

the fields. The Comte de Provence, afterwards *Monsieur*, and now Louis XVIII was likewise of too studious turn of mind to seek his pleasure in routs and public amusements: but the Comte d'Artois, the third brother entered with all the ardour of youth in all kind of diversions. As to the Princess Elizabeth the fourth and youngest of them she was yet under the government of her Great aunts, and had not yet had an opportunity to display those virtues and that magnanimity that have since immortalized her name. Such was the Court in which the beautiful, lively, ingenuous and august Maria Antoinette was introduced. She had difficult cards to play. There was very little congeniality between her taste and that of the husband with whom State policy alone had united her. Happily, far from putting any restraint on her youthful gaiety, the Dauphin allowed her full liberty of enjoying those pleasures of her age, provided he himself was not compelled to join in them: and as, of all the three brothers the inclination of the Comte d'Artois alone was congenial with hers, it was very natural for him to become the constant attendant on his sister-in-law. But that intimacy far from having any thing criminal in it, ought rather to have been a shield against the shafts of slander, for State policy and self interest would have induced the Prince to be the stern guardian of the honor of his brother, rather than the seducer of his wife, since a spurious progeny would have marred the prospect of his own children ascending the Throne, the Comte d'Artois being then the only one of the three brothers who had children. The Princess however, by her entering too spiritedly in the pleasures of her age, drew upon her the censure of her Great aunts who reproached her with a levity, unbecoming to her high station, and so derogatory of that etiquette, the departure of which was, according to their antiquated notions, highly reprehensible. Finding her insensible to their reproofs, they applied to the King, but she had already by her winning ways and her affectionate conduct towards him, obtained such an ascendancy over that prince that a kiss and a smile from her, soon obliterated from his mind any unfavorable impression left on it by the complaints of his sisters. They were no more successful