

but now the States-General were more troublesome than parliament, and we were ordered about as if we were domestics—

"I order you to separate immediately!" "Bishops, marquises, counts, and barons enjoyed our decomposition and looked down on us; but believe me, Maitre Jean, we never looked down, but were terribly agitated."

"The king, saying nothing more, rose and went out as he came. Nearly all the bishops, some curés, and the greater part of the deputies of the nobility, withdrew by the great door of the avenue."

"We were to go out by the little door of the Chantier, but for the moment we kept our places. Every one was thoughtful. The feeling of force and anger was increasing in every man's breast. This lasted a quarter of an hour, when Mirabeau rose, his great head thrown back and his eyes sparkling. The silence was terrible; we looked at him. All at once, in his clearest tones, he said—

"Gentlemen, I confess to you that what you have just heard might be the salvation of the country, if the gifts of despotism were not always dangerous. What is this insolent dictatorship, this attendance of armed men, this violation of the national temple, to order you to be happy?"

"Every one shuddered. We felt that Mirabeau risked his head. He knew it as well as we, but indignation ran away with him; his face changed to beautiful! It is even all that is most beautiful in the world!" He continued—

"Who gives you this command? Your proxy! Who lays down these imperious? Your proxy!—he who ought to receive them from us, gentlemen, who are invested with a political and inviolable priesthood—from us, from whom twenty-five millions of men expect certain happiness, because it must be consented to, given, and received by all."

"Every word plunged like a cannon-ball into the throne of absolutism."

"But a fetter is laid upon your freedom of discussion," continued he, with a gesture which made us tremble; "a military force surrounds the Estates! Where are the country's enemies? Is Catiline at our gates? I demand that, covering yourselves with your dignity, your legislative power, your remain faithful to your oath: it does allow you to separate until a constitution is made."

"During this speech the master of the ceremonies, who had followed the king-re-entered the hall and advanced towards the benches vacated by the nobility. Mirabeau had hardly finished speaking when he uttered some few words; but as he was not audible, several cried out, 'Louder, louder!'

"Then he raised his voice, and said in profound silence—

"Gentlemen, you have heard the king's orders!" "Mirabeau remained standing; I saw anger and contempt set his great jaws."

"Yes, sir," said he slowly, in the tone of a great seigneur speaking, "we have heard the proposals which have been suggested to the king, and you, who cannot be his medium with the States-General—you have neither place here nor right to speak, it is not for you to remind us of what he said."

(To be continued.)

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JAMES MATTINSON.

May 1st, 1875.

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