

uled but no less easily cooled. Impressed with those ideas on my return into France I became one of his warmest supporters and as such highly resented his dismissal from office, which I attributed to the intrigues of courtiers, who under his administration, could no longer plunder the public treasury. Neither the real ability of Mr. de Calonne, nor the motley schemes of the *notables* and still less the inaptness of the Cardinal de Brienne could keep afloat the vessel of State, and its government was again intrusted to the same tutelary Angel who for this time prescribed the conditions on which he would lend his all-powerful assistance. This triumph could only raise his vanity to the highest climax, and from that moment he thought himself omnipotent. More the speculative philosopher than the experimental statesman, he fancied that by flattering and gratifying the ruling passions of the people and by the magic of his name, he should be able to mould anew a population of thirty millions of human beings, he might at his will and pleasure pull down old establishments and erect new ones, and that, Jupiter like, at his nod tumultuary waves of an infuriated mob raising mountains high and threatening every thing around them with instant destruction, could as instantly subside into the profoundest calm, and thereby impress every one who should dare to oppose his measures with the idea of the danger of attempting it. Such was the principal guide of a Sovereign whose sense and abilities yielded only to the desire of relieving the distress of his people, whose diffidence induced him to prefer the advice of others to the dictates of his own judgment, and whose truly paternal affection for his subjects, made him regardless of every personal danger, and ready to sacrifice even his Crown and his life rather than to keep the one and the other by the effusion of a single drop of blood, In a word Louis the XVI was too virtuous for the time in which he lived, and to that excess of virtue is due all the horrors and crimes of an era that will forever pollute the pages of history.

The Parliament of Paris, always ready to take a part against the Court and which was glad of having an opportunity of avenging their late momentary dismissal, were the foremost in calling for