

when they were summoned to go to execution. With calm and recollected countenances, they got into the carts which were to carry them from the Palais de Justice to the Barriere du Trone, where the guillotine was permanently set up. This time also their hands were bound, and they rejoiced at this mark of resemblance with their Divine Master.

The way was long, yet their noble bearing never altered for an instant. Their gentle serenity and their eyes fixed on Heaven showed the direction of their thoughts. They sang by turns the *Miserere*, the *Salve Regina* and the *Te Deum*, thereby expressing, in the sublime language of the Church, sorrow for their sins, their devotion to Mary, the Queen and glory of Carmel, their thanksgiving to God, and the joy of their souls. In the pure and sweet voices of these women on their way to death, there was a nameless accent which was more than human, as well as a mysterious harmony. Amid their sufferings, there shone from their transfigured faces, the ray of supernatural beauty which glorifies great souls at a solemn hour. Upon their countenances was an indescribable expression of goodness and modesty, sweetness and strength, and a reflection of purity and joy which struck everyone.

These funeral processions were generally escorted by an insolent or drunken crowd, the greater part of which was made up of the vile creatures known as "The furies of the guillotine." They would shake their fists at the condemned, overwhelm them with abuse, and follow them with the most abominable imprecations. On the present occasion it was different. A few vixens did, it is true, try at first to insult these heroic women, who opposed to their violence naught but the gentleness and sweetness befitting the gospel. Soon, however, these possessed creatures found themselves disarmed, and the hatred of the most excited was changed into sympathetic curiosity.

This procession, so different from every other, was followed by an im-

mense crowd, which seemed to be deeply impressed, and kept a respectful silence. If a cry was heard now and then, it was a cry of pity and admiration for the condemned. "Oh, the noble souls! What a heavenly look! If they do not go to Paradise, it must be because there is none." We are told that flowers were thrown into the carts by unknown hands.

These heroic virgins were clothed in white. It was, no doubt, with the foresight of their martyrdom, that they had carried their white choir mantles with them upon leaving Compiegne. What a sublime and touching thought to adorn themselves on this, the day of their eternal nuptials, with the symbolic garment which the nun of Carmel wears on the most solemn festivals and each time that she is bidden to the eucharistic banquet of her heavenly Spouse!

The foot of the scaffold was reached. Calmly and simply the Carmelites descended from the carts. Kneeling, they began the *Veni Creator* with as much serenity as though it were the prelude to a religious ceremony in their Monastery. In a loud and clear voice, they together renewed their promises of baptism and their religious vows. The executioner, the guard and the people, allowed them to pursue these religious acts with no show of displeasure or of impatience. That she might support the courage of her daughters to the end, the Prioress asked that she might be the last to be put to death, and her request was granted.

The first to be called was Sister Constance, the youngest of all. She was a novice whom the Revolution had deprived of the happiness of taking her vows. She was born at Saint Denis, near Paris, and was but twenty-eight years old. In the world she had been called Marie Meunier. Kneeling before her Prioress, she asked her blessing and permission to die; then mounting the platform, she sang the canticle of holy joy, the "*Laudate Dominum omnes gentes*," which she finished in Heaven; she then gave herself up to the executioner. "You would have thought