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Jeanne Marie Roland de la Platière, *An Appeal to Impartial Posterity, by Citizenness Roland* [1793]



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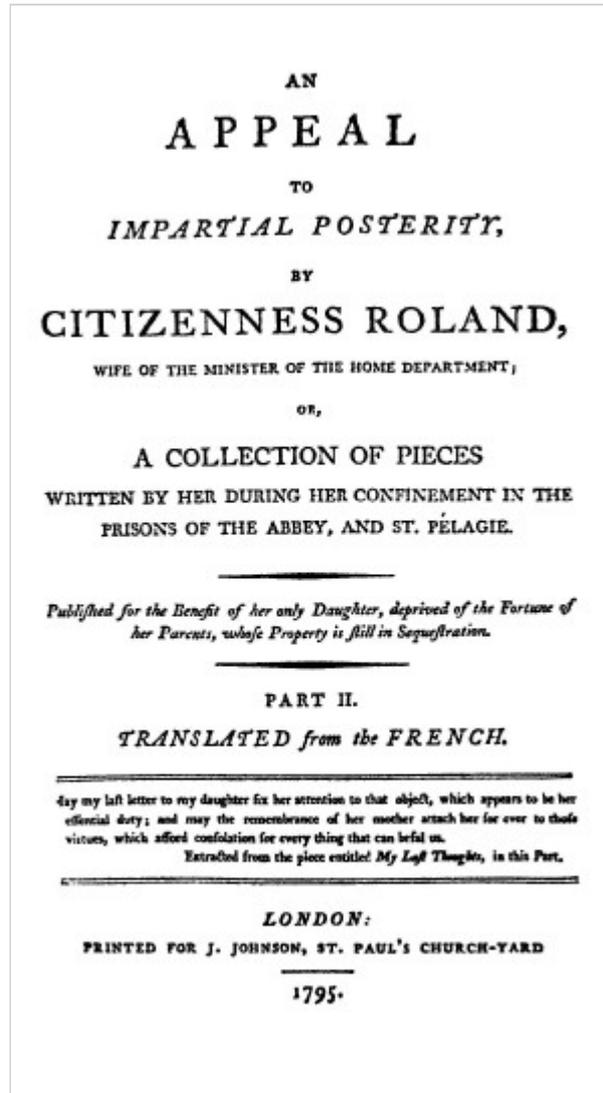
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Author: [Jeanne Marie Roland de la Platière](#)

About This Title:

Whilst in prison for her liberal views Roland wrote a series of letters and reflections which were published in 2 volumes.

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FROM THE EDITOR.

Royalism and Terrorism endeavour to excite doubts in the public mind concerning the authenticity of these writings. Both wish to suspend their sale: the former with the intention of favouring a counter-revolution, by aspersing a minister, whose firm and wise administration proved that France might be happy under a republican form of government; the latter, that they may not be held up to public view as the real authors of our present situation, and with the hope of being able to diminish the horror with which their crimes must necessarily inspire all those to whom they shall be faithfully narrated.

I request all good citizens, whose faith may have been staggered by their insinuations, to consider, first, that nobody but Madame Roland could detail an infinite number of circumstances, with which she alone could be acquainted; secondly, that every writer has his appropriate style, and that the manner of Madame Roland is sufficiently original to prevent its being easily confounded with that of another; in the third place, that my signature certifies the truth, and that all who please may come to my house and convince themselves, that the whole of the manuscript is in the hand-writing of my unfortunate friend.

BOSC.

Paris, 4th Floreal, 3d year of the Republic.

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The first thirty-two pages of this second part, relating to Roland's first administration, consist in great measure of matter that has already been presented to the reader in another shape, having been written by Madame Roland when she supposed the *Historical Memoirs* entirely destroyed. The French editor did not, however, think proper to suppress it; and his example has been followed in the translation, because it contains, besides many brilliant passages that are not in the preceding part of the work, a sketch of the character of Lewis XVI, an account of his deceptious conduct with his ministers, a judgment on our countrymen, Mr. Thomas Paine and Mr. David Williams, and several other characters, delineated in a forcible and masterly manner.

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ROLAND'S FIRST ADMINISTRATION.

How came Louis XVI. to select for the administration of public affairs a man like Roland, to whom, as an austere philosopher, and a laborious student, retirement was doubly dear? This will be a question with many people, and it would be one with me, were I any other than what I am. I am going to answer it by facts.

Resident at Lyons, during the winter, and belonging to the scientific and literary academics of that city, Roland was employed by the agricultural society to draw up its instructions for the use of the States General. His principles, and his turn of mind, made him naturally look forward with pleasure to a revolution which promised the reform of so many abuses. The publicity of these sentiments and his well known talents procured him his admission into the electoral body upon the first formation of the commune, and he was afterwards employed to manage the concerns of the city, which was deeply involved in debt. Being sent as a deputy extraordinary to the constituent assembly, he connected himself at Paris with several of its members and with some of the persons who devoted themselves to the study of public affairs. He returned home however, when the suppression of his place of inspector, by changing his destiny, obliged him to reflect on the course it would become him in future to pursue. The question was whether he should retire altogether to the country, live there upon his fortune, and employ himself in improving it; or whether, continuing his literary labours, he should make a journey to Paris, with the double view of collecting materials for that purpose, and of soliciting a pension as a reward for thirty years service in his administrative employ. The latter measure was adopted, because it would not prevent his recurring to the other, whenever he should deem it adviseable. We returned then to Paris on the 15th December 1791; but the affairs of the nation at large did not permit us to hope, that the legislative assembly, which had just met, would soon be at leisure to attend to the concerns of private individuals. Roland, intimate with Brissot, became acquainted with several of his colleagues in the legislative body; and not unfrequently went to the society of Jacobins, with old friends long since settled at Paris, who like him were delighted with a revolution which they esteemed friendly to liberty, and who thought that the society had already been useful, and might still help to support so good a cause.

Roland, content with being a peaceful auditor, never ascended the tribune to speak. He was known however, not indeed to the illiterate, who had as yet gained no ascendancy, but to many others; and by their means was appointed one of the committee of correspondence. This committee, of which the functions are indicated by the name, was composed of a considerable number of members, but only a few were actively employed. Roland often came home with a considerable packet of letters to answer: for though the business was divided into departments, and particular ones assigned to particular members; yet that every thing might be attended to in time, the more diligent were frequently obliged to perform the duty of the rest.—I read these letters; I often took upon me the care of answering them, having always found epistolary writing singularly easy and agreeable, because it adapts itself to every subject, and to every style alike, giving to discussion the most pleasing form, and to

reason all the scope it can desire.—I remarked in the greatest part of the letters from the departments, a style exalted and emphatical, sentiments full of bombast, and consequently of affectation, in general a desire of the public good, or the ambition of appearing an ardent patriot. I considered that the parent society might exert a great influence by disseminating good principles, taking care always to confine itself to the instruction of the people, and to the communication of sentiments calculated to strengthen the social tie, and consequently to inspire the true love of our country, which ought to be only that of the human kind, carried to the highest pitch in regard to those who live under the same laws with ourselves, and exalted by a disregard of self-interest in the unrequited, but sometimes urgent, cases, which require the greatest sacrifices. Persuaded that a revolution is no better than a terrible, and destructive storm, if the improvement of the public mind do not keep pace with the progression of events; and sensible of the good that it was possible to do by taking hold of men's imaginations, and giving them an impulsion towards virtue, I employed myself with pleasure in this correspondence. The committee gave Roland credit for his industry; nor indeed was he idle; but the work of two expeditious persons must necessarily have been considerable in the eyes of those, to whom the labours of either would have appeared great.

A few members of the assembly used to meet frequently in private at a house in Vendome square, where one of them lodged, and where a worthy and opulent woman had it in her power, without putting herself to inconvenience, to lend them an apartment, of which they were free to make use, even in her absence. Roland, who was esteemed for his good sense and integrity, was invited to join them; but he seldom went on account of the distance. As to me, I lived at home according to custom; I was not in health, and kept little company.

The state of affairs, and the discontents of the public mind alarmed the court. The ministers soon became the objects of public animadversion, and indeed their whole proceeding only tended to undermine a constitution to which the king had sworn contrary to his inclination, and which he did not mean to maintain. The court uneasy and perplexed, in the midst of the frequent changes and agitation of the ministry, knew not on whom to fix its choice. But there were people who declared openly, that if Louis XVI. were sincere, he would take men of undoubted civism for his agents. At length, impelled by weakness or by fear, the court came to a decision, but it was with the hope of corrupting, or if that hope failed, with the intention of dismissing, the ministers it should appoint. The court then shewed itself inclined to make a choice among those called patriots; and at that time the term had not been abused. How was this brought about? I never knew, nor did I ever inquire, because it appeared to me, that in that, as in all other cases, the idea is first started by some few individuals, is propagated by others, and is at last taken up and acted upon by people in power. By reflecting minds it was considered as important, to direct the attention of the court towards men of abilities, and of respectable character; for it was possible that it might take a malicious pleasure in selecting hot-headed Jacobins, whose extravagancies would authorize it to complain, and serve to bring patriotism into contempt. I am ignorant who was the individual that first mentioned Roland, in the committee at Vendome square, as one of those who ought not to be overlooked. The name of Roland was necessarily associated with the idea of a well informed man, who had

written upon the subject of administration, who was not destitute of experience in that line, who was besides in possession of a fair reputation, and whose age, manners, and decisive character, joined to the principles he had openly professed even before the revolution, bespoke him a worthy partizan of liberty, in every point of view.—The king himself was no stranger to the above considerations, or at least to the facts upon which they were founded, as I shall hereafter have occasion to shew. These ideas owed their birth so entirely to the nature of things, that they were communicated to us only three days before the formation of the new ministry.—Brissot called upon me one evening when I was alone, and informed me of the probability of Roland's elevation. I smiled, and asked him what was the meaning of his pleasantry. But he assured me that it was no joke, related to me the particulars I have just mentioned, and added that he was come to know whether Roland would consent to take upon him such a task. I promised to consult him, and make known his resolution on the following day. Roland was as much astonished at the event as myself: but his natural activity rendered him by no means averse to a multiplicity of business, and he said to me with a smile, that he had always seen people in power so miserably deficient, that he had never ceased to wonder how the public concerns could go forward at all; and that consequently the thing in itself gave him no alarm. The circumstances of the times were indeed critical, on account of the interests of the court and the uncertainty of the king's intentions; but to a man attached to his duty, and caring little for the loss of his place while fulfilling it, the risk of acceptance was not great. Besides, a zealous man who had a right to some confidence in his talents, could not be insensible to the hope of serving his country. Roland then decided in the affirmative, and made known his intentions to Brissot. The following day the latter accompanied Dumouriez; who came to Roland's house at eleven o'clock at night, after the breaking up of the council, to announce to him, in virtue of the orders, of which he was the bearer, that the king had just chosen him minister for the home department. Dumouriez, who had himself lately come into administration, spoke of the king's sincere determination to support the constitution, and of his hope of seeing the machine set to work as soon as the same spirit should pervade the whole council. He also testified to Roland his particular satisfaction at seeing a virtuous and enlightened patriot like him, called upon to take a share in the government.

Brissot observed, that in the present circumstances, the business of the home department was the most delicate, and the most multifarious; and that the friends of liberty would feel themselves at ease on seeing it entrusted to hands so steady and so pure. The conversation passed lightly over these matters, and an hour of the next day was appointed for Roland to be presented to the king, and to take his oath and his seat in the council. I found in Dumouriez the deliberate air of a soldier, the manners of an artful courtier, and the conversation of a man of wit, but nothing that indicated sincerity or truth.—On comparing this man with his new colleague, whose frankness and austerity sometimes bordered upon rudeness, I asked myself if it were possible for beings so dissimilar to act long in concert?—‘That is a man,’ said Roland, after they were gone, ‘who discovers a great deal of patriotism, and announces abilities.’—‘Yes,’ said I, ‘and against whom you will do well to be on your guard; for I believe him capable of soon worming you out of place, if you do not steer a course to please him.’—‘We shall see,’ said Roland.

The first time that Roland appeared at court in the philosophical dress which he had long adopted for the sake of convenience, with a few scattered hairs combed over his venerable forehead, a round hat, and strings in his shoes, all the court lackeys, who attached the greatest importance to that etiquette on which their existence depended, were scandalized, and in a manner terrified at the sight.—One of them stepped up to Dumouriez with horror pictured in his countenance, and indicating the cause of his consternation with his eyes, *Monsieur**, said he, *point de boucles a ses souliers*. Dumouriez, ready at repartee, and assuming a tragic-comic tone, cried out, *Monsieur†! tout est perdu!* The saying was soon put in circulation, and provoked a laugh from those who were the least inclined to mirth.

Louis XVI. behaved to his new ministers with the greatest appearance of frankness and good nature. This man was not precisely what he was depicted by those who took a pleasure in vilifying him; he was neither the brutish blockhead, who was held up to the contempt of the people; nor was he the honest, kind, and sensible creature, whom his friends extolled to the skies. Nature had endowed him with ordinary faculties, which would have done very well in an obscure station, but he was depraved by his princely education, and ruined by his mediocrity in difficult times, when his safety could be effected only by the union of genius and virtue. A common understanding, educated for the throne, and taught dissimulation from the earliest infancy, has a great advantage in flealing with mankind. The art of shewing to each person only what it is proper for him to see, is *in him* no more than a habit, the practice of which gives him the appearance of ability; but a man must be born an idiot indeed to appear a fool in similar circumstances. Louis XVI. had besides an excellent memory, and an active turn of mind; was never idle, and read a great deal. He had also a ready recollection of the various treaties existing between France and the neighbouring nations; was well versed in history, and was the best geographer in the kingdom. His knowledge of the names, and his application of them to the faces, of all the persons about the court to whom they belonged, as well as his acquaintance with the anecdotes peculiar to each, had been extended to all the individuals who had distinguished themselves in any manner during the revolution; so that it was impossible to present to him a candidate for any place, concerning whom he had not formed an opinion, founded on particular facts. But Louis XVI. without elevation of soul, energy of mind, or firmness of character, had suffered his views to be still further contracted, and his sentiments to be twisted, if I may use the expression, by religious prejudices, and jesuitical principles. Elevated ideas of religion, a belief in God, and the hope of immortality, accord very well with philosophy, and fix it upon a broader basis, at the same time that they compose the best ornaments of the superstructure. Woe to the legislators who despise these powerful means of inspiring the political virtues, and of preserving the morals of the people! Even if they were illusions yet unborn, it would be necessary to create and foster them for the consolation of mankind. But the religion of our priests presents nothing but objects of puerile fear, and miserable practices, to supply the place of good actions; and it sanctifies besides all the maxims of despotism which the authority of the church calls in to its aid. Louis XVI. was afraid of hell, and of excommunication: with such weakness as this it was impossible not to make a despicable king. If he had been born two centuries before, and his wife had been a rational woman, he would have made no more noise in the world, than so many other princes of the Capetian line, who have “fretted their hour upon the stage,” without

doing either much good or much harm.—But raised to the throne when the profligacy of Louis XV's court was at the highest, and when the disorder of the finances was extreme, he was led away by a giddy woman, who united with Austrian insolence the presumption of youth and high birth, an inordinate love of pleasure, and all the thoughtlessness of a light mind, and who was herself seduced by the vices of an Asiatic court, for which she had been but too well prepared by the example of her mother.—Louis XVI. too weak to hold the reins of a government which was running to destruction, hastened their common ruin by innumerable faults. Necker, who always mixed up pathos in his politics as he did in his style, was a man of moderate abilities, of whom the public entertained a good opinion, because he had a very high opinion of himself, and proclaimed it without reserve; but void of all political foresight, a kind of double refined financier, who could calculate nothing but the contents of a purse, and who spoke for ever of his character without rhyme or reason, as women of gallantry do of their virtue; Necker was a bad pilot for France, when such a storm was gathering round the horizon. France was in a manner destitute of *men*; their scarcity has been truly surprizing in this revolution, in which scarcely any thing but pigmies have appeared. I do not mean however that there was any want of wit, of knowledge, of learning, of accomplishments, or of philosophy. These ingredients, on the contrary, were never so common: it was like the last glimmering of an expiring taper; but as to that firmness *of mind* which J. J. Rousseau has so well defined by calling it the first attribute of a hero, supported by that soundness of judgment which knows how to set a true value upon things, and by those extensive views which penetrate into futurity, altogether constituting the character of a great man, they were sought for every where, and were scarcely any where to be found.

Louis XVI. constantly fluctuating between the fear of irritating his subjects, and the inclination of keeping them in awe, while incapable of governing them, convoked the states general instead of retrenching his expences, and introducing order into his court. After having himself sowed the seeds, and provided the means of innovation, he pretended to prevent it by the affectation of a power, against which he had established a principle of counteraction, and by so doing only taught his people how to resist. Nothing remained for him but to sacrifice one portion of his authority with a good grace, that he might preserve in the other the means of recovering the whole; but for want of knowing how to go about it, he turned his attention to nothing but petty intrigues, the only kind familiar to the persons chosen by himself, and favoured by the queen. He had however reserved in the constitution sufficient means of power and of happiness, had he known how to be content; so that, wanting as he was in abilities to prevent its establishment, he might still have been saved by his good faith, if after having accepted it, he had sincerely endeavoured to promote its execution. But always protesting, on one hand, his intention to support what he was undermining on the other, the obliquity of his proceedings, and the fallacy of his conduct, first awakened distrust, and at last excited indignation.

As soon as he had appointed patriotic ministers, he made it his sole study to inspire them with confidence; and so well did he succeed, that for the first three weeks, Roland and Claviere were enchanted with the good disposition of the king. They dreamt of nothing but a better order of things, and flattered themselves that the revolution was at an end. 'Good God!' I used to say to them, 'every time I see you set

off for the council with that wonderful confidence, it seems to me that you are about to commit a folly.’ ‘I assure you,’ would Claviere answer, ‘that the king is perfectly sensible, that his interest is connected with the observation of the new laws; he reasons too pertinently on the subject not to be convinced of that truth.’ ‘*Ma foi*,’ added Roland, ‘if he be not an honest man, he is the greatest knave in the kingdom; it is impossible to carry dissimulation to so great a length.’ As to me, I always replied that I had no faith in the love for the constitution professed by a man who had been brought up in the prejudices of despotism, and the habits of enjoyment, and whose recent conduct proved him wanting in both genius and virtue. My great argument was the flight to Varennes.

The sittings of the council were held in a manner which might pass for decent, in comparison of what they afterwards became; but with puerility, if regard be had to the important matters that called for discussion. Each of the ministers who had *bons** to be signed, or business of a similar nature, regulated by the law, peculiar to his department, and concerning which there was no occasion to deliberate, waited upon the king, on the day appointed, previously to the meeting of the council, to transact these particular and subordinate affairs. They all repaired afterwards to the council chamber; and there the proclamations that related to the subjects of discussion were taken out of the port-folio. The minister of justice presented the decrees for the royal assent; and then the council proceeded, or ought to have proceeded, to deliberate upon the operations of government, the state of affairs at home and abroad, the question of peace and war, &c. As to proclamations adapted to circumstances of the moment, it was only necessary to examine the decree, and the occasion of applying it, which was readily done. In the mean time, the king suffered his ministers to confer, read the gazette, or the English newspapers in the original language, or else wrote a few letters. The sanctioning of decrees obtained more of his attention: he seldom gave his consent easily, and never without a refusal; always declining to accede to the first request, and postponing the matter to the next meeting, when he came with his opinion ready formed, though appearing to ground it upon the discussion. As to great political affairs, he often eluded their investigation, by turning the conversation to general topics, or to subjects suited to each particular person. If war were the question, he would talk of travelling; if diplomatic concerns were upon the carpet, he would relate the manners, or inquire into the local peculiarities of the country; or if the state of affairs at home were in discussion, he would dwell upon some trifling detail of economy or agriculture. Roland he would question about his works, Dumouriez concerning anecdotes, and so on: the council chamber was converted to a coffee-room, where nothing was heard but idle conversation; nor were any minutes taken of the proceedings, nor was there any secretary to keep them. At the end of three or four hours they broke up, without doing any thing but signing their names, and this was repeated three or four times a week.—‘Why ’tis pitiable!’ cried I out of all patience, when on Roland’s return, I inquired what had passed—‘You are all in good humour, because you experience no contradiction, and are treated with civility. You seem indeed to do whatever you please in your several departments; but I am terribly afraid that you are duped—however the public business is not at a stand—no, but much time is lost; for in the torrent of affairs that overwhelms you, I would rather see you employ three hours in solitary meditation on the great interests of the state, than spend them in idle chat.’ In the mean time the enemy were making their

dispositions; for it had become absolutely necessary to declare war, a measure which was the subject of an animated discussion, and which the king did not seem to take without extreme repugnance. He had long delayed the decision; and appeared only to yield to the well-known opinion of the majority of the assembly, and to the unanimous voice of the council. Soon after the continuation or the multiplicity of religious troubles rendered those coercive measures indispensable, which the minister of the interior had long solicited in vain. On the other hand, the threatening, and formidable attitude of the foreign armies inspired the minister of war with the idea of a regulation, which the convention adopted with enthusiasm, and decreed without delay.

It is true that these two decrees, one for the formation of a camp of twenty thousand men near Paris, the other concerning the priests, were altogether decisive. The court perceived that they would overturn its secret treachery, the partial revolts fomented by fanaticism, and the progress of the enemy, which it favoured. The king was too firmly resolved to refuse his assent, to be in any haste to confess his determination, and devised various pretexts to avoid it for more than a fortnight. The discussion of this matter was several times renewed. Roland and Servan were urgent in their representations, because each of them felt the importance and the necessity of the law that regarded his department; the general advantage was evident to all, and the six ministers in this respect were agreed in their opinion. At this period Dumouriez, whose loose conversation the king encouraged, was sent for several times to the queen; he had a little affront to revenge, and wished to get rid of colleagues, whose austerity accorded ill with his gay turn of mind: hence he was induced to enter into agreements of which the effect was soon perceived.

As to me, I felt a kind of agitation difficult to describe; delighted with the revolution, persuaded that, with all its faults, it was necessary to enforce the constitution, and ardently desiring to see my country prosper, the lowering aspect of public affairs gave me a moral fever, which raged without intermission. The king's delays demonstrated his duplicity; and Roland had no longer any doubt upon the subject: there remained then but one resolution for an honest minister to take, and that was to resign, in case Louis XVI. should persist in rejecting measures necessary to the salvation of the empire.

This step, unattended by any other, might perhaps have satisfied a timid man; but for a zealous citizen, it is not enough to renounce a post in which good is no longer to be done; it behoves him to say so with energy, that he may throw a light upon the public calamities, and render his retreat beneficial to his country.—Roland and I had long lamented the weakness of his colleagues. The tardiness of the king had made us imagine, that it might be of great use to address a letter to him from the ministers collectively, which might set forth the reasons that had been already given in the council, but which, when expressed upon paper, and signed by them all, with the offer of their resignation in case his majesty should not think proper to listen to their representations, might either force him to compliance, or expose him to the eyes of all France. I had drawn up the letter, after having agreed upon the fundamental points with Roland, who made the proposal to his colleagues.—All approved of the idea, but most of them differed as to the execution. Claviere objected to some phrase or other;

Duranthon was inclined to temporize; and Lacoste was in no haste to subscribe his name. As the propriety of such a measure should be perceived at the first glance and felt in a lively manner, the bad success of our first attempt was a hint not to repeat it. It became then necessary to act in an insulated character, and since the council had not spirit enough to stand forth together, it behoved the man who set events at defiance to take upon himself the task which the whole body should have fulfilled: the question was no longer to retire, but to deserve to be dismissed—to say, do thus, or we will resign; but to assert, that all was lost unless a proper line of conduct were pursued.

I composed the famous letter. Here I must digress for a moment to clear up the doubts, and to fix the opinion of a number of persons, of whom the greater part only allow me a little merit, that they may deny it to my husband, and of whom several others suppose me to have had an influence in public affairs discordant with my character. Studious habits and a taste for literature made me participate in his labours, as long as he remained a private individual—I wrote with him as I ate with him, because one was almost as natural to me as the other, and because my existence being devoted to his happiness, I applied myself to those things which gave him the greatest pleasure. Roland wrote treatises on the arts; I did the same, although the subject was tedious to me. He was fond of erudition; I helped him to pursue his critical researches. Did he wish, by way of recreation, to compose an essay for some academy? we sat down to write in concert, or else separately, that we might compare our productions, choose the best, or compress them into one. If he had written homilies, I should have written homilies also. He became minister: I did not interfere with his administration; but if a circular letter, a set of instructions, or an important state paper, were wanting, we talked the matter over with our usual freedom, and impressed with his ideas, and pregnant with my own, I took up the pen, which I had more leisure to conduct than he.

Our principles and our turns of mind being the same, we agreed upon the form, and my husband ran no risk in passing through my hands. I could advance nothing warranted by justice or reason, which he was not capable of realizing, or supporting by his character and conduct; but my language expressed more strongly than his words, what he had done or what he promised to do. Roland *without me* would not have been a worse minister; his activity, his knowledge, and his probity, were all his own; but *with me* he attracted more attention, because I infused into his writings that mixture of energy and of softness, of authoritative reason, and of seducing sentiment, which are perhaps only to be found in a woman of a clear head and a feeling heart. I took a delight in composing those pieces which I presumed would be of use, and my pleasure was even greater than if I had been known as the author. I am avaricious of happiness: with me it consists entirely in the good I do. I do not even stand in need of glory; nor can I find any part that suits me in this world, but that of Providence. I allow the malicious to look upon this confession as a piece of impertinence; but those who know me will see nothing in it but what is sincere, like myself.

I return to the letter, which was sketched with a stroke of the pen, as was generally the case with every thing I did of the kind; for to feel the necessity and the propriety of a thing, to conceive its good effect, to desire to produce it, and to cast in the mould the object from which that effect was to result, were to me but one and the same operation. While we were reading over this letter together, Pache was in my

husband's closet, that very *Pache*, who, before the expiration of the year, calumniated Roland, and now persecutes us, as the enemies of liberty.—'Tis a hazardous step,' said the hypocrite, whom I took for a sage.—'Hazardous! without doubt, but just and necessary; what signifies any thing else?'—Roland repaired to the council, on the 10th of June, with the letter in his pocket, and with the design of first reading it aloud to his colleagues, and then putting it into the king's hands. The debate concerning the sanctioning of the two decrees began; but was suspended by the king, who told his ministers to have each his written opinion ready to deliver to him at the next meeting of the council. Roland could have delivered *his* without delay: he thought however, after what had passed, that it was incumbent on him to wait out of regard to his colleagues; but on his return home we were of opinion, that he could not do better than dispatch his letter, to which he added three or four missive lines.

The next day, at eight o'clock in the evening, I saw Servan walk into my apartment with a joyful countenance. 'Congratulate me,' said he, 'I am turned out.'—'I am much mortified,' answered I, 'at your being the first to have that honour; but I hope that, ere long, it will be awarded to my husband.'—Servan related to me that he had been on business with the king in the morning, that he had endeavoured to speak to him about the camp; that the king, with evident marks of ill humour, had at last turned his back upon him; and that Dumouriez came an instant after, to demand his *port folio*, of which he was going to take charge himself.—'Dumouriez? His conduct surprizes me little, but it is infamous, and the other ministers in that case ought not to wait for their dismissal. It would become them better to write to the king, that they can no longer sit at the council board with Dumouriez: we must send for them to consult about it.' Nobody but Claviere and Duranthon came, and they were people who never knew how to take a decisive measure. It was agreed upon that they should return the next morning, after due deliberation, and that Roland should have a letter prepared for them to sign. He had already communicated to them the one he had sent in the morning, and from which he expected the same treatment as Servan had met with before.—I do not know whether, for that very reason, these gentlemen, who were fond of their places, might not imagine, that the two ministers the most urgent for the decrees, would be the only ones sacrificed, and that they ought not to expose themselves rashly to the same fate. The next morning they did not think proper to write, but deemed it most advisable to go and speak to the king in person; a measure contrary to common sense, for when it is necessary to say strong and disagreeable things to a person entitled by his situation to a great deal of respect, it is much more advantageous to do it by letter. Roland, who had fulfilled his task, could no longer be of the party; but they waited upon Lacoste, with the intention of asking him to join them. Lacoste was doubtful, and appeared to hesitate, when a messenger from the king brought Duranthon an order to go immediately, and alone, to the palace.—'We will wait for you at your own house,' said Claviere and Roland.—Scarcely had they reached the palace of justice, when Duranthon returned with a long face, and a hypocritical look; and drew slowly out of his pocket what was called a *lettrede cachet*; containing the discharge of his two colleagues. 'You make us wait a long while for our liberty,' said Roland, taking the paper with a smile. 'Ay, our liberty is here indeed.'—He returned home, and brought me this intelligence for which I was well prepared.—'One thing remains to be done,' said I, with animation; 'and that is, to be the first to acquaint the assembly with your dismissal, and to send them a copy

of your letter to the king, by which it has certainly been occasioned.’ This idea pleased him much, and we put it immediately into execution.—I was satisfied that it would have a great effect, nor was I deceived; it answered a double purpose; *utility* and *glory* followed my husband’s retreat. I had not been proud of his elevation to the ministry, but I was proud of his disgrace.

I have said that Dumouriez had a little affront to revenge by entering into a league with the court against his colleagues. The circumstance that gave rise to it was as follows.

Bonne-Carrere, a handsome man, who had the reputation and manners of an intriguer, and who owed the cross of St. Lewis which decorated his person to the interest of Dumouriez, was chosen by the latter for his principal agent, and appointed director general of the department of foreign affairs.

I saw him once only, when Dumouriez brought him to dine with me; and was as little imposed upon by his agreeable outside as by that of Hérault de Séchelles. ‘All these handsome fellows,’ said I to a friend, ‘seem to me to be but poor patriots; they appear too fond of themselves not to prefer their own pretty persons to the public good; and I am always tempted to mortify their arrogance, by affecting to be blind to the advantage on which they pride themselves the most.’

I more than once heard grave men, members of the legislature, some of those noble originals who gave their support to probity and honour, and who are now declared infamous on that account; I heard them lament the choice that Dumouriez had made, and contend that patriotic ministers, to give strength to the cause of liberty, should be particularly careful to commit every part of the administration to the purest hands. I know that Dumouriez was mildly remonstrated with; but he urged in excuse the understanding and talents of Bonne-Carrere, to whom wit, versatility, and a mind fertile in resources, could not be denied; but a rumour got abroad of an affair managed by Bonne-Carrere, on account of which a hundred thousand livres had been deposited in a notary’s hands. A part of this sum was destined for Madame de Beauvart, Dumouriez’ mistress, a woman of easy virtue, and sister to Rivarol, who lived in the midst of people of dissolute manners, and disgusting aristocracy. I have forgot the nature of the affair, and the parties; but the names, the time, and the particulars, were known, and the fact was undoubted. It was agreed upon that Dumouriez should be seriously requested to dismiss Bonne-Carrere, and to preserve, or to put on a decency of demeanour, without which it was impossible for him to remain in the ministry, without injury to the cause. Gensonné, who was intimately acquainted with Dumouriez; and Brissot, to whom all Bonne-Carrere’s tricks had been denounced, determined to speak to him at Roland’s, in his presence and in that of three or four other persons, either his colleagues, or members of the legislative body. Accordingly, after dining with me, and retiring into the room which I generally inhabited, the grievance was set forth, and the observations it warranted, were made to Dumouriez. Roland, with the gravity of his age and character, took the liberty of insisting upon the matter, as interesting to the whole ministry. Nothing being less agreeable to Dumouriez than this precision, and the tone of remonstrance, he endeavoured at first to give the subject a light turn; but finding himself hard pressed by sober argument, he

grew angry, and took leave with an air of discontent. From that day he ceased to visit the members of the assembly, did not seem satisfied when he met them at my house, and came thither much less frequently than before. Reflecting upon this conduct, I told Roland, ‘that, without pretending to be versed in intrigue, I believed, that, according to the practice of the world, the hour of ruining Dumouriez was at hand, if he did not wish to be overturned himself. I know very well,’ added I, ‘that you will not descend to such manœuvres; but it is nevertheless true, that Dumouriez will certainly endeavour to get rid of those by whose censure he has been offended. When a man once thinks fit to preach, and does it to no purpose, he must punish, or expect to be molested.’ Dumouriez, who was partial to Bonne-Carrere, let him into the secret of what concerned him, and Bonne-Carrere found means to hush up the matter; he was besides admitted to the presence of the queen by means of the women with whom he was connected. Intrigues were set on foot; the famous decrees followed; and although Dumouriez was of opinion that they should receive the royal assent, he contrived to keep in favour; and was of use, after the departure of his colleagues, either by proposing successors, or by accepting the war department, though, by the way, he did not keep it long; for the court, which at first was glad to retain him, that they might not appear to dismiss all the ministers called patriots at once, got rid of him soon after. But he was too dexterous not to avoid a total disgrace, and obtained employment in the army conformable to his rank.

Even the patriots imagined that it was advisable to avail themselves of his talents, and were in hopes that he might make a good use of them in his military career.—One of the principal embarrassments of government, after the 10th of August, was to find persons fit to fill public employments, particularly in that line. The old government conferred the rank of officer upon none but nobles; and knowledge and experience were concentrated in their order: but the people were uneasy at seeing them intrusted with the conduct of the forces intended to support a constitution adverse to their interest. Struck with this contrast, they could not, like the enlightened part of mankind, judge of the reasons of confidence, founded on one officer’s disposition, on the passions of another, and on the principles of a third. Their flatterers, on the contrary, aggravated their fears, and excited their distrust: everlasting denouncers, they make them themselves the enemies of every man in place, that they may establish themselves in that which best suits their ambition: this is the system of all agitators, from Hippo, the harangue-maker of Syracuse, to Robespierre, the *speechifier* of Paris.

Roland, recalled to the ministry, thought that the public good, and the circumstances of the times, made it his duty to do away all idea of opposition between Dumouriez and himself, since each was serving the republic in his way. “The chances in politics,” said he in his letter, “are as uncertain as in war; *I* am again in the executive council; *you* are at the head of an army: you have the errors of your administration to efface from the public mind, and laurels to gather in the field of Mars! You were led into an intrigue which made you do an ill office to your colleagues, and were duped, in your turn, by the very court whose favour you were striving to preserve. But you are not unlike those valorous knights, who were every now and then guilty of little reguish tricks, at which they were the first to laugh themselves; but who sought nevertheless like furies, when their honour was at stake. It must be confessed that this character

does not very well accord with republican austerity: it is the consequence of those manners, which we have not yet been able to throw off, and for which you will be sure of a pardon, if you beat the enemy. You will find me in the council always ready to second your enterprises as long as they have the public welfare in view. Where that is concerned I am a stranger to all favour and affection; and shall look up to you as to one of the saviours of my country, provided you sincerely devote yourself to its defence.”—Dumouriez’s answer was spirited, and his conduct no less so—he repulsed the Prussians.

I remember that at this period, some hopes were entertained of detaching him from the league, and some overtures made in consequence; but they led to nothing. He came to Paris after the enemy had evacuated our territory, to concert the plan of his Belgic operations. Roland saw him at the council chamber, and once he came to dine at our house, with a number of other persons. When he came into the room, he appeared rather embarrassed, and offered me a beautiful bouquet which he had in his hand, with somewhat of an awkward air for a man of so much assurance. I smiled, and told him, that the tricks of fortune were whimsical enough; and that doubtless he never expected that she would enable me to receive him again in that hotel; but that flowers did not the less become the conqueror of the Prussians, and that I received them with pleasure from his hand. After dinner he purposed going to the opera. This again was an old folly of our generals, whose custom it was to repair to the playhouse in search of theatrical crowns whenever they had obtained an advantage over the enemy. Somebody asked me if I intended to be there; but I declined giving an answer, because it was neither agreeable to my character, nor to my manners, to be seen in public with Dumouriez. When the company was gone, however, I proposed to Vergniaux to take a seat in my box in company with my daughter and myself. We went thither, and were told by the astonished box-keeper that the minister’s box was full. ‘That is impossible,’ said I; for nobody could go into it without a ticket signed by him, and I had not given a single one away.—‘But it is the minister himself, and he insisted upon being let in’—‘No, it is not he: open the door, and let me see who is there.’ Two or three *sans-culottes*, in the shape of bullies, were standing in the lobby. ‘Don’t open the door,’ cried they, the minister is there.’—‘I cannot do otherwise,’ answered the woman, who immediately obeyed me; and there I saw Danton’s broad face, that of Fabre, and two or three women of vulgar appearance. The opera was begun; their eyes were turned upon the stage; and Danton was leaning over towards the next box to speak to Dumouriez. I perceived them all at one glance, without being perceived by any body in the box, and pushing the door to, made a hasty retreat. ‘Why, indeed,’ said I to the box-keeper, ‘a certain *ci-devant* minister of justice is there, whom I would rather leave to enjoy the fruits of his impertinence, than expose myself to an affront: I have nothing to do here.’ On saying this, I retired, well pleased upon the whole that Danton’s improper behaviour had spared me the mortification I wished to avoid of appearing in public with Dumouriez, whose seat would have been so very near to mine. I afterwards heard that Danton and Fabre constantly attended him to all the other theatres, where he had the weakness to shew himself. As to me, I have never seen him since. This then was the whole of our connexion with a man, whose accomplices people were pleased to suppose us at the time of his treachery. Dumouriez is active, vigilant, witty, and brave; calculated alike for war and for intrigue. Of great military talents, he was the only man in France, in the opinion even

of his jealous competitors, able to command a large army properly; but he was better fitted by his character, and immorality, to serve under the old court, than under the new government. With extensive views, and with the spirit necessary to pursue them, he is capable of forming vast projects, and does not want abilities to put them into execution; but his temper is not equal to his understanding, and his impatience and his impetuosity render him indiscreet or precipitate: he is excellent at devising a stratagem; he is incapable of concealing his purpose for any length of time. Dumouriez, in short, to become the leader of a party, wanted a cooler head.

I am persuaded that he did not go to the Belgic provinces with treacherous intentions: he would have served the republic as he had served his king, provided it had tended to his glory and advantage; but the injudicious decrees passed by the convention, the infamous conduct of its commissaries, and the blunders of the executive power, ruining our cause in that country, and the aspect of affairs threatening a general convulsion, he conceived the idea of giving them a turn, and for want of temper and prudence bewildered himself in his combinations. Dumouriez must be very amiable in orgies of his own sex, and agreeable to women of dissolute manners: he appears to have still all the sprightliness of youth, and all the gaiety of a lively and free imagination; but with women of a reserved disposition there is something formal in his politeness. He used to divert the king in council by the most extravagant stories, at which his grave colleagues could not help laughing; and now and then he seasoned them with truths equally bold, and well applied. What a difference between this man, vicious as he is, and Lukner, who at one time was the only hope of France! He was an old soldier, little better than a brute, without common sense, and destitute of character; the mere phantom of a man, who, by means of his broken French, his fondness for wine, a few oaths, and a certain air of intrepidity, had acquired great popularity in the army, among mercenary machines, always the dupes of any one who taps them upon the shoulder, speaks to them with familiarity, and punishes them from time to time. 'O my poor country!' said I next day to Gaudet, who asked me what I thought of Lukner, 'you are undone indeed, if you are obliged to send abroad for such a being, and to confide your destiny to his hands!'

I have no knowledge of tacticks, and Lukner, for aught I know, might understand the routine of his profession; but I am well assured that no man can be a great general without good sense and rationality.

The thing which surprised me the most, after my husband's elevation had given me an opportunity of knowing a great number of persons, particularly of those employed in important affairs, was the universal meanness of their minds: it surpasses every thing that can be imagined, and extends to every rank, from the clerk, who wants nothing but sense to comprehend a plain question, method to treat it, and a decent style to draw up a letter, to the minister charged with the government, the general at the head of armies, and the ambassador employed to negotiate. But for that experience, I never should have thought so poorly of my confidence nor was it till that period that I assumed any confidence in myself: till then I was as bashful as a boarder in a convent, and thought that people who had more assurance than myself, had more abilities also.—I no longer wonder indeed that I was a favourite: my friends perceived that I was not without my share of merit, and yet I sacrificed my own pretensions with

sincerity to the vanity of other people.—In this scarcity of men of abilities, the revolution having successively driven away those whose birth, fortune, education, and circumstances, had rendered them superior to the mass of the people by a somewhat higher degree of cultivation, it is no wonder if we fell gradually into the hand of the grossest ignorance, and most shameful incapacity. There are a great many degrees between de Grave and Bouchotte. The former was a little man, whom nature had made gentle, whose prejudices inspired him with pride, and whose heart persuaded him to be amiable; but who, for want of knowing how to reconcile these various affections, at last became nothing at all. I think I see him now, walking upon his heels, with his elbows turned out, and his head erect, very often shewing nothing but the whites of his great blue eyes, which he could not keep open after dinner without the assistance of two or three cups of coffee; speaking little, as if out of discretion, but in reality for fear of exposing himself; and truly anxious about his official concerns, but distracted by their multiplicity. The consequence was, that at last he abandoned a place for which he felt himself unfit. I will say nothing of Bouchotte; an idiot is described in three syllables; but his faults were innumerable. Of Servan I have spoken elsewhere; a brave soldier, an excellent citizen, and a man of information, he possessed a degree of merit seldom to be met with: the world would be too happy if there were many men of that stamp. Claviere, with wit, and that disagreeable disposition common among men, who passing much of their time in their closets, form opinions there, which they afterwards maintain with obstinacy, was neither deficient in knowledge nor philosophy; but financial habits had in some measure narrowed his mind. Pecuniary calculations indeed always spoil the happiest dispositions; for it is impossible for a man not to set a high value upon that which constitutes his daily occupation. A banker may be an able and well-informed man; but he will never number the disinterestedness of Aristides among his virtues. Claviere is very laborious, easy to be led by those who know his weak side, but insupportable in his commerce with any body who partakes of his own obstinacy in dispute; a bad judge of mankind, of whom he never studied but one part, their understandings, without attending to their characters, their interests, and their passions; timid in the council, although sometimes violent; in a word, rather a good administrator than an able minister.

I never yet could understand what it was that promoted Duranthon to a place in the administration, unless indeed it were the idea of the small abilities necessary to fill that of minister of justice. Heavy, slothful, vain, and talkative, timid and confined in his notions, he was in truth nothing more than an old woman. His reputation for integrity, the sober manners of a decent advocate, and the age of experience, probably served him as a recommendation; but he had not even sense enough to make a seasonable retreat, the only one by which he could have acquired a portion of glory. When I recollect who have been his successors, I am less angry with those who judged him worthy of his place; but I cannot help asking myself where we are to seek for men qualified to hold the reins of government.

Lacoste had the official knowledge, the laborious habits, and the insignificance of a clerk. Having been long employed in the admiralty-office (*Bureaux de la marine*), he was thought fit to be put at the head of that department, in which he committed no blunders. But he was destitute of the capacity and activity which ought to characterize

the administrator of so considerable a branch of the public business, and his want of them was exposed by the exigencies of the times. Nothing short of the inability of Monge, could have afforded an advantageous object of comparison for Lacoste.—Beneath the mask of a timid countenance, the latter concealed an irritable disposition, which in case of contradiction, degenerated into the most ridiculous violence.

Such was the composition of the ministry the first time that Roland belonged to it. There prevailed, at first, a great union between the members of the council; and I verily believe that they were all sincerely attached to the constitution, with more or less of regard to their own interest on the part of several. They assembled at each other's houses on the days that the council met, and once a week I had them to dine with me. Some of the members of the legislative body were also invited; and the conversation used to turn on the affairs of the nation, with the common desire of promoting the public good. This was a happy time in comparison of that which followed!

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ROLAND'S SECOND ADMINISTRATION.

At the time of the recal of Roland, Claviere, and Servan, the composition of the ministry was completed by the appointment of Danton, whom I have sufficiently depicted elsewhere, and by that of Monge and le Brun; the former to the marine department, the latter to that of foreign affairs. Nothing is so distressing as the difficulty of making a choice in circumstances like those of the times in question. Every man who had belonged to the court directly, or indirectly, was proscribed by the public opinion; nor could any thing less than the brilliant proofs of patriotism given by Servan, efface that original sin, even small as it was in respect to him. The persons employed to make a choice were ill calculated to do so. New themselves to public affairs, our legislators had not had those extensive connexions which lead to an acquaintance with a great number of individuals, and enable a man to select from among them the persons fitted for important employs. The committee was at a loss on whom to fix, when the idea of Monge, who was known to Condorcet as a fellow academician, and of whose patriotism several others had heard favourable mention, presented itself. Monge, a mathematician, an examiner, sometimes sent to the out-ports, an honest citizen, the father of a respectable family, and a zealous member of the club of the Luxemburg, was for a moment put in the scale with Meunier, his colleague at the academy, and an officer of engineers; but as the latter was known to have paid his court to the great, Monge was preferred.

Good-humoured, thick-witted, and inclined to drollery, Monge was a stone-cutter at Mezieres, where the Abbe Bossut, perceiving him to have a turn that way, initiated him in the mathematicks, and encouraged him with six livres a week: but when by dint of application he had got forward in the world, he ceased to visit his benefactor, whose equal he was become. Accustomed to calculate immutable elements, Monge had no knowledge of mankind, or of public affairs: heavy and awkward in his pleasantry, whenever he made an attempt at wit, he recalled to my recollection the bears kept in the ditches of the city of Berne, whose playful tricks, corresponding with their uncouth form, amuse the passers by.

The new minister filled his office with men as little capable of acting as he was of judging: he took a great deal of pains without doing any good, and suffered the marine to be disorganized at a time when it was the most important to keep up, and increase the establishment. Justice, however, ought to be done to his good faith: he was frightened at the burthen, and wished to lay it down; but the difficulty of finding a better man, procured him an invitation to remain at his post. By degrees his situation became agreeable, and he fancied he did his duty as well as it could have been done by any one else. But if he was a bad administrator, he was still worse as a counsellor, and never occupied any thing but his chair in the deliberations of the executive power, always adhering to the opinion of the most timid, because having none of his own, he naturally followed that which was most conformable to the views of a narrow mind.

When Pache was promoted to the ministry, he became the regulator of his friend and admirer Monge, who no longer had any opinion of his own, but received that of Pache

as if it had been the inspiration of the divinity. Thus was he *Maratized*; and thus did this man, who would have been a good creature in his way, become the abettor of the most atrocious and sanguinary doctrines.

Le Brun, employed in the office of foreign affairs, passed for a man of sound understanding, because he had never any flights of fancy, and for a man of abilities, because he had been a pretty good clerk. He was tolerably well acquainted with the diplomatic chart, and could draw up a sensible letter or report. In ordinary times, he would have been very well situated in the department which is the least onerous, and where the business is the most agreeable to transact. But he had none of that activity of mind and character, which it was necessary to display at the moment he was called to the ministry. Ill-informed of what was going on among our neighbours, and sending to foreign courts men, who, although not destitute of merit, had none of those qualities which serve as a recommendation, and who could hardly penetrate further than the anti-chambers of the great; he neither employed the kind of intrigue, by which occupation might have been given at home to those who wished to attack us, nor the kind of grandeur with which a powerful state should invest its acknowledged agents to procure itself respect—‘What are you about?’ said Roland sometimes. ‘In your place, I would have put all Europe in motion, and have assured peace to France, without the assistance of arms; I would take care to know what is going on in every cabinet, and exert my influence there.’ Le Brun was never in haste; and now, in August 1793, Semonville, who ought to have been at Constantinople eight months ago, has just been intercepted in his way through Switzerland. The last choice of Le Brun will serve to characterize him completely, without my adding another trait. He has appointed Grouvelle, the secretary to the council, of whom in that quality I should already have spoken, minister plenipotentiary at the court of Denmark.

Grouvelle, a pupil of Cerutti, of whom he learned nothing but to construct affected phrases, which contain the whole of his philosophy; narrow-minded, frigid, and vain, the last editor of the *Feuille Villageoise*, become as insipid as himself; Grouvelle had been candidate for I know not what place in the ministry, and was appointed secretary to the council on the tenth of August, in execution of a constitutional law, against the disregard of which Roland had remonstrated so warmly, that the king had at last determined to attend to it. Roland was in hopes that the keeping of a regular register, in which the deliberations might be entered, would give to the proceedings of the council a more serious, and more useful turn: he perceived besides, that it would afford to men of a firm character an opportunity of authenticating their opinions, and of securing a testimony sometimes useful to history, and always to their own justification. But the best institutions are only advantageous when in the hands of those incapable of perverting them. Grouvelle did not know how to take minutes of the proceedings, and the ministers, for the most part, cared little whether there remained or not any traces of their opinion. The secretary never was able to draw up more than a summary of the resolutions taken, without deduction of any motives, or mention of any opposition; nor could Roland ever find means to get his objections inserted, even when he formally resisted the determinations of the council. Grouvelle constantly interfered in the discussion, and by his punctilious manner contributed not a little to render it difficult: at length Roland, out of patience, observed to him that he did not recollect his character.—‘What, am I nothing but an ink-horn!’ exclaimed

angrily the important secretary. - - - 'You ought to be nothing else here,' replied the severe Roland; 'every time you interfere in the debate, you forget your duty, which is to take it down; and this is the reason why you have only time to make a little insignificant statement upon a loose sheet of paper, which, when entered in the register, gives not the smallest idea of the operations of government; whereas the register of the council ought to serve as archives to the executive power.' - - - Grouvelle incensed, neither improved, nor altered his method; but it is easy to see that it was good enough for such men as I have described above. The salary of his place was twenty thousand livres (£.833), to which he thought it would be convenient to add an apartment in the Louvre, spacious enough to lodge himself and his clerks, and made his representation to the minister of the home department accordingly. It requires but a slight knowledge of Roland's character to conceive the indignation with which he received this proposal, and the vigour with which he repelled it. 'Clerks! for business that I could transact myself in a few hours, and better than you if I were in your place,' said he to Grouvelle. 'I desire that you will take a copyist to save you the trouble of delivering such copies or extracts of the proceedings as you may be called upon to furnish; but twenty thousand livres are quite sufficient to pay his salary, and to find a lodging for him as well as for yourself: the sum is even extravagant, in a free government, for the place you occupy.

Grouvelle certainly has a right not to be fond of Roland, and I believe he exercises it to its full extent.

As to me, I felt, in the most lively manner, that his ridiculous pretensions were intolerable.—These men, made up of vanity, whose wit is but a jargon, whose philosophy is pitiable ostentation, and whose sentiments are recollections, appear to me a kind of eunuchs, in a moral sense, whom I despise and detest more cordially than some women hate and disdain the other sort. Such, however, is the minister of a great nation at a foreign court, of which it is of consequence to preserve the esteem, and secure the neutrality. I am unacquainted with the secret of his appointment; but I would wager that Grouvelle, half-dead with fear, on seeing the disastrous position of public affairs, requested le Brun to get him sent out of France in any shape whatever; and that le Brun, in quality of minister, made him ambassador, as he would have made him a travelling clerk, if he himself had been a merchant. It is an arrangement between individual and individual, in which the republic is no otherwise concerned than in conferring the title, and advantages attached to it, and in receiving the injury that may arise from being so badly represented.

The choice of an envoy to the United States was conducted with more wisdom; and affords a new argument in favour of Brissot, against whom the share he had in it is brought forward as a crime. Bonne-Carrere having been pitched upon, I know not at what period, Brissot observed to some members of the council, that it was of consequence to the maintenance of our good understanding with the United States, as well as to the glory of our infant republic, to send to America a man whose character and manners might please the Americans. In that respect, Bonne-Carrere was not a suitable person: an amiable libertine of the fashionable world, and a gamester, whatever might be his talents and abilities, was very unfit to play the grave and decent part becoming a minister resident with that transatlantic nation.

Brissot was actuated by no personal interest; he was the last man in the world to be so influenced: he mentioned Genest, who was just returned from a residence of five years in Russia, and who, besides his being already conversant with diplomatic affairs, possessed all the moral virtues, and all the information which could render him agreeable to a serious people.

This proposal was a wise one, it was supported by every possible consideration, and Genest was preferred. If this indeed be an intrigue, let us pray that all intriguers may resemble Brissot. I saw Genest, I desired to see him again, and I should always be pleased with his company. His judgment is solid, his mind enlightened: he has as much amenity as decency of manners; his conversation is instructive and agreeable, and equally free from pedantry and from affectation: gentleness, propriety, grace, and reason, constitute his character; and with all this merit he unites the advantage of speaking English with fluency. Let the ignorant Robespierre, and the extravagant Chabot, declaim against such a man, by calling him the friend of Brissot; let them procure by their clamours the recal of the one, and the trial of the other, they will only add to the proofs of their own villany and stupidity, without hurting the fame of those whom they may deprive of existence.

During the second administration of Roland, as well as during the first, I determined with myself to receive no female, and this was a rule to which I scrupulously adhered. My circle was never very extensive, and never did the greater part of it consist of my own sex. Besides my nearest relations, I saw nobody but the persons whose congenial taste and studies made them interesting to my husband. I was sensible that while he was in the ministry, I should expose myself to very troublesome company, which might even be attended with danger. It appeared to me that Madame Pétion's conduct at the *Mairie* (the residence of the mayor) was highly prudent; and I deemed it as laudable to follow, as to set, a good example. I had then neither circle nor visits: this in the first place was a saving of time, an inestimable advantage to those who have the means of turning it to any account. Twice a week only I gave a dinner:—once to my husband's colleagues, with a few members of the Assembly; and once to a mixed company, composed either of national representatives, of first clerks in the public offices, or of such other persons as took a part in politics, or were concerned in the business of the state. Taste and neatness presided at my table, but profusion and the luxury of ornaments were equally unknown: every one was there at his ease, without devoting much time to conviviality, because I gave only a single course, and relinquished to nobody the care of doing the honours of the table. The usual number of guests was fifteen; it seldom exceeded eighteen; and once only amounted to twenty. Such were the repasts, which popular orators, at the tribune of the Jacobins, converted into sumptuous entertainments, where, like another Circe, I corrupted all those who had the misfortune to partake of the banquet. After dinner, we conversed for some time in the drawing room, and then every one took leave. We sat down to table about five; at nine not a creature remained; and yet this was the court, of which they made me the queen, and here, with the doors wide open, we entered into our dark and dangerous conspiracies.

The other days confined to our family party, my husband and myself generally sat down to table alone; for the transaction of the public business delaying our dinner to a

very late hour, my daughter dined with her governess in her own room. Those, who saw me at that time, will bear witness in my savour, whenever the voice of truth can make itself heard: I shall then perhaps be no more; but I shall go out of this world with the persuasion, that the memory of my persecutors will be lost in maledictions, while my name will sometimes be recollected with a sigh.

Among the persons whom I was in the habit of receiving, and of whom I have already described the most remarkable, *Paine* deserves to be mentioned. Declared a French citizen, as one of those celebrated foreigners, whom the nation was naturally desirous of adopting, he was known by writings which had been useful in the American revolution, and which might have contributed to produce one in England. I shall not, however, take upon me to pronounce an absolute judgment upon his character, because he understood French without speaking it, and because that being nearly my case in regard to English, I was less able to converse with him than to listen to his conversation with those whose political skill was greater than my own.

The boldness of his conceptions, the originality of his style, and the striking truths which he throws with defiance into the midst of those whom they offend, have necessarily attracted great attention; but I think him better fitted to sow the seeds of popular commotion, than to lay the foundation or prepare the form of a government. *Paine* throws light upon a revolution better than he concurs in the making of a constitution. He takes up, and establishes those great principles, of which the exposition strikes every eye, gains the applause of a club, or excites the enthusiasm of a tavern; but for cool discussion in a committee, or the regular labours of a legislator, I conceive *David Williams* infinitely more proper than he. *Williams*, made a French citizen also, was not chosen a member of the Convention, in which he would have been of more use; but he was invited by the government to repair to Paris, where he passed several months, and frequently conferred with the most active representatives of the nation. A deep thinker, and a real friend to mankind, he appeared to me to combine their means of happiness, as well as *Paine* feels and describes the abuses which constitute their misery. I saw him, from the very first time he was present at the sittings of the assembly, uneasy at the disorder of the debates, afflicted at the influence exercised by the galleries, and in doubt whether it were possible for such men, in such circumstances, ever to decree a rational constitution. I think that the knowledge which he then acquired of what we were already, attached him more strongly to his country, to which he was impatient to return. How is it possible, said he, for men to debate a question, who are incapable of listening to each other? Your nation does not even take pains to preserve that external decency, which is of so much consequence in public assemblies: a giddy manner, carelessness, and a slovenly person, are no recommendations to a legislator; nor is any thing indifferent which passes in public, and of which the effect is repeated every day.—Good heaven! what would he say now, if he were to see our senators drest, since the 31st of May, like watermen, in long trowsers, a jacket and a cap, with the bosom of their shirts open, and swearing and gesticulating like drunken *sans-culottes*? He would think it perfectly natural for the people to treat them like their lackeys, and for the whole nation, debased by its excesses, to crouch beneath the rod of the first despot who shall find means to reduce it to subjection.—*Williams* is equally fit to fill a place in the parliament, or the senate, and will carry with him true dignity wherever he goes.

By what sally of imagination is Vandermonde present to mine? Never did I see eyes so false, more truly express the turn of mind of the person to whom they belong. One would suppose that this man has had *his* cut into two equal parts; with one he is capable of beginning any kind of reasoning; but it is impossible for him with the other to pursue an argument, or to draw from the whole a reasonable conclusion. What a poor figure does science make in a head so badly organized! Accordingly Vandermonde, an *academician* by the way, the friend of Pache and of Monge, boasted of serving the latter as a counsellor, and of being called his wife. Speaking to me one day of the *cordeliers* (to which sect he confessed himself to belong), in opposition to the persons who considered them as *madmen*, 'We,' said he, 'desire order by reason, and you are of the party that desires it by force.' After such a definition I have nothing further to say of this man's wayward turn of mind. But since I have been speaking of an academician, I must say a word or two of *Condorcet*, whose mind will ever soar to the sublimest truths, but whose character will ever be on a level with the base sentiment of fear. It may be said of his understanding, in relation to his person, that it is a fine liquor imbibed by cotton. Never will the saying of, a strong mind in a feeble body, be applied to him: his heart is as weak as his constitution. The timidity which characterizes him, and which he carries into company in his face and attitude, is not only a defect in his temperament, but seems to be a vice inherent in his soul, which all his philosophy cannot overcome.—Hence it was, that after having ably established a principle, or demonstrated a truth, he voted in the Assembly contrary to his own opinion, when obliged to stand up in presence of the thundering galleries, armed with injurious words, and prodigal of threats. He was very well in his place of Secretary to the Academy: such men may write, but ought never to be actively employed. It is even a fortunate circumstance when they can be made of any use, for most timid men are absolutely good for nothing. Look at those poltroons of the Assembly, pouring forth their lamentations in the senate: if they had had fortitude enough to procure their own arrestation, by protesting against that of the *twenty-two*, nobody would have dared to hurt a hair of the head of two or three hundred representatives of the people; the republic would have been saved, and the departments would not have relapsed into submission. The people acquiesced in the loss of twenty men, but an assembly, of which one-half should have retired, would never have been considered as the national convention.

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PUBLIC SPIRIT.

What was the *Office for Public Spirit*, which has been objected to Roland as so great a crime?—I am tempted to repeat this question to the very persons who ask it; for I can conceive nothing so chimerical as that name.

Roland, restored to the ministry after the 10th of August, thought that nothing was more urgent than to diffuse the same spirit throughout the public administration, that every thing proceeding in an uniform course, the success of the revolution might be assured: he therefore addressed to all the administrative bodies a circular letter, tending that way, which did not fail to produce a favourable effect. The Legislative Assembly felt the necessity of seconding it; and for want of a body of Public Instruction, which was not yet organized, determined that an hundred thousand livres (£.4167) should be left to the disposal of the minister of the home department, for the purpose of dispersing such useful writings as he might think fit.

Roland, rigid in his economy, made it his business to lay out this money to the best advantage: availing himself of the public papers, then in the highest estimation, he ordered them to be forwarded *gratis* to the popular societies, to the parish priests, and to such zealous individuals as appeared desirous of contributing to the welfare of the state. Some of those societies, and several of those individuals, seeing that the government interested itself in their instruction, took courage, and now and then wrote to the minister, to request works which the Convention had ordered to be printed, and which they had not received. The minister, desirous of satisfying them, assigned to one of his offices the care of answering these letters, and of forwarding the publications desired. In this alone consist all the mighty machinations which have made so much noise, and which were nothing more than the mere execution of duties imposed by a decree. Roland was so careful of expence, that at the end of six months he had only disbursed about thirty-four thousand livres, out of the hundred thousand of which he was free to dispose; and of these he delivered an exact account, together with a list of the works distributed or acquired. But as in consequence of the nature of his place, and of the circumstances in which he found himself, he sometimes drew up instructions, which he dispersed in the same way; and as his writings in general breathed nothing but philosophy and a love of his fellow-creatures, fears were entertained lest the personal consideration that might result from thence should render him too powerful.

It only followed that he inspired great confidence, which, by facilitating administrative operations, was productive of considerable advantage; but supposing it necessary to prevent his acquiring too much esteem, and too great an ascendancy, there was nothing to do but to repeal the decree, and to forbid his forwarding any thing which did not necessarily belong to his correspondence with the administrative bodies. It was not however any regard to the public weal, but jealousy of the individual, which raised such a fermentation in men's minds; and accordingly they began to set up an outcry, and to accuse and denounce him in a vague manner, without pointing out the object of their complaint, for if he could have imagined what

it was, he would have been the first to apply a remedy to the evil apprehended. Instead of doing that, he thought only of defending himself, at first by continuing to do his duty, and afterwards by explaining his conduct, and refuting his calumniators. His triumphant answers aggravated envy; he was no longer mentioned but as a public enemy; and a real struggle took place between the courageous functionary, who remained at the helm in spite of the tempest, and the jealous deceivers or deceived, who endeavoured to bury him beneath the waves. He stood firm, as long as he hoped it could answer any purpose, but the weakness and insufficiency of the party of sages having been demonstrated on an important occasion, he retired.

His enemies dreaded his accounts; and prevented not only their examination, but the report of them from being made to the Assembly. The calumniators, when once afoot, thought only of justifying their false aspersions by the ruin of the man who had been the object of them; hence their redoubled efforts, their open persecution directed even against me; and in the want of well-founded reasons, the accusation so often repeated of *corrupting the public spirit*, and of an office established for that purpose, with my pretended share in the delinquency; and all without citing a *fact*, a *writing*, or even a reprehensible *phrase*.—And yet Roland's glory, in future times, will in part be attached to the able and instructive productions of his pen!

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MY SECOND ARRESTATION.

Sainte-Pelagie, August 20.

The twenty-fourth day of my confinement in the Abbey was beginning to pass away: the period of that confinement had been employed in study and literary labours, principally in writing *memoirs*, of which the composition must have born marks of the excellent disposition of mind I was in. The insurrection of the 31st of May, and the outrages of the 2d of June, had filled me with indignation; but I was persuaded that the departments would not look on them with an eye of satisfaction, and that their reclamations, supported by the necessary measures, would make the good cause triumphant. Little did I care, while indulging this hope, whether in some critical moment, or in the struggle of expiring tyranny, I fell a victim to private hatred, or to the rage of some furious madman. The success of my friends, and the triumph of true republicans, consoled me for every thing before-hand: I could have undergone the execution of an unjust sentence, or have succumbed beneath some unforeseen atrocity, with the calmness, the pride, and even the joy of innocence, which despises death, and knows that its wrongs will be revenged.—Here I cannot help once more expressing my regret for the loss of those *Memoirs*, which described so well the facts that had come to my knowledge, the persons by whom I had been surrounded, and the sentiments I had experienced in the varying succession of events. I am informed that some of them have escaped destruction; but they only contain the particulars of my first arrestation. The day will come perhaps when the union of these fragments will afford to some friendly hand the means of exhibiting the truth in more glowing colours.

The publication of a gross falsehood, and the loud bawling of the hawkers under my window, while announcing one of the numbers of *Pere Duchesne*, a filthy print with which Hebert, substitute of the Commons of Paris, every morning poisons the ignorant populace, who drink calumny like water, persuaded me that some new atrocity was in agitation. This paper pretended that its author had paid me a visit in the Abbey, and that having obtained my confidence by assuming the appearance of one of the Vendean banditti, he had brought me to confess the connexions of Roland and the Brissotines with the rebels of that department and the English government. In this ridiculous story, interspersed with the usual ornaments of style of *Pere Duchesne*, physical and moral probabilities were disregarded alike; I was not only transformed into the abettor of a counter-revolution, but into an old toothless hag, and was exhorted to weep for my sins till the time should come of expiating them on the scaffold. The hawkers, in consequence no doubt of their instructions, did not leave the vicinity of my residence for a moment, but accompanied their proclamation of *Pere Duchesne's Great Visit* with the most sanguinary advice to the people of the market. I took up my pen, and wrote a few lines to that cowardly Garat, who thinks himself a sage, because he is actuated by no passion but fear, which makes him pay his court to whatever party chances to be uppermost, without the least regard to justice. I pointed out to him the infamy of an administration which expose innocence, already oppressed, to the last outrages of a blind and furious populace. I certainly had no hope

of converting him; but I sent him my farewell to prey like a vulture upon his heart. About the same time, a young woman, who has no great talents to boast of, but who combines the graces of her sex with that sensibility which is its principal merit, and its greatest charm, found means to make her way into my prison. How was I astonished to see her sweet countenance, and to feel myself pressed to her bosom, and bathed in her tears! I took her for an angel; and an angel she was, for she is good and handsome, and had done her best to bring me news of my friends: she also furnished me with the means of informing them of my situation. This alleviation of my captivity had contributed to make me forget it, when at noon, on the 24th of June, the gaoler's wife came and begged me to step into her apartment, where an administrator was waiting to see me—I was in pain, and a-bed—I rose, and followed her into her room, where a man was walking up and down, and another writing, without either of them appearing to perceive my arrival.—‘Am I the person, gentlemen, whom you asked for?’—‘You are Citizenness Roland?’—‘Yes, that is my name.’—‘Be good enough to sit down.’—And the one continued to write, and the other to walk about.—I was endeavouring in vain to divine what this comedy might mean, when the *writer* deigned to address me—‘I am come,’ said he, ‘to set you at liberty.’—I know not how it was, but I felt myself very little affected by this information.—‘Why, indeed,’ answered I, ‘it is very right to remove me from this place; but that is not all; I wish to return home, and the door of my apartment is sealed up.’—‘The administration will have it opened in the course of the day; I am writing for an order, because I am the only administrator here, and two signatures are necessary for the gaoler's discharge.’—He rose, delivered his message, and returned to speak to me, with the air of a man desirous of inspiring confidence.—‘Do you know,’ said he all on a sudden, and as if without design, ‘where M. Roland is at present?’—I smiled at the question, observed that it was not candid enough to deserve an answer; and, as the conversation grew tiresome, retired to my room to prepare for my departure. My first idea was to dine quietly, and not to remove till towards the evening; but, upon further reflection, I thought it a folly to remain in a prison when it was in my power to get out. Besides, the gaoler came to know if I was getting ready, and I plainly saw that he was impatient to turn me out of my lodgings. It was a little closet, rendered very uncomfortable by the dirtiness of the walls, the closeness of the grates, and the neighbourhood of a pile of wood, where all the animals belonging to the house deposited their ordure; but as it could contain only one bed, and as the prisoner consequently had the advantage of being alone, the honour of inhabiting it was generally conferred upon a new comer, or upon an individual desirous of solitude. Lavacquerie (the gaoler), who had never seen it occupied by any body so contented as I, and who used to admire the pleasure I took in arranging my books and my flowers, told me, that in future he should call it the pavilion of Flora. I was ignorant that at that very moment he intended it for Brissot, whom I did not even suppose to be my neighbour; and that soon after, it would be inhabited by a heroine, worthy of a better age, the celebrated Charlotte Corday. My poor maid, who was just come to see me, wept for joy while packing up my things; the order for setting me at liberty, founded upon nothing appearing against me, was shewn to me; I settled my accounts, and distributed my little favours to the poor, and to the servants belonging to the prison; and in my way out met the prince of Linanges, one of the hostages, who congratulated me in obliging terms upon my enlargement. I answered, ‘That I should be happy to pay him the same compliment, as it would be a pledge of the release of our

commissioners, and of the return of peace to my country;’ then, sending for a hackney-coach, I walked down slairs, much surprised at finding that the administrator had not yet left the prison, and at his coming to the door to see me into the carriage.

Driving home with the intention of leaving a few things there, and of proceeding immediately after to the house of the worthy people, who have adopted my daughter, I quitted the hackney-coach with that activity which never allowed me to get out of a carriage without jumping, passed under the gate-way as if upon wings, and said cheerfully to the porter as I went by, ‘Good morrow, Lamarre.’ Scarcely, however, had I got up four or five stairs, when two men, who some how or other had kept close at my heels, called out ‘Citizenness Roland!’—‘What do you want?’ said I, turning about.—‘In the name of the law, we arrest you.’ Those who know what it is to feel, will easily conceive all that I experienced at that moment. I desired the order to be read to me; and coming to a resolution immediately, stepped down stairs, and walked hastily across the yard.—‘Where are you going?’—‘To my landlord’s, where I have business; follow me thither.’—The mistress of the house opened the door with a smile.—‘Let me sit down and breathe,’ said I, ‘but do not rejoice at my being set at liberty: it is nothing but a cruel artifice: I am no sooner released from the Abbey, than I am ordered to be confined at Sainte-Pelagie. As I am not ignorant of the resolutions lately entered into by my section, I am determined to put myself under its protection, and will beg you to send thither accordingly.’—Her son immediately offered to go with all the warmth and indignation of an honest young man*. Two commissioners from the section came; desired to see the order; and made a formal opposition; but they afterwards begged me to accompany them to the residence of the mayor, where they were going to give notice of it, and to assign their reasons. With this request I could not refuse to comply. After employing the intermediate time in writing notes to my friends to inform them of my new destination, I took leave of a family which this scene had affected with terror and surprise, and was conducted to the mayor’s. There I was put into a little anti-chamber with the inspectors charged to take care of my person, while the commissioners proceeded to the office of the administrators of the police. The debate began, continued for some time, and grew warm. Ill at my case, and dissatisfied with the place I was in, I asked myself by what fatality innocence was obliged to play the part of a criminal, expecting judgment, and to remain in the mean time exposed to the inquisitive eyes of every body who came into the anti-chamber. At length, out of all patience, I rose, and opened the door of the office.—‘There can certainly, Gentlemen, be no harm in my being present at a discussion of which I am the subject.’—‘Get you gone,’ cried a little man, whom I recognized as the very Louvet that had examined me so awkwardly at the Abbey—‘But, Gentlemen, I have no intention to commit any act of violence, I am not prepared for that; I do not even ask to be heard; I only desire to be present.’—‘Get you gone; get you gone.—*Gendarmes*, come here!’—Any one would have supposed that the office was besieged, because a woman of common sense wished to hear what they were saying of her. It was however necessary to withdraw, that I might not be carried away by force. Soon after I perceived them making signs, running backwards and forwards, and sending for a coach; and at last an inspector of the police came and begged me to follow him. I turned round to the door of the office, and set it wide open.—‘Commissioners of the section of Beaurepaire, I give you notice that they are taking me away.’—‘We cannot help it; but the section will not forget you; it will take

care that you be examined.’—After having been set at liberty at one o’clock, because *nothing appeared against me*, I should be glad to know how I could become a *suspected person*, in my way home from the Abbey, and thus give cause for a new detention.—Joubert, another administrator, as violent as Louvet, and still more awkward and stupid than he, addressing me in a magisterial tone, confessed that my first arrest was illegal, and that it had been necessary to enlarge me, that I might afterwards be taken into custody according to the terms of the law. This opened me a fine field; and I was going to avail myself of it; but tyrants, even when they suffer the truth to escape them, cannot bear to hear it from the lips of others; noise and anger lest no room for reason; I quitted the company, and was conveyed to *Sainte-Pelagie*.

The name of this house, which, under the old government, was inhabited by nuns, keepers of those female victims of *lettres-de-cachet*, whose conduct was supposed to be immoral, added to its lonely situation in a remote quarter of the town, inhabited by what may truly be called populace, and but too well known on account of the ferocious spirit which displayed itself there in the month of September, by the massacre of so many priests; all this did not present my new asylum to my eyes in a consolatory point of view.

While a note was taking of my entry, a man of a sinister countenance opened my bundle, and began to examine it with particular curiosity. I perceived it at the moment when he laid upon the gaoler’s desk some newspapers which it contained. Surprised and offended at a behaviour only authorized in cases of secret confinement, I observed that it by no means became a man to examine a woman’s night clothes in so indecent a manner. He was accordingly ordered to let them alone; but he was the turnkey of the corridor in which I lodged; and twice a day I was doomed to see his horrible countenance. I was asked if I chose a room with one or two beds—‘I am alone, and want no company.’—‘But the room will be too small.’—‘It is all the same to me.’—Upon enquiry, it was found that they were all full, and I was conducted to a double-bedded room, six feet wide by twelve feet long, so that with the two *little tables*, and the two *chairs*, there was hardly any space to spare. I was then informed that I must pay the first month’s lodging in advance; fifteen livres for one bed; twice as much for the two. As I wanted only one, and should have taken it in a room which contained no more, I paid only fifteen livres. ‘But there is no water-bottle, or other vessel?’—‘You must buy them,’ said the same officious personage, very ready to make a tender of services, of which it was easy to perceive the interested motive. To these acquisitions I added an ink-stand, paper and pens, and established myself in my new apartment.

The mistress of the house coming to visit me, I made enquiry concerning my rights and the customs of the place, and was told that the state allowed nothing to the prisoners.—‘How then do they live?’—‘They receive a plate of kidney-beans only, and a pound and half of bread per day; but you would not be able to eat either one or the other.’—‘I can easily believe that they are not like what I have been accustomed to; but I wish to know what belongs to every situation, and will make a trial.’—I made a trial accordingly; but, either the state of my stomach, or want of exercise, made me reject the prison diet; and I was obliged to have recourse to Madame Bouchaud’s kitchen. She had made an offer of boarding me, which I accepted; and I found her fare

both salubrious, and economical, in comparison of what I might have sent for from the cook's shop, at an immense distance, and in a desolate quarter of the town. A mutton chop, and a few spoonfuls of vegetables for dinner, a sallad for supper, never any desert, and nothing but bread and water for breakfast; such were the dishes I ordered, and such was the fare I had been accustomed to at the Abbey. I mention it here, by way of opposing this manner of living, to the complaints soon after made by the section of the observatory, of my expences at Sainte Palagie, where it was said, that I was endeavouring to corrupt the gaoler by giving treats to his family: hence great indignation among the *Sans-culottes*, and a proposal from some of them to dispatch me to the other world. This accords well with the clamours of those women, who pretend that by dressing themselves up in fine clothes, they got admission into the circles of old countesses, at which I presided, in the Hotel of the home department, and with the articles of the journal of the Mountain, which inserts letters written to me by refractory priests.

O Danton! thus it is that you direct the knife of the assassin against your victims. Strike! one more will add little to the catalogue of your crimes; but their multiplicity cannot cover your wickedness, nor save you from infamy. As cruel as Marius, and more terrible than Cataline, you surpass their misdeeds, without possessing their great qualities; and history will vomit forth your name with horror, when relating the carnage of the first days of September, and the dissolution of the social body in consequence of the events that took place on the second of June.

My courage did not sink under the new misfortunes I experienced; but the refinement of cruelty with which they had given me a foretaste of liberty, only to load me with fresh chains, and the barbarous care with which they took advantage of a decree, by applying to me a false designation, as the way of legalizing an arbitrary arrest, fired me with indignation. Feeling myself in that disposition of mind when every impression becomes stronger, and its effect more prejudicial to health, I went to bed; but as I could not sleep, it was impossible to avoid thinking. This violent state, however, never lasts long with me. Being accustomed to govern my mind, I felt the want of self-possession, and thought myself a fool for affording a triumph to my perfecutors, by suffering their injustice to break my spirit. They were only bringing fresh odium on themselves, without making much alteration in the situation I had already found means so well to support: had I not books and leisure here as well as at the Abbey? I began indeed to be quite angry with myself for having allowed my peace of mind to be disturbed, and no longer thought of any thing, but of enjoying existence, and of employing my faculties with that independence of spirit which a strong mind preserves in the midst of fetters, and which thus disappoints its most determined enemies. As I felt that it was necessary to vary my occupations, I bought crayons, and took up my drawing again, which I had laid aside for a long while. Fortitude does not consist solely in rising superior to circumstances by an effort of the mind, but in maintaining that elevation by suitable conduct and care. Whenever unfortunate or irritating events take me by surprise, I am not content with calling up the maxims of philosophy to support my courage; but I provide agreeable amusements for my mind, and do not neglect the health-preserving art to keep myself in a just equilibrium. I laid out my days then with a certain sort of regularity. In the morning I studied the English language in Shaftesbury's Essay on Virtue, and in the verses of Thomson. The found

metaphysicks of the one, and the enchanting descriptions of the other, transported me by turns to the intellectual regions, and to the midst of the most touching scenes of nature. Shaftesbury's reason gave new strength to mine, and his thoughts invited meditation; while Thomson's sensibility, and his delightful and sublime pictures, went to my heart, and charmed my imagination. I afterwards sat down to my drawing till dinner time. Having been so long without handling the pencil, I could not expect to acquit myself with much skill; but we always preserve the power of repeating with pleasure, and of attempting with facility, whatever in our youth we have practised with success. Accordingly, the study of the fine arts, considered as a part of the education of young women, ought, in my opinion, to be less directed towards the acquisition of distinguished talents, than to the inspiring of them with the love of employment, to the making them contract a habit of application, and to the multiplying of their means of amusement; for it is thus that we escape from that *ennui* which is the most cruel disease of man in society; and thus it is that we avoid the quicksands of vice, and seductions that are still more to be feared than vice itself.

I will not then make my daughter a professor (*une virtuose*): I shall ever remember that my mother was afraid of my becoming too great a musician, or of my devoting myself entirely to painting, because she desired, above all things, that I should be fond of the duties of my sex, and learn to be a good housewife, in case of my becoming the mother of a family. My Eudora then shall learn to accompany herself in a pleasing manner on the harp, or to play with ease on the *forte-piano*; and shall know enough of drawing, to enable her to contemplate the master-pieces of art with greater pleasure, to trace or imitate a flower which pleases her, and to shew taste and elegant simplicity in the choice of her ornaments. It is my wish that the mediocrity of her talents may excite neither admiration in others, nor vanity in herself. It is my wish that she may please rather by her collective merit, than astonish at the first glance, and that she may rather gain affection by her good qualities, than applause by her brilliant accomplishments. But, good heavens! I am a prisoner, and a great distance divides us! I dare not even send for her to receive my embraces; for hatred pursues the very children of those whom tyranny persecutes; and no sooner does my girl appear in the streets with her virgin looks, and her beautiful fair hair, than those beings, hired or seduced by falsehood, point her out as the offspring of a conspirator. Cruel wretches! they well know how to break a mother's heart!

Could not I have brought her with me? - - - I have not yet said what is the situation of a prisoner at Sainte Pelagie.

The wing appropriated to females, is divided into long and very narrow corridors, on one side of which are little cells like that which I have described as my lodging. There, under the same roof, upon the same line, and only separated by a thin plaster partition, I dwell in the midst of murderers and women of the town. By the side of me is one of those creatures who make a trade of seduction, and set up innocence to sale; and above me is a woman guilty of forging assignats, who, with a band of monsters to which she belongs, tore an individual of her own sex to pieces upon the highway. The door of each cell is secured by a great bolt, and opened every morning by a man who stares in impudently to see whether you be up or a-bed: their inhabitants then

assemble in the corridors, upon the stair-cases, or in a damp and noisome room, a worthy receptacle for this scum of the earth.

It will be readily believed that I confine myself constantly to my cell; but the distance is not great enough to save the ear from the expressions which such women may be supposed to utter, but which it is impossible for any one to imagine, who never heard them.

This is not all: the wing where the men are confined, having windows in front of, and very near, the building inhabited by the women, the individuals of the two sexes of analogous character, enter into conversation, which is the more dissolute, as those who hold it are unsusceptible of fear: gestures supply the place of actions, and the windows serve as the theatre of the most shameful scenes of infamous debauchery.

Such is the dwelling reserved for the worthy wife of an honest man!—If this be the reward of virtue on earth, who will be astonished at my contempt of life, and at the resolution with which I shall be able to look death in the face? It never appeared to me in a formidable shape; but at present it is not without its charms; and I could embrace it with pleasure, if my daughter did not invite me to stay a little longer with her, and if my voluntary *exit* would not furnish calumny with weapons against my husband, whose glory I should support, if they should dare to carry me before a tribunal.

In the latter part of Roland's administration, conspiracies and threats succeeded each other so fast, that our friends often pressed us to leave the hotel during the night. Two or three times we yielded to their entreaties; but soon growing tired of this daily removal, I observed that malevolence would hardly go so far as to violate the abode of a man in office, while it might way-lay and immolate him out of doors; and that, in fine, if such a misfortune were to happen, it would be more conducive to public utility, and to his personal glory, for the minister to perish at his post.

Accordingly we no longer slept out; but I had my husband's bed brought into my own room, that we might run the same hazard, and kept under my pillow or upon my night-table, a pistol, which I meant to use, not for a vain defence, but to save myself from the outrages of the assassins, if I should chance to see them approach. In this situation I passed three weeks; and certain it is that the hotel was twice beset, and that another time the Marseillaise, informed of some project, sent eighty of their people to guard us. It is certain also that the Jacobins and Cordeliers were for ever repeating in their tribune, that a 10th of August was as necessary against Roland as it had been against Louis XVI; but as they said so, it might be presumed that they were not ready to realize their threat. Death, which I cheerfully braved at that time, must needs appear desirable to me at Sainte-Pelagie, if powerful considerations did not chain me to the earth.

My keepers soon began to suffer more than myself from my situation, and were at great pains to render it less disagreeable. The excessive heat of the month of July rendered my prison uninhabitable. The paper with which I surrounded the grates, did not prevent the sun from striking upon the white walls of my narrow cell, and though

my windows remained open all night, the burning and concentrated air of the day did not get cool.

The gaoler's wife invited me to pass my days in her apartment; but of this offer I limited my acceptance to the afternoon. It was then that I thought of sending for a *forte-piano*, which I put into her room, and with which I sometimes amused myself. But what a modification did my moral state suffer during that period! The rising of some of the departments seemed to announce the indignation they had conceived at the violence offered to their representatives, and their resolution of avenging it, by restoring the convention to its former entire state.

I knew that Roland was in a safe and peaceful retreat, receiving the consolation, and the attentions, of friendship; my daughter, taken into the house of venerable patriarchs, continued her exercises, and her education, under their immediate inspection, and along with their own children; and my friends, the fugitives, welcomed to Caen, were there surrounded by a respectable force. I thought I saw the salvation of the republic growing out of events; and resigned to my own fate, I was happy still; for our happiness depends less upon external objects, than upon the disposition and affections of the mind. I employed my time in a useful and agreeable manner; I sometimes saw the four persons who used to visit me at the Abbey; the worthy *Grandpré*, whose place authorised him to come, and who came accompanied by a charming woman; the faithful Bosc, who brought me flowers from the *garden of plants*, of which the beautiful forms, the brilliant colours, and the sweet odours diminished the horrors of my melancholy abode; and the kind Champagneux, who so earnestly persuaded me to continue the historical memoirs I had begun, that at his desire I resumed my pen, and for a while laid by my Tacitus and my Plutarch, to whom I was accustomed to devote my afternoons.

Madame Bouchaud did not think it enough to have offered me the use of her apartment. Perceiving that I availed myself of it, with great reserve, she determined to remove me altogether from my gloomy cell, and to lodge me in a comfortable room with a fire place, situated on the ground floor, and underneath her own chamber. Thus was I delivered from the shocking company which for three weeks had been my greatest torment. I shall no longer be obliged to pass twice a day through the midst of the women of my neighbourhood, that I may get out of their way for a little time at least. I shall no longer see the turnkey of sinister countenance open my door every morning, and shut me in every night with a great bolt, like a criminal whom it is necessary to keep in close confinement. It is the good-natured face of Madame Bouchaud, which offers itself to my eyes: she it is whose kind attentions I perceive every moment. There is nothing, even to the very jessamine carried up before my window and winding its flexible branches round the bars, that does not testify her desire to oblige. I look upon myself as her boarder, and forget my captivity. All my articles of study and amusement are united around me; my *forte-piano* is by my bedside, and recesses in the walls afford me the means of arranging my little effects in such a way as to preserve in my asylum that neatness in which I delight. But gold, and falsehood, and intrigue, and arms, are employed against the departments which the truth was beginning to enlighten: soldiers deluded, or bought over, betray the brave Normans; Evreux is evacuated; Caen abandons the members to which it had

afforded a refuge; domineering banditti, in what they still dare to call a convention, declare them traitors to their country; their persons are outlawed; their property is confiscated; their wives and children are taken into custody; their houses are demolished; the members who chose to remain in confinement are impeached, without any reason being given; and every thing announces the triumph of audacious guilt over unfortunate virtue. That cowardice which marks the selfishness and corruption of a degenerate people, whom we thought it possible to reclaim by the light of reason, but who were too far debased; that cowardice delivers over to terror the perfidious administrators, and the ignorant multitude. Every where the idea of peace and the desire of repose, always illusory when it is not deserved, counsel the acceptance of a monstrous constitution, which, had it even been better, ought not to have been received from the unworthy hands that held it out. There where any resistance might have arisen, it is stifled by corruption; and the money of the nation is lavished to insure the success of its oppressors. In their silly stupor, a majority, incapable of reasoning, consider the sacrifice of a few individuals as a trifling misfortune; they think to establish justice, peace, and security, for themselves, by suffering them to be violated in the persons of their representatives; and receive the pledge of their servitude as a sign of salvation. In the mean time a rod of iron is held over the weak Parisians, the pusillanimous witnesses of horrors, which they lament, without daring to make them known: famine threatens them; poverty preys upon them; oppression overwhelms them; the reign of proscriptions begins; denunciations come showering down on every side; and the prisons overflow. Every where an infamous recompense awaits him who has a victim to offer; the porters of private houses, kept secretly in pay, become the chief informers, and servants no longer are any thing but spies.

An astonishing woman taking counsel, from her courage alone, came to inflict death upon the apostle of murder and pillage. She deserves the admiration of the universe. But for want of her being well acquainted with the state of things, her time and her victim were ill chosen. There was a greater criminal, to whom her immolating hand should have given the preference. The death of Marat only served the purposes of his abominable sectaries: they transformed into a martyr him whom they had taken for a prophet; and fanaticism and knavery, always in a league, derived from this event an advantage similar to that which the murder of le Pelletier had procured them. Certainly, its consequences had been too fatal, for the fugitive members, entire strangers to the action of Paris*, not to be equally so to that of Charlotte Corday; but their adversaries laid hold of it as a new mean of ruining them in the minds of the people. The most determined republicans, the only men of the assembly who united with the courage of austere probity, the authority of talents and knowledge, were represented as the favourers of despotism, and as vile conspirators. At one time they are supposed to be in a league with the rebels of La Vendée, and on the sabres of the warriors desirous of defending them, the words *Vive Louis XVII.* are said to be inscribed: at another time they are accused of endeavouring to divide France into little republics, and are reprobated as federalists. It is with equal consistency that Brissot is taken into English pay, and that his wife, in a report sent to all the departments, is gravely represented as having retired to the queen's apartments at Versailles, and as holding secret councils there.

Nothing can be more ridiculous than this story to those who are acquainted with Brissot's wife, devoted to the domestic virtues, wholly taken up with the cares of her household, ironing her husband's shirts herself, looking through the key-hole to see if she may safely open the door to those who knock, and hiring a little miserable room in the village of St. Cloud, that she may have it in her power to carry the child that she has just weaned into the open air. But she is soon taken into custody; is conducted to Paris; and a guard is placed over her. Petion's wife, who was going to retire among her friends till the storm should blow over, is arrested with her son. Miranda, whom the revolutionary tribunal had acquitted, is remanded to prison as a suspected person, on the information of his valet, a spy of Pache; all the generals are put under arrest; and Custine, whom, as I have been told by the Prince de Linanges, the Austrians dreaded more than any of the rest, is threatened with the loss of his head.

Disorganization spreads itself over the whole face of France, and a civil war breaks out in a variety of places. The acceptance of the constitution cannot procure for Lyons an act of oblivion for the justice it dared to execute on two or three of Marat's banditti; it is called upon to deliver up the heads of its richest inhabitants, and to pay a considerable sum; troops are recalled from the frontiers, which are left exposed to the ravages of the enemy, while brother is set against brother, and the blood of Frenchmen is spilt by the French themselves. In the mean time the enemy advances in the north; Valenciennes no longer exists; Cambray is blocked up; and the Austrian light troops appear in the environs of Peronne. Paris, like another Babylon, sees its brutish populace run in crowds to ridiculous festivals, or feast their eyes with the blood of a multitude of wretches sacrificed to their ferocious distrust; while the selfish and unfeeling fill the theatres, and while the timid citizen stays trembling at home, where he is not sure of sleeping, if it please his neighbour to say that he has made use of *uncivic* expressions, blamed the carnage of the 2d of September, or lamented the fate of the victims of Orleans, put to death without proof of their being privy to an assassination which was *not* committed on the person of the infamous Bourdon. O my country! into what hands art thou fallen. Chabot and his fellows announce that Roland is at Lyons, affirm that he excites that city to insurrection, and call for his impeachment and for mine: and at the self-same time they search the cellars of the observatory, and invest the house of one of his friends, where they suppose he may be concealed.

All my friends are proscribed, fugitives, or in confinement; my husband only escapes from the fury of his adversaries by keeping close in a retreat which may be compared to the severest imprisonment; and it is even decreed that the few persons who come to console me shall undergo persecution.—Grandpré, dining in company with a man whom he did not know to be a justice of peace, and a member of the tribunal of the district, lamented the negligence of the magistrates, who suffered so many persons to languish in the prisons. On this the unknown personage discovered himself; affected a great desire to be made acquainted with abuses, to the reform of which he might be able to contribute; and begged Grandpré to tell him his name and his address, that he might call, and take him with him when he should visit the prisons. This was only a pretext,—the justice of peace hastened to the committee of general safety, and fabricated an atrocious denunciation against Grandpré, whom he accused of being an accomplice in the death of Marat.—It seems as if we were living in the time of Tiberius; for, like his, this is the reign of informers.—Grandpré was taken up by an

officer and four musketeers, who repaired to his apartment at five o'clock in the morning; ransacked his papers, and sealed up his effects. He had then about him a letter addressed by me to the unfortunate Brissot. What a crime might be made of this, to me for having written it, and to him for being the bearer! Luckily he found means to conceal it from their search; but it was not till after a tedious debate that he could obtain permission to remain under a guard at his office, instead of going to sleep at the abbey; nor was it till after the expiration of several days, that means were found to demonstrate the falsity of the charge.

Champagneux was less fortunate: to the crime of owing his appointment to Roland, he joined that of occupying a desirable place.—Collot d'Herbois went drunk to the office of the home department, between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, at the moment that the clerks had just left their desks to go to dinner: his business was to demand carriages, of which the minister had not the disposal. In a rage at not finding Garat, he swore, stormed, broke the legs of the chairs and table*, went to the apartment of Champagneux, the first clerk, abused him, ordered the packets that were made up for the Post-office to be opened, and quarrelled with the inclosure they contained. It was a kind of circular letter, consisting of questions, and intended to procure information concerning the state of the country. In his heated brain he arranged a denunciation, which he brought forward the next day, at the Convention, and on the strength of which a decree of arrest was passed against both Garat and Champagneux.

Garat came to the bar, made no complaint of Collot, explained his conduct in the gentlest terms, pronounced a fulsome panegyric on the august assembly, and was sent back to his duty. Champagneux at first hid himself in a fright, but afterwards appeared. He was referred by the Convention to the Committee, and by the Committee was sent a prisoner to the *Force*. Garat, solicited by others, and interested himself in the enlargement of Champagneux, whose services he could not dispense with, repaired to the Committee to obtain it. There he made it appear, that, without the assistance of a man so conversant with business, it would be impossible for him to remain in office, and by his friends, such as Barrere, if men like Barrere can be called friends, was encouraged to hope, that by offering his conditional resignation, Champagneux would be restored to him, as an inducement to continue in the administration; but the rest of the Committee spoke out in plainer terms. He was required to fill up the place of Champagneux: his liberty and his life depended on his compliance. He was required to fill it up by the appointment of a young man, twenty-six years of age, destitute of experience in business, of all kinds of knowledge, and of every recommendation but the favour of the Committee, of which he was a tool. Garat, who never refused his masters any thing, submitted, and then retired from his office, abandoning a post it was impossible for him to maintain*. But Champagneux was not set at liberty, and the fourth week of his detention has already passed away. At the moment when he was threatened with an arrest (for Collot had announced it as an act that would necessarily follow his volition), Champagneux was in possession of almost the whole of my *Historical Memoirs*, the existence of which he wished to insure by taking a copy. Uneasy, agitated, and not doubting but that the principles by which they were dictated, and the freedom with which they were written, were a direct passport to the scaffold, he committed them to the flame.—Yet these are the

governors of the empire!—A Collot, a strolling player by profession, by whose side sits a judge of the southern departments, who not long since condemned him to a year's imprisonment for an offence which he committed while a vagrant from barn to barn, and for which several of the judges wished to send him to the galleys!—Great strength of lungs, the gestures of a buffoon, the manœuvres of a knave, the extravagance of a madman, and the effrontery of ignorance; such were his means of success at the clubs, particularly at the Jacobins, who were not ashamed to mention him at the time that the patriotic ministry was formed under Louis XVI.

Collot thinking himself ill used by the appointment of Roland to the home department, to which he had directed his views, deemed him the more worthy of his hatred, as being an enemy, by whom he was overlooked. From that moment his Jacobinical influence was directed against him, and this conduct, added to his other relative qualities, procured him a seat in the Convention, as one of the Parisian deputation.

Champagneux, in his confinement, regrets his liberty less than the pleasure of sometimes alleviating my captivity, while I am afflicted at *his*, which he owes to his connexion with Roland and myself. As to Bose, who has already given up his place of administrator at the post-office, and whom I endeavour to persuade not to run the risk of a prison by visiting me in mine, I see him once a week, as it were by stealth. In the midst of all these sorrows, I can however offer my friends a seat in the pleasant room, where the kind-hearted Madame Bouchaud has sequestered me from all the appearances of a prison. I am there exposed, it is true, to the inconvenience of having a sentry planted directly opposite my window, on whose account I am always obliged to keep my curtains drawn, and who comes to listen to every thing that is said when I am not alone; and there I am disturbed by the horrible barking of three great dogs, whose kennel is at less than ten paces distance. I am also close to a large room, pompously styled the council-chamber, where the administrators of the police do their business when they come to examine a prisoner. It is to this neighbourhood that I am indebted for the knowledge of some curious scenes, of which I am going to say a few words.

Two men, whose names I once knew, and have either forgotten, or do not choose to repeat, because the names of such wretches are not deserving of mention, had been sent to prison for their malversations in the clothing of the troops, in which department of the public service they were employed. They had for friends, or for accomplices, some people of their own description, and these people were precisely administrators of the police. Charged in that quality with the maintenance of order in the prisons, and the superintendance of the gaolers, they came to Sainte-Pelagie, once or twice a week, with other friends like themselves, ten or twelve in number, and sometimes more, sent for the two darling prisoners to the council-chamber, and there exacting from the gaoler capons, chickens, eggs, wine, cordials, coffee, &c. consumed them at his expence, and kept up their permanent orgies for three or four hours together. No one would ever imagine, and most assuredly I shall not undertake to relate the brutal joy, the fulsome conversation, and the infamy of these entertainments. The word patriotism, stupidly applied, and repeated emphatically on every mention of the scaffold, to which it was proper to send all *suspected persons*;

that denomination bestowed upon every one who had received a good education, or was possessed of a fortune not recently stolen; the disgusting kisses from those mouths, reeking with wine, smacking upon the cheeks of the new comers, and repeated in concert at the moment of breaking up; the obscene jests of men destitute of all morality, and strangers to all shame; and the silly pride of atrocious blockheads, who dreamed of nothing but denunciations, and whose sole science consisted in imprisoning their betters - - - -

Plato might well compare democracy to an *auktion* of government, a kind of *fair*, where all possible modes of administration are intermixed. But how would he characterize that state of society where men like these are arbiters of the liberty of their fellow-citizens? Whenever this agreeable company came, Bouchaud or his wife never failed to withdraw my key from the door, and to give me notice of their arrival. At last I took my resolution, and shut my ears against their noise; I even thought it entertaining to continue my *Historical Memoirs*, and to write vigorous passages, before the eyes, as it were, of wretches, who would have torn me to pieces if they had only heard a single phrase.

As the 10th of August was at hand, and fears were entertained of a rehearsal of the 2d of September, in the prisons, the administrators found means to get out the rogues of their acquaintance; and by so doing put an end to the civic feasts at Sainte-Pelagie. If I could persuade myself to meddle with such disgusting matters, I could give very astonishing, and very shocking accounts, of the abuses that prevail in the gaols:—the imprisoned criminals would there be seen converting into accomplices almost all the servants, and other persons concerned in the business of the place; women of the town, guilty of serious offences, obtaining their enlargement without a trial, by means of the administrator, who sleeps with them the night after; assassins, rich enough to pay an advocate (*defenseur officieux*) with the produce of their robberies, bribing him to destroy the vouchers, and procure the impunity, of their crimes; and professed thieves keeping up their intrigues with one another, and with their accomplices without, thieving still, though immured in a prison, and dividing the spoils with the turnkey, or with the *gendarme*, who appears to guard them. Every thing gets tainted or completely spoiled in these infectious places under a vicious administration, desiring only to destroy, careless of correcting, and actuated by passion alone.—‘Compassionate and generous Howard, who wanderedst over all Europe to visit those gloomy dungeons, in which the wisdom of an equitable government ought never to let innocence languish, and where it should also take care to distinguish weakness from crime, how would your feeling heart have been hurt if you had been perfectly acquainted with the management of the prisons belonging to the nation then esteemed the gentlest upon earth!’ There no distinction is made between giddy youth and hardened guilt. I have seen a botanical student, who had spoken ill of Marat, confined in the same room with highway robbers. There no respect is shewn to morals. I have seen a girl of fourteen, who was claimed by her parents, detained in the same cell with the infamous woman who had just seduced her, and who had been taken up for that offence. There no regard is had to decency, or attention to salubrity, in the construction of the edifice, or in the laying out of the internal space. A building is now erecting at Sainte-Pelagie, on an immense piece of ground, by an architect of confined ideas, a man of no mind, who is making his dispositions contrary to every

principle of rationality, and yet no person in the superior branches of administration is either able or willing to correct his plan.

Here I must do justice to the present keeper. He does what he can in matters of detail, but nothing can prevent the bad consequences resulting from an organization essentially vicious. There ought to be either distinct houses, some appropriated to criminals, and others to suspicious or suspected persons, or else wings entirely detached; nor should there be any communication between the two sexes. But as this is not the place for a treatise upon the subject, I can only lament the destiny of a people, in the establishment of whose liberty it is impossible for those to believe who have once been witnesses to its extreme corruption.

On my first coming to Sainte-Pelagie, a woman, confined for some trifling offence, was allowed me, whose services might be an assistance to my weakness, while I had the means of making them an alleviation of her distress. Not but that I was very well able to be my own servant: ‘*Tout sied bien au généreux courage**,’ was said of Favonius performing for Pompey in his misfortunes the offices which valets are accustomed to perform for their masters. This may be applied with equal truth to the unfortunate man, stripped of his fortune, and providing for all his wants, and to the austere philosopher, disdaining every superfluity. Quintius† was roasting his turnips when he received the ambassadors of the Samnites; and I could very well have made my bed at Saint-Pelagie; but, as in fetching water, and things of the like kind, it was necessary to go through long passages, and to mix with their various inhabitants, I was not sorry to have a person whom I could oblige by sending her on such errands. She continued to assist me in the room I had been indulged with, and was coming in one morning at the very moment that an administrator was at the door of the council-chamber. He asked who lodged there; desired to inspect the room; came in; cast an angry eye around him; and then went out, and complained to the keeper’s wife of the degree of comfort she allowed me to enjoy.—‘Madame Roland was indisposed (this was true); and I put her more in the way of receiving such assistance as she might stand in need of; besides she sometimes amuses herself with a *forte-piano*, for which there is not room in a cell.’—‘She must do without: send her this very day into a corridor: it is your business to maintain equality.’

Unfeeling wretch! is it to maintain equality that you wish to confound me with the most abandoned of women?—Madame Bouchard, more distressed than can well be imagined, soon came to communicate to me the order she had received: I consoled her by conforming to it with much calmness and resignation; and it was agreed upon, that I should come down in the course of the day to change the air, and to return to my studies, the materials for which I left where they were. Thus am I once more destined to see the turnkeys, to hear the creaking of the bolts, to breathe the fetid air of a corridor, sadly illumined in the evening by a lamp, of which the thick smoke blackens all the walls, and suffocates the neighbourhood. These are the humane actions, the signs of liberty of those men, who upon the ruins of the Bastille recal to our recollection the cruelty of the governor killing Lauzun’s spider, and who, in the *Champ de Mars*, send up birds carrying streamers, to announce to the inhabitants of the upper regions the felicity of the earth. Insolent comedians! you are playing your

last parts: the enemy is at hand.—By the enemy I mean the departments endeavouring to insure the triumph of reason and of true liberty, and preparing your ruin.

Mine is inevitable no doubt; I have deserved the hatred of all tyrants; but I only regret that of my country, which your chastisement will console, but cannot save.

As to the rest, the consequences of oppression have filled the corridor I inhabit with women in whose company I can remain without shame, and even with pleasure. I have found there the wife of a justice of peace, whose neighbour ascribes to her expressions styled uncivic; I have found there the wife also of the president of the Revolutionary tribunal; and there I have found Madame Pétion.—‘I little thought,’ said I on accosting her, ‘when I was sharing your uneasiness at the *Mairie**, on the 10th of August, 1792, that we should keep our sad anniversary at Sainte-Pelagie, and that the fall of the throne would lead to our disgrace.’

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RAPID OBSERVATIONS

On The Indictment Drawn Up By Amar Against The Members Of The Convention.

If there have existed a *conspiracy against the unity and indivisibility of the republic, against the liberty and the safety of the French people*, it is evident that it can only have been formed by the abettors of despotism, by ambitious men, wishing to monopolize power and riches, or by the enemies of mankind.

Brissot, Genononné, Vergniaux, Gaudet, Gorsas, Petion, Buzot, &c. are accounted such. These men must then have shewn, on more occasions than one, their hatred of liberty, their thirst of gain, their eagerness to obtain places, all the vices and corruption, in short, that are natural to such characters. Supposing even that they had assumed the mask of hypocrisy, it was impossible for the end they had in view to remain concealed: their conduct must have betrayed it, and their interested motives must have evidently appeared. Let us enquire into what they were; let us see how they have acted; and we shall be able to judge of what is ascribed to them. After that it will be time to go in search of the *conspiracy* itself, which very possibly may resemble the story of the *golden tooth*; or may amount to nothing more than the well-known efforts of aristocrates and royalists, manifested as early as the infancy of the revolution, and connected with the enterprizes of foreign powers.—Let us look at a few of these men in private life before the year 1789, the æra when the busy scene of politics, then opening, first brought them forward to public view; and let us observe the course they afterwards pursued. Advocates for the most part, some had distinguished themselves at the bar, others had made themselves known in the republic of letters; several, remarkable only for the integrity they had displayed in their professions, were seated in the States General, by the esteem that integrity had procured them, while several others devoted themselves to the laborious, but honourable functions of journalists, and struggled courageously with despotism driven to despair.

Pétion, simple in his manners, moderate in his desires, and married to a woman of good sense, resided at Chartres. Esteemed by his fellow citizens, who had witnessed his birth, and already noted for that philosophy which marks a good understanding at an early period in life, he was deemed worthy of a seat in the assembly of the states.

Buzot, distinguished at Evreux by his strict probity, and premature prudence, inspired confidence, and deserved consideration at an age when so many others think of nothing but pleasure. A taste for study, and the solitary habits of a meditative mind, filled up all those moments which he did not devote to the bar; while manners equally pure and gentle, rendered him dear to his friends. The warmth of his sentiments, the ease of his elocution, and the austerity of his principles, procured him the honourable office of carrying his country's complaints and demands to the States General.

Gorsas, the father of a numerous family, undertook from the very beginning of the revolution, to conduct a periodical paper, in which he combated the still powerful court, and devoted himself to the defence of the people, ever endeavouring to establish, and never neglecting to reclaim, their rights.

Brissot, a writer from his early youth, had preached liberty in the time of despotism, and humanity during the reign of tyranny: he had long prayed for the revolution, had helped to bring it forward by exposing the abuses of the times, and had undergone imprisonment as a punishment for the freedom of his writings. More taken up with moral truths in politics than with the care of his fortune, he had engaged in several speculations, the failure of which had increased his poverty without injury to his honour. The revolution was the signal of his political life: he began his career, in the midst of storms, discussing principles, sparing no one who appeared to violate them, and labouring without intermission for the public weal.

I stop for a moment at these four personages: the two first made a figure in the constituent assembly; Brissot obtained a seat in the succeeding legislature; and all four became members of the Convention. Was there a single circumstance in which they acted unlike themselves? Did they assume any authority? Did they acquire any wealth? Or did they aim at the supreme power for themselves and their friends?

Petion and Buzot served the cause of liberty in the constituent assembly, with a zeal and constancy which procured them the hatred of aristocracy, and the favour of the people: but popular favour is inconstant while persevering hatred gains fresh strength from the accession of all the jealous, whose attacks never fail to follow any brilliant success. Buzot, belonging to the criminal tribunal of Evreux, preferred doing his duty in his native country to the exercise of the same functions at Paris; which would have better suited an ambitious man; supported his reputation in the presence of his fellow-citizens, and of the enemies he had made himself by his civism; and obtained by his merit a seat in the Convention, after having established a popular society in the town, as an indispensable barrier against the struggles of despotism in chains, but not subdued. It cannot be said that he had either his re-election, or any kind of employ in view on leaving the constituent assembly, any more than Petion; for they were the very men who procured the passing of the decree, forbidding the members of that assembly to hold any place or to be re-elected, for four years to come. They had even demanded an interval of six; but at the time of the revision that decree was repealed, in spite of their endeavours to maintain it. Buzot then entered the convention as pure as he had left the constituent assembly; and there for a while we will leave him. We shall see hereafter how he conducted himself, and shall be able to judge whether a man who braved clamour and outrages in support of his opinions, even admitting some of them to be erroneous, could be an ambitious hypocrite, or a conspirator.

Petion was elevated to the mayoralty by popular favour; and preserved it till after the 10th of August, as well as the hatred of the court, which manifested itself on every occasion, even to the very last. It is only of late that any one has ventured to accuse him of going to the palace for the purpose of defending it, while it is well known that he was exposed to its fire. The calumnious assertion of his having given *Mandat* orders to fire upon the people, is also of recent date. I ask what could tempt Petion,

detested by the court, and beloved by the people, to betray the latter, and serve the former, when it stood on the very brink of ruin? Could he who had acquired popularity by combating regal power, have any reason to forfeit it, when the people were beginning to get the upper-hand? Let us put the philosopher and the zealous citizen out of the question: let us look only to the man; and we shall see that even in the regard of ambition and self-interest, the conduct attributed to Petion would have been absurd; and that if he had not too much principle, he had at least too much good sense, to fall into such an error. He was prevented by his office from putting himself at the head of the insurrection; and to prevent his opposing it, he should have been rendered incapable of acting, or confined. This the heedless commune forgot to do, and I remember, that Lanthenas went twice from the *Mairie* to the town-house, to advise their putting a strong guard over his hotel. The reporter (Amar) did not say a syllable of the massacres of the second of September: he wisely avoided the danger of touching on a question, both sides of which had been supported by the Mountaineers. When Roland denounced those massacres, the Jacobins said they were the work of the people and of its vengeance: they even made it a crime not to applaud them; and when Petion, with the rest of the right side, obtained a decree to prosecute the murderers, Petion and the right side were called the enemies of liberty and of the people. But when the decree had fallen into desuetude, when the Jacobins triumphed, and the twenty-two were proscribed, the Jacobins themselves, and Hebert among the first of them, impudently asserted that the massacres were the infamous work of Petion.

Gaudet, *Vergniaux*, and *Gensonné*, distinguished by their talents, and well known at Bourdeaux, as friends to the revolution, were elected members of the legislative assembly. They were the first men for talents in that body, a kind of aristocracy which procured them more numerous and more dangerous enemies, than any want of civism could have done. They alternately filled the president's chair on the tenth of August, at that critical moment when the weak would have trembled at such a painful pre-eminence; nor can any but knaves reproach them with the moderation and the temper they displayed in their conduct at that interesting period. Brissot naturally became intimate with them, because he approached nearer to their level than any body else, in like manner as a similarity of sentiments had made him connect himself with the defenders of principles in the constituent assembly, to which he did not belong: the countryman and friend of Petion, he became acquainted with such of his colleagues as supported that cause in favour of which his journal was composed.

He had laboured under the same mistake as many other persons, in regard to la Fayette; or rather it may be said, that la Fayette, swayed at first by the principles he had adopted, had no longer the strength of mind necessary to support them when the struggle became difficult; or that, fearing the consequences of too great a power in the hands of the people, he deemed it prudent to establish a kind of counterpoise. The fact is, that as he professed even republicanism in private, Brissot was a long while before he could believe him guilty, even when he was become so in the eyes of more violent men. But he had blamed him without reserve, and publicly declared his rupture with him, before the affair of the *Champ-de-Mars*. Here the reporter piques himself so little upon accuracy, that he confounds dates; he makes Brissot come to the Jacobins in *March* 1791, to prepare the business of the *Champ-de-Mars*, which did not take place till *July*, and which was solely occasioned by the flight and return of the king in the

month of June. It is well known besides, that Brissot did not go to the Jacobins to excite them to sign the petition, but merely because he was appointed one of the committee to draw it up. I remember to have heard him relate on the following day, that *Laclos*, who was also of the committee, complained of such a violent head-ach, that he could not hold the pen, and that he begged of Brissot to take it; that the same *Laclos* proposed the insertion of an article which he mentioned with an air of indifference, but which would have been favourable to d'Orleans; and that he (Brissot) rejected it with indignation, and substituted the passage recommending a republic, for which that moment was peculiarly proper, and might have been turned to great account. It is also well known that the assembly having decided in favour of the king, the Jacobins, instead of sending their petition to the *Champ-de-Mars*, sent deputies there to say, that it was not a proper place for their purpose, since the passing of the decree. This took place on the Saturday. I saw the deputies come to the *Champ-de-Mars*, where I was at noon, with not more than two or three hundred persons, and where *Verrieres*, the little hump-backed cordelier, and some others, were declaiming upon the national altar. It was on the Sunday morning, that two men were hung, when there were not thirty persons assembled, a fact which I have heard attributed with some probability to the contrivance of the *Lameths* in coalition with others, who wanted an opportunity of employing force, and of inspiring terror. Certain it is, that Sunday having brought together a great number of people, who had been attracted by the vague report of a petition, while that of the hanging business had not as yet got abroad, *Robert* set about drawing one up, completed it, and was getting it signed, when the military were called out, in consequence of a denunciation made to the assembly, and of the violent letter written by Charles *Lameth*, the president, to the commune of Paris, setting forth the necessity of repressing the horrid disorders of which two men had been the victims. Thus did the morning murder, committed, as it were, by stealth, serve as a pretext for shooting the people assembled in the afternoon. The red flag was hoisted at the town-hall, terror and imprisonment were the order of the day, and prepared the triumph of the revisors, who wished to give strength to the party of the court. Surely it will be quite enough to read the *Patriot** of that time, to judge whether it be possible that Brissot, who denounced the affair of the *Champ-de-Mars*, supported the people, and attacked the revisors, could at the same time have been their accomplice. This accusation is absurd in the extreme! but every thing is so from one end to the other of this work of iniquity. I will not enter here into the question of the war, which was the signal of the great division that took place among the patriots. *Robespierre*, fiery, jealous, greedy of popularity, and inclined to domineer both by his nature, and the high opinion he entertained of his own merit, put himself at the head of the party that opposed the declaration of hostilities. It would be worth while to see the speeches on the subject: but to me it appeared that the mass of enlightened people were in general for the affirmative, and consequently of Brissot's opinion. Certain it is that the court was very repugnant to the measure, and that the king was in a manner overruled by his council. He had every thing to gain by delay: the enemy were making their preparations at their ease, and our inaction would have delivered us into their hands, a defenceless prey. *Robespierre* could not forgive Brissot this triumph. The ice was broken, and from that moment it became his sole object to bring forward all the misfortunes that beset us, whether inevitable, or not, as crimes against the partisans of the war. The exaggeration of passion, became by degrees a system of refined calumny, artfully contrived, and obstinately persevered in.

Brissot could no longer make the eulogium of any man, without its being construed into perfidy, if that man afterwards departed from the line of duty. Brissot was acquainted with several persons in the ministry by whom he was esteemed—here was another reason of jealousy and distrust. These ministers, honourably disgraced by the court, were recalled after the fall of the throne; and Brissot at that time was one of the few men in the assembly possessed of any talents, or exercising any influence there: Brissot consequently appeared an important personage to Robespierre, who determined to ruin him, and had full leisure to effect his purpose, for Brissot, constantly confiding in the goodness of his intentions, could not prevail upon himself to go and enter the lists at the Jacobins with an everlasting harangue-maker, who tired him to death. He despised the adversary by whom he was overcome. But who could have believed the convention so weak, or the people so stupid? Those who not suffering themselves to be hurried along by the current of daily events, recur frequently to the page of history, meditate upon its contents, and compare the present with times past. I never saw any man in place do so since the revolution; indeed they have hardly time to breathe, and to answer to the calls of each returning day, without an extreme and uncommon economy in the distribution of their hours.

The letter of Gensonne and his associates to Louis XVI. cannot be construed into treason, unless by the most determined malevolence. Certainly nobody could at that time be sure of a successful revolution: the wisest men were therefore desirous that the king should feel the necessity of enforcing the constitution, and resolve upon recalling, and retaining those ministers who were sincerely inclined to execute the laws. They had given proofs of their patriotism, and the application for their recall was not a step directed by private interest, but the expression of the general will. Roland, for his part, knew nothing of this letter until these latter times, and probably would never have heard of it if it had not become public. But let us attend to the charges brought against him in these articles of impeachment, which will reflect everlasting disgrace on the age and nation, that could either applaud, or suffer them to pass, without the strongest marks of reprobation.

“The very day after the 10th of August,” say these articles, “Gensonné and his faction posted up libels reflecting upon those who had contributed to the fall of the throne, upon the Jacobins, upon the council-general of the commune, and upon the people of Paris. The pens of Louvet, Brissot, and Champagneux, were set to work; enormous packets of these libels were seen at Roland’s house, and all his servants were employed in dispersing them.”

I have read this passage twice, without being able to conceive how any one could dare to write it. Gensonné never to my knowledge posted up any thing: Louvet was editor of the *Sentinel*, of which complete collections exist: it was of great service to the revolution, and is an everlasting refutation of these assertions; for it breathes nothing but liberty, great and wise principles, the hatred of tyranny, and the love of equality. Roland has perhaps contributed as much as any body to reconcile men’s minds to the revolution; his circular letters exist; let them be read; and let any one be pointed out, that is not even excellent. Champagneux never dispatched any papers but those printed by order of the assembly; nor was any alteration ever made in them; the contrary supposition is as absurd as abominable. In the first place, it was impossible,

for it was not Roland who had them printed, but the authors at Baudoins, from whom the minister used to demand a certain number of copies: secondly, it was useless; for supposing that he made a selection, he was free to send off a smaller number of those which he deemed the least deserving of attention: and, lastly, if there had been the smallest breach of faith, the persons interested would not have waited a year to make their complaints, and demonstrate the deceit. What then can be intended by this ridiculous passage?—I have divined it; and it is a matter which demands some explanation.

In revolutionary movements, the most active people are not always the most blameless: how many beings come forward only that they may appear of some consequence in the world! Their services, however, are not to be despised; but when once the point in view is gained, it becomes necessary to lose no time in re-establishing order to avoid the dissolution of the social body. The commune formed on the 10th of August had contributed to the fall of the tyrant: they did well; but several of its members had been guilty of various excesses; a great deal of pillage and robbery had taken place at the *Tuileries* and elsewhere; considerable sums had been given to the commune for the purchase of corn; and it was the duty of the minister of the home department to demand their accounts, and to transmit them to the legislative body. Roland then pressed the commune to give in their accounts; but the commune being little disposed, and still less able to comply, the minister, with a view to justice, and to avoid sharing in the blame, made his report to the assembly accordingly. If the assembly had possessed sufficient energy, it would not have waited for such an opportunity, or at least would have laid hold of it, to renew the commune, a political operation equally equitable and necessary. But Danton, who made use of the commune, was minister, had partisans in the assembly, and contrived to keep his tool. Roland remained then in a difficult situation; liable to accusation if he did not demand these accounts, and sure to be hated if he did. His upright character did not permit him to hesitate; his austerity perhaps gave still greater solemnity to the demand; and when he was required to represent the state of Paris to the assembly, he gave no quarter to the errors, the follies, and the faults of the commune. They were in great number; and the commune consequently became his enemy. Thus did he acquire the hatred of that active body, who among the populace, had the reputation of being the patriots of the 10th of August, and the exterminators of tyranny. Add to the commune all those excited by the plunderer, Danton, against a colleague whose austerity was a constraint upon him, and who had besides denounced the September massacres, another exploit of a part of the commune, Santerre, &c. Add also those whom the jealous Robespierre set against Brissot's connexions, and you will have altogether a very considerable number, either of guilty men who felt the necessity of getting rid of their watchful denunciator, or of extravagant patriots prepossessed in favour of the heroes of the 10th of August, without seeing to the bottom of the business, or of people interested in supporting them, or of the ignorant whom they imposed upon, with a few envious popular leaders, well skilled in contriving the overthrow of a man in possession of the public esteem. Such was the origin of a party, which was increased by all the newcomers to the convention, too little acquainted with Paris, and public affairs, to form a right judgment of things, and by all those whose vanity was hurt by the superiority of the distinguished members, with whom Roland naturally became intimate, because men of equal capacity are ever fond of one another's company. Had I more time, I

could follow this party through all its ramifications, and indicate all its enterprises; but this is enough to put others in the way of coming at the truth.

It now appears clearly, that the party at present predominant, of which Amar is the organ, bestows the appellation of *libel* upon those writings in which Roland exhibited the state of Paris, called for the accounts of the commune, held up the massacres of September to public indignation, and recommended the establishment of order to reconcile all hearts to the revolution; which is somewhat more difficult than killing folks, according to the practice of these gentlemen. They do not point out these pretended libels, for that would be burning their fingers; but they hold forth concerning the distribution of certain libels, and the public believing that there must needs be some foundation for a charge so boldly brought forward, applauds the declamation, and think itself avenged when its own champions are put to death.

The understanding kept up with the Prussians is a piece of extravagance which one knows not how to characterize, and Brunswick must surely laugh at seeing people accused of being his friends who attacked him with so much vigour. It will suffice to read the letter in which it is pretended that Roland confesses the existence of a plan for quitting Paris, to form a judgment of the matter, especially as to the intention of opening a passage for Brunswick. I know, that on the supposition of the Prussians approaching very near to Paris, the question of what it would be proper to do, and whether it would be expedient to send away from that town the national representation, in which the whole empire was interested, was once debated; but the discussion was slight, and hypothetical, more so indeed than it ought to have been; nor did any one of the ministers threaten his colleagues. It was Danton, who, after the event, thought of bringing forward this denunciation, by way of making a merit of it to himself, and of injuring Roland. I recollect these matters perfectly, having heard my husband mention them on the breaking up of the council, which was then held at his hotel. As to the great movement of the people of Paris, it is well known that it served as a veil for the massacres of the month of September, and that it was Kellerman's action on the 20th of that month that saved the republic.

It is not less ridiculous to hear the government of that time accused of starving the people. Never during Roland's administration were provisions so scarce, and difficult to procure, as they have become since: his anxiety on that head was extreme, and any one may recur to what he says of the bad administration peculiar in that respect to the commune of Paris.

It is an infamous and absurd calumny to assert that Roland employed the sums given him to purchase provisions, in the pay of hireling writers. In the first place, those sums never passed through his hands, nor could he dispose of them otherwise than by orders upon the treasury indicating the purposes for which they were wanted. Secondly, he gave an account of these monies; he did so every month, and repeated it on his going out of office, the whole accompanied by sufficient vouchers. Of these accounts he never ceased to call for a report; and they were accordingly examined; but as no fault could be found with them, the Mountain would never suffer any report to be made. Those who doubt it need only ask *Dupin*, a member and one of the commissioners charged with their examination; they need only ask *Saint-Aubin*, a

commissioner of accounts, by whom the commissioners of the convention were assisted in their labours, which lasted two months, and in which they proceeded with great rigour and a desire of finding fault, but without success. In the third place, no more than one hundred thousand livres (£.4167) were given to Roland to pay for compositions and printing, out of which in six months he only spent thirty-four thousand, (£.1417) of which he likewise gave an account: the rest remained in the public treasury, as appears by the statement of what has been disbursed.

It requires a degree of ill faith scarcely credible to advance such scandalous falsities! Roland never established any new offices in his department; he only assigned to particular clerks the care of forwarding the papers he was charged to send off; nor did he ever give to any thing the name of *formation of public spirit*: his enemies began by inventing the chimera, and afterwards christened it as they thought proper. As to me, I never interfered, much less did I direct anything: I defy it to be proved. Roland had nothing to do with his colleagues in the department of the finances, in like manner as his colleagues never interfered with the forwarding of any papers; and it is impossible to mention a single one dispatched by Roland himself, which did not tend to attach the public to the 10th of August, instead of endeavouring to cast an odium upon the events of that day. Roland had no command over the administration of the post-office to get any thing intercepted; nor if he had, would the administrators ever have been able, without courting their own ruin, to engage in so odious a manœuvre. If they had only attempted it, would they not have been punished, they who have been so much persecuted, whose places have been taken from them, but whose persons it was not possible to touch?

It is false that Roland ever suppressed any thing which was ordered to be forwarded: I have seen him send off the speeches of Marat. It is equally false that any thing was or could be mutilated, as I have said before: I have shewn that it was as impossible as improbable; that the denunciation would not have been delayed till now, if only a single instance of the kind had occurred; and that even now, when they have the impudence to advance it, they neither can nor dare cite a fact. But what an excellent precaution was that of accusing Roland and the Moniteur of making the mountaineers *appear like madmen* in the eyes of the whole republic, by the misplacing of a word! Not being able to annihilate history, they wish to bring its materials into discredit! But, O my God! even if nothing were to remain but their calumnies and their conduct, the atrocity of their falsehoods would nevertheless appear. For a few years truth may be reduced to silence; but it cannot be extinguished: the very efforts that are made to annihilate it operate a contrary way, and give evidence of its existence.

The discovery of the iron door is also brought forward against Roland as a crime; and nothing is more easy, by way of accounting for the want of proof against the pretended Brissotine faction, than to suppose that he suppressed a part of its contents. But Roland had witnesses, and Roland did not contradict himself. A locksmith of the name of *Gamin*, living at Versailles, gave information of his having been employed by Louis XVI. to make a little hiding-place in his apartment at the Tuileries; but did not know what it might contain. Roland was charged with the inspection of the Tuileries: the palace and every thing belonging to it were intrusted to his care. Taking with him *Gamin* and *Heurtier*, a respectable architect, he repaired to the king's

apartment, where, in a passage between two doors, Gamin lifted up a pannel of wainscoat, and discovered a little iron door, which Roland made him open. It served to close a hole in the wall in which several packets of papers were found. Roland called a servant, ordered a napkin to be brought, took out the packets, without untying them, cast his eyes upon the indorsements, which announced a correspondence with the generals and other persons, put them in the napkin in the presence of Heurtier and Gamin, gave the parcel to his servant, and repaired to the convention, where he deposited them in a formal manner. As he was passing through the apartments he met a member, who asked him what he had there.—‘Good things,’ answered he, ‘which I am going to carry to the convention.’—It remains to be said, that when the minister of the home department was made responsible for the palace, and every thing it contained, the convention appointed a committee of some of its members to examine all the papers printed or in manuscript, which were there at the time of the assault, and which had been collected in one place. The members of this committee were angry that the minister had not sent for them to be present at the discovery. But Roland thought that nothing could be more natural, upon Gamin’s information, than to repair to the place; and upon finding the papers to submit them to the inspection of the convention. He conducted himself like a man whose conscious rectitude renders him incapable of distrust; though certainly very unlike an artful man of the world, who foresees every thing, and takes care not to hurt the vanity of others. Roland was guilty of no real fault upon this occasion; but he discovered a want of prudence and caution. Add to this, that among the members of the commission at the palace was one *Calon*, a person whom Roland despised, and with whom he sometimes had disputes, because these commissioners wished to exceed their powers, and to turn every thing topzy-turvy at the palace as they pleased, while Roland, naturally rigid, and strong in his responsibility, frequently opposed their proceedings. To give a good idea of this *Calon*, it will suffice to say, that it was a matter of public notoriety, that he had entered into partnership with his mistress in setting up a coffee-house and tavern close to the assembly.

It is now easy to see the origin of all the outcry about the iron cabinet, and to conceive how eagerly Roland’s different enemies availed themselves of appearances to throw suspicion upon his conduct, and how many little passions concurred in raising doubts concerning this circumstance. Of what value is it since become to those, who, wishing to accuse Roland’s friends in the Convention of a conspiracy, find it so convenient to make the world believe that the cabinet contained papers which the minister concealed! But recollect dates, calculate facts, and by attending particularly to the one in question, you will see, that if Roland had meant to convey any thing away, he would first have repaired in secret to the place, after which he would have called witnesses, and observed every necessary form in the discovery. His rapid and incautious way of proceeding, by exposing him to blame, must prove his innocence to every reflecting mind. *Heurtier* exists; he is a man advanced in years, and generally esteemed; and *Gamin* exists also: they took a minute of all that passed, which will not be lost to history any more than these details. I shall make no remark upon the charge in which Roland is accused of favouring the partisans of aristocracy, and of receiving the emigrants with open arms. Roland in his administration was just, impartial, and severe: he received nothing but the law with open arms: it was the object of all his attention, and the guide of all his decisions. It must no doubt appear as strange to

aristocracy to be put under the protection of such a patron, as it must to Brunswick to hear himself styled Roland's friend: but these are follies which will not long go down. True it is that the republic once established, Roland wished to attach its very enemies to it by an equitable form of government: he wished for good laws instead of blood. These principles inspired with a kind of confidence even those people, who, without being fanatics in the cause of royalty, were however far from being republicans. They felt their prejudices give way, and acknowledged that the minister of the home department, although a patriot, appeared to be an honest man. The jealous noted down these confessions, that they might represent Roland as a partisan of aristocracy; a title by which they have since distinguished every friend of reason and humanity.

I should be glad to know how Roland, who, under the old government, had stood in the way of his own promotion by supporting the liberty of commerce, on which subject his opinions were considered as a crime; who had professed his principles in works published from fifteen to twenty years before; who faithful to those principles at the time of the revolution, had taken such a decided part in its favour as to attract the enmity of all the aristocracy of Lyons; who, elevated to the ministry, had there conducted himself with the greatest firmness and energy; who had dared to write a letter to the king, which the partisans of the throne have not yet forgiven him; who, recalled to the administration of public affairs by the insurrection of the 10th of August, was interested in defending it both by his interest and his glory; how, I say, could Roland seek to decry it; to favour the royalists who hated him, or would have looked upon him with eyes of distrust; and to restore aristocracy, of which he had deserved the hatred, and which at this very moment is rejoicing at the persecution he undergoes? What could he have in view? He had reached the highest elevation then attainable, and enjoyed great consideration: both ambition and self-interest could seek for nothing more than to remain in place; and if he had listened to them he would have soothed men's passions, flattered the different parties, and have been upon his guard against giving offence. The care of not making enemies is the strongest characteristic of the ambitious man, already arrived at eminence in a republic; while Roland, on the contrary, rigorously denounced the abuses he could not repress, never flattered any man whatever, nor ever gave way to the violence or to the prejudices of the times. This is the conduct of a sincere and courageous man, and not that of a hypocrite.—Let us now return to the members of the Convention, to whom the same reasoning will apply.

The electoral body of Paris was evidently at the command of Robespierre and Danton: its nominations were entirely their work. It is notorious that Robespierre made an harangue against Priestley, and in favour of Marat: it is notorious that he brought forward his brother: it is equally well-known that Danton, casting aside his ministerial functions, repaired to the hustings to exercise his sway; nor is it forgotten, that these ringleaders of the electors were the means of getting d'Orleans returned. (Here I ask, by the way, Why he was not waited for at the trial of the deputies, with whom he was confounded in the articles of impeachment, and to whom he was assigned as an accomplice?) Among the Parisian delegates to the Convention were seen the members of the famous Committee of Vigilance (*surveillance*), that directed the September massacres, and advised the departments to imitate so good an example, in a circular letter, which is well known, and which Danton forwarded under his own cover. There

were also seen men accused of robberies, whom the council-general, composed in part of new members, has since thought it indispensable to denounce, although sitting in the Convention, where they still remain upon the top of the Mountain (Sergent and Panis). The *constituents*, repairing to the Convention, and acquainted with Paris, the revolution, and all the men of any note, came there uneasy at this Parisian deputation, indignant at the events of the 2d of September, and disposed to distrust the one, and to punish the authors of the other. This disposition would not have escaped the persons interested, even if the constituents had endeavoured to conceal it, which they did not do. But the Convention opened before it was complete, and the Parisian members formed a party, which was recruited with all the ignorant and weak, as fast as they arrived: it had already collected a good number by the time the whole Convention had got together, and all the *constituents* were there. I need not say, that I give this appellation to the members who had belonged to the assembly of 1789, and who, for the most part, seated themselves on what was called the right side of the Convention.

The agitation of Paris, the conduct of its commune, the weakness of the department*, the high tone of its deputies, and the tyranny of the galleries, suggested the idea of a departmentary guard, as the first step to insure the liberty of the national representation, to remind the Parisians that they were not its masters, and to prevent the departments from forgetting the necessity of maintaining an equilibrium for the common advantage. In Buzot's report on the subject may be seen the principal reasons in favour of this proposition. It was a gauntlet thrown down as the signal for combat. The Parisian members felt that they were in danger of losing their ascendancy, and as some of the number were criminals, who could only be saved by maintaining it, every effort was made to parry so fatal a blow. From that moment it became a war of extermination, and as such they carried it on; but their adversaries were not sufficiently aware of the danger: they were not ready enough to coalesce, because they did not imagine that truth stood in need of a party; they neglected the Jacobin club, because the Jacobins gave them a bad reception; and they did not intrigue, because they had neither money nor cunning enough for that purpose. About forty of them used indeed to meet and converse at Valazé's, whence there proceeded much courage to support principles, and brave clamour, and much devotion to the public good; but never any measures, unless in the shape of motions, which were imputed to them as crimes. They wished to go to work upon the constitution in the best way they might be able, since it was in vain to hope by further skirmishing to obtain a better situation. The leaders of the Parisian deputation were desirous, on the contrary, to entangle the Convention in a trial, that they might keep up the heat of the public mind, make a merit of the death of a man already tumbled from the throne, and incapable of doing mischief, and retard a constitution, of which the completion would have restored order, and set bounds to their power. But, it may be said, these are the men who have made one since the 2d of June—Yes, and these are the men who prevented it before, as the journals of the time will shew; and the proof that they care no more about it at present is, that after having got it accepted, they have suspended its execution, by declaring that France remains in a state of revolution; so that the departments, which were only induced to accept it by lassitude, enjoy no better repose than before. Never, indeed, did they suffer so much agitation and misery of every kind. It is easy for any one who has attended the sittings of the Convention, to say from whence all the scandalous scenes proceeded. When the members of the right

side reasoned, they were accused: if they attempted to defend themselves they were called to order, loaded with abuse by the galleries, and even spit upon. If, indignant at this treatment, they appealed to their constituents, they were called conspirators, and clubs and pistols were shewn to them; and yet it is now said upon their trial, that they governed. What was it that they did to their liking?—Nothing whatever: they could not then be either in possession of power, or leading men in the Convention. Their speeches in the affair of the king sufficiently prove their good sense, and their desire of establishing the republic by wisdom rather than blood. I shall not enter into an examination of these speeches: it is necessary to read them to form a judgment of their merit. All these things will no doubt be appreciated by posterity without partiality: it will see, that forgetting themselves, they calculated for its advantage; it will honour their memory, and strew their graves with flowers; a vain and tardy homage, which cannot restore life to those who have lost it; but the hope of which affords consolation to those who sacrifice themselves for their country's good.

The murder of le Pelletier is still a kind of mystery; but I shall never forget two facts, which I will mention here: the first is, that all the members, at present proscribed, were afflicted beyond measure at that event. I saw Buzot and Louvet shed tears of rage, persuaded that some bold mountaineer had done the deed with a view of ascribing it to the members of the right side, and of exciting against them the revolutionary sanaticism of the people. The second is, that Gorsas, expressing this opinion in tolerably clear terms, added, that either the assassin would never be discovered at all, or that he would be found dead. It is certain that a Parisian Mountaineer, dispatched with another in pursuit of Paris, did not overtake him till he came to an inn in Normandy, where they said that he had blown out his brains. It is also certain, that the Mountain made a kind of saint of le Pelletier, who certainly little expected such an honour. A weak and rich man, he had only gone over to them through fear, like Heraut-de-Sechelles, and other *ci-devant* nobles of the same stamp; and was only of use to them by the manner of his death. Its effect was such as the right side had foreseen; and this is an additional reason for being satisfied that the fugitives are not the authors of that of Marat, even if it were not absurd to suppose, that resolution like Charlotte Corday's could be assumed at any man's bidding. Besides, considering the circumstances of the times, and their intention of coming to Paris, their having any share in the immolation of Marat, would have been a most dangerous act of folly. To this we may add, that men, abhorrent of blood, endeavouring to repress murder, pillage, and all other excesses, and bold enough to defy their adversaries to their faces, are not likely to have recourse to such means; while they are natural enough to a Danton, who drew up the lists of the September massacres at his own house, and who dispersed the eulogium of them under his own covers, and to his coadjutors, the members of the Committee of Vigilance, who were the directors of that bloody business.

It is necessary to study the sittings of the Jacobins in all these conjunctures, to see how the 10th of March was prepared, and to be acquainted with that day's conspiracy, which first miscarried, and was afterwards resumed, to be able to set a just value upon the audacious charges which attribute our misfortunes to the sages about to be sacrificed.

It is truly curious to see how Amar, the reporter, confounds dates, things, and persons. He makes the war of la Vendée the work of the right side, of the pretended faction in which he includes Roland.—Now the troubles in la Vendée did not begin till two months after he had gone out of office; and certainly at that period the Brissotines were not the leaders of the Convention: it cannot then be their fault if efficacious measures were not taken to appease those disturbances. I will go further: I will venture to affirm, that with Roland's activity, and his vigilant correspondence, the troubles in la Vendée would never have had time to get to any head: it was Garat's want of energy that encouraged their growth. I know from his first clerk, that in the beginning that weak minister was strangely tardy in his proceedings. Champagneux presented to him his ideas concerning the rapid means it was proper to employ; but Garat, always uncertain how to act, adopted no plan, and suffered a spark to kindle a conflagration.

Amar pretends that the fugitives after their proscription, attempted to assemble in la Vendée. What was there then to prevent them, if so inclined? They would be in safety, instead of wandering about, forlorn adventurers. They are every moment in danger of losing their lives, which they might insure by going over to the English, whose agents they are said to have been.—What is it then that restrains them?

Abominable calumniators, worthy to be compared with the insensate wretches who condemned Socrates, with the jealous beings who ruined Phocion, with the intriguers who banished Aristides, and with the villains who murdered Dion, you say to the people: Here is liberty, and you violate it in the persons of their representatives; you pretend to give them a constitution, and you will not permit them to enjoy it; you proscribe, imprison, or bring to trial, two hundred members of the convention; and you say that they over-awed you, that they were a faction: what then are you? You who despise all rights, who set yourselves above all authority, who abuse every species of power, who govern by the sword, who preach up nothing but terror, and who have imposed upon groaning France the most execrable tyranny!—What did these men, whom you accuse of many crimes, without proving a single one, get in the honourable struggle they sustained with intrepidity against villany and blind delusion, in the midst of mortifications without number, and of dangers which they were aware of, which they predicted, which you collected over their heads, and with which you have overwhelmed them?—*They made a trade of their opinions concerning the colonies.*—Why the rich planters hated them: they did not pay them then; or if they did, where are their bills? Was it not they who got a decree passed to oblige every member to furnish an account of his fortune, and to assign the reasons of its increase since the revolution? You did not enforce its execution, and you have since pretended not to remember it, by lately passing another of the same purport, and of which the effect will be the same. You bring Perrin to trial: why then do you keep Sergent among you, and why do you not make Danton regorge his ill-gotten wealth? The day perhaps will come; for it is natural that you should destroy one another at last, and for that purpose make use of your own hands. But how happens it that the wives of the *rich members* you have proscribed are so pinched by poverty?

Gaudet's wife, suckling a child born in these disastrous times, guarded since her husband's departure by a *gendarme*, who makes a mockery of her tears, and watched

by a barbarous porter, the president of the section, who will not suffer a parcel to be carried out, only subsists upon the produce of a few effects; watches, silver spoons, and linen, which she disposes of by stealth. The wife of Gensonné, dying of grief and of disease, depends upon the secret assistance of a few friends to provide for the support of two charming children. Brissot's wife, confined at first in ready furnished lodgings, because her door was sealed up, was afterwards dragged to the *Force*; where she would be living still, as she did for five days, upon bread and water, and be lying upon straw, if a friendly hand had not afforded her some relief. The wives of Petion and Roland, fellow prisoners at Sainte Pelagie, are obliged to borrow, to pay the trifling expences to which they confine themselves. And you, *Chabot*, where did you get those sums, that you call the fortune of your bride. And you — but recrimination, however just, is unworthy of the cause of those celebrated men, who are now kept standing by tyranny at the bar of a sanguinary tribunal, the composition of which would make us laugh, if it did not inspire us with horror. And these men, not yet under sentence, are crowded into a single room of the prison, to the number of twenty-nine, with one bed for every five! O France! you suffer this treatment to be inflicted on, I will not say your children, but your fathers in liberty, and your champions, and yet you talk of a republic!

I have not courage enough to dwell upon the particulars of these abominable charges, after the public reading of which an advocate for the prisoners was heard to observe, that not one of the written documents on which they were founded had been communicated to him, as the law directs. On his request that the tribunal would take this matter into consideration, the president whispered for a moment to somebody on his right, and then answered in a faltering voice, that the immense number of these papers rendered their communication difficult; that besides a great many of them were sealed up at the houses of the accused; that they should be sent for, but that the trial in the mean time must go on.—Thus did they proceed to the drawing up of the charges upon the strength of papers that had never been seen, and which are supposed to be at the houses of the accused; and thus do they proceed to judgment without communicating those they pretend to have in their possession, under the pretext they are too numerous—and this is not an imposture!—Good heavens!—Never could I have believed these things if I had not been present. Called upon to attend as a witness at the trial, I was one of the auditory at the opening of the business: I imagined that it was their intention to take advantage of the truth I might have the courage to tell, to effect my ruin.—After the reading of the charges I withdrew, and waited for my turn to be called: it did not come; and I was carried back to my prison: this is the third day, and nobody as yet is come for me. I passed the hours of expectation on the first in the office of the clerk of the court, where I spoke with energy and freedom to all those who happened to be there. Have they reflected that this energy and freedom might have an effect upon the audience, that it is better to avoid it, to dispatch the deputies first, and then to send for me to finish my own affairs, without making me an interesting accessory at the trial of others?—I am afraid so.—I am desirous of deserving death, by bearing witness in their favour while they are alive, and I fear I shall lose the opportunity. I am upon thorns; I wait for the messenger as a distressed soul waits for its deliverer; and have only written the above observations to beguile my impatience.

October 25.

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MY LAST THOUGHTS.

To be, or not to be, that is the question.
It will soon be resolved in regard to me.

Is life a property which belongs to us? I think it is; but this property is given us upon conditions in regard to which alone we are liable to error.

We are born to seek happiness for ourselves and to contribute to that of others: the social state extends this destination, as well as all our other faculties, without creating any thing new.

As long as we have a field before us in which we can practise virtue, and give a great example, it becomes us not to quit it; for courage consists in continuing our career in spite of misfortune. But if malevolence set bounds to that career, we are free to stop short of them, especially when the fortitude with which we might undergo its last effects can be conducive to no one's advantage. When I was put in confinement, I flattered myself that I should contribute to my husband's glory, and help to enlighten the public, if brought to trial. But it was then that I should have been tried, and our persecutors were too dexterous to choose their time so ill. They were circumspect as long as they had any thing to fear from those, who, having fled from their violence, inspired the departments with zeal in their defence. But now that terror holds its iron sceptre over a subjugated world, insolent guilt no longer delays its triumph; it deludes, it oppresses, and the gaping multitude wonders at its power. An immense city, fed upon blood and lies, furiously applauds abominable proscriptions, on which it stupidly imagines its salvation to depend.

Two months ago, I aspired to the honour of ascending the scaffold; the victim was then allowed to speak, and the energy of a courageous mind might have been serviceable to the cause of truth. Now all is lost!—This generation, rendered ferocious by infamous preachers of carnage, looks upon the friends of mankind as conspirators, and considers as its champions those abject wretches, who cover their vile passions and their cowardice with the mask of frantic enthusiasm. To live in the midst of it, is basely to submit to its horrible government, and to give room for the commission of new atrocities.

I know that the reign of the wicked cannot be of long duration: they generally survive their power, and almost always undergo the punishment they have deserved.

Unknown and overlooked, I might in solitude and silence have withdrawn myself from the horrors which rend the bosom of my country, and have waited in the practice of private virtues, for the period of its misfortunes. But a prisoner, and marked out as a victim, by prolonging my existence, I shall only afford a new gratification to tyranny.

Let us deceive it then, since it is not to be overthrown.

Forgive me, respectable man, for disposing of a life which I had devoted to you: your misfortunes would have attached me to it, if I had been permitted to alleviate them. But I am robbed for ever of the power of doing so, and you lose nothing but a shadow, a useless object of affliction and uneasiness.

Forgive me, my dear child, young and tender girl, whose sweet image is impressed upon my maternal heart, and staggers my resolution. Oh! certainly, I would not have deprived you of your guide, if it had been possible that they would have let her remain with you: the cruel wretches! have they any pity upon innocence!—But do what they will, they cannot rob you of my example; and I feel, and I will venture to say, upon the very brink of the grave, that it is a rich inheritance.

All you, whom heaven in its bounty gave me for friends, direct your attentions towards my orphan. A young plant violently torn from her native soil, she would have withered perhaps, or have been bruised by the hand of the spoiler; but you placed her in a kindly shelter, and beneath a reviving shade: there may she flourish, and may her beauty and her virtues repay your care!—Do not grieve at a resolution which puts an end to my sufferings: I can bear adversity: you know me, and you will not believe that weakness or fear have prompted my decision. If any one could assure me that before the tribunal at which so many just men are arraigned, I should be allowed to indicate the tyrants, I would appear there with pleasure; but experience has too well shewn that the vain formality of judgment is only an insulting parade in which they take care to refuse the victim the privilege of speech*. Shall I then wait till it please my executioners to indicate the hour of my death, and to enhance their triumph by the insolent clamours to which I shall be exposed. Most certainly, I should be able to brave them, if my fortitude could instruct the stupid populace; but they are no longer capable of feeling any thing, except the savage delight of seeing the blood of others spilt, while they run no risk of shedding their own.

The time foretold is come, when their cries for bread are appeased with dead bodies: their degraded nature is regaled by the spectacle, and the gratification of this brutal appetite will render the scarcity of bread supportable, until it shall exceed the sufferance of nature.

Perhaps, some one may say, these dominators of the present day, who sacrifice every thing to their fears, may not extend their fury so far as you.—Why, do you not see that they have reserved the facility of doing so by comprising me in the absurd indictment against the republicans whom they detest?

Shall I then hold my existence subject to their pleasure, until the fancy shall take them, of first bringing me forward in my turn upon the stage, and then commanding the *exit* of so formidable a witness of their villany?—Yes, formidable, for long ago my eyes read the secret of their hearts, my soul abhorred them, and my courage set them at defiance: they know it: they must then be determined on my ruin.

But the chances of a new revolution; the approach of the foreign armies!—What signifies it to my safety?—I should like as little to owe it to the Austrians, as to

received death from the French at present in power. They are alike the enemies of my country, and I desire nothing from any of them but their honourable hatred.

Oh! if those pusillanimous beings, those men unworthy of the name, whose weakness assumed the disguise of prudence, and ruined the estimable *twenty-two*, if they had possessed my courage, they would have redeemed the first faults of their conduct; they would have provoked on the second of June, by a formal opposition, the imprisonment to which they have just been consigned. Their resistance then would have enlightened the uncertain and timid departments; it would have saved the republic; and if they had been doomed to perish, it would have been with as much glory to themselves, as utility to their country.

The cowards, they entered into a compromise with guilt!—It was decreed that they should fall in their turn; but they fall ingloriously, unpitied by any one, and with nothing to hope for from posterity, but its perfect contempt. Why, in this last conjuncture, rather than obey their tyrants, descend to their bar, walk out of the assembly like a timid flock marked for slaughter by the butcher, and submit to be taken into custody, why did they not do themselves justice by falling upon the monsters, and expunging them from the face of the earth?

Divinity, supreme being, soul of the universe, principle of every thing great, good, and happy, thou in whose existence I believe, because I must needs emanate from something better than what I see around me, I am about to be reunited to thine essence!—I invoke the kindness of all those to whom I was dear in favour of that good servant, whose uncommon fidelity made her a pattern in her way. The excellent woman! How many tears has her attachment for me made her shed during these thirteen years past. How many secret sorrows has she shared in silence, which but for her tender cares I should not have known that she perceived! What activity in my afflictions! What devotion in my misfortunes!—If the chimæras of the metempsychosis had any reality, and if our wishes could have any influence upon the changes we should undergo, I should be glad to return to the world in another shape, that I might take care of her in my turn, and administer comfort to the old age of so kind and worthy a creature! O my friends! discharge the debt I owe her; it is the most grateful tribute you can pay to my memory.

As to my property, I find in the resolution I have taken, the advantage of securing it to whom it belongs: it will descend to my daughter, who, even if they should seize upon her father's fortune, would have a right to claim every thing of mine on which the State has put its seals: she can claim besides twelve thousand livres (500*l.*) which were my portion, as will appear by the marriage contract, executed in February 1780, at Durand's, a notary, resident at Paris, in Dauphine Square. Moreover an estate, a little wood, and a meadow, bought by me, in pursuance of the power given me by the *written law** according to which I was married, from monies arising from sundry sums that came to me in my own right, by inheritance or reimbursement, as will appear by the contract executed at Dufresne's, a notary, *Rue Vivienne*, in 1791, and by a deed of which duplicates exist in my apartment at Thésée, and at Villefranche; the whole amounting to thirteen or fourteen thousand livres. [From £.540 to £.580].

I have besides a thousand crowns in paper, which shall be pointed out. I desire that enough may be taken out of that sum to buy my daughter the harp on which she plays, and which I hired from Koliker, a musical instrument maker, *rue des Fosses-Saint-Germain-des Prés*: he is an honest and fair-dealing man, and will perhaps abate something of the hundred crowns (£.12. 10s.), which he asked me for it. At any rate, I should rather choose it to be laid out in this way than kept in paper. Virtues are the first of treasures: but they are employed to better advantage by the help of talents. Nobody can tell the relief that music affords in solitude and misfortune, nor from how many seductions it may be a preservative in prosperous days. Let the teacher of the harp be kept a few months longer; by that time, if circumstances will not admit of further expense, the dear little girl, by making a good use of her time, will know enough for her own amusement. Among the things sealed up is an excellent forte-piano, bought out of my savings, and for which the receipt was consequently made out in my own name, as will appear by examining the papers: let it by all means be claimed. As to drawing, that is the essential article to which her application, care, and attention, ought to be directed.

I have found means to get a letter written to her uncle and godfather, and I hope, if he be at liberty, that he will take the necessary steps to secure for my child what belongs to her. In that case, my daughter not being left destitute herself, ought to provide for our maid Fleury; and this is what I beg those who may watch over her conduct to induce her to do.

My venerable relations, the Besnards, *rue et île St. Louis*, placed some money in my husband's hands, of which we used to pay them the interest. As they may be ignorant of the forms to be observed in establishing their claim, the necessary information should be given to those respectable old people. They should now and then also see their great-great-niece, who stands them in the stead of a child, and who will soon be their only hope.

I never had any jewels; but I possess two rings of very moderate value, which were left me by my father; I intend them, as memorials, the emerald for my daughter's adoptive father, the other for my friend Bosc.

I have nothing to add to what I lately expressed to the generous woman who has the goodness to be a mother to my child: the services which she and her husband render me, inspire a sentiment which I shall carry with me to the grave, and which words cannot express.

May my last letter to my daughter fix her attention upon that object which appears to be her essential duty; and may the remembrance of her mother attach her for ever to those virtues which afford consolation for every thing that can befall us.

Farewell, my dear child, my worthy husband, my faithful servant, and my good friends; farewell, thou sun, whose resplendent beams used to shed serenity over my soul while they recalled it to the skies: farewell, ye solitary fields whose sight has so often called forth soft emotions; and you, ye rustic inhabitants of Thezée, who were wont to bless my presence, whom I attended in sickness, whose labours I alleviated,

and whose indigence I relieved, farewell; farewell peaceful retirements, where I have enriched my mind with moral truths, and learnt in the silence of meditation to govern my passions, and to despise the vanity of the world.

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TO MY DAUGHTER.

October 18, 1793.

I do not know, my dear girl, whether I shall be allowed to see, or to write to you again. Remember your mother. In these few words is contained the best advice I can give you. You have seen me happy in fulfilling my duties, and in giving assistance to those who were in distress.—It is the only way of being so.

You have seen me tranquil in misfortune and in confinement, because I was free from remorse, and because I enjoyed the pleasing recollections that good actions leave behind them. This also is the only mean of supporting the evils of life, and the vicissitudes of fortune.

Perhaps, as I hope, you are not fated to undergo trials so severe as mine; but there are others against which you ought to be equally on your guard. Propriety of conduct, and occupation, are the best preservatives against every danger; and necessity, as well as prudence, require you to attend seriously to your studies.

Be worthy of your parents: they leave you great examples to follow; and if you are careful to avail yourself of them, your existence will not be useless to mankind.

Farewell, my beloved child, you who drew life from my bosom, and whom I wish to impress with all my sentiments. The time will come when you will be better able to judge of the efforts I make at this moment to repress the violent emotions which your dear image excites. I press you to my heart.

Farewell, my Eudora.

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TO MY FAITHFUL SERVANT FLEURY.

My dear Fleury, you whose fidelity, services, and attachment, have been so grateful to me for these thirteen years past, receive my embraces, and my farewell.

Preserve the remembrance of what I was. It will console you for what I suffer: the good pass on to glory when they descend to the tomb. My sorrows are about to terminate; lay aside yours, and think of the peace which I am about to enjoy, and which nobody will in future be able to disturb. Tell my Agatha that I carry with me to the grave the satisfaction of being beloved by her from my infancy, and the regret of not being able to give her proofs of my attachment. I could have wished to be of service to you, do not at least let me afflict you.

Farewell, my poor Fleury, farewell!

Friday, 24 October.

You cannot imagine, dear Jany, all the vexation I have suffered at not being able to write to you at my ease, nor even to read your letter at leisure: I perceived that I had an officer close at my heels, and was afraid on your account. I am like a person afflicted with the plague. I have no longer any thing to lose, but I am frightened out of my wits for those who accost me; insomuch that yesterday at the court of justice, I was in doubt whether I should return the salute of a man whom I recollected, and whom I thought highly imprudent for shewing me politeness in public.—I was present at the reading of those articles of impeachment, a prodigy of delusion, or rather a master piece of perfidy. As soon as they had been read, the advocate, Chauvean, observed, in terms of great moderation, that, contrary to all the forms of law, the documents on which they were sounded had not been communicated to the prisoners' counsel, and that he begged the tribunal to take the matter into consideration, and give orders for their delivery. After a moment's whispering, the president made answer, in a faltering voice, that the papers in question were for the most part sealed up at the houses of the accused; that orders would be given to proceed to the removal of the seals, and that in the mean time the trial would begin. Yes, Jany, I heard this very distinctly with my own ears! I looked about to see if it were not a dream, and I asked of myself whether posterity would believe these things if they should come to its knowledge?—Well, the people felt nothing of all this; they did not perceive the atrocity of such conduct; the absurdity of bringing forward a charge and of withholding the vouchers of its truth; the stupidity of pretending that these documents are at the houses of the accused, of whose papers as yet no inventory has been taken; and the folly and impudence of confessing it. The president muttered a few words besides concerning the immense number of the other papers, and the difficulty of communicating them; but this was neither more just, nor less absurd. The witnesses were then sent out of court, that they might be called in their turns to make their deposition: mine is not yet come, but probably may to-morrow. I can perceive nothing, in these proceedings, but the intention of taking advantage of the truths I may have the courage to tell, to effect my ruin, which, considering the villains I have to

deal with, and my contempt of death, is by no means difficult. Perhaps then we are doomed to meet no more. My friendship bequeaths to you the care of my memory. If I could think of any thing more conformable to the generosity of your sentiments known too late, I would charge you with it: but why, my dear Jany, known too late? It was Providence that conducted every thing: had I earlier known your worth, my affection for you would have involved you in my misfortunes. You will dispose of every thing for the best. A fall out of the window may be supposed, and those who will not believe it may be sent to see. As there are a great many workmen, masons and others, nothing is more easy than to imagine, that one of them, or somebody disguised like one of them, stole, at a certain hour under my window, and received the parcel.—This idea is indeed a very good one, and carries with it an air of probability. The *portraits, anecdotes*, and other detached pieces, should be presented to the public as materials to be worked up in better times. The little *depot* ought not to be neglected: it should be added to the mass.

The being summoned as a witness previously to the being judicially accused, forces me to adopt a different mode of proceeding from that on which I had determined when I gave you my will, and for which I had already made my preparations: I will then drain the bitter cup to the last drop. Farewell, Jany, farewell!

Your letter, my dear Bosc, was highly welcome: it discovers to me your whole heart, and the full extent of your attachment: they are both as uncommon, in my estimation, as they are dear to my heart. We do not however differ so much as you imagine; we did not understand each other perfectly. It was not my intention to depart at that moment, but to procure the means of doing so when I should deem it fitting. I was desirous of rendering homage to the truth, as I have it in my power to do, and then to make my *exit* just before the last ceremony. I thought it noble thus to deceive the tyrants. I had long ruminated on this project; and I swear to you, that it was not inspired by weakness. I am perfectly well: my head is as cool, and my spirit as unbroken, as ever. True it is, however, that the present trial embitters my sorrows, and inflames my indignation. I thought that the fugitives also had been taken up. It is possible that deep grief, and the exaltation of sentiments already terrible, matured in the secret recesses of my heart a resolution, to which my mind did not fail to ascribe the most excellent motives.

Called upon to give evidence in this affair, I thought that it necessarily changed my mode of proceeding. I was determined to avail myself of the opportunity to reach the goal with greater celerity: I intended to thunder, and then to make a finish. I thought that this very circumstance would authorize me to speak without reserve, and that I ought to have it in my pocket when going into court. I did not however wait for it to support my character. During the hours of expectation that I passed in the clerk's office, in the midst of ten persons, *officers, judges* of the other sections, &c. and in the hearing of *Hebert* and *Chabot*, who came into the next room, I spoke with equal energy and freedom. My turn to be heard did not come; they were to fetch me the second day after: the third however is almost over, and nobody has yet appeared. I fear that these knaves perceive that I may possibly furnish an interesting episode, and think that, after having summoned me, it is better to reject my evidence.

I wait with impatience, and am now afraid that I shall not have an opportunity of acknowledging my friends in their presence. You are of opinion, my dear Bosc, that in either case I ought to wait for, and not hasten the catastrophe; it is on this alone that we are not perfectly agreed. It seems to me, that there would be weakness in receiving the *coup-de-grace* from the hands of others instead of taking it from one's own; and in exposing one's self to the insolent clamours of a brutal populace, as unworthy of such an example as incapable of turning it to any account. No doubt it would have been right to do so three months ago; but now it will be lost upon the present generation; and as to posterity, the other resolution, well managed, will have quite as good an effect.

You see that you did not understand me.—Examine then the matter in the same point of view in which it strikes me: it is not at all the same as that in which you see it. When you shall thus have maturely considered it, I will abide by your determination.

I hasten to conclude, that you may have my answer by the same conveyance: it is enough for me to have indicated what you will be able to investigate in the leisure of meditation.—My poor little girl! Where then is she? Let me know, I beg of you: send me a few particulars, that my mind's eye at least may see her in her new situation. Affected by your cares, you think that I feel likewise the cruelty of all these circumstances. I understand that my brother-in-law is in confinement: no doubt the sequestration of his property is still in force, and perhaps he is in danger of banishment.

Consider that your friendship, which finds the task I impose upon it a painful one, may easily deceive you, as to what you can or ought to do in that respect. Try to think of the matter, as if it were neither you nor I, but two indifferent persons, in our relative situations, submitted to your impartial judgment. Attend to my fortitude, weigh my reasons, calculate coolly, and recollect how little the mob is worth that feasts upon such a sight.

I embrace you tenderly. Jany will tell you what it is possible to attempt some morning; but take care not to run any hazard.

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NOTES

On My Trial, And The Examination By Which It Began.

At the first moment of my confinement, I thought of writing to Duperret, to beg him to get some attention paid to my complaints. Without being intimate with him, I had observed in his character that kind of courage which prompts a man to stand forth without fear of consequences whenever he has it in his power to oblige; and he had inspired me with that confidence which arises in a revolution from a conformity of principles. I was not deceived: Duperret answered me with kindness and warmth; and added, to the expressions of his own sentiments, some intelligence concerning the state of public affairs, and the fugitive deputies. I thanked him; and, in replying to the passage that related to our friends, expressed my wishes for their safety, and for that of my country. A few days after, having printed the examination which I had undergone before an administrator of the police at the Abbey, I sent a copy to Duperret; and took that opportunity of testifying my contempt for the silly lies which Hebert had just told in speaking of me in his *Pere Duchesne*. The whole of our correspondence might amount to three or four short letters, including a note, in which I acquainted Duperret, as I acquainted at the time several other persons, whom I supposed to take an interest in my welfare, with the sudden transformation of my enlargement from the Abbey, into a new confinement at Sainte-Pelagie. It is on this correspondence that they mean to found an accusation against me, as having been at least indirectly connected with the rebels of Calvados. The very day of Brissot's execution I was removed to the *Conciergerie*, put into a noisome room, and forced to sleep in a bed without sheets, which a fellow-prisoner was good enough to lend me. The day after I was examined in the office of the tribunal, by judge David, accompanied by the public accuser, and in the presence of a man whom I suspect to be a juror. At first they asked me many tedious questions concerning what Roland was before the 14th July, 1789; who was mayor of Lyons when he was municipal officer, &c.—I answered these questions by an exact relation of facts; but from that very moment I could perceive that, while asking a great many particulars, they did not wish me to be circumstantial in my answers. After this, without any transition, I was asked, if at the time of the Convention I had not been in the habit of seeing such and such members (here the proscribed and the condemned were named); and if in their conferences I had not heard them mention a departmentary force, and the means of obtaining it. I had to remark, that I had seen some of those members as friends, with whom Roland had been intimate from the time of the Constituent Assembly; others by accident, as acquaintances, or brought to our house by their colleagues; and that several of them I had never seen at all. That besides there had never been any secret councils or conferences at Roland's; but that the conversation was public, and turned upon matters which engaged the attention of the Assembly, and interested every body else. The debate was long and violent before I could get my answers taken down. They desired me to confine myself to *yes* and *no*; accused me of being talkative; and told me that I was not shewing my wit at the hotel of the home department. The public accuser and the judge, especially the first, behaved with the prepossession and

acrimony of people persuaded that they had got a great criminal before them, and impatient for her conviction. When the judge had asked a question, and the public accuser did not find it to his liking, he couched it in other terms, extended and rendered it complex and captious, interrupted my answers, and required them to be more concise: it was a downright persecution. I was kept about three hours, or rather more, after which the examination was suspended to be resumed, as I was told, in the evening. I am waiting for it. A determination to destroy me seems evident.—I will not prolong my life by any base subterfuge; neither will I lay bare my bosom to malevolence, nor facilitate, by a silly complaisance, the labours of the public accuser, who seems desirous, that by my answers I should furnish him with matter for the indictment which his zeal meditates against me.

Two days after I was sent for to be re-examined. The first question turned upon the pretended contradiction that existed between my letters to Duperret, and my having said that I was not particularly intimate with him; whence it resulted, that I disguised the truth in regard to my political connexions with the rebels. I answered that I had not seen Duperret above ten times in my life, and never in private, as it was easy to perceive by the first letter I addressed to him, when sending him a copy of the one I had written to the Convention; that the subsequent letters were the consequence of the kind and explicit answer I had received, &c. That at the period our little correspondence began there was no question of revolt and rebellion; and that at that time I had little room to make a choice in the assembly, where there was scarcely any person to whom I was known, or who would have undertaken the care of my interests.

Question. Who were the common friends of yourself and Duperret?

Answer. Barbaroux in particular.

Question. Was it known to you that Roland, before he entered into the administration, belonged to the Committee of Correspondence of the Jacobins?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Was it not you who took upon you to compose the letters it was his duty to draw up for the Committee?

Answer. My husband never borrowed my thoughts, although he may sometimes have employed my pen.

Question. Were you not acquainted with the office for the *formation of public spirit*, established by Roland to corrupt the departments, to bring to Paris a departmentary force, to tear the republic to pieces, according to the plans of a liberticide faction, &c.; and was it not you who conducted the business of that office?

Answer. Roland established no office under that denomination; and I conducted the business of none. After the decree, passed at the latter end of August, ordering him to disperse useful writings, he assigned to some of his clerks the care of forwarding them, exerting himself to the utmost in the execution of a law which tended to diffuse the knowledge and the love of the revolution. This he called the patriotic

correspondence; and as to his own writings, instead of promoting discord, they all breathed a desire to concur in the maintenance of order, and of peace.

Here it was observed, that it was in vain for me to attempt to disguise the truth, as it evidently appeared by all my answers, that I was desirous of doing; that upon the door of that very office was a ridiculous inscription, and that I was not so great a stranger to my husband's transactions as not to know it; that my endeavours to justify Roland would be equally ineffectual; and that fatal experience had but too well shown the mischief that perfidious minister had done, by aspersing the most faithful representatives of the people, and by exciting the departments to take up arms against Paris.

To this I answered, that far from desiring to disguise the truth, I was proud of doing homage to it, even at the risk of my life; that I had never read the inscription in question; that, on the contrary, I had remarked at the time the report of that denomination was in circulation, that it was not to be found in the printed lists of offices belonging to the home department; and that, in answer to the injurious imputations cast upon Roland, I had only two facts to oppose: the *first* his *writings*, which all contained the best principles of morality and *politicks*; the *second*, his forwarding of all those printed by order of the National Convention, even to the speeches of the members of that assembly, who passed for the most violent in opposition.

Question. Do you know at what time Roland left Paris, and where he may be?

Answer. Whether I do or not, it is what I neither ought nor choose to tell.

It was observed, that this obstinacy in constantly disguising the truth proved that I thought Roland guilty; that I set myself in open rebellion against the law; that I forgot the duty of a person accused, whom it behoves above all to reveal the truth to justice, &c. The public accuser, who put this question, took care to accompany it, as he did every one else he thought proper to ask, with insulting epithets, and expressions that indicated anger. I attempted to answer; but he forbid me to enter into details; and both he and the judge, endeavouring to avail themselves of the kind of authority given them by their office, employed every mean to reduce me to silence, or to make me say what they thought fit. Indignant at this, I told them, that I would complain in open court of their unheard of and captious mode of examination; that I would not suffer myself to be brow-beat; and that I considered the laws of reason and nature as superior to all human institutions: then turning round to the clerk, 'Take your pen,' said I, 'and write.'

Answer. 'A person accused is answerable for his own actions, but not for those of others. If, during more than four months, Roland had not in vain solicited the passing of his accounts, he would not now be obliged to absent himself, nor should I be obliged to make a secret of the place of his residence, even supposing that I am acquainted with it.—I know of no law which requires me to betray the dearest sentiments of nature.'

Here the public accuser exclaimed in a rage, that there would be no end to my loquacity; and here he closed the examination.

‘How I pity you,’ said I calmly. ‘I forgive you even the disagreeable things you say to me: you think you have a great criminal before you, and you are impatient to convict her. How unfortunate is the man who entertains such prejudices! You may send me to the scaffold; but you cannot deprive me of the satisfaction I derive from a good conscience, nor of the persuasion that posterity will revenge Roland and myself, by devoting his persecutors to infamy.’ Being desired to choose an advocate, I named Chauveau, and retired, saying to them with a smile, ‘I wish you, in return for all the ill you mean to do me, the same peace of mind I enjoy, whatever may be the reward attached to it.’

This examination took place in a room called the council-chamber, where there was a table with several persons sitting round it, who appeared to be there for the purpose of writing, and who did nothing but listen to what I said. There were a great many goers and comers; nor could any thing be less secret than this examination.

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DRAUGHT OF A DEFENCE INTENDED TO BE READ TO THE TRIBUNAL* .

The charge brought against me rests entirely upon the pretended fact of my being the accomplice of men called conspirators. My intimacy with a small number of them is of much older date than the political circumstances, in consequence of which they are now considered as rebels; and the correspondence kept up with them through the medium of our common friends, at the time of their departure from Paris, was entirely foreign to public affairs. Properly speaking, I have been engaged in no political correspondence whatever, and in that respect I might confine myself to a simple denial; for I certainly cannot be called upon to give an account of my particular affections. But I have a right to be proud of them, as well as of my conduct, nor do I wish to conceal any thing from the public eye. I shall therefore acknowledge, that, with expressions of regret at my confinement, I received an intimation that Duperret had two letters for me, whether written by one or by two of my friends, before or after leaving Paris, I cannot say. Duperret had delivered them into other hands, and they never came to mine. Another time I received a pressing invitation to break my chains, and an offer of services, both to assist me in effecting my escape in any way I might think proper, and to convey me whithersoever I might afterwards wish to go. I was dissuaded from listening to such proposals by duty and by honour; by duty, that I might not endanger the safety of those to whose care I was confided; and by honour, because at all events I preferred running the risk of an unjust trial, to exposing myself to the suspicion of guilt by a flight, unworthy of me. When I consented to be taken up on the 31st of May, it was not with the intention of afterwards making my escape. In this alone consists all my correspondence with my fugitive friends. No doubt, if all means of communication had not been cut off, or if I had not been hindered by my confinement, I should have endeavoured to learn what was become of them; for I know of no law by which my doing so is forbid. In what age, or among what nation, was it ever considered as a crime to be faithful to those sentiments of esteem and brotherly affection which bind man to man? I do not pretend to judge of the measures of those who have been proscribed: they are unknown to me; but I will never believe in the perverse intentions of those men, of whose probity, civism, and devotion to their country, I am thoroughly convinced. If they erred, it was unwittingly; they fall without being abased; and I regard them as unfortunate without being liable to blame. I am perfectly easy as to their glory, and willingly consent to partake of that of being oppressed by their enemies. I know these men, accused of conspiring against their country, to have been determined republicans, but humane, and persuaded that good laws were necessary to procure the republic the good-will of those who doubted whether it could be maintained; which it must be confessed is more difficult than to kill them. The history of every age proves, that it requires great talents to lead men to virtue by wise institutions, while force suffices to oppress them by terror, or to annihilate them by death. I have heard them assert, that abundance, as well as happiness, can only proceed from an equitable, protecting, and beneficent government; and that the omnipotence of the bayonet may produce fear, but not bread. I have seen them animated by the most lively enthusiasm for the good of the

people, disdain to flatter them, and resolved rather to fall victims to their delusion than be the means of deceiving them. I confess that these principles, and this conduct, appeared to me totally different from the sentiments and proceedings of tyrants or ambitious men, who seek to please the people by way of bringing about their subjugation. It inspired me with the highest esteem for these generous men; this error, if an error it be, will accompany me to the grave, whither I shall be proud of following those whom I was not permitted to accompany.

My defence, I will venture to say, is more necessary for those, who really wish to come at the truth, than it is for myself. Calm and contented in the consciousness of having done my duty, I look forward to futurity with perfect peace of mind. My serious turn, and studious habits, have preserved me alike from the follies of dissipation, and from the bustle of intrigue. A friend to liberty, on which reflection had taught me to set a just value, I beheld the revolution with delight, persuaded that it was destined to put an end to the arbitrary power which I detested, and to the abuses I had so often lamented, when reflecting with pity upon the fate of the indigent classes of society. I observed the progress of the revolution with interest, and I spoke with warmth of public affairs; but I did not out-step the bounds prescribed by my sex. Some small talents perhaps, a considerable share of philosophy, a degree of courage more uncommon, and which did not permit me to weaken my husband's energy in dangerous times: these perhaps are the qualities which those who know me may have indiscreetly extolled, and which may have made me enemies among those to whom I am unknown. Roland sometimes employed me as a secretary; and the famous letter to the king, for instance, is copied entirely in my hand-writing: this would be an excellent count to add to my indictment, if the Austrians were trying me, and if they should have thought fit to extend a minister's responsibility to his wife. But Roland long ago manifested his knowledge, and his attachment to the great principles of politics: the proofs of them exist in his numerous works, published during the last fifteen years.—His learning and his probity are all his own, nor did he stand in need of a wife to make him an able minister. Never were conferences or secret councils held at his house; his colleagues, whoever they might be, and a few friends and acquaintance, met once a week at his table, and there conversed in a public manner on matters in which every body was concerned. As to the rest, the writings of that minister, which breathe throughout a love of order and of peace, and which lay down in the most forcible manner the best principles of morality and politics, will for ever attest his wisdom, in like manner as his accounts will prove his integrity.

To return to the offence imputed to me, I have to observe that I never was intimate with Duperret. I saw him now and then at the time of Roland's administration; but he never came to our house during the six months that my husband was no longer in office. The same remark will apply to the other members, our friends, which surely does not accord with the plots and conspiracies laid to our charge. It is evident by my first letter to Duperret, that I only wrote to him, because I knew not well to whom else to address myself, and because I imagined that he would readily consent to oblige me. My correspondence with him was not then concerted; it was not the consequence of any previous intimacy, and had only one particular object in view. It gave me afterwards an opportunity of receiving accounts from those who had just absented themselves, and with whom I was connected by the ties of friendship, independently

of all political considerations. The latter were totally out of the question in the kind of correspondence I kept up with them during the early part of their absence. No written memorial testifies against me in that respect, those that are adduced only leading to a belief that I partook of the opinions and sentiments of the persons called conspirators, This deduction is well founded, I confess it without reserve, and am proud of the conformity. But I never manifested my opinions in a way which can be construed into a crime, or which tended to occasion any disturbance. Now, to become an accomplice in any plan whatever, it is necessary to give advice, or to furnish means of execution. I have done neither; I am not then reprehensible in the eye of the law—there is no law to condemn me, nor any fact which admits of the application a law.

I know that in revolutions, law, as well as justice, is often forgotten; and the proof of it is, that I am here. I owe my trial to nothing but the prejudices, and violent animosities which arise in times of great agitation, and which are generally directed against those who have been placed in conspicuous situations, or are known to possess any energy or spirit. It would have been easy for my courage to put me out of the reach of the sentence I foresaw; but I thought that it rather became me to undergo it; I thought that I owed this example to my country; I thought that if I were to be condemned, it was right to leave tyranny all the odium of sacrificing a woman whose crime was that of possessing some small talents which she never misapplied, a zealous desire for the good of mankind, and courage enough to acknowledge her unfortunate friends, and to do homage to virtue at the risk of her life. Those minds that have any claim to greatness are capable of divesting themselves of selfish considerations; they feel that they belong to the whole human race; and their views are directed towards posterity alone. I am the wife of a virtuous man exposed to persecution; I was the friend of men who have been proscribed and immolated by delusion, and the hatred of jealous mediocrity. It is necessary that I should perish in my turn, because it is a rule with tyranny to sacrifice those whom it has grievously oppressed, and to annihilate the very witnesses of its misdeeds. I have this double claim to death from your hands, and I expect it. When innocence walks to the scaffold, at the command of error and perversity, every step she takes is an advance towards glory. May I be the last victim sacrificed to the furious spirit of party! I shall quit with joy this unfortunate earth, which swallows up the friends of virtue, and drinks the blood of the just.

Truth! friendship! my country! sacred objects, sentiments dear to my heart, accept my last sacrifice. My life was devoted to you, and you will render my death easy and glorious.

Just heaven! enlighten this unfortunate people for whom I desired liberty. . . . Liberty!—It is for the noble minds, who despise death, and who know how upon occasion to give it to themselves. It is not for those weak beings who enter into a composition with guilt, and cover their selfishness and cowardice with the name of prudence. It is not for those corrupted men who rise from the bed of debauchery, or from the mire of indigence to feast their eyes upon the blood that streams from the scaffold. It is for the wise people who delight in humanity, practise justice, despise their flatterers, and respect the truth. As long as you are not such a people, O my fellow-citizens! you will talk in vain of liberty; instead of liberty you will have

nothing but licentiousness, of which you will all fall victims in your turns: you will ask for bread; dead bodies will be given you, and at last you will bow down your necks to the yoke.

I have neither concealed my sentiments nor my opinions. I know that a Roman lady was sent to the scaffold for having lamented the loss of her son; I know that in times of delusion and party rage, he who dares avow himself the friend of the condemned or of the proscribed exposes himself to share their fate. But I despise death; I never feared any thing but guilt, and I will not purchase life at the expense of a base subterfuge. Woe to the times! woe to the people among whom the doing homage to disregarded truth can be attended with danger, and happy he who in such circumstances is bold enough to brave it!

It is now your part to see whether it answer your purpose to condemn me without proof, upon mere matter of opinion, and without the support of any law whatever.

18 *Brumaire*.

By authority of the criminal revolutionary tribunal established by the law of the 10th of March 1793, without appeal to the tribunal of annulment, and also in virtue of the power delegated by the law of 25 April of the same year, to the said tribunal sitting in the hall of justice at Paris,

The indictment drawn up by the public accuser against Mary-Jane Philippon, wife of John-Mary Roland, aged thirty-nine years, born at Paris, and dwelling there, in the *rue de la harpe*, of which the tenor is as hereafter followeth:

Antony-Quintin Fouquier-Tinville, public accuser of the extraordinary criminal and revolutionary tribunal, established at Paris, by a decree of the national convention, of the 10th of March, the second year of the republic, without any appeal to the tribunal of annulment, in virtue of the power to him given by the second article of another decree of the convention of the 5th of April following, importing that the public accuser of the said tribunal is authorised to arrest, prosecute, and bring to judgment, on the denunciation of the constituted authorities and of citizens,

Sheweth that the sword of the law has recently struck several principal chiefs of the conspiracy which existed against the liberty and safety of the French people; but a great number of authors and accomplices of this conspiracy still exist, and as yet have found means, by a cowardly flight, to avoid the just punishment due to their crimes: of this number is Roland, ex-minister of the home department, the principal agent of the conspirators. The flight of some of them did not put a stop to the correspondence kept up between those who remained at Paris, as well at liberty as in a state of arrest: they corresponded also with those who had taken refuge at Caen, and other cities of the republic. Roland on leaving Paris left behind him his wife, who, although put in confinement in a house of arrest, continued to correspond with the conspirators who had retired to Caen, through the medium of another who remained at Paris. That intriguing woman, who is well known to have received, and assembled at her house the principal chiefs of the conspirators in secret councils, of which she was the soul,

received, although in prison, letters from Barbaroux and others of the refugees at Caen; and always answered them in terms favourable to the conspiracy. Of this correspondence the proof exists, 1stly, in a letter dated from Evreux, the 13th of June last, written by Barbaroux to Lauze Duperret, in which he says: "Do not forget the worthy citizenness Roland, and try to give her some consolation in her prison, by conveying to her the good news, &c." 2dly, in another letter, dated the 15th of the said month of June, from the same to the same, in which are the following passages. "You have no doubt executed my commission in regard to Madame Roland, by trying to convey to her some little consolation.—Make an effort to see her, and tell her, that the *twenty-two* proscribed, and all honest men, share in her afflictions, &c. Herewith you will receive a letter which we have written to that worthy woman. I need not say that you alone can execute this important commission; she must at all events try to get out of her prison, and into some place of safety, &c." 3dly, In a letter written by Lauze Duperret to the said wife of Roland, in which he says: "I have kept for several days three letters which Barbaroux and Buzot inclosed to me, without having it in my power to convey them to you; and what is still more unfortunate, is, that at the moment when I might avail myself of the means you afford me, the thing is become impossible, seeing that they are in the hands of Petion, to whom I thought it adviseable to deliver them, thinking that he had it more in his power to forward them than any body else, and who set off without being able to do so. I shall this very day give notice of it to those citizens to whom I am going to write by a safe hand, and shall inform them that I have it now in my power to execute their commands with more punctuality, &c." 4thly. In a note dated the 24th of June, written by the above wife of Roland to Duperret, in which she acquaints him that she has been released from the abbey; that she thought she was going to return home; but that before she reached it she was taken up and conducted to Sainte Pelagie. 5thly, and lastly, in three other letters written by her in like manner to Lauze Duperret; the first dated June 6, the second without date, and the third of the date of June 24. In the second she says: "The accounts I receive from my friends are the only pleasure I am sensible of: you have helped to procure me that pleasure: tell them that my confidence in their courage and the knowledge of what they are capable of doing for liberty, stands me in the stead of every thing, and consoles me in all my misfortunes; tell them that my esteem, my attachment, and my good wishes, will follow them wherever they go. Barbaroux's hand-bill gave me great pleasure," &c.

After the contents of the said letters, there can be no doubt that the above wife of Roland was one of the principal agents and abettors of the conspiracy.

These things considered, the public accuser has drawn up the present indictment against Mary-Jane Philipon, the wife of Roland, heretofore minister of the home department, for having wickedly, and designedly, aided and assisted in the conspiracy which existed against the unity and indivisibility of the republic, against the liberty and safety of the French people, by assembling at her house, in secret council, the principal chiefs of this conspiracy, and by keeping up correspondencies tending to facilitate their liberticide projects.

Wherefore the public accuser demands, that a record be made, by the tribunal assembled, of the accusation brought by him against Mary-Jane Philipon, the wife of

Roland; and that in consequence he be ordered with his best speed, and by a serjeant (*huissier*) of the tribunal, bearer of the warrant, to take the said Mary-Jane Roland, wife of Roland, into custody, and to lodge her in the *house of arrest* of the *Conciergerie* at Paris, there to remain as in a house of justice; as also that the said warrant be notified to the accused, and the tribunal of Paris.

Done, in the cabinet of the public accuser, this seventeenth Brumaire, in the second year of the French republic, one and indivisible.

(Signed) A. Q. Fouquier.

The warrant issued against her by the tribunal, and the minutes of the delivery of her person in the house of justice of the *Conciergerie*, as also the declaration of the jury of judgments, importing:

That there has existed a horrible conspiracy against the unity and indivisibility of the republic, the liberty and safety of the French people.

That Mary-Jane Philipon, wife of John-Mary Roland, is convicted of being one of the abettors or accomplices of that conspiracy.

The tribunal, after having heard the public accuser deliver his reasons concerning the application of the law, condemns Mary-Jane Philipon, wife of John-Mary Roland, ex-minister, to the punishment of death, in conformity with the law of the sixteenth December, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two, which has been read, and which is conceived in these terms:

“The National Convention decrees, that whoever shall propose or attempt to destroy the unity of the French republic, or to detach its integral parts to unite them to a foreign territory, shall be punished with death.”

Declares the property of the said wife of Roland confiscated to the profit of the nation, in conformity with the law of the 10th of March last, which has been read, and which is conceived in these terms: “The property of those who shall be condemned to the punishment of death, shall be confiscated to the profit of the republic: a provision shall be made for the widows and children who have no property of their own.”

Orders the public accuser to see that the present sentence be put in execution, within twenty-four hours, upon the public square of the Revolution of this city, and to be printed and posted up throughout the whole extent of the republic, wherever need may be.

Done, and pronounced in open court, the eighteenth of the month Brumaire, the second year of the French republic; where were present citizens René-Francis Dumas, vice-president, performing the functions of president; Gabriel Deliegé, Francis-Joseph Denisot, and Peter-Noel Subleyras, judges; who have signed the minutes with Wolff, clerk of the court.

Collated.

A true copy, delivered by the undersigned.

Paris, secretary (*Greffier*).

Such was the sentence that sent to the scaffold, at thirty-nine years of age, a woman, whose energetic disposition, feeling heart, and cultivated mind, rendered her the delight and admiration of all who knew her. Her death reflects equal glory upon her sex, and disgrace upon her executioners.

It does not belong to me to draw her character: her writings speak; her conduct bears witness in her favour; and history will some day or other revenge the injustice of her contemporaries.

This sentence was preceded, for form's sake, and according to the custom of that horrible tribunal, by a mock trial (*débats*), in which citizeness Roland was not allowed to speak, and in which hired ruffians vomited forth the most palpable calumnies before other ruffians, the execrable tools of Robespierre, so unworthily honoured with the title of judges and jurors. I have not been able to procure the proceedings, which, as every body knows, must not be taken down in writing: but I know that only one person paid a tribute to truth, and that he was some time after sent on that account to the scaffold. I mean the worthy Lecocq, who for eight months only had lived with Roland as a servant, and whose excellent qualities rendered him worthy of a better fate.

Citizenness Roland did not deceive the expectation of her friends. She went to the scaffold with all the calmness of a great mind, superior to the idea of death, and possessing sufficient powers to overcome our natural horror of dissolution. To exhibit a picture of her last moments, I cannot do better than borrow the elegant and impressive pen of Roiuffe. The following is the account he gives of them in his work, intituled *Memoires d'un détenu, poursesvir à l'histoire de la tyrannie de Robespierre*; a work which will furnish history with more than one trait, and which will never be read without emotion.

“The blood of the *twenty-two* was still warm when citizenness Roland was brought to the *Conciergerie*. Well aware of the fate that awaited her, her peace of mind continued undisturbed. Though past the prime of life, she was still a charming woman: she was tall and of elegant make; and her countenance was expressive; but her misfortunes and a long confinement had left traces of melancholy upon her face, which tempered its natural vivacity. She had the soul of a republican in a body made up of graces, and fashioned by a certain courtly style of politeness. Something more than is generally found in the eyes of women beamed from hers, which were large, black, and full of softness and expression. She often spoke to me at the grate with the freedom and energy of a great man. This republican language, from the mouth of a pretty French woman, for whom the scaffold was getting ready, was one of the miracles of the revolution to which we were not yet accustomed. We all stood listening round her, in a kind of admiration and astonishment. Her conversation was serious without being frigid; and she expressed herself with a choice of words, a harmony, and a cadence, that made of her language a kind of music with which the

ear was never satisfied. She always spoke of the members, who had just been put to death, with respect; but she spoke of them at the same time without feminine pity, and even reproached them with not having adopted measures sufficiently energetic. She generally styled them *our friends*, and often sent for Clavieres to converse with him. Sometimes her sex would recover the ascendancy; and it was easy to see, that the recollection of her daughter and her husband had drawn tears from her eyes. This mixture of natural softness, and of fortitude, rendered her only the more interesting. The woman, who waited upon her, said to me one day, '*Before you she calls up all her courage; but in her own room she sometimes stands for three hours, leaning against her window, and weeping.*' The day she was sent for to be examined, we saw her pass with her usual firmness; but when she returned the tears were glistening in her eyes: she had been treated with so much harshness, and questions so injurious to her honour had been asked her, that her tears and her indignation had burst forth together. A mercenary pedant coldly insulted this woman, celebrated for the excellence of her understanding, and who, at the bar of the National Convention, had reduced her enemies to silence, and forced them to admire the easy graces of her eloquence. She remained eight days at the *Conciergerie*; and in that short time rendered herself dear to all the prisoners, who sincerely deplored her fate.

The day when she was condemned, she was neatly dressed in white; and her long black hair flowed loosely to her waist. She would have moved the most savage heart, but those monsters had no heart at all. Her dress, however, was not meant to excite pity; but was chosen as a symbol of the purity of her mind. After her condemnation, she passed through the wicket with a quick step, bespeaking something like joy; and indicated, by an expressive gesture, that she was condemned to die. She had, for the companion of her misfortune, a man whose fortitude was not equal to her own, but whom she found means to inspire with gaiety, so cheering and so real, that it several times brought a smile upon his face.

At the place of execution, she bowed down before the statue of Liberty, and pronounced these memorable words: *O Liberty, how many crimes are committed in thy name!*

She often said, that her husband would not survive her; and soon after we learned in our dungeons, that the virtuous Roland had killed himself upon the highway, thereby indicating his wish to die irreproachable in regard to courageous hospitality.

My heart, though suffering so many cruel torments in that horrible abode, felt no pang more severely than the one occasioned by the death of this celebrated woman.—The remembrance of her murder, added to that of my unfortunate friends, will make my mind a prey to inconsolable sorrow to the last period of my existence.

end of the second part.

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SUPPLEMENT*

The Examination Of Citizenness Roland At The Abbey, Taken From Dulaure'S Paper Called The Thermometre Du Jour, Of The 21St And 22D June, 1793.

I consider it as an indispensable duty, whatever may be the prejudices of the public, to afford to persons accused the means of making known their justification. This it is that induces me to publish the examination of citizenness Roland. None but cowards, and men strangers to all equity, can blame this conduct. Dulaure.

The 12th of June, Louvet, an administrator of the police, repaired to the Abbey to examine citizenness Roland.

Question. Are you not acquainted with the troubles which agitated the republic during and after the administration of citizen Roland, your husband?

Answer. These things were known to me, in like manner as to every one else, by conversations and the public papers.

Observed. That this negative manner of answering a question is not satisfactory, newspapers not giving that intimate knowledge which I must have had of public affairs.

Answer. I was not bound to acquire any such knowledge, since as a woman I had no business to interfere in them.

Question. Had you no knowledge of a plan for a federative republic, and for detaching the departments from Paris?

Answer. I never heard of any such thing: I can say, on the contrary, that Roland, and all the persons I was in the habit of seeing, constantly spoke in my presence of the expediency of maintaining the unity of the republic, as tending to give it greater force; of the consequent necessity of preserving an equilibrium between all the departments; of their wish that Paris might do nothing to excite the jealousy of the rest; and of their desire to see *justice* and *liberty* prevail throughout France, and to concur in the maintenance of the same.

Observed. That if those persons spoke of *justice* and *liberty* without *equality*, their principles were reprehensible.

Answer. In my opinion, as well as in that of the persons in question, *equality* is the necessary consequence of *justice* and *liberty*.

Question. Who were the persons that composed Roland's society and yours?

Answer. His old friends, and those with whom he had business to transact.

Observed. That it would be desirable to know the names of the citizens and citizenesses, with whom I was in the greatest habits of intimacy.

Answer. Those with whom I was most intimate are generally known, and most assuredly nobody came to my house in secret.

Observed. That I could certainly name those who the most frequently visited the minister, and formed his private parties.

Answer. As a man in office, Roland sometimes received a hundred persons in a day, not one of whom I saw. As to myself, I never had any extensive circle of visitors; but sometimes gave a dinner to my husband's colleagues, and to the persons with whom they were any way connected.

Question. Had you no knowledge of writings sent to the departments to provoke them to rise against Paris?

Answer. I never heard of any such thing.

Observed. That Roland while minister had however set up offices *of public opinion* in the departments, and that it appeared that sums of money were set apart for that purpose.

Answer. The first part of the observation appears to me absolutely destitute of foundation. As to the second, every body knows that the minister of the home department was allowed a sum of money to disperse useful writings; and as Roland has given in his accounts, it is easy to see what writings were sent to the departments.

Question. Can you not name those writings? You must certainly know what they were.

Answer. The accounts being public, and having been posted up, any one may recur to them for a more exact list of those writings than I am able to give. As to their contents, it belongs to the public, and not to me, to decide upon their merit.

Observed. That Roland could not have given in his accounts, since he so earnestly solicited permission to do so, when desirous of leaving Paris.

Answer. Not wishing to suppose that the person who examines me has any bad intention, I can only attribute the present observation to an extreme ignorance of facts. Roland not only delivered a monthly account to the convention, but on going out of office, gave in a general account, in which every thing was detailed in the most particular manner. What he solicited was the passing of these accounts, that is to say, their investigation by the commissioners of the convention, and such a report of them to that assembly as they might appear to deserve. The committee of public accounts in consequence imposed this task upon several of its members.

I added, that I knew that they had come repeatedly to the hotel of the home department; that they had there examined the minutes and vouchers, that they had been edified, as they needs must, by the administration of a man whose integrity and courage would long be the theme of praise; that it was Roland's most earnest desire, as well as mine, that the commissioners should make their report, and that I begged all good citizens to join me in my endeavours to obtain it.

[I was interrupted in this answer: it was thought too long; and I was accused of being acrimonious. I observed, that I availed myself of my rights, and that there was no acrimony in informing those, who were ignorant of Roland's having given in his accounts, that he had done so long ago.]

Question. Among your acquaintances was there no friend of Dumouriez?

Answer. There was nobody intimate with him, to the best of my knowledge, among those I was in the habit of seeing.

Question. Have you had no connexion with traitors?

Answer. All the persons I was acquainted with, were so noted for their patriotism, that it was impossible even to suspect them of any intercourse with traitors.

Question. Do you know where your husband is?

Answer. I do not.

Question. Were you not privy to a plan for dissolving the popular societies?

Answer. Nobody in my presence ever disclosed such a plan, or opinions tending that way.

Here, after a confinement of twelve days, for which no motive had been assigned, ended my examination, without my being told of what I was accused or suspected, and consequently without my knowing as to what facts I was to be questioned.

Confident that I had nothing to lose by telling the truth concerning my sentiments, and concerning all the persons with whom I had been acquainted, I neglected to avail myself of my rights, and gave a plain and direct answer to every thing that was asked.

The examination was upon two sheets of paper: my signature was required at the end only. I demanded a copy, and was promised it on the next day: nine are however passed away, and I have not received it, although I have sent to ask for it four several times. But, on leaving the administrator, I committed to paper all that had passed; I am sure that I have exactly related every thing that was said; and I sign *Roland*, formerly *Philipon*.

End of the Supplement to the Second Part.

[*] Sir! there are no buckles in his shoes!

[†] Sir! we are all ruined and undone!

[*] Orders on the Treasury.

[*] He was dragged to the scaffold on this account, and his father died of grief.

[*] The murderer of le Pelletier.

[*] These facts may appear exaggerated; but they are strictly true: I had them from the mouth of an eye witness, whose veracity is undoubted.

[*] Paré, formerly head-clerk to Danton, who had got him appointed secretary of the Council on Grouvelle's departure, succeeded Garat; and the ex-minister, happy to effect a change, which, by delivering him from a place of responsibility, conferred on him one of twenty thousand livres a year, became secretary of the Council. It is not altogether irrelevant to remark, that *Desforgues*, minister of foreign affairs, was also one of Danton's clerks.

[*] Every thing becomes a noble spirit.

[†] By *Quintius*, Madame Roland means *Lucius Quintius Cincinnatus*, but *Marcus Curius Dentatus* is the personage of whom this anecdote is related by the Roman historians: '*Legatis Samnitum aurum offerentibus, quum ipse in focis rapa terreret,*' &c. *Plin. de viris illustribus*. Trans.

[*] The residence of the mayor.

[*] Brissot's Journal.

[*] Department means here the directory of the department of Paris, which made some feeble attempts to check the presumption of the Commune. *Trans.*

[*] Look at Gorsas; he is condemned; he is about to die; he is in their hands; they forbid him to speak: such is the fate of the courageous apostles of liberty.

[*] The written law (*le droit écrit*) is the old Roman law, which was retained in several parts of France till the fall of the ancient despotic system. It was so called in contradistinction to the traditionary customs, or common law, which prevailed in other places. Hence the provinces of France were divided into *Pays de droit écrit*, and *Pays Coutumier*.—Trans.

[*] This piece was written at the *Conciergerie*, the night after her examination.

[*] This piece probably was inserted in the part of the Historical Memoirs which was burnt. It has been thought proper to give it here by way of supplement.