subsequent history of her peculiarities would be amusing if it were not that she subjected her children, and Morris, who was by their father, during his absence in France, appointed guardian, to ceaseless annoyances.

[*]Jean Antoine Houdon, a French sculptor, was born at Versailles in 1741. About the year 1785 Dr. Franklin gave him a commission to execute the marble statue of Washington which is now in the State House at Richmond, Virginia. He came to Philadelphia to obtain the model of this work. His reputation was increased later in life by his statues of Voltaire and Cicero, and his busts of Rousseau, Franklin, Napoleon, and Ney. He died in 1825.

[*]The Marquis Simon Louis Pierre de Cubières was attached to the person of the king as equerry and served him faithfully at the risk of his own life in the Revolution.

[*]Duc de la Rochefoucault, a patriot and active member of the States-General in 1789. He favored the popular cause in the Revolution, but was massacred at Gisors in 1792.

[†]Vicomte de Noailles was a deputy to the States-General in 1789, and proposed, on the 4th of August, the suppression of feudal rights and other privileges of the aristocracy. Soon after the commencement of the Reign of Terror he emigrated to the United States. In 1804 he was killed in a naval engagement with the English. He married a sister of Madame de Lafayette.

[*]Morris had been ill with a chill and fever.

[*]Duc Armand de Vignerot d'Aguillon was the second of the noblesse to renounce his privileges in the session of August 4th, warmly supported the popular cause in the States-General, and later took command of one of the armies; was prosecuted in 1792, but escaped by flight.

[†]Jacques François Baron de Menou. Served in the Republican army in 1793, in the Vendean campaign, and commanded the National Guard which suppressed the insurrection in the Faubourg St. Antoine.

[*]Baron de Besenval was tried by M. Déséze, a celebrated advocate, and discharged, March, 1790.

[*]Count Charles Hector d'Estaing, commandant of the National Guard at Versailles, was intimate at Court. Madame Campan says he used to dine with the butchers at Versailles, and flattered the people by the meanest condescensions. He worked hard to save the king and queen, and was himself guillotined in April, 1794.

[*]Count Charles Claude d'Angivilliers, a patron of arts and sciences, a favorite of Louis ??., who made him Director of Royal Gardens, Manufactures, and Buildings; died in 1810.

[*]Lafayette had done most efficient work in Paris as commandant of the National Guard. From the 14th to the 22d of July he, at the risk of his life, saved seventeen persons from hanging and other violent deaths in different quarters of the city.

[*]The demolition of the Bastille was begun at once, and some of the prisoners were found buried among the stones.

[*]Foulon was conseiller d'état. His anti-popular opinions cost him his life.

[*]Anne César, Chevalier de la Luzerne, ambassador to London in 1788. He had been sent in 1779 to the United States as minister, and, without instructions from his government, performed the responsible duties of the position with credit. He died at London in 1791.

[†] Sir John Sinclair originated the Board of Agriculture, and wrote many valuable books, essays on agriculture, etc.

[*] Anne Seymour Damer, the sculptress, was born in 1748, and was the only child of Field Marshal Conway. Her family connections were of the very best blood in England, and her birth and beauty entitled her to a life of ease and luxury, but she early developed a taste for art and studies, which taste her cousin, Horace Walpole, took great pleasure in directing. David Hume seems to have given her the first impulse toward the art of sculpture when, on one occasion, while walking together, they met a vender of plaster casts. Hume stopped to speak to the lad, looked at his wares, and gave him a shilling. The lively Miss Conway laughed at him for wasting time on such paltry images; whereupon the historian gently reproved her, telling her not to be so severe, that it had required both science and genius to make even such poor imitations, and, he continued, “with all your attainments you cannot produce such works.” After this conversation she set herself to model in wax, and finally to cut the marble. Mrs. Damer was one of the trio of beautiful women who canvassed London during the bitterly contested election of Charles James Fox for Westminster. On the death of Horace Walpole Mrs. Damer found herself the possessor of his Gothic villa at Strawberry Hill, and here, amid the splendid confusion of things valuable and otherwise, and surrounded by her chosen companions, Mrs. Berry, Mrs. Garrick, Mrs. Siddons, and, last but not least, Joanna Baillie, she passed the last years of her life. She died in her eightieth year, after an eventful and interesting career.

[*] John B. Church had been Commissary-General under Lafayette in America during the Revolution; an Englishman of very high social position and great wealth, he made himself prominent as a citizen of New York, and while there married Miss Angelica Schuyler, a member of a family who warmly espoused the cause of America. On his return to England Mr. Church found himself out of favor with the Tories, but thoroughly independent in politics as in purse, he soon found friends among the Pitt and Fox party, and was elected to Parliament from Wendover. Mr. Church’s house in London, was the frequent resort of Pitt, Fox, and Burke. Talleyrand sought refuge under his roof, and through Church’s exertions, when ordered by government to leave London in twenty-four hours Talleyrand was enabled to flee to America.

[*] The Abbé Galiani, who wrote the *Dialogues sur le Commerce des Blés*.

[*] Vestris, an Italian dancer, had made his debut in Paris in 1748. He was popularly styled the “God of dancing.” His vanity was excessive, but amusing, as is attested by the familiar anecdote that he was once heard to observe, that Frederick, King of Prussia, Voltaire and himself were the only great men of the century. He died in 1808.

[*] Count Florida Blanca, a Spanish statesman, and prime minister in 1777. He made great efforts to recover Gibraltar, in which attempt, however, his plans were frustrated—but the Spanish captured Florida, Minorca, the Bahamas, and a fleet of fifty-five merchant-vessels.

[*] Marquis Stanislas de Boufflers, a mediocre French writer.

[*]Mounier was a man of strong judgment and inflexible character, who considered the system of the English constitution as the type of representative government and wished to effect the revolution by accommodation.

[†]Marquis de Lally-Tollendal, a deputy from the noblesse to the States-General in 1789, was one of the minority of his order who united with the Tiers État and favored reform. He emigrated to England in 1792.

[*]Malet-du-Pin was said to be the sole newspaper man in Paris during the Revolution who, without insult or flattery, gave correct analyses of the debates.

[*]General Sir Howe Whiteford Dalrymple, a British general, fought in several campaigns in the war against France.

[*]The most sumptuous table, perhaps, in Paris was that of M. de Laborde, over which presided his wife, a sensible woman, who, wiser than many others of the financial set, took with pleasure and graciously the advances of the *grandes dames*, but withal maintained her dignity.

[*]Cardinal de Rohan, so famous for his complicity in the affair of the diamond necklace.

[*]Necker's plan of finance, which Morris frequently mentions, was an effort to induce the National Assembly to consent to the conversion of the Caisse d'Escompte into a national bank; the commissioners to be chosen by the National Assembly; the notes put successively in circulation to be fixed at two hundred and forty millions; the nation by a special decree of the National Assembly, sanctioned by his Majesty, to guarantee the notes, which were to be stamped with the arms of France and the legend "*Garantie Nationale*." He also proposed that the capital of the Caisse d'Escompte, which represented then thirty millions in circulation and seventy deposited, should be augmented to fifty millions by a creation of twelve thousand five hundred shares payable in silver. Loustalot opposed Necker's scheme on the ground that it would simply associate the nation in the bankruptcy of the Caisse d'Escompte, for if the Caisse d'Escompte had the credit, it had no use for a national guarantee, and if the nation had the credit, it was not necessary for the Caisse d'Escompte to establish a Caisse Nationale. Bouchez and Roux mention that Necker's project made but little sensation, as several of the journals did not even notice it.

[*]M. Boutin, who had filled the offices of Collector General of the Revenue, Councillor of State, and Paymaster of the Navy, had made, at an enormous expense, a garden, which he called "Tivoli," but for which the popular appellation was *La Folie-Boutin*. It was a ravishing garden, with surprises in the way of grottoes, shrubbery, and statues at every turn, and a pavilion furnished with princely luxury. In this bewildering place M. Boutin gave suppers no less sumptuous than the surroundings.

[*]William Short, charge d'affaires during Jefferson's official residence at Paris, was at this time the only representative of the United States in Paris.

[*]Abbé Sieyès, a central figure through all the years of the French Revolution, from the moment of writing, in 1789, the brochure entitled, “Qu’est-ce que le Tiers État,” until ten years later he was dismissed and placed in the hands of Bonaparte. The constitution he drew for France was conceived with a view of transforming the popular beliefs and principles; beginning a new order of things, not working to perfect the old. He was of bourgeois birth.

[*]Washington had intrusted to Morris an order for the purchase of table-ornaments to be used at his state dinners at Philadelphia.

[*]The Duke and Duchess of Orleans had lived happily until 1789, when Madame de Genlis came between them, and the management of the children was given to her. The first open quarrel they had was when the duchess refused to accompany the duke on his mission to England, but she was subsequently reconciled to him. About this time a separation had taken place between them, and a lawsuit had been commenced to obtain the repayment of her dowry. This demand, in the shattered condition of the duke’s finances, meant ruin. At length, worn out with worry, the duchess quitted her husband’s palace on the twenty second anniversary of their wedding-day, April 5, 1791, and sought shelter with her father, the Duc de Penthièvre. Later the Princesse de Lamballe undertook to reconcile the duke and duchess, and the duke offered to restore the dowry, provided the duchess would settle an annuity of one hundred thousand livres on each of her children, entirely independent of both parents. The duchess rejected these terms, but offered to be responsible for the entire support of the Comte de Beaujolais and Mademoiselle d’Orléans, they to be immediately confided to her care. Scarcely was this proposal made than Mademoiselle d’Orléans was sent with Madame de Genlis to England, and the duchess did not see her again for ten years. A suit was brought against the duke in October, 1791, which was continued even when the husband and wife were separated by many leagues, and the decree of final separation was pronounced, in November, 1792, only a few weeks before the duke lost his head.

[*]Jean François Marmontel, the successor to D’Alembert as perpetual secretary of the French Academy, a writer and critic, was in the first rank of the literature of the eighteenth century. Full of resources and of ideas, he expressed himself with precision and force. Through the epoch of the Revolution his course was dignified, prudent, and at the same time generous. He passed those stormy years in retirement in the country, and died in 1799.

[*]Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury of the United States.

[*]In October, 1789, Washington wrote to Morris, and desired him, in “the capacity of private agent and on the authority and credit of this letter, to converse with His Britannic Majesty’s ministers on these points; viz., whether there be any, and what objections to performing those articles in the treaty which remain to be performed on his part, and whether they incline to a treaty of commerce with the United States on any, and what terms?” The office of Secretary of State being at this time unfilled, Washington, to avoid delays, made this communication under his own hand. This letter is the one referred to in Morris’s interview with the Duke of Leeds;

[*]The effort to purchase Fairfax lands was simply a speculation on Morris's part. It was after the death of the sixth Lord Fairfax, the recluse of Greenway Court in Virginia, when the State of Virginia had passed acts of confiscation of all his lordship's lands, as well as of his lord proprietorship. The acts recited that the confiscation was made because the title to them had descended to an alien enemy, his brother Robert, the seventh lord. Afterward it was insisted that the title of the Fairfax heirs in the lands which the sixth Lord Fairfax had appropriated to himself in severalty, either by deeds made to himself as lord proprietor, or by surveys or other acts, indicating his intention to appropriate them to himself individually, should be allowed by the State, which was done by an act of legislature, procured to be passed by John Marshall, afterward chief justice, and who had himself become a purchaser of a considerable tract of these lands. After that act of legislature was passed, Dr. Denny Martin Fairfax, of Leeds Castle, nephew of the sixth lord, sold all of those lands which had not been previously sold. In 1789 Robert, seventh Lord Fairfax, was still alive. There was no conclusion arrived at in the negotiation in which Morris was interested.

[*]The continued occupation of the posts along the frontier by the British troops had occasioned much dissatisfaction in America, and, as early as 1785, Adams, when sent on his mission to Great Britain, had told Lord Carmarthen that perhaps the most pressing of all the six points for discussion was the retention of the posts, which had deprived the "merchants of a most profitable trade in furs, which they justly considered as their right." In 1785 this subject was also mentioned to Pitt by Mr. Adams, but was always met with the same answer, that it was a matter connected with the debts. It was not until 1796, under Mr. Jay's treaty, that the much-disputed frontier-posts were surrendered by Great Britain to the United States.

[*]Richard Price, a dissenting minister and speculative philosopher, born in 1723, was the intimate friend of Dr. Franklin and Dr. Priestley. He strongly advocated the cause of American liberty, and in 1778 he was invited by Congress to become a citizen of the United States. This offer he declined. He was an ardent supporter of the French Revolution and drew down upon himself thus the denunciations of Burke in the famous "Reflections." He died at London in 1791.

[*]Count Alexandre La Meth, a deputy of the noblesse in 1789, who united with the Third Estate to form the national party.

[†]Antoine Charles Pierre Barnave, a revolutionist and an orator, and a member of the States-General in 1789.

[‡]Isaac René Gui Chapelier, an eminent lawyer, among the ablest members of the States-General. He drafted the degree abolishing the nobility, and favored the Feuillants, or the side of the constitution. In 1794 he was executed on the charge of having conspired in favor of royalty.

[§]Jacques François Baron de Menou served in the republican army in 1793, in the Vendean campaign, and commanded the national guard which suppressed the insurrection in the Faubourg St. Antoine.

[¶] Armand de Vignerot Duplessis Richelieu, Duc d'Aquillon, warmly supported the popular cause in the States-General in 1789, was the second of the noblesse to renounce his privileges in the session of August 4th, took command of the armies, was proscribed in 1792, but escaped by flight.

[*] M. Duport du Tertre, a member of the electoral body of Paris, became Garde des Sceaux, or, rather, Minister of Justice (for the post of chancellor was abolished soon after he came into the ministry) early in November, 1790. At this time, of the old ministry there only remained Saint-Priest of the Interior, and Montmorin of Foreign Affairs. The advent of M. Duport du Tertre excited great enthusiasm in ministerial circles. He was a simple, modest man with a limited fortune, and of recognized uprightness of character. He signed the order of arrest of the fugitive king, and finally lost his head in June, 1791.

[*] Mademoiselle Duplessis was a member of Madame de Flahaut's family.

[*] In the salon of Madame d'Angivilliers, so frequented during the eighteenth century, and so full of economic and advanced ideas of all kinds, the Revolution found congenial soil and flourished vigorously.

[†] M. Duportail succeeded M. la Tour du Pin. He had gained distinction in the American Revolution.

[*] The Bishop of Autun was accused of playing so high that he made a public acknowledgment of his gains in the *Chronique de Paris*. "I have gained in six months," he says, "not in the gambling-houses, but in the society of chess-clubs, about thirty thousand francs," and seemed to think he had made atonement by having had the courage to acknowledge his errors. He did not, however, escape from the sarcasm of the pen of Camille Desmoulins, who said: "The Bishop d'Autun feels called upon to bring back all the usages of the primitive church, and among them public confession."

[*] Unfortunately Morris does not give this conversation or his authority.

[*] Louis Blanc, in his history of the French Revolution, gives a startling description of the effect of farming the revenue which prevailed in France until this year of 1791. Of eight principal branches of the revenue five were farmed. The salt tax, the subsidy, the land, and the tobacco were all indirect contributions. The history of the farmers-general was the martyring of the tax-payers; for the tax-gatherers France was a conquered country. They bled the people, and they had prisons and galleys ready to punish them. Adam Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations*, suggested "that by subjecting all those taxes to an administration under the immediate inspection and direction of government, the exorbitant profits of the farmers-general might be added to the revenue." "The most dreadful laws," he said, "exist in a country where the revenue is farmed."

[*] Étienne Brémond, of whom Morris so often speaks in his diary, had been successively curé at Chartres, canon of the cathedral, canon of a church in Paris, and

docteur de la Sorbonne. His chagrin at the imprisonment of the king threw him into a painful condition of health, which resulted in his death in January, 1795.

[*]The Abbé Maury defended with skill and eloquence the cause of the monarchy, the church, and the nobles in the National Assembly. He became afterward an archbishop and a cardinal, and died in 1817, having witnessed the Bourbon restoration. He was born in 1746.

[†]Count Charles de la Marck was Minister of Marine from October, 1790, to May, 1791.

[‡]Count Mercy d'Argenteau was Austrian ambassador from the Court of Vienna to Paris in 1791. He advised the flight of the royal family.

[*]Félix Vicq d'Azyr possessed great attractions of person and manner, and as a writer, professor, and orator was judged a worthy successor to Buffon at the French Academy. He was the great promoter of the Academy of Medicine, and he represented a new phase in the progress of social science; Vicq d'Azyr was perhaps the first physician who practised his profession in Paris without a wig. He was chosen as the physician of Marie Antoinette, and his short career embraced all the time that was accorded to the reign of Louis ??., for he only survived a short time after the 21st of January, 1793, and perished a moral victim to the terrors of the Revolution. He was born in Normandy in April, 1748.

[†]The last of the philosophers of the eighteenth century was M. de Condorcet, secretary of the Academy of Sciences, the successor of d'Alembert, the last correspondent of Voltaire, and the friend of Turgot. In his salon, which was the centre of thinking Europe, where distinguished persons from far and near were to be found, perhaps the most attractive feature was Madame Condorcet, his lively, refined, and sympathetic wife. Always master of himself, Condorcet talked little, listened to everything, profited by everything, and forgot nothing. His sympathy was far-reaching, ready to embrace everything, from the profound questions of the moment to the latest fashion in woman's dress. In 1789 he ardently embraced the popular cause, and voted generally with the Girondists, but not for the king's death. He attacked violently the Constitution of 1793, and was obliged to seek safety against the Revolution, and for eight months he found an asylum in the house of Madame Vernet, where he wrote his famous *Progrès de l'esprit humain*. A longing for fresh air impelled him to leave his house; he was arrested, thrown into prison, and ended his life by poison.

[*]On the 27th of January, 1791, Washington wrote to the President of the National Assembly acknowledging the tribute paid to Franklin, which had been sent to Washington in the form of a letter of condolence. He at the same time desired the president to convey to the National Assembly his interest in their efforts to establish in France a firm constitution for the diffusion of the true principles of liberty, assimilating as well as ameliorating the condition of mankind, and convincing them that their interest would best be promoted by mutual good will and harmony.

[*]George Grenville, second marquis, who during his father's lifetime was summoned to Parliament as Baron Gower. His lordship, who was a privy councillor and Knight of the Garter, was created Duke of Sutherland, January 28, 1833. He married, September, 1785, Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland, and Baroness of Strathnaver in her own right.

[*]The salon of Madame de Trudaine was known familiarly as the Salon du Garçon Philosophe. At one or two grand dinners and suppers a week she entertained all the dukes, ambassadors, gentlemen of letters and finance, strangers, and ministers. The conversation was at the same time solid and piquant. The mistress of the salon sometimes marred the perfect accord of her guests by her indifference.

[*]The Club of '89, which Morris here alludes to as the Quatre-vingt-neuf, was a dismemberment of that of the Jacobins. Malouet and some of his friends, becoming alarmed at the extreme tendencies of the Club des Jacobins, conceived the plan of forming a rival society, which they accordingly did in April, 1790. The schismatics installed themselves in superb apartments in the Palais Royal, under the name of the Club of '89. It would seem that the new club was by no means uncorrupt, when Siéyès could exclaim, in an access of virtuous brutality, "that with the exception of two or three Jacobins of whom I have a horror, I like all the members of that club, and with the exception of a dozen members among you I distrust all of you." While the Club of '89 enjoyed their beautiful surroundings, the old Jacobin Club of the Rue St. Honoré manufactured, by the light of their flambeaux, the means to push the Revolution to its completion.

[*]M. Terrier de Monciel belonged to a distinguished family of Franche Comté. He was Roland's successor as minister in June, 1792, just before the catastrophe of the 20th of June, which he had not foreseen and which it would have been impossible to prevent, though he did all in his power, however, to re-establish order. He said in the National Assembly, the day after, that "the action against the king should put all France into eternal mourning." Forced, finally, to leave the ministry, he however remained in Paris during the revolution of August 10th, and afterward had the good fortune to escape the proscription of 1793. He died in September, 1831.

[*]Camus, one of the deputies, and council of the clergy, represented Jansenism under all its aspects. The violence and strength of his asceticism were somewhat softened by a love of literature. He was a stoic, and owing to him more than to anyone else was passed the legislative measures through which, under the name of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, came the *bouleversement* of the clergy.

[*]Antoine Charles Barnave, member of the States-General in 1789, and one of the founders of the club called "The Friends of the Constitution." He, with one other, was appointed to attend the king in his compulsory return from Varennes. He afterward became a defender of the throne and Constitution, and was executed in 1793.

[†]Alexandre Lameth was one of the deputies of the Noblesse who united with the Third Estate. After Mirabeau's death the two, Lameth and Barnave, were for a short

time the master-spirits of the Assembly, and co-operated with Lafayette in the effort to defend the Constitution after the king's arrest at Varennes.

[*]Sébastien Michel Amelot, Bishop of Vannes, came of an ancient family who had given a great many magistrates to the Parlement of Paris. He was *Ministre de la Maison du Roi* under Louis ??., refused to take the civil oath, and many of the clergy in his diocese followed his example. The dominant party, near the end of 1790, foreseeing that, if Amelot were allowed to reside exclusively in his diocese, it would be difficult to introduce the new order of things, raised suspicions against him which exposed his life to the greatest peril, and ordered him before the Constituent Assembly. When that Assembly terminated its session, he went to Switzerland. He died in 1829 at Paris.

[†]A plan of a discourse for the king, which Morris drew up, hoping to influence him in the acceptance of the Constitution.

[*]Chevalier de Beaumetz, a French jurist and member of the Constituent Assembly. He wrote a valuable work on the "Penal Code of the Jurymen of the Chief National Court, 1792." To escape the Reign of Terror he emigrated in 1792.

[*]Fezensac de Montesquiou, a French ecclesiastic deputy from the clergy to the States-General in 1789, was twice elected President of the National Assembly. He fled to England during the Terror, but after the second restoration returned to France, and received the title of duke.

[*]Sir William and Lady Hamilton were returning to Naples from London, where he had, early in the summer of 1791, privately married the fair Emma. Sir William, having found that even at the Court of Naples it was not sufficient to have made Emma his wife in a private manner, had in the spring of this year hastened to London with her to rectify the mistake, and have her acknowledged by the English sovereign.

[*]Fontenelle, the friend of Madame Necker and Madame de Geoffrin, early gave promise of a fine intellect, and wrote with a rare purity of expression and with delicate analysis. Madame de Geoffrin says of him that he was never angry, he never interrupted anyone, and always listened in preference to speaking. Said Madame Geoffrin to him one day: "M. de Fontenelle, vous n'avez jamais ri." "Non, répondit-il, je ne l'ai jamais fait." Fontenelle was the nephew of Corneille, and was born at Rouen.

[*]On accepting the Constitution.

[*]The whipping of women in Paris was not always according to law, and flagellation never occupied a conspicuous place in the penal code of France; but the rod had always flourished with vigor in domestic life and in schools. When, however, Paris was in the hands of the *tricoteuses*, and savage outlaws ruled in the streets; and, again, when the *jeunesse dorée* had the upper hand, flagellation was not forgotten. Nuns were waylaid in the streets and shamefully beaten by the *tricoteuses*, and young girls were publicly whipped by the delicate libertines of the *jeunesse dorée*. An old book,

called “The Château at Tours,” graphically describes a kind of romantic whipping club which existed in Paris shortly before the “Terror,” composed exclusively of ladies of rank and fashion. After a trial, the lady who was found guilty of some misdemeanor was disrobed and birched by her companions. Ladies of rank had long used the birch as a means of settling their personal quarrels, and a slight, or a *jeu d’esprit* at the expense of the ladies and gentlemen of the court, was not infrequently revenged by whipping.

[*]Pierre Victor Malouet was a member of the States-General in 1789, and became prominent as a Liberal Royalist.

[*]It was this Princesse de Tarente (née Châtellon, the wife of Prince de Tarente, of a Neapolitan family) who proved herself such a heroine in the cause of Marie Antoinette during the September massacres of 1792. After two days of unwearied attention to the dying people among whom she staid, she was taken before the tribunal, and there, surrounded by bleeding bodies, they tried to force from her a confirmation of the calumnies against the queen. Failing to shake her courage by threats or promises, they ordered her to prison; whereupon she demanded, in a firm, clear, commanding voice, instant death or liberty. Her courage so electrified the spectators that they carried her in triumph to her house and left her unmolested. As soon as possible she left France, and subsequently went to St. Petersburg, where she died in 1814.

[*]The Abbé Guillaume Raynal, French philosopher and historian, renounced his profession when he went to Paris. In consequence of a philosophical and political history which he wrote, and in which he declaimed against the political and religious institutions of France, he was arrested and exiled for some years and the book was burned. He eventually returned to Paris, and died there in 1796.

[*]Pierre Louis Dabus, called Préville, was acknowledged, by all the critics who saw him play, as near perfection as possible. “Le Bourreau bienfaisant” was one of his greatest successes. Préville appeared first at the Comédie Française in 1753, and became a great favorite with Louis ?? . With a pension he retired in 1786, but the French stage being in a bad way in 1791, he consented, although seventy years of age, to appear. His advent was greeted with enthusiasm, for he had seemingly lost none of his physical forces. Again he retired from the stage, in 1792, but appeared again in 1795, when, in the midst of his performance of the “Mercure galant,” whilst he was being vehemently applauded, he suddenly gave signs of mental aberration. He was born in September, 1721, and died in 1799.

[*]M. de Fleurieu.

[*]Duport, Lameth, and Barnave had been known as the triumvirate since the autumn of 1789.

[*]The private secretary of Lord Gower at this time was William Huskisson, of Birch Moreton Court, Worcestershire, who met his death at the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway at Parkside, near Newton, on September 15, 1830.

[*]Marie-Gabriel-Florens-Auguste, Comte de Choiseul, was born at Paris, September 27, 1752. After a brilliant success in society he travelled much in Greece and Asia Minor, and gave to the world an account of all of his adventures in his “Voyage pittoresque.” Louis ?? in 1784 sent him to Constantinople as ambassador. In 1792 M. de Choiseul was proscribed, and fled to Russia. He returned to France in 1802, and died there in 1817, aged seventy-four years.

[*]Conference at Pilnitz, August, 1791.

[*]Count Alexandre de Woronzow was President of the Department of Commerce under Catherine ?. of Russia, and in this capacity signed several treaties with England and the different Northern powers. Subsequently he became ambassador at London. Under Alexander he was made Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Chancellor of the Empire. Highly educated, and with great ability, he was, nevertheless, exceedingly irascible, and not always cautious in guarding diplomatic secrets. He died in 1805.

[*]George Macartney, Earl of Macartney, was appointed in 1764 envoy to Russia, and succeeded in negotiating an alliance between that country and England. Subsequently he was made Governor of Granada, and later of Madras. The same position was offered to him in Bengal, but he declined it. After the fulfilment of a confidential mission to Italy he was, in 1792, appointed the first envoy of Britain to China. Born in 1737, died, 1806.

[*]Claude François Dumouriez, probably more than any other French general, influenced the first period of the French wars at this time. He was born at Cambrai, January 25, 1739, and died in England, March 14, 1823, after a long and varied career.

[*]Lafayette’s request, in his own name and that of the army, was the punishment of those who figured in the attempted insurrection of the 20th and the destruction of the sect of the Jacobins.

[*]The manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick, which was dated the 25th of July, at Coblenz, and printed in all the royalist newspapers in Paris on the 28th, actually contained all the startling details which Morris notes; and the knowledge that Paris was to be invaded by enemies—by Austrians and Prussians—led by a general whose language was so haughty and whose threats were so violent, produced from all quarters promises of active resistance.

[*]Translation of above Letter.—Her Royal Highness will find enclosed the only account which could be kept, under the circumstances. An explanation is here necessary. Mr. M—, who sometimes allowed himself to submit to their Majesties his ideas concerning public affairs, placed in the hands of Count Montmorin (before the acceptance of the fatal law called the French Constitution) a memorandum in English with the draft of a proposed French speech. The memorandum—the more important of the two documents, as it explained the other—was submitted to the king, but only after his acceptance. His Majesty asked for a translation, and M. de Montmorin requested the author to undertake the work. He did so, but sent the whole to His

Majesty direct, begging to be pardoned some of his expressions, perhaps too energetic. His Majesty had conceived opinions similar to those expressed in the proposed speech, and sustained by the arguments of the memorandum; the king regretted to have to give up these ideas. The conduct of M. de Montmorin thus appeared too sharp, and the confidence His Majesty entertained until then in this nobleman became clouded. But the king's fearful situation forced His Majesty to make use of persons but imperfectly known. Among those brought, through circumstances, to enter the ministry, was a M. T rier de Monciel, a man known by Mr. M— to be faithful to the king, inspite of his more than suspicious connections. Mr. M— made, therefore, bold to state to His Majesty that the king could confide in M. de Monciel. The result was that this gentleman was intrusted with the most important of all undertakings, that of extricating His Majesty from his perilous situation. M. de Monciel had frequent consultations with Mr. M—, and, among the many means suggested, the most essential was found to be the departure of the royal family. All measures to that end were so well taken that success seemed infallible; but the king (for reasons it is useless to mention here) gave the plan up, the very morning fixed for the departure, even after the Swiss Guard had left Courbevoie to help to cover His Majesty's retreat. The ministers, all gravely compromised, handed in their resignations. The moment was critical indeed, as His Majesty already possessed proofs of the plot concocted against his safety. One issue only was left to the king; to come out victorious from the imminent struggle, to take place as soon as the conspirators should think themselves sufficiently strong. M. de Monciel, having conversed with their Majesties, consented to serve them again in this matter, although out of the ministry. He busied himself, with others, to raise a sort of Royal Army, a very delicate task, that could but endanger the fate of all those who would take part in it if the enemies of the king should triumph. M. de Monciel took as his coadjutor a M. Br mond, a man full of courage, zeal, and fidelity, but hot-headed, talkative, and imprudent. The latter defect was probably an essential quality, since the situation in which the royal family found itself kept away all those whose zeal cooled off in presence of such dangers. Toward the end of July His Majesty caused Mr. M— to be thanked, in the king's name, for the advice given, stating at the same time His Majesty's regret not to have followed it. The king requested also Mr. M— to have an eye on what was done for His Majesty's service, and to accept the deposit of the king's moneys and papers. The answer stated that His Majesty could always depend on Mr. M—'s best efforts, but that his house did not appear to him any more secure than the Tuileries, as Mr. M— had been for so long the object of the conspirators' hatred that neither the papers nor the money of the king would be safe in Mr. M—'s house. For the money, as it bore no distinctive mark of proprietorship, he would consent to take charge of it and to make such use of it as might be ordered, in case His Majesty could find no one else for the trust. As the result of his consent, M. de Monciel brought to Mr. M—, on the 22d of July, 547,000 livres, 539,000 of which were still there on August 2d, being used according to the king's orders. The sum of 449,750 livres, paid out on August 2d, were to be converted by Br mond into louis d'or. He bought actually 5,000 louis d'or and divided them in twenty-louis purses. These were to be distributed to various persons who chose to follow the initiated ones to such places where they would have to fight under appointed chiefs. To render these counter-conspirators even more useful, they were to be chosen, by preference, among Marseillais and other agents of the conspirators. Therefore, so as to avoid deceit, it

was agreed that the moneys were to be paid only after the services should have been rendered. In the meantime the 5,000 louis remained in Mr. M—'s house. The events of the 10th of August are too well known to necessitate a rehearsal of such a painful story. On that day M. de Monciel, as he took refuge with his family and several other persons at Mr. M—'s, brought with him 200,000 livres. A few days later he was forced to go into hiding. Brémond was already hidden somewhere else, and Madame de Monciel had to do her best to save the most compromised ones, those who could endanger the king all the more because they were well known and their acts strongly suspected.

D'Angrémont was captured and sacrificed; he had the courage to keep silent. By means of money, they managed to have some of the others escape, and some kept in hiding. At that time, Brémond sent a person he had confided the secret to, for the 5,000 louis d'or, and they were paid him, not only because it was important not to give to a man of Brémond's temper any occasion for some insane outburst, in deed or speech, but more especially because it was believed that he had agreed with M. de Monciel to use that money to help some essential undertaking. But there was no project of the kind. Much to the contrary, Brémond had, with an inconceivable imprudence, betrayed an important secret so as to place a pretty large sum in hands out of which it has since been found impossible to withdraw one sou. When the Duke of Brunswick entered France, Mr. M—, persuaded that if his Royal Highness reached Paris the assignats (paper-money) would have but an insignificant value, and knowing, besides, how extravagant were the plans of the rulers of France, sent to England 104,800 livres, a value, at the time, of £2,518, placing thus this sum out of the fluctuations of events. About one-fourth (£600) of it he caused to be paid to M. de Monciel, then in London, and also negotiated drafts for the remainder, to satisfy Madame de Monciel's demands. Finally, there remained the sum of 6,715 livres, which Mr. M— kept until satisfied that all those whose statements could have been made use of by the enemies of the king to legitimize their accusations were fully out of reach. Of course, such accusations were false and slanderous, as the king had simply been acting in self-defence. But the conspirators had success in their favor, and would not have failed to make use of the facts above stated. The remaining 6,715 livres have had the fate of the assignats, and lost much of their value. One can fix the exchange rate at—. That sum Mr. M— will have the honor of paying to any person her Royal Highness may kindly designate. He had started for Switzerland, in an attempt to bring about the repayment of the 5,000 louis, but circumstances have closed the road to Switzerland. He has therefore come to Vienna, solely to communicate the above facts. Mr. M— sees, with regret, that not only have all attempts toward a restitution of the sum been fruitless, but that the most extraordinary excuses are put forward in the matter. A detailed narrative would occupy too much space; a *résumé* of what Mr. M— desired to be submitted to her Royal Highness is to be found herein. Her good sense will complete it. Thus will her Royal Highness be shown now necessary it is to keep secret all that concerns so closely the best and most unfortunate of kings. Mr. M— earnestly begs her Royal Highness to accept the homage of his inviolable attachment.

[*]The famous band of Provençal volunteers brought to Paris from Marseilles, together with all the vagabonds the Jacobins could engage to come, after the king refused to sign the decree to establish a camp of 20,000 men outside the city.

[*]Anne Pierre, Marquis de Montesquiou-Ferzensac was brought to the special notice of Monsieur (Louis ??.) by his taste for letters. Appointed in 1771 premier écuyer, he became a maréchal de camp in 1780. In the American Revolution he served with distinction. A deputy to the States General from the Nobles in 1789, he, after the king's arrest at Varennes, was called to command the Army of the South. After achieving the conquest of Savoy, in 1792, without bloodshed, he was accused of compromising the dignity of the nation, and retired to Switzerland. Born in 1741, he died in 1798.