

the influence of the Princess over her royal husband and to dissolve the alliance existing between the Queen and her royal brother-in-law. That this was their main object appears evidently from the circumstance of coupling together those two devoted victims in all the calumnies that were in the principle vomited against them. This similarity of means, to come at very different ends, produced the coalition between the utopian schemers and the anti-utopian Egalité.

And in fact, what means were more proper to alienate a husband from his wife than assailing his heart on the tenderest part? What accusation was more calculated to rouse the indignation of a man than that of his bed being defiled by an incestuous intercourse? But Louis knew too well ~~her~~, against whom these calumnies were directed; he knew too well, that altho' the brother thus charged with being accessory to the crimes of his consort, might be capable of juvenile indiscretions, his noble mind would have recoiled with horror at any act derogatory of the principles of that honor which he eminently possessed; in fine, Louis was too well aware of the vile source from whence these atrocities sprung, and of their criminal motives, to be in the least affected by them. This so far failed on that side that they were obliged to give up the part of the plot on which they had built their best hopes. Nevertheless, it had not entirely failed, and those aspersions did certainly undermine the general enthusiasm for the Queen; many believed them, and very few could persuade themselves that she had not been guilty, at least, of some of the indiscretion laid to her charge. The King was stigmatized as one of those easy men, who suffer themselves to be hood-winked by the artifices of a vicious woman, and he sunk in the esteem of his subjects. These national feelings were supported and encreased by that which ought to have had an opposite effect; and that patient enduring which proceeded from a dignified sense of innocence, and from a thorough contempt of the vile slanderers, was attributed by many to the fear of the discoveries to which an investigation might lead.

Undismayed by the storm that was thus gathering on her angust head, the Queen persisted in her unremitted duties of a mother