

so?' Madame had it all her own way, as no one answered.

Their visit, brief as it was, fell out fortunately after all, for they were just in time for the Feast of Saint Louis. The Tuileries was a blaze of glory; the grand staircase leading to the banqueting-room was decorated by soldiers in gorgeous uniforms standing at attention on every second step, grand and still as statues; and all because the exiled king was pleased to dine in public, for the pleasure of his subjects.

Madame had made a great effort to enjoy the sight, and as a suitable gown for such high occasions had not been included in her travelling wardrobe, the want had to be supplied at the briefest notice. The costumier of the period, however, was equal to the occasion, and in four hours or so, the correct garment was forthcoming, and was pronounced a perfect wonder of elegance and beauty, a feminine confection, altogether charming.

And so Madame had the fecility of seeing the king dine in his own honour, with a large napkin tucked deftly under his chin, and eating profusely of every dish, as in duty bound, until he became almost black in the face, such pious zeal did the anniversary of his patron saint inspire!

Talleyrand, and his uncle the Archbishop of Paris, who looked as though they had been dug out of the grave for the occasion, stood, meanwhile, at his right hand.

It was considered a most edifying sight by such of the old nobility as had been fortunate enough to keep their heads upon their shoulders to witness it. Madame was highly gratified by the sight of a function so curious and entertaining and worthy of perpetual remembrance.