

very eloquent about the wrongs of Marie Antoinette, but the slightest acquaintance with the history of the French Court would have told him that the scandals about her were to no small extent the natural consequences of her own folly, and that, at all events, the first whose "looks threatened her with insult" were denizens not of the Faubourg St. Antoine, but of Versailles. He might have known, too, the political part which she played. For that hideous catastrophe, and all the woes that it entailed on mankind, the person really responsible above all others was the unhappy Queen. The Assembly was inexperienced, but it was patriotic, and when it came together thoroughly disposed to act cordially with the King, childlike confidence in whose goodness and power to set everything right was still the ruling sentiment in France. The King, on his part, benevolent and conscientious, though lamentably weak, was not less disposed to act cordially with the Assembly, and while this harmony continued not only was there no reason to despair, but there was every reason to hope that a Constitution would be founded. The Queen it was, who, by her baneful influence, drove her vacillating husband, as Henrietta Maria had driven Charles I., to the courses of violence and perfidy which wrecked her and him, France, and the fortunes of Humanity. The assent of the King had been scarcely extorted when she and her Camarilla brought up the army to disperse the Assembly, if not with a still worse intent. The army, infected with popular feeling, refused to act: but the Assembly, in the hour of peril, had been compelled to place itself under the protection of the armed populace of Paris, which, the army having melted away, was thenceforth master of the situation. Then all was over: by the Queen's most criminal folly the avalanche had been set loose from the mountain side and nothing was left to stop its fatal descent into the abyss.

Not to admire Burke's zeal as a reformer is impossible; but it is difficult to see his immense sagacity. The root of all the self-seeking, corruption and caballing in the House of Commons of that day was the unreformed state of the representa-