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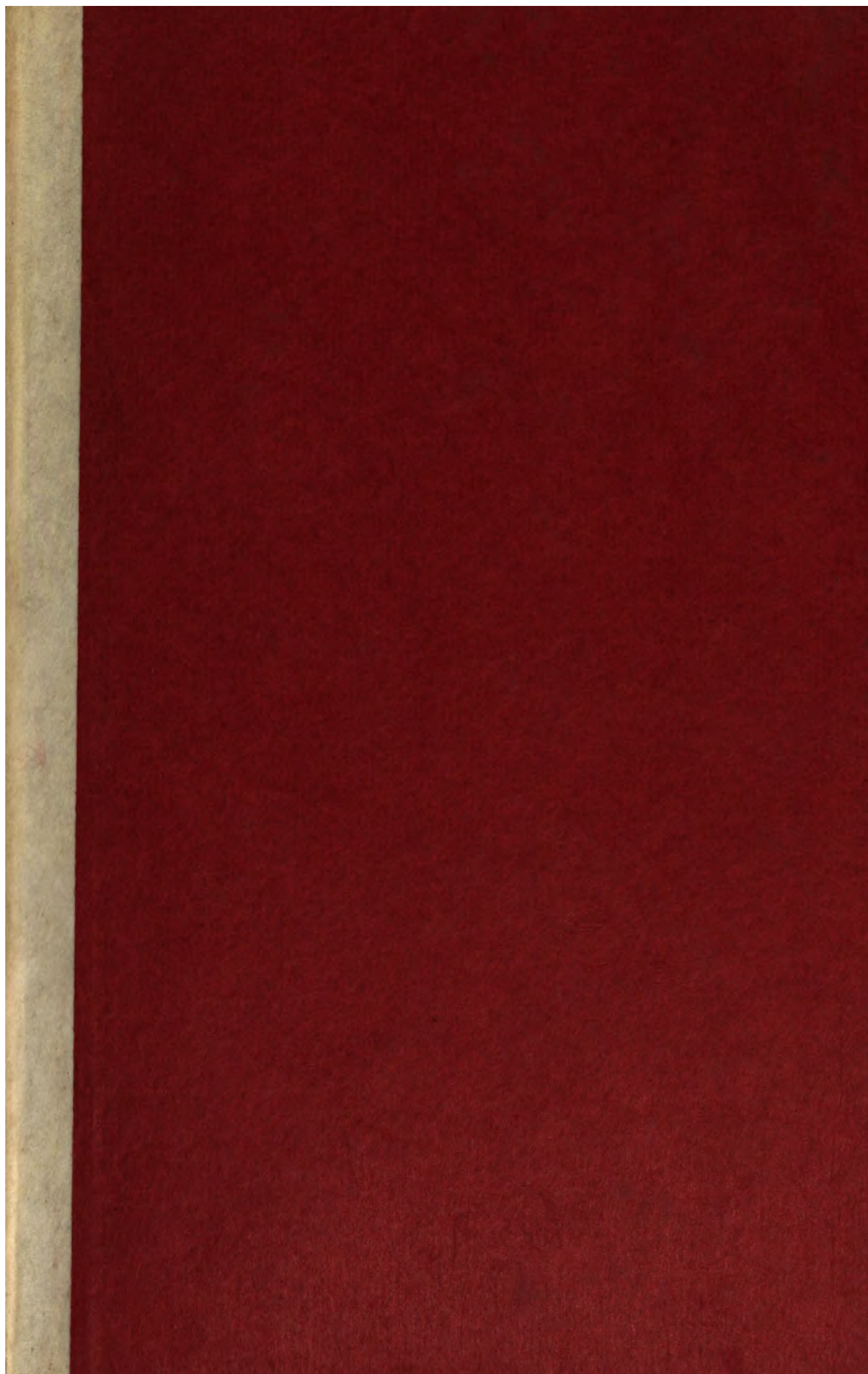
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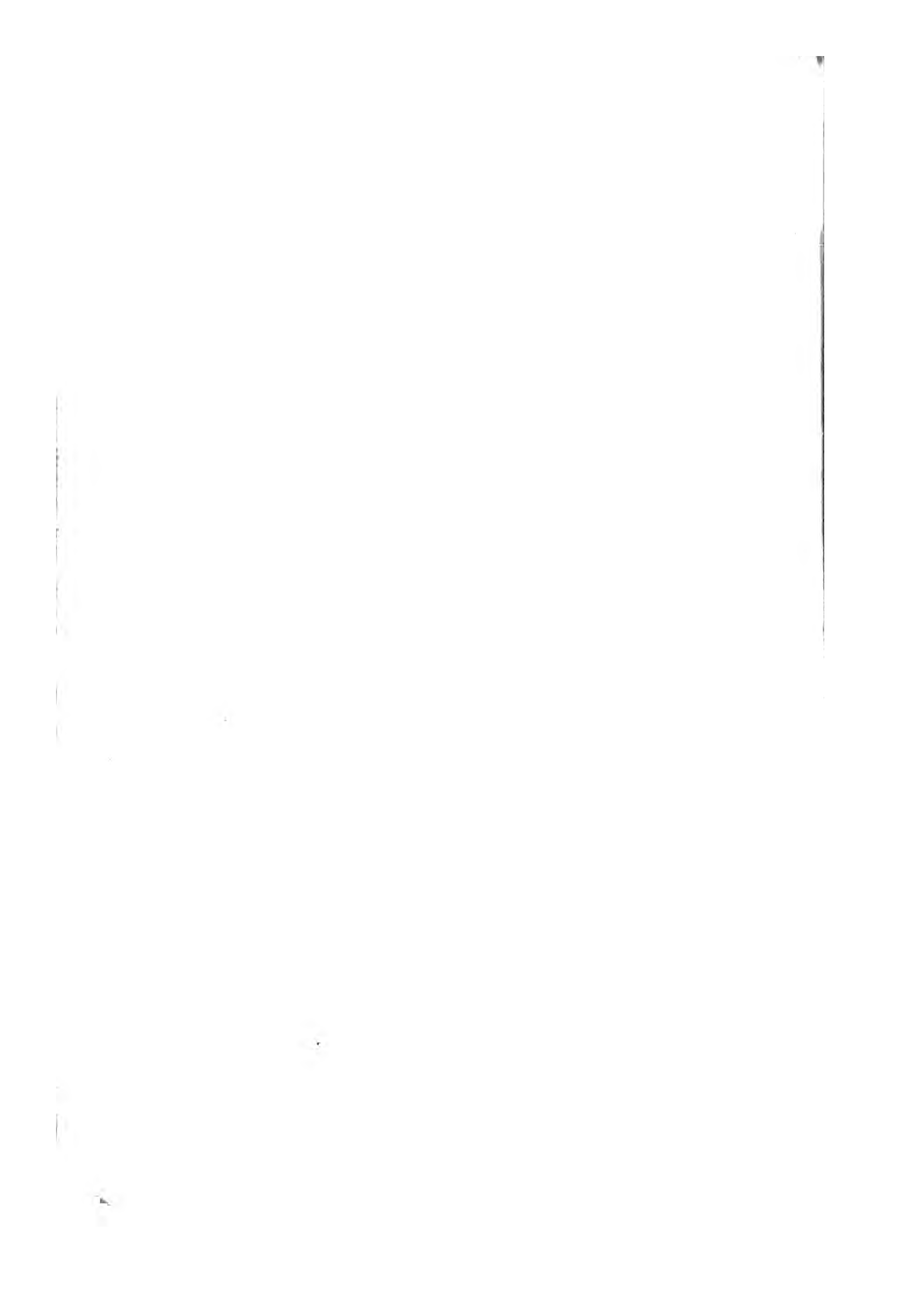
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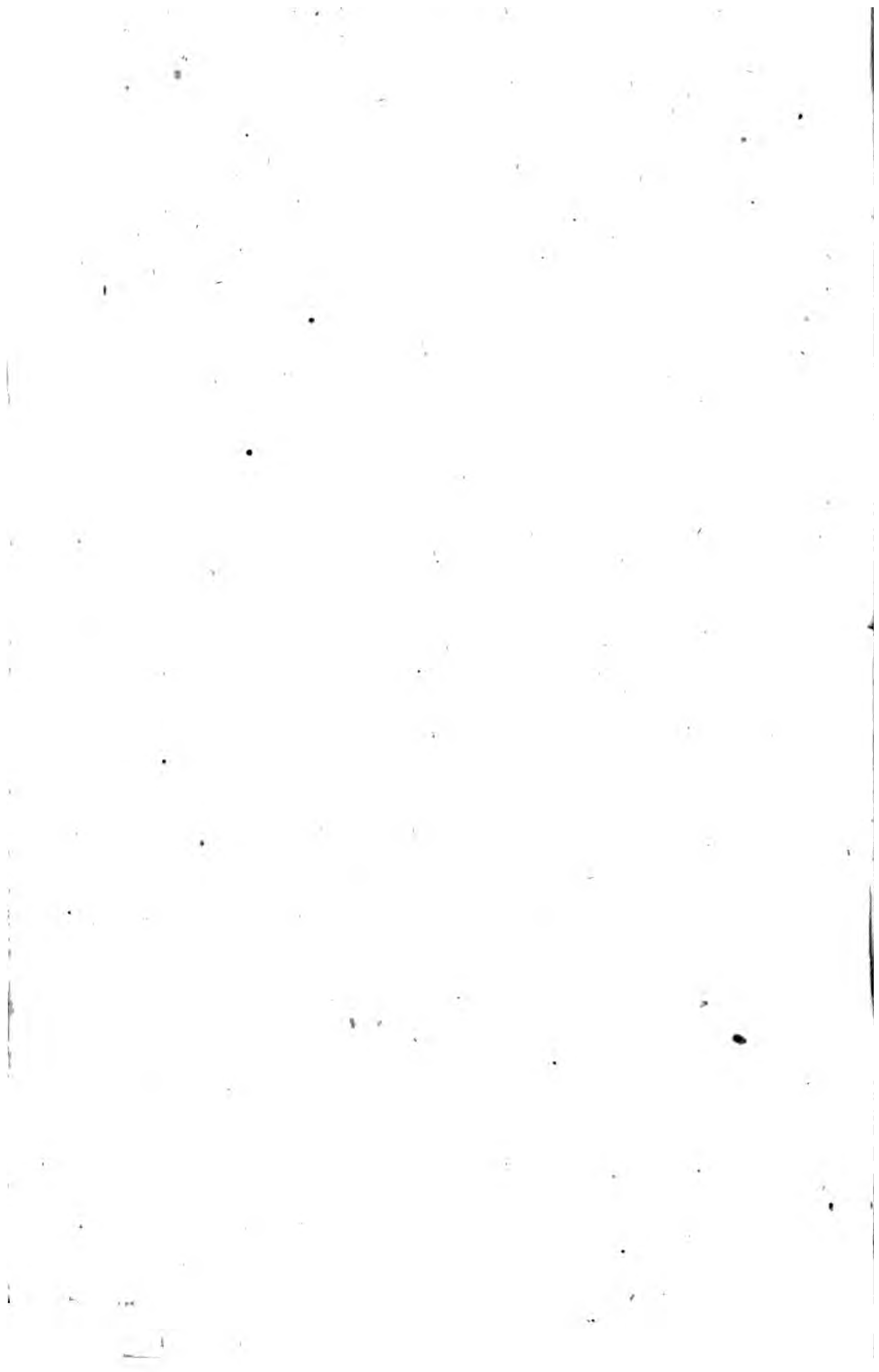




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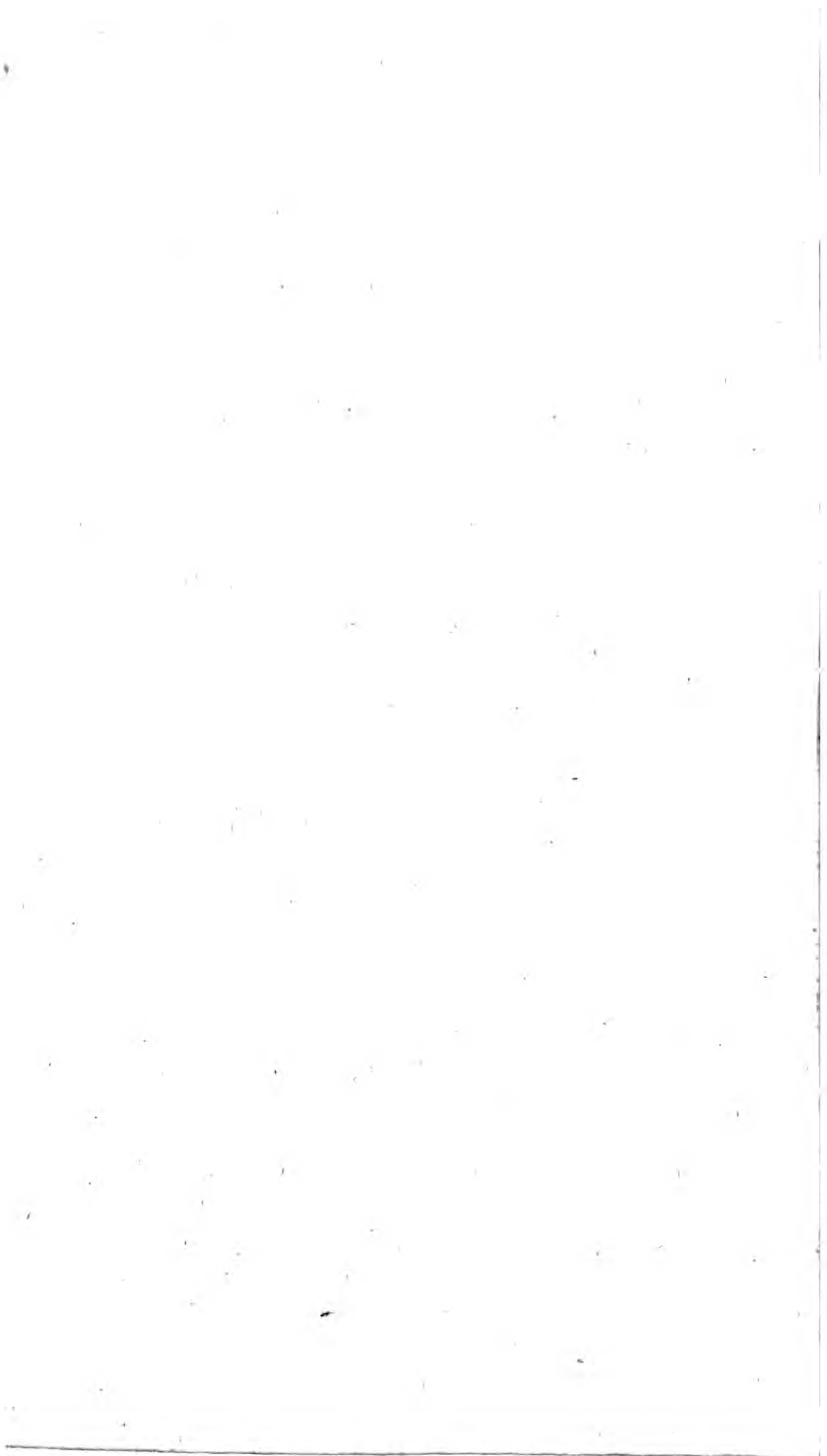
DEMOCRATIC RAGE;

OR

LOUIS THE UNFORTUNATE.

A

TRAGEDY.



DEMOCRATIC RAGE;

OR,

LOUIS THE UNFORTUNATE,

A

TRAGEDY.

BY

WILLIAM PRESTON, ESQ.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY GRAISBERRY AND CAMPBELL,
FOR JOHN ARCHER, NO. 80, DAME-STREET.

1798.

DEMOCRATIC RANGE
Mr. J. P. Peiking Bhatto

FROM THE UNFOR TUNATE.

Y. C. Y.
BODLEIAN
13 OCT 1930
LIBRARY

WILLIAM WESTON, ESQ.

DEDICATION

TO you, ye subjects of the BRITISH empire, happy, if ye know how to prize your happiness, the author inscribes this poem, in which he has attempted to illustrate the blessings ye enjoy, under your present mild and inestimable constitution; a constitution, the result of tempered firmness, and progressive wisdom.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

M E N.

LOUIS, KING OF FRANCE.
DUKE OF ORLEANS, otherwise EGALITE.
KERSAINT.
SIEYES.
PETION.
SANTERRE.
ROBESPIERRE.
MARAT.
LAMOIGNON.
CLERI.
PARIS.
GASTON.

W O M E N.

QUEEN OF FRANCE.
PRINCESS ROYAL.
PRINCESS ELIZABETH.

THE DAUPHIN, a Child.

ACT I. SCENE I.

An Apartment adjoining the Meeting of the Convention.

Enter ORLEANS, solus.

Orleans.

OH pride, how dear thy price ! and thou ambition,
Proud, groveling appetite, how dost thou stoop !—
The great distinctions of my royal blood,
All levell'd in the dust ; and peasant slaves,
Spawn'd by the mire, in strange fraternity,
With princes mix, and soil their ermine robes,
With hard unhallow'd hands, by labour worn ;—
But such the path to pow'r, sole worthy aim,
And consummation of imperial man.

Buffling thro' chaos, when the glorious vapour,
 The fiery atoms, that compose my soul,
 Uprose a mind, ambition was infus'd,
 The best ingredient ; and the principle
 Of new existence : thence she forc'd her way,
 Thro' ling'ring feeds of earth, and tow'r'd aloft,
 Intelligent, and vast ; and still, she holds
 The glorious tendency, that gave her being.—
 Ascend, ascend, thou fiery energy,
 For ever mount, until, diffus'd in air,
 No trace remains, to tell the world thou wert.

S C E N E II.

Enter, to him, ROBESPIERRE with MARAT.

Approach, my trusty minions—do ye linger,
 When precious mischief labours for a birth ?
 What says our imp Gorsas ? hath he sublim'd
 His press, that fruitful mine of massacres,
 With fire unquenchable ?

Mar. The tyrant's blood
 Must soon be shed, and ev'ry root and fibre
 Of freedom's glorious tree shall largely drink
 The fatt'ning streams, and vital force imbibe,
 And wide and deeply strike, and send aloft
 The glorious boughs, to reach the starry cope.

The spirits of the gallant train, that fell
 On that illustrious day, around us crowd,
 Or, hov'ring o'er our heads, with silent tongue,
 Yet audible to ev'ry patriot heart,
 For retribution call. Their glorious thirst
 No common draught requires. Oh, let them drink,
 Drink largely, of the sceptred miscreant's blood.—

Rob. And they shall drink.—We have already lopt
 The boughs; and suckers; undermin'd the root,
 And naked left the trunk; th' unwieldy mass
 Stands tottering to its fall, and the next blast
 Of popular fury lays it in the dust.

Oh, thanks to Brunswick! sure, our guardian genius
 Was busy, when he wrote, to guide his pen.

Oh, better than a thousand tongues divine,
 Our cause he pleaded; in parisian hearts,
 He conjur'd up a raging thirst of blood,
 And gave it sanction, by his own example.



Orl. Yes, ye are witnesses—ye, whose streaming blood
 O'erflow'd our prisons, when September's calends,
 Eventful, set in crimson, Brunswick's pen
 To slaughter doom'd you. If the parted shade
 Survives the stroke of death; in dread array,
 Ye muster round his couch, and vex his dreams.
 But, still unfated, with the price of death,
 With all the plunder of that cruel day,
 Our blood-hounds crave; they cry to me, for gold.

Rob. Shame on the miscreants! they have had their fill

Of tyrant blood, and shall not that suffice?—
 Have seen the fall of proud aristocrates ;
 Their last convulsions mark'd, with gladden'd eyes,
 And heard, with gladden'd ears, their dying groans ;
 And shall not that suffice ? From seas of blood,
 Up springs the glorious sun, diffusive dawn
 Of civic power and broad equality.
 And shall not that suffice ?

Orl. Yet, we must own,
 They have done worthy service. All in vain
 Th' inventive head may toil, and weave the web
 Of mighty changes, if the daring hand
 Consecutive be wanting—to Rotondo,
 And his tried comrades, do we stand indebted,
 For victory o'er Louis ; they have stript him
 Of counsel and assistance.

Mar. 'Tis most true.
 Vainly had our associates cram'd the dungeons,
 With Capet's faithful friends ; vainly Gorsas,
 With dark surmises, visionary fears,
 Plots, massacres, and counter-revolutions, fill'd
 Th' unsteady populace ; in vain, the walls
 Of Paris, cover'd with proscriptions, call'd
 To summary revenge ; unless these men
 Had furnish'd leaders for the passive crowd,
 Ready to finish, tardy to commence,
 The work of slaughter.

Orl. Say, have ye prepared

Our trusty instruments, zealous and loud,
 To trace the city, clamour in the streets,
 In flame the populace, and teach the crowd,
 To thirst for blood, and cry aloud for vengeance,
 For instant vengeance, on the bloody tyrant?—
 So call this harmless thing—this christian log!
 Remember, “all the blood of friends and foes
 “Be charg’d to his account: the state of France
 “Concord or rest, while hated Louis lives,
 “Must never hope to know.” The present hour
 Brings on the dread appeal, big with our fate:
 We fall, or Louis dies; and much I fear
 The temper of the assembly, they will shrink,
 In the dread crisis, from the crowning blow,
 The consummation.

Mar. We must work by threats.—

Oh, did not fear withhold the recreant tongue,
 How many, at this hour, would stand avow’d,
 Champions of tyranny.

Rob. Doubt not our zeal—

The mountain yet shall rage; oh thou shalt hear
 Its bellowing crater roar, for Capet’s death,
 Infernal thunder, and disgorge the flames
 Of rage fanatic, and the rolling smoak
 Of fearful prejudice. We have prepar’d
 A pageant for the crowd, that shall to frenzy
 Transport their spirits.

Mar. ’Tis a glorious thought.—

In vain, the assembly, with united voice,
 Decrees the tyrant's guilt, if his adherents,
 With moderation's name, and specious forms
 Of prudence, temp'ring patriotic zeal,
 Conceal th' insidious arts, that darkly work,
 To snatch away the victim, on the eve
 Of glorious sacrifice:

Orl. Impart your aim.

Rob. We have array'd a ghastly multitude
 Of hideous spectres, that erewhile were human ;
 A breathing aggregate of butchery.—
 The lazar-house shall pour its tenants forth,
 Dismember'd trunks, that scarcely hold existence,
 To strike the tender nature, with affright,
 At mortal miseries ; the stripling, doom'd,
 By one fell blow, to long decrepitude,
 Propt by his weeping parents ; hoary fires,
 Adding to wounds th' infirmities of age,
 Borne on their childrens' arms ; in litters some,
 As spectacles of more distinguish'd horror,
 And ostentatious pain ; next these, a band
 Of childless fires, and mothers, orphan babes,
 And widow'd matrons ; all, in doleful weeds,
 With hair dishevell'd, and with piercing cries,
 Bewail the victims of that glorious day,
 Our butcher'd brethren, butcher'd by the hands
 Of cruel mercenaries—all, for blood,
 Cry to th' assembly—for a tyrant's blood.

Mar. Many there are, that toil, with secret art,
 To mar our best-laid schemes ; while, by delay,
 Adorn'd with moderation's specious name,
 They hope to fool us, and some moment seize,
 Of weak relenting in the multitude,
 To reinstate th' anointed pageantry,
 The foolish costly bauble call'd a king.

Rob. The fiery Lanjuinais, the good Rabaut,
 That pious heretic, bold Manuel,
 Kerfaint, more boist'rous than his element,
 Keen Roland, charg'd with fury feminine,
 With borrow'd talents and a soul transfus'd,
 And cool Condorcet, that with rule and line
 Would human actions mete, a remnant all
 Of mongrel thinkers, party-colour'd zealots,
 Ling'ring 'twixt night and day, with glance oblique,
 To british freedom lean. 'Twere sure perdition,
 Should they prevail, to all our dreams of pow'r.
 But 'twill not be ;—we have a lesson given,
 Of dreadful warning ; wisely, have infus'd
 A salutary terror, that insures
 Completion of our hopes. Ev'n now, in thought,
 I see thee seated high, I see thee move
 The cords and springs, that wield the vast machine
 Of democratic rage

Mar. What may this mean ?

[*Aside.*

Rob. We must remove the philosophic fools,
 The scientific praters. Still, too dense

Are moderation's ranks, compact with friends
 Of prostrate royalty ; we must recall
 The calends of September. Then, reveal'd,
 Thou may'st assert thyself, dispel the clouds
 That veil thy glorious presence, and shine forth
 Our great dictator, our illustrious Sylla.

[To Orleans.]

Mar. Dictator, Sylla ! o detested founts !
 First perish all creation, ere this frame,
 This little frame, in vile obeisance, bend
 Before the sway of one, one like myself,
 An individual man, the wretched subject
 Of folly and diseases ; or betray
 The claims, and majesty, of the great pow'r,
 Supreme, imperial, absolute,—the people !

Rob. Well said, volcanic mind ; but know'st thou not
 That Sylla but suspended, not destroy'd,
 His country's freedom ? to himself he took
 Imperial pow'r, not, as a vested right,
 But a deposit ; having purg'd the state,
 Gross and corrupted then, and largely drain'd
 The rank blood from her veins, he gave her back
 Her freedom undiminish'd, having made her
 More capable of freedom. France must pour
 More blood, more blood ; o she is yet too rank.

Mar. Let thousand gasping heads around me fall,
 And bite the dust ; and thousand mangled trunks
 Around me spout with blood : all crimson'd o'er,

Let me to freedom march, o'er scatter'd limbs ;
 And free remain ; altho' I should remain
 The single living thing, amidst the wreck
 Of crumbled empires.—I'll for freedom shout,
 Altho' I stand in blood, ev'n to the lips.

Orl. Forbear this waste of words ; the present crisis
 Demands our utmost care, to shape the measures,
 Adapted to the moment.—Should th' assembly,
 Unaw'd by menaces, delay the fate
 Of him that we have doom'd, whose instant death
 Is vital to our hopes—what then remains ?

Mar. What then remains ?—why, force must have its way,
 Dispense with legal forms, and seize the victim.

Rob. That may not be, unless Santerre combine ;
 And he uncertain wavers—'tis a vane
 That points, as interest breathes ; a golden key
 Commands each entrance to his narrow heart.

Orl. Is he not gorg'd with riches ?—Holds he not
 Within his gripe, the plunder of the slain,
 Ev'n half the wealth of Paris ?—Brave we not
 The public voice, for him ; and stay the hand
 Of rigid justice ?

Rob. We must glut him still ;
 New massacres, new plunder. Haste, my lord.

Mar. How—lord !—we know no lord.—Egalite.

Rob. Well—be it so.—Haste then, Egalite :
 The present moment labours with our fate—
 Clamours must silence eloquence ; and rage

Baffle the wise, confound the reasoner.

I, to Santerre, and work his sluggish soul,
 With motives fit to rouse him. I'll present
 To his base mind, for ever bent on gain,
 Proscriptions, confiscations, gold, the god
 That he adores.—Each to his several task,
 And re-assemble at the Jacobins.

[*Exeunt Orleans and Robespierre.*]

S C E N E III.

MARAT, *solus.*

Ye too shall perish, for I know you well ;
 Tyrants in embryo ;—a Marius this,
 And that a Cinna ;—but the times demand them.—
 'Tis their ambition that must purge the state,
 From ev'ry relique of nobility,
 From ev'ry dangerous man, whose pride would build,
 On worth superior, or superior wisdom,
 Claim to pre-eminence. All must be equal ;
 Or all no more are free—the pride of genius
 Will ne'er submit to herd among the crowd.
 The pomp of words, the vanity of science,
 Will be distinguish'd—we must cut them off.
 Wit, wisdom, virtue—ev'ry head, that tow'rs

Above the rest, deforms the gen'ral system
 Of broad equality, and tends to gain
 Dominion o'er the crowd. Equality,
 Be thou my god. To thee, I sacrifice
 Whole bleeding hecatombs ; that bustling fool
 Shall be the priest ; and, last, a chosen victim,
 On some high day of solemn sacrifice,
 Shall bleed himself. With deadly hate, I view
 Each haughty thing, that, in society,
 Would claim a place above me ; and my place,
 Save in the day of common anarchy,
 Is low indeed ; for, nature to my birth
 Denied her bounties, ev'ry pow'r of mind,
 And grace of person, that, with smooth attraction,
 Advance her minions ; and conspir'd with fortune,
 To mark me out, for pain, and indigence,
 And vile subservient station ; stigmatized me,
 With want and infamy. Yet, in despite
 Of nature and of fortune, I have gain'd
 An envy'd rank ; and wield the rod of pow'r,
 To scourge the proud and great ; with such, I swear
 Eternal war ; not less the foe confirm'd
 Of all superiors, than the punic chief
 Of proud aspiring Rome, but I must hence.—
 Yes, model empires ; and, in thoughts elate,
 Upborne in clouds of fancy'd excellence,
 The spheres of virtue tread, and think ye roll.

In a superior orb ; I wield an engine—
That soon shall lay you prostrate in the dust.

S C E N E IV.

Enter, to him, KERSAINT with SIEYES.

In vain your wily arts ; th' almighty will,
That sacred law, th' almighty people's will,
Decrees the tyrant's doom ; and he must fall.

Ker. Away, thou miscreant, can'st thou bear the sight
Of honourable men ? dive deep in earth,
Thy proper element ; nor stand contrasted,
Profaning day, to god and his good works.—
I shudder at thee, thou art crimson'd o'er
With murd'rous hue. The smell of blood ascends ;
Ascends—it fills the boundless atmosphere
With such pollution, that no virtuous thing
May near thee dwell.

Mar. Such censure is my praise.
Ye say, I smell of blood ; it is my boast
That I do smell of blood. O might the scent
Fill the wide air, and poison, on their seats,
The despots of the earth ! Ye say, Marat
Is red with butchery ;—true—I am red
With blood of tyrants ; 'tis my proudest boast.
O let me wade to freedom, thro' the blood

Of monarchs and their minions, I was born
 The scourge of royalty, the great apostle
 Of proud equality. For this, the pavements
 Of Paris smook with blood ; for this, the Seine
 Is choak'd with mangled dead, that, from the stream,
 The wond'ring natives drive, and, ye, beware—
 This abject, vile, detested, murd'rous thing
 Is master of your fates—a day shall come.—

[Exit Marat.]



S C E N E V.

KERSAINT *and* SIEYES.

Kerf. Where is our freedom ? where the reign of laws
 And constitution ? while such miscreants live,
 Protected by the rabble, and defy
 The sword of justice. Vainly have we crush'd
 The single tyranny ; if we must find,
 In place of one, a myriad of oppressors,
 More cruel, as more base ; if ev'ry lane,
 Each suburb tavern, and each midnight haunt
 Of vice and idleness, must vomit forth
 Its dark divan of desp'rate democrates,
 Lawless themselves, to give their betters law,
 And sanction their decrees, with pike and sabre.

Sieyes. I do not praise the people. I condemn
 Their wild excesses ; and their anarchy.

The state is sick to death, and 'tis our grievance,
 That ev'ry vile empiric would prescribe.—
 Forth from his study comes the theorist,
 Fill'd with romances wild of legislation.
 The mean, the base, the lawless, and the godless,
 Are now grown mighty, and assume the sway :
 I see—I mourn it—but I am not driv'n,
 In base despondence, to forsake the vessel,
 When tempests blacken, and the billows rise,
 And strain her lab'ring sides ;—imprinted here,

[*Laying his hand on his breast.*]

I read the duties, which my country's voice
 Enjoins to all her sons.

Kerf Thrice happy Britain !

There, the mild genius of her virtuous sons
 Infuses the temp'rate rule of equal laws,
 Justice, and decent order ; pure alike
 From eastern softness, and from gothic fury,
 That fill th' unhappy Frank. Alike, they shun
 The tyranny of democratic rage,
 That levels all distinction ; and, more hateful,
 Tho', sure, less noxious, of despotic pow'r
 That strikes the palace but the cottage spares.
 No theorists inflame the fickle crowd,
 With fine-spun systems, to fanatic orgies,
 Philosophize to madness, or produce
 A monster, in the history of man,
 Enthusiast crowds, by metaphysic themes,

Inflam'd to wilder bigotry, than fill'd
 The mad crusaders, or fanatic bands,
 That follow'd Omar, when their arch impostor
 Pour'd them resistless o'er the christian world.

Sieyes. A nation may not pass, with sudden stride,
 To freedom, from oppression; the rich gift,
 Like luscious viands and strong racy wines,
 To famish'd wretches, fevers breed, and death.
 There need some preparation and degrees
 Of rising privileges, to confirm
 The public habit; that, with constant strength,
 It may concoct, and thro' each member send
 Its due proportion of the public freedom,
 The precious aliment, that feeds the whole.
 The sons of Britain, by slow gradual use,
 And long succession of progressive rights,
 Were disciplin'd to freedom, and became
 Worthy possessors of the mighty boon.

Kerf. The valiant Julius of the Gauls has said,
 " They are a race too fiercely volatile,
 " For solid freedom." Monarchy o'erthrown,
 A thousand systems of a day shall rise,
 Chimeras wild of fancy'd liberty,
 And deluge France with blood.

Sieyes. 'Tis true, my friend,
 All this I know, and feel; but more I know,
 We live not for ourselves. The parent soil
 Claims our existence. We are bound to labour

With our best efforts, for the public weal,
 Successful or unhappy be the event.
 But I foretell, that, from this anarchy,
 A structure shall arise, whose mighty circuit,
 And solid strength, and glorious symmetry,
 Shall human-kind in latest times amaze.
 Blame not the forms of freedom, rather blame
 The baneful influence of oppression past,
 The mind of man degrading, in the birth,
 Stifling the germs and principles of good.

[*Exeunt Kerfaint and Sieyes.*]

S C E N E VI.

Changes to the Street.

Enter ROBESPIERRE, with a number of parisian citizens, of the lowest order, and of the violent party.

Citizens. All hail, equality to tyrants death!
 Blood, blood, we thirst, we thirst; we have emerg'd,
 From lowest depths of human degradation,
 That tyranny could found.

Rob. 'Tis true, my brethren.
 The crown, the nobles, and the hierarchy,
 A triple monster, join'd in fatal union,
 Against the laws of nature, curst the land,
 With famine, bonds, and death; the bread of life,

The vital air, your toils, your progeny,
 All, all, were grasp'd by the strong fangs of pow'r,
 And squeez'd to dissolution. The smooth courtier,
 Within his cabinet, beset with mirrors
 And breathing essences, a puny thing,
 Shrinking from ev'ry breeze, to gratify
 His vanity, his pride, or his caprice,
 His lust of vengeance, or his lust of gold,
 Would chaffer for the fame, the liberty,
 The very being of the vet'ran foldier,
 Hardy and rough, and seam'd with glorious scars,
 That for his country bled. The source of justice,
 Curs'd by the midnight fiend of tyranny,
 Call'd from th' infernal pit, became a sink
 Of all pollutions ; and th' empoison'd vapour
 Continual rose, and thro' the groaning land
 Diffus'd infectious plagues.

Citizens. We will be free.

All hail, equality—to tyrants death.—

Rob. Yes, death to tyrants, would ye free remain.—

For vainly, vainly, prostrate in the dust,

The form is trampled, while the substance lives,—

The tyrant breathes, the guilty cause of all,

The murderer of his people. Let your sons,

Your fires, your brothers, slain in freedom's cause,

Your butcher'd husbands, and your mangled children,

Be ever in your fight ; their dying groans,

Their last convulsions, call on you for justice.

Hark !—hark !—the smoak of civic blood ascends

On freedom's altar. Do ye feel its heat?—
 Will it not animate the very stones
 To rise, and smite the sceptred criminal?

Citizens. Blood, blood, we thirst for blood;—the tyrant dies.
 All hail, equality, to Capet death!

[*Exit Robespierre with Citizens.*]

A C T II. S C E N E I.

The Queen's Apartment in the Temple.

*The QUEEN and PRINCESS-ELIZABETH, the PRINCESS-ROYAL
 asleep on a couch, the DAUPHIN, at a distance,
 with a port feuille, drawing.*

Princess Elizabeth—looking over the Princess-Royal.

STILL she reposes. 'Tis a blessed respite
 From agonizing thought. The languid frame
 Sinks in the arms of sleep in spite of care.—
 Well, little-one, how goes thy task? Oh fie,
 Such sombrous colouring! What, this a landscape!

Daup. Black, black is ever next me; and no wonder;
 For this abode is gloomy—Thou art fad,
 My mother fadder still, and my poor sister
 Saddest of all!—I would that we were free.—
 When I sit down to copy out a landscape,
 The streams and groves, and fields, with sun-shine gay,

Where Montmorin ? and where my poor Lamballe ?
 That foul of pleasure, that embody'd wit,
 That genius more than female. All the graces
 Combin'd to deck her form and mind, with charms
 For ever varied, and resistless ever.
 Oh horror, horror ! mangled, butcher'd,—savages,
 Devouring hell-hounds,—and for me and mine
 The victims bled.

Daup. Oh save me, sister, save me.

Feel how I tremble.

Queen. Vengeance, vengeance, vengeance !
 Why sleep thy thunders, heav'n ? Oh why delay
 The myriads of the north ? The vulture's sloth
 Retards the mighty eagle. Distant yet
 He hovers doubtful, and forbears to strike
 The destin'd prey ; descend, thou bird of war,
 Descend in whirlwinds ; thunder on thy plumes ;
 And, in thy talons, fear and desolation !
 Come, bathe in blood, no common feast demands
 Thy presence.—Were I, in the ranks of war,
 With trenchant sabre arm'd, I should forget
 The weakness of my sex ; I should forego
 The softness of my nature ; I should fly
 To great revenge.

Cleri. The heav'nly instruments
 Are now at work. The forge, where great events
 Are to perfection wrought, with double heat,
 Labours and glows.

Queen. Had he been rul'd by me ;
 Paris had fall'n, with all her miscreant brood
 Of base-born tyrants ; his paternal crown
 Had still adorn'd his brow ; we had been free ;
 Ev'n now, perhaps, amidst th' embattled ranks
 Passing from camp to camp, inspiring all,
 With glorious thirst of victory and vengeance.

Cleri. Peruse this note ; beset with eyes and ears,
 I may not trust my tongue with the vast secret.
 Read it not now, but seize the friendly silence
 And gloom of night, and having stored the purport,
 Within thy bosom, give it to the flames.
 My stay might wake suspicion. With our tyrants,
 Suspicions wak'd are murd'rous certainties.

S C E N E III.

Changes to the King's apartment in the Temple.

LOUIS, *alone.*

Welcome adversity ; thou hast remov'd
 Th' ignoble mask, or I had past thro' life,
 In base disguise ; but with repeated blows,
 My soul is rous'd ; she learns to know herself,
 Asserts her functions, and unfolds her pow'rs,
 Deserts the narrow nest, expands her plumes,

And claims the vast of ether for her own.
 The world shall see me now, by suff'rings tried,
 In evils patient, in pursuit of good
 Firm and tenacious ; of my people's blood
 Ever most frugal, lavish of my own.

S C E N E IV.

Enter, to him, LAMOIGNON.

Approach, my friend Lamoignon—blessed fruit
 Of this my humble state, I now may find
 A friend sincere ; and use the sacred name,
 As equals do, without the vain restraint
 Of ceremonials. I am now, methinks,
 A simple citizen.

Lam. My royal lord,
 With deeper reverence, I behold thee, now,
 Immur'd, the subject of unmanly scorn
 And rancorous contumely, bearing all,
 In the mild dignity of patient woe,
 Than when thou sat'st, enthron'd in sceptred pomp,
 First among earthly kings.

King. O Lamoignon,
 I am not void of feeling. At my heart,
 I find each motive that can thrill with anguish,
 A sovereign and a man. I plainly read

The dismal sequel of the storm that shook me,
 Thus rudely, from a throne : yet, wonder not,
 If I profess myself more truly happy,
 Than, in those hours of dazzled royalty,
 When I was rais'd a pageant, to the gaze
 Of shouting multitudes. Oft have I mourn'd
 The misery of kings enslav'd to pomp
 And cumbrous ceremonial of a court ;
 Ev'n, at the close of every wretched day,
 Stol'n from myself, from wisdom, and enjoyment,
 By vain parade, and vile unmeaning pomp.
 Oft have I wish'd, that heaven had plac'd my birth,
 Amidst the middle ranks. I then, had known,
 The tranquil joys of sacred privacy,
 The blessed sweetness of domestic life ;
 Had mix'd, without reserve, in converse free,
 And heard the voice of truth from friendship's tongue ;
 My books, my rural sports had fill'd my hours.
 I then had found my talents and my state
 Commensurate, and reach'd the destin'd goal,
 Nor mourn'd to find that folly or design
 Mar'd my best efforts for the public weal.
 Aware of this, and feeling want of means
 To remedy the mischief ; such a state
 Oft made me sick of life ; and oft I wish'd,
 Did not the hope, vain hope, that I should prove
 An humble instrument of gen'ral good,
 Make me recall the wish, to rid myself,

Like other monarchs, that imperial Charles,
 And Savoy's sage, of cumbrous royalty.
 But heav'n is good ; I am releas'd from all.

Lam. Releas'd, releas'd ! my king, my royal master.
 Oh how shall I proceed ?

King. Thy face is haggard,
 And thy red eyes are sunk within their orbits,
 While their inflated cords too plainly show
 The moisture drain'd by weeping.—Art thou sick ?

Lam. Sire, I am ill at ease. I wore the night,
 In earnest study. To these careful lids,
 Sleep was a stranger, while I told the hours,
 In preparation for the solemn plea.

King. Thou know'st thy toils are vain ; not angel tongues
 Would on that theme prevail. This head must fall ;
 This blood must flow ; for that aspiring slave
 Of basest passions, and of blackest aims,
 Would stride, to seize a bloody diadem,
 And spurn the mangled body of his king,
 His kinsman, and his friend.

Lam. Despair not wholly.
 Our voice may yet awake, within th' assembly,
 The dormant sparks of loyalty and reason,
 Now stifled by their fears ; th' extorted doom
 Has past their lips ; but, 'tis not, sure, enroll'd
 Within their hearts.

King. No, no, 'tis all in vain.
 I can look thro' the tender fallacy.—

Thou hast been weeping, and thy tears are shed,
 For thine unhappy friend ; thou must no more
 Thy sov'reign call him. Could the tongue of man
 Avert th' approaching doom ; I should, to thee,
 My safety owe ; and sure he breathes not air,
 I would so soon elect my creditor,
 For life and freedom. But deceive me not.
 Thou think'st, perhaps, I cannot bear the truth,
 That I, like others, brave the thoughts of death,
 When distant view'd, but shrink at its approach.

Lam. Without disguise, as, to a royal mind,
 Fill'd with true greatness, independent all,
 Of diadems and ermine, and more great,
 To a philosopher, and greater still,
 A pious christian—I reveal the truth—
 A truth severe ; but well I feel and know,
 The steady temper of a mind resolv'd
 By pow'r divine sustain'd. My lord—my king.

King. It is enough, my friend, be comforted.
 I do expect the worst ; to that I hold me.—
 How can I pay thy kindness, good Lamoignon ?
 Thy king is poor indeed.—And yet, thy zeal,
 That ev'n exposes life, in standing forth,
 Friend of a friendless king, it shall not want
 A glorious recompence.

Lam. How much I envy
 The brave and virtuous Romans ! They were free
 To shake aside the cumbrous load of life,

And march, with fearless step and soul erect,
To meet eternity. Then friends might join,
And hand in hand pursue that awful journey,
Whence traveller ne'er returns.

King. I welcome death,
As a relief, from this most wretched state.
Not for myself I mourn, but for my people.
I see them now, just starting from the goal,
To run their race of anarchy and woe.—
But social intercourse, so late indulg'd,
Betrays my tongue to riot.—I'll not hold thee
Imprison'd longer.—To thy friendly task,
Pleasing, yet sad. Affection to thy king
Will recommend the toil, which it must mourn.

Lam. With wonder I depart. Sure heav'n sustains
Thy royal soul with fortitude divine.

[*Exit Lamoignon.*]

S C E N E V.

As LAMOIGNON retires, enter CLERI.

Cleri. Hope, hope, my royal lord, thou yet may'st reign.

King. What mean'st thou, Cleri?

Cleri. Still, in France remain,
Some loyal hearts. I may not speak, at large,
What well I know; but, heav'n is busy now,

To give thee pow'r and freedom, and avenge thee
Of all thy cruel foes.

King. What hast thou said?

Freedom and pow'r! Beware, beware, I charge thee.
No plots, no massacres; for hitherto
My soul is clear from blood. "I am a man
"More sinn'd against, than sinning;" glorious boast,
Dearer to me than all the laurell'd fame
Of blood-stain'd conquerors.

Cleri. In solemn league,
A thousand gallant spirits are combin'd
To shed their blood, in thy most righteous cause.—
They have eluded all the watchful cares,
The dragon eyes, that close not, night, nor day.—
Dispers'd thro' Paris, they but wait the signal
That bids them storm these walls, and doom to death,
Too long postpon'd, the leaders of sedition.

King. No, by the spirits of the murder'd bands
That for my safety fell,—No, by the fate
Of all my faithful friends, whose gen'rous blood
Yet reeks throughout my palace,—mine no more
It may be stiled!—for the capetian line,
No longer shall its spacious precincts fill,
With majesty august.—Not, for myself,
I mourn. The fiercest pang, that rends my heart,
Is, that I should be mark'd, an instrument,
Of miserable ruin to my friends;
That in my words and looks, I bear a sword,

To pierce each faithful heart, that glows with love
For an unhappy king. But I will prove
That this destructive nature is, in me,
A fault involuntary. Were I now
Free, and environ'd by a mighty host,
What should I gain?—The dreadful privilege,
Of desolating that afflicted land,
Which I would die to bless. Forbid it, heav'n.
Too many harbingers, by Robespierre,
Have been before me sent, to tell the shades,
That Capet is at hand, in this, alas,
Most royally attended: more shall bleed,
To swell my pomp. Such numbers never fill'd
The court of eastern kings. O pardon me,
Ye wretched victims of a fatal cause,
Your sufferings now are past. Ye are at rest.

[Scene closes.]

A C T III. S C E N E I.

An apartment in the Palais Royal.

Enter ORLEANS and KERSAINT.

Kersaint,

I WILL not call thee by the wretched name
 That speaks thee of the rabble; mean device,
 To catch vile plaudits, by yet viler means.—
 No.—I will call thee Orleans—let the title
 Recall to that ignoble breast a spark
 Of honourable pride;—let it remind thee
 Of royal lineage, and the ties of blood
 That bind thee to thy king. Thy poor ambition,
 With mock humility, would counterfeit
 A democratic spirit.—O 'tis gross!—
 Awhile thou may'st succeed; but a few days
 Will tear away the mask; with double rage,
 Repenting past deceit, the populace,
 Thine idol, now, and engine, will recoil,
 And crush thee in thine aims.

Orl. Thy looks are harsh,
 And harsher still thy words. But, know'st thou not
 The danger of thy rashness?—should I breathe
 The least accusing word, or stamp my foot,
 Five hundred ponyards glitter in thine eyes,
 Or reek within thine heart.

Kerf. I fear thee not.—
 Look but the tiger sternly in the face,
 He crouches, and is fled, smote by the pow'r
 Of man's imperial glance. There's in true courage
 Something that awes the dastard. Can it be?—
 A prince of ancient Capet's royal stem
 Renounce his name—forego his honour'd place—
 To herd with robbers, base-born libellers,
 And midnight murderers;—to search the stews,
 The gaming house, and if this vicious city,
 Within its ample bounds, includes a scene
 More base and infamous, of guilt and shame;
 And thence to draw companions, and allies—
 To clasp the thief, the beggar, and the knave,
 The wretched meddling things, that mount on stools
 And in the streets declaim!—what—thou a prince?—
 For shame, for shame!—Tho', haply, thou may'st think,
 To rival the great Florentine, that hid
 The sword of pow'r beneath the civic gown,
 Or that aspiring Greek, whose subtle art
 Deceiv'd the wise Athenians; 'twill not be;—
 Thou hast their lust of power, in that, alone,

Dost thou resemble them, but, want their talents,
And want the virtues that adorn'd their crimes.

Orl. What provocation wags thy galling tongue,
With inroad bold on me?

Kerf. Thy shame and guilt.—
Thou hast assum'd a name, that justifies
My boldest license; ceremonial forms
Suit not the champion of equality.—
I see not in thee, now, a peer of France,
I see not, now, a prince of royal blood;—
I see th' associate of a Robespierre,
A busy Jacobin, a bosom friend
Of a Marat, and every noxious thing
The public tumult spawns.

Orl. Say, wouldst thou ought
Beyond the spiteful pleasure that reproach
Yields the malignant soul?

Kerf. My drift is plain.
The chart I steer by is the public weal.
The public weal demands the life of Louis,
Were it, but as a pledge of peace, an hostage
For acquiescence in the multitude,
Devoted to him yet. The monarch's death
Gives the dire signal for devouring storms,
Millions will rise to vindicate his doom,
Whom fear restrains, lest opposition, now,
Should hasten what they dread.—'Tis thine to save him;
Renounce thy fatal aims, thy black ambition:

Put off the fiend, for once, and be a man,
 Or latest times will execrate thy name ;
 Egalite shall be a sound of horror,
 A term of reprobation, to denote
 Th' incendiary, the villain, and th' affassin.—
 Nay, never gather tempests on thy brow ;
 I am a sailor, and I fear them not.—
 Good heav'n ! what times are these ! when worthy men
 But hold existence, at the wild discretion
 Of an infuriate rabble. Moderation
 Is treason now against the majesty
 And undisputed reign of anarchy.

Orl. I feel I've gone too far, but room is none
 For change or penitence, I am so pledg'd.

Kerf. What pledges bind to guilt ? What change is late,
 From infamy to virtue ? We have heard—
 And ev'n thy black associates, horror-struck,
 Recoil'd as from a monster—when thy tongue,
 A Bourbon's tongue, profan'd the privilege
 Of sacred royalty, and rent the ties
 Of fealty and nature, binding thee
 To thine unhappy soveraign. Yet remains
 One step of monstrous guilt ; but, sure, I think,
 Sold, as thou art, to crimes, thou hast not heart
 Fiend-like and black, to reach it. Can Marat
 Claim such abasement of thy royal blood ?
 Or, does th' attendant imp, thy Robespierre,

Barter his hellish services, for acts
That damn thee past redemption ?

Orl. Oh forbear ! —

Thy words are ponyards ; ev'ry accent thrills
Within my secret heart.

Kerf. 'Tis better speak

Ideal ponyards, if we thus avert
Material ponyards from the noblest hearts,
That beat in France. Forbear, most wretched man,
Think not, by fawning blandishments, to sooth
The changeful populace ; they scorn'd to bear
Th' imperial sway of one, adorn'd by justice,
Ordain'd and hallow'd by the voice of heav'n,
And sanction'd, by th' authority of time,
Hereditary rule ; and will they bow
To self-erected tyrants, upstart kings,
Loaded with crimes, and black with infamy ?—
It may not be—they soon will spurn to dust
The fabric of thy greatness, and o'erwhelm
The builders in the ruin ; 'tis a fabric
Compos'd of vile materials, and cemented
With blood of guiltless men. Oh, ye shall find
The gloss of novelty, that gives you pow'r,
Shall wear away, and to th' astonish'd eye
Reveal your black designs.

Orl. Should I recede,

I lose th' affections of the populace.

Kerf. Trust not the people ; 'tis a tiger tam'd ;
 You stroke him, while he fawns, and fondly think,
 He has abjur'd his nature ; at the moment,
 He meditates the prey, puts forth his claws,
 Collects his limbs, and rounds his spotted back,—
 Springs forth ; you shriek and perish, and your fall
 Shall be unpitied !—for, alas, you knew not,
 In the pernicious zenith of your pow'r,
 To pity others.

Orl. Something in thy words
 Strikes home ; I feel them in my heart of heart.
 I shall revolve thy sayings, and recede,
 If I with safety may.

Kerf. So thrive, or perish.



[*Exit.*]

S C E N E II.

ORLEANS, *solus.*

Oh force of truth, how dost thou strike the soul !
 Sure, if there be a god, he gives to truth
 A portion of himself, arms it with pow'r,
 To quell the sinner's mind. Superior force
 Inform'd this man ; I fell before him, aw'd.
 He seem'd some agent of the sacred will,
 Some guiding genius. How his accents chang'd
 The temper of my soul ! I am a villain,

I feel I am. I play a desperate game,
 A base and desperate game ;—but how return?—
 The ship is launch'd from shore ; my royal blood,
 My glorious name, my wealth ;—these are the freight—
 And with what crew ?—and what my object ?—pow'r,
 Precarious, anxious pow'r, by ev'ry crime,
 And ev'ry baseness won ;—and how retain'd ?
 By blood on blood retain'd ;—for I must brave,
 Brave and subdue such mighty opposition.—
 Egalite——'tis true——Egalite——
 Name of reproach—I shall be chronicled,
 With tyrants and usurpers, that have ris'n
 To scourge the crimes of man.

S C E N E III.

Enter, to him, ROBESPIERRE and MARAT.

Rob. All is prepar'd ;
 Zealous and loud, our faithful myrmidons
 In ev'ry quarter wait. They call for blood.

Orl. The middle path is safest, Capet's death
 Removes no danger, adds no particle
 Of vigour to the cause, but heaps a weight
 Of odium on our names ; destroying him,
 We lose a tow'r of strength.

It makes me wish, that still, as in times past,
 I might be free to range, and skip, and play ;
 And when a wand'ring bird, as oft befalls,
 Against the window beats, with careless wing,
 Methinks I envy him, and would exchange
 My hopes of royalty for his free state.

Queen. Thy hopes of royalty !—oh child, child, child !—
 Avenging heav'n look down on me and mine.

Daup. But, mother, why is this ? Must we remain
 All the next summer in this narrow room ?
 Nor range the fields, nor chace the butterflies,
 Nor cull wild flow'rs, nor see the lambkins sport,
 As in times past ? Oh, when I see the sun,
 And think of the green fields ; I grow so sick
 To range abroad. Why are we thus confin'd ?—
 I would I were a bird ; but 'tis most strange,
 What can they fear from a poor little child,
 Simple, and weak, that they should mew me up
 Like an unhappy bird, in this dark cage ?
 Tell me, how fares my father ? Shall I see him,
 And have his blessing ? We have long been parted.

Queen. Thy father is condemn'd. Thou hast no father—
 Condemn'd, condemn'd to die, most wretched child.

P. Eliz. Forbear thy clam'rous grief ; thou wilt awake
 This sleeping wretch, that hath a moment stol'n
 From feeling of her pangs.

Daup. Would I could paint

Like those fine artists that adorn the cielings
Of palaces and churches.

P. Eliz. Why, my child?—

Daup. I would describe our story. First, a king,
Torn from his palace and his friends, confin'd
In a vile prison ; thro' the grated windows,
The scanty beams should pass ; his eyes, with weeping,
Should be all red, his visage pale and wan,
His hair should hang neglected, and his garb
Express th' extreme of sorrow. I would paint
His woeful sister, and afflicted wife,
His wretched daughter, and his little son,
Degraded from a prince, and now become
An hopeless beggar child. The portraiture
Should be so pity-moving, and so true,
That all mankind, should wonder first, then weep,
Then join relenting, and redeem my father.

Queen. Redeem thy father ! foolish child forbear :
Thine artless prattle stings me to the soul.
Oh happy thou, that can't not feel thy state !

Daup. Sure, Cleri tells me, they have murder'd all
My father's friends and servants, good Laporte,
That venerable man, the Jacobins
Have cut his head off ; and the valiant Swifs,
Those brave tall fellows, who have borne me, oft,
In their stout arms—all murder'd, and he says,
'They'll kill my father, too, and you and me.
This, sure, is strange ; for we ne'er injur'd them.

Queen. Why, why does reason hold her fatal feat?
 And mem'ry, why reside within this brain,
 Too, too, tenacious of the happy past,
 To tear my soul, with cruel diligence,
 Dwelling on images of parted joy,
 Reflecting all augmented, and with skill,
 Redoubling every horrid circumstance,
 Of misery around me? Gracious heav'n!
 Am I the worshipp'd queen of mighty France,
 Daughter and sister of an emperor?

Daup. But, must I lose my father?

P. Eliz. Wretched child!

Too soon, too soon, thy words are ominous.

Queen. And nature, too, with fortune, has conspir'd
 More to degrade me. Where is now the light
 Of radiant beauty, that around me pour'd
 A beaming glory? Fled is all the fire
 That fill'd these eyes, and gave their glances power,
 To win or to command. No more my voice
 Around me calls the pleasures, bids the world
 For my amusement toil, the gay delights,
 Exalted joys, and gallant luxury,
 Refin'd by genius, that the moments fill'd,
 While hours and days, enamour'd of the scene,
 Forgot their course. All vanish'd — Where the crowds,
 With prompt observance of contentious duty?—

P. Eliz. We want the common forms, that polish'd France
 Was wont to pay the meanest of our sex;

The common decencies, wont to refrain
The brute unletter'd hind, are outrag'd all,
In us and ours.

Queen. I feel thee, hoary age ;
Thy snows untimely on my head are strew'd.
Grief hath anticipated thine approach,
With transport I should hail them, might they prove
The harbingers of freedom.--Sister haste—
Look there, look there,—most strange and horrible.

P. Eliz. I nothing can discern, save the dim casement,
That toward the garden looks ;—but moderate
Thy voice—perhaps, our surly keepers hear,
And comment on thy sayings.

Queen. 'Tis amazing—
This sudden blindness : grief hath dimn'd thine eyes,
Or thou would'st plainly mark ; for there I see it.—
Nay, wonder not—'tis there, it onward moves.—
Think it not working fancy or th' effect
Of a distemper'd thought. Look there, look there.

P. Eliz. What dost thou mean ? Thy fix'd and hollow eyes
Are turn'd on vacancy.

Queen. Incredulous !
Behold that crimson arch of bloody drops,
Athwart the chamber stretch'd, the gory dew,
Like atomies, suspended hangs in air.
And from that arch's point, a bleeding head
Sails gradual down to me—on either hand
The graceful tresses flow—on me she smiles,

Smiles ev'n in death. 'Tis she, my faithful friend,—
 Welcome, ev'n thus ; welcome, thou bloody pledge.—
 Yes, ye fell blood-hounds, I accept your boon,
 This only relique of my mangled friend.

P. Eliz. Now, gracious heav'n, restore the light of reason,
 To her distemper'd mind.

Queen. Thou art deceiv'd.

I am not frantic. With my waking eyes,
 And sober mind I saw it.—Now, 'tis fled,
 The bow dissolves, and all the chamber floor
 Is crimson'd o'er with blood.—Think me not mad.
 I would to heaven I were !—Madness would bring
 A kind oblivion, of the past and present,
 And joys peculiar to my sad condition.
 I then might think this wretched seat a throne,
 This dark unhealthy cloister a fair palace.
 Fancy might free this body from restraint,
 This mind from cares, and call around me bow'rs,
 And shades, and fountains. I might crown my brows
 With straw, and think I wore a diadem.—
 Oh cruel that I am !—My clam'rous grief
 Has wak'd my suff'ring child. Poor innocence,
 I've robb'd thee of a treasure, and recall'd thee
 To sickness and despair. But deem not this,
 Sole injury, that thy most wretched parent
 Has to her children wrought.

P. Royal. My dearest mother
 Give me thine hand, and thou, my other parent,

Raise me, sustain me, aid my trembling limbs,
 To reach the casement ; let me see the sun,
 And breathe such air, as this enclosure yields.—
 Blest source of life and light, thro' these dim grates,
 Thy beams flow temper'd, hail, thou glorious emblem,
 Of future entity ; in the dark cells,
 Of night and silence, thou dost sink to rest ;
 To rise with light renew'd.

Queen. How fares my child ?

Thy hands are damp and chill.

P. Royal. O much restor'd.

Fled are the secret dread, and inward loathing,
 Panting anxiety, and dire oppression.—
 Still weak, indeed, and languid, but my weakness,
 Has somewhat of internal luxury,
 A most delicious feeling past the pow'r
 Of language to describe.

P. Eliz. Hast thou not slept ?

P. Royal. O most refreshing sleep, sweet, sweet and tranquil,—
 And then such golden dreams, such scenes of bliss !
 I feel the recollection tranquillize
 Corroding thought, and thro' my fainting heart,
 Diffuse new life and health.

Queen. What were thy dreams ?

P. Royal. Methought, the populace of Paris throng'd,
 With joyful visages, and eager shouts,
 That rent the sky ; and on their shoulders bore,—

Queen. Bore whom, and whither ?—

P. Royal. To his coronation,
 Methought, they bore my father. Thousand forms
 Surpassing human, clad in dazzling robes,
 Of light transcendent, in their arms receiv'd,
 And plac'd him on a throne, with beamy stars
 Surrounded. At his footstool, prostrate fell
 The nations of the earth, and paid him homage,
 As universal king; and, at the word,
 The ground with palms was shaded, that obtain'd
 The growth of ages, in a moment's lapse;
 And roses bloom'd around, and fill'd the air,
 With fragrance most divine. My father then,
 Casting his eyes below, amidst the crowd,
 Perceiv'd me, where I stood; and with his hand,
 Beckon'd me to him; cleaving air, I rose
 Upborne by hands invisible, and fate
 Beside him on the throne. Around us then,
 Those bright angelic forms display'd their wings,
 And drew from golden harps such thrilling sounds,
 As rapt us in delight.

Daup. Alas my sister,
 They say that visions their reverse portend.—
 O might our father reign, and thou, and I
 Partake his glory, for a glorious thing
 It is to reign; a monarch has such pow'r
 Of making happy.—Sure, were I a king,
 I would not hurt a creature.—I rejoic'd
 When the bastile was levell'd. I would fill
 My treasury with gold and silver coin,

And keep the key myself, that when I saw
 A poor afflicted man, or wretched child,
 Like the sad king of France, and me, his son,
 I might rejoice their hearts.

S C E N E II.

Enter, to them, CLERI.

Queen. Oh, faithful Cleri!

Cleri. Hardly indulg'd, I snatch a precious moment.
 Our keepers' curtesy, to them and me
 Were fatal, were it known.

Queen. Thou com'st from that curst meeting.—O, the king—
 The king, the king. That horror in thy looks!—
 Yet speak—I am prepar'd.—O, thou shalt find me
 No woman in my tears.

Cleri. I need not speak.—
 Oh spare me—spare me—

Queen. Yes, he is condemn'd.—
 He was too mild and good, for these vile times.
 And what th' event? His valiant guards are slain;
 His tried adherents butcher'd; he, himself,
 Shall follow next; and last, his wife and children
 Must expiate with blood their royalty.
 Where is Launay? and where the good Laporte?

Mar. Egalite,

Thou must be ours, or nothing. Next my heart,
 I wear this dagger, and my bosom holds
 A fount of roman blood, that bids me strike
 The friends of tyranny. Ev'n I myself,
 Could I suspect thine heart contain'd a wish
 Or lurking notion stain'd with royalty,
 Would'st pierce thy breast, and purify the mansion,
 From such unworthy tenants.—O remember
 We have forgiven thee thy kingly blood,
 And rank'd thee, with our democratic bands,
 The sacred champion of equality.—
 And would thou now desert us?—I detest
 All luke-warm counsels and ambiguous paths,
 That steer, 'twixt tyranny and common weal;
 Neither, and both.—No more—no more of this.

Rob. Hast thou not urg'd us on? are we not pledg'd,
 By draughts of blood thy servants? Thou, prime mover,
 Hast stain'd our souls with murder. Dost thou, now,
 Leave us to mourn thy cowardice, and feel
 We toil'd for indecision, and obtain'd,
 Sole produce of our labours, infamy,
 Danger and guilt?—Be sure, who joins a party
 Hath pass'd the Rubicon, and penitence,
 Retreat, reluctance,—ev'n a backward glance
 Is treason to his allies. Thou hast won
 Our secrets from us, secrets of such weight,
 They may not rest in alienated minds,

Or doubtful to our cause. Deserting us,
 Can'st thou restore the fatal conscioufness,—
 Can'st thou erase the knowledge of our deeds,
 Our sayings, nay our thoughts?—divest thyself
 Of the dread pow'r, to doom us all to death?—
 Thou must be ours or nothing —

Orl. Both your hands.—

Then I am wholly yours, by all the blood
 Our valiant bands have shed.

Mar. The moderate,

So self-denominated, whom our speech,
 More justly, traitors calls, by force, or fraud,
 Aim to delay the deed; should they prevail,
 They too must fall; the state must bleed again,
 At every pore; all must be ting'd with blood,
 And wear our livery, as the only passport
 That saves them from the ponyard.—Rise once more,
 One final insurrection; for these shocks
 Exhaust the public frame.—Blood, blood must flow,
 Flow in large torrents —At the self-same hour,
 In every province, district, city, town,
 Village or domicile, in ev'ry cottage,
 Thro' spacious France, let heads of traitors roll,
 Gasping and sobbing, in th' empurpled dust;
 All hands be plung'd alike in guilt, or justice;—
 I heed not, by which name the futile world
 Denotes the glorious sacrifice.

Rob. 'Tis right—

Louis must perish. Then no place remains
 For penitence or treaties, that might raise
 The prostrate wrecks of hated royalty.
 Th' assembly then are ours ; we hold them, penn'd
 On a small narrow isthmus, a deep gulf
 On either hand ; the populace are ours,
 A mighty engine, and no tardy schemes
 Or views prudential suit their fiery temper,
 So that the populace retreat yields none
 To moderation's sons ; and having flesh'd them,
 With us co-partners and accomplices,
 In Capet's death, we cut off ev'ry thought
 Of pardon, or alliance with the friends
 Of Louis and his blood. Rejected thus,
 By democrat and royalist they fall
 Without redemption.

Mar. Oh how I exult !

On what a glorious giddy eminence
 Our flight is pitch'd !—We govern or we fall.
 And we will govern. My presageful heart
 Tells me, that we shall wield the pow'r of France.
 There's nothing so extravagant and wild,
 That perseverance may not soon accomplish.
 Nay, the more wild, the more extravagant,
 The surer of completion ; for such aims
 Flatter th' imagination, and accord
 With the wild thoughts and crude distracted minds
 Of the gross multitude. There is a moment,

Take them but glowing hot, inflam'd with rage,
That molds the populace to what we list.

Rob. Thou hast said true. To put thee to the proof,
Haste to the Cordeliers and Jacobins ;
Let all our friends be active in their functions ;—
Some to the sections ;—to the commune some ;—
The rest possess the streets, and cry aloud
For Capet's death.—We must be bold, and firm
To this one point, a mere majority
Decides the fate of Louis. Be assur'd,
Losing, or gaining this, we fall, or triumph :
I have with diligence, the thoughts explor'd
Of all th' assembly, and, with certainty,
Can speak their numbers ; some for banishment,
Others, for death, with respite of the sentence,
Will give their voices. I am well assur'd,
We shall out-number them, and yet so small
Th' exceeding, it will prove a doubtful cast.
What then remains ?—unless we may dispense,
In this one instance, with establish'd forms,
Capet is safe ; he still remains a check
On all our aims, an object for the faction,
Who hate equality, and look in secret
For renovation of despotic sway,
An object of idolatry, a mark,
Round which they rally ;—he must be remov'd.—
A scarcity of bread, or ev'n the fear,
The phantom, of imaginary want,

A check in arms, which, 'mongst our numerous hosts,
 May well befall, emboldens his adherents.
 Then, Louis from a prison mounts a throne ;
 We on a scaffold expiate our guilt ;
 For so will traitors call our love of freedom.

Mar. This point resolv'd. I to my mission haste,
 Among the Jacobins.—Into their hearts
 I'll breathe my soul, and wake a flame, that suits
 The present juncture ; then, with care, select
 The apostles of our cause, and send them forth,
 To preach the faith among the federates.

[*Exit Marat.*]

S C E N E IV.

ORLEANS *and* ROBESPIERRE.

Orl. We must remove that man. The frantic zeal
 That renders him an useful instrument,
 Our ends obtain'd, would make him dangerous.

Rob. Now, Orleans, be thyself. Thou may'st be king,
 In all the essentials of despotic sway,
 Wanting the name alone.—protector—tribune—
 It sounds as well—it strikes as solid awe,
 As king, or emperor—but ev'n the name,
 If such a trifle, as an empty name,
 Ensnares the manly mind, ev'n that shall follow,
 On Capet's punishment.—Resolve to be

All this, or nothing; and divest thy mind
 Of idle scruples, ev'ry recollection
 Of kindred blood, of oaths of fealty,
 Of former friendship, and the graceful charms
 That deck'd Maria once, and bad her rise,
 The gaze and wonder of the ravish'd world.

Orl. Maria's charms!—His words have touch'd the spring
 That works my soul to madness,—wak'd the viper
 That nestles at my heart!—Revenge, revenge,—
 Yes, I am all thine own, possess my soul.

Rob. Seek thine adherents. Soon th' assembly meets.
 Let them surround the doors, possess the hall,
 And cry for Capet's death; the federates
 Will clash their pikes, and join the glorious sound.

[*Exit Orleans.*

S C E N E V.

ROBESPIERRE, *solus.*

Fool of ambition, rich in villainy,
 But poor in manly daring; adequate
 To ev'ry crime, that smooths the path to greatness;
 Devoid of courage, when the path is smooth'd,
 To march, with manly pace, and grasp the prize.
 Yet will I labour, till I place a crown

On his vain head ; for while he seems to reign,
 My pleasure shall be law, to govern France.
 Exalting him, I rise ; his pow'r, and wealth,
 His active zeal, and influence with the crowd
 Are needful for a season ; by his aid,
 And specious seemings with the populace,
 We hold a power resulting from opinion,
 The child of imposition, that amazes
 Ev'n us, who have obtain'd it ; that, improv'd
 By patient arts of gradual usurpation,
 Silent, and slow, may soon attain an height
 Which shall disdain a mask. While he is mine,
 This necessary miscreant, this excrescence
 Of wild ambition, feeds his vain desire
 With royal visions ; but, revolting from me,
 He sinks o'erwhelm'd beneath the gen'ral odium,
 That waits the Bourbon race.—O time and chance,
 Ye, that have been my tutelary gods,
 And taught with rapid eye, and steady hand,
 To seize the crisis, bear me, on your wings,
 To reach th' illustrious goal ; for, distanc'd now,
 I fall, I perish, trampled by the crowd,
 That onward press.—I know the populace,
 A many-headed beast, slow to suspicion,
 Impetuous in belief ; a silken thread,
 In a fool's hand, will lead them now ;—anon,
 Ev'n chains of adamant and pow'r divine
 Will fail to move them. Their suspicions rous'd,



Wakeful, unwearied, they soon find, or make,
 A dreadful certainty. The death of Louis
 Now, in the moment when the public mind,
 Hot from remembrance of that bloody day,
 Is keen for slaughter, well may be achiev'd,
 If Orleans is our own ; and that, achiev'd,
 Secures our sovereignty.

S C E N E VI.

Enter, SANTERRE.

Sant. Inactive thus!—
 We must be prompt, for mischief is abroad.—
 The palais royal, night by night, resounds
 With some unusual stir ; and oft, by day,
 Small groupes we note, that hurry to and fro
 With wild and conscious looks ; and, at the temple,
 The guards observant mark, that certain strangers
 Pace round the walls, with slow and cautious steps,
 And measure with their eyes the height and breadth,
 And seem to treasure each particular,
 That might th' assailable aid. Trust me, I fear
 Some bold attempt, to free the royal captives.

Rob. A vigorous blow anticipates such aims.—
 Be Capet's sentence sudden, and for death ;

And let the execution follow up
 The sentence with dispatch. We frustrate thus
 The treason of his friends. Amaze and awe
 Shall quell the bravest, palsy ev'ry heart ;
 And that conspiracy, so menacing
 While Louis liv'd, becomes a rope of sand.

Sant. What of the dauphin ?—O, that he might share
 His father's fate !

Rob. I think not so, my friend,
 'Twere better he should live ; we hold the boy,
 An hostage for our own security.
 In time to come, he may prove dangerous,
 When he has strength to bite, his paws, as yet,
 Are velvet and unarm'd ; his tusks unborn.
 When he has teeth and fangs, we may remove him,
 Pretext will not be wanting for the measure.
 We bear, already, but too great a load
 Of blood and odium ; all the pow'rs of Europe
 Exclaim against us, for the tragedies
 That Paris witness'd ; and the death of Louis
 Will aggravate these clamours : let us shun
 Superfluous cruelty.—An infant's blood,
 Tender and helpless, with his father's mix'd,
 Were such a spectacle, as would awake
 Ev'n savage hearts to pity.—But, Santerre,
 Say—can'st thou answer for the multitude ?
 The gen'ral cry for Capet's death resounds,
 Yet some there are, that droop, and hang their heads,

And raise their hands to heav'n, in silent horror,
 As in remonstrance with the pow'rs above,
 That thus they should decree.

Sant. Our federates
 Are all prepar'd, and, should the weight of numbers
 Preponderate for Louis, in th' assembly,
 The people, then, assert their majesty,
 And purge convention of the lurking traitors,
 That, if they dar'd, would justify the deeds
 Of that arch-traitor Capet. He must fall
 With his abettors.

Rob. All thy vigilance
 Is needful now ; for talents, virtues, wealth,
 The name of royalty, the prejudice,
 Inveterate and strong, that sheds a glory
 Around the diadem, and, stronger still,
 The mild endurance, 'midst calamities,
 Work forcibly for Louis ; should he 'scape
 A black abyfs, a yawning gulf will ope,
 And quick devour us,

Sant. To thy function haste.
 I, to the valiant pike-men, they shall crowd
 The streets, beset the temple, and confound
 The hopes of bold conspiracy, that aims
 To snatch our victim from the sword of justice.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Street at the Palais Royal.

PARIS, *solus.*

SHADE of our fainted Louis, from thy seat,
 In blifs above, behold thy progeny,
 The best of human kind beset with hell-hounds,
 Athirst for sacred blood.—O happy Paris,
 Heav'n hath selected thee, and rais'd thy soul
 With energy divine, to meet and fill
 Th' ennobling functions of thy mighty mission.—
 Oh, happy right-hand, thou shalt yet be red,
 With glorious crimson, with the blood of traitors !
 Orleans shall bleed, that most detested traitor ;
 That double traitor—to his royal blood
 And to his king ; and Robespierre shall bleed,
 That dust-engender'd serpent ;—he hath ris'n
 On wings unwonted, to pollute the air
 With pestilential blast ;—Marat shall bleed :—
 I claim the miscreants ; they are my possession,
 By heav'n assign'd, their blood is all my own.

S C E N E II.

Enter, CLERI.

What bring'st thou, Cleri? Doth our fainted lord
Approve the labours of our loyalty?

Cleri. It may not be, for, with a martyr's firmness,
He is prepar'd for death. He ne'er assum'd
So stern a tone before. With mind resolv'd,
He reprobates all schemes, that lead to war
And carnage of his people.—Mark his words—

“ If, yet, there may be found whose loyal hearts
“ Revere their king tho' rest of earthly good,
“ And earthly hope, o pay the sole obedience
“ Your sov'reign now requires! I do conjure you,
“ By all the comfort my reflections yield,
“ To sooth captivity; by that repose
“ My parting days require; by all my hopes
“ Of bright serenity, in that dark hour
“ That frees th' immortal part, from mortal coil;
“ And, lastly, as ye hope to see my name
“ And mem'ry to succeeding times descend,
“ Free from reproach,—forbear your schemes of blood.
“ That leave your king the mark of calumny,
“ And draw down on yourselves most sure destruction.”

Paris. Think'st thou to shake our rooted loyalty,
 By danger to ourselves, poor worthless things !
 Made for our master, only valuable,
 When something we contribute to his pleasure,
 His service, or his safety :—too, too happy,
 Were we elected, by the pow'rs above,
 To perish in his cause !—What from the queen ?

Cleri. The weight of sorrows and the sad reverse,
 Beyond example, of her present state,
 Have now o'erwhelm'd that active soaring mind,
 And so relax'd its tone, she flies from thought,
 Nor dares to cherish hope. Yet well I know,
 Could'st thou avenge her wrongs, without destruction
 Of thee and thine, it were a service grateful
 To ev'ry ruling pow'r of earth and heav'n.

Paris. Enough, o Cleri, thou hast fir'd my blood.—
 Three days mature our hopes, and break the bonds,
 That hold the royal captives ; then, our king,
 Array'd in terror, not in patient suff'rance,
 Shall join the austrian hosts, and lead them on,
 To crush his rebel foes.—Ye pow'rs of heav'n,
 Strengthen these arms, to reach the hearts of traitors ;
 And when I see my sov'reign and his race
 Restor'd to freedom, and endued with pow'r,
 To claim their ancient rights, then, let me fall
 A glorious martyr to the blessed cause !—
 This very hour, within the walls of Paris,
 Are thrice five hundred gallant veterans,

All unsuspected ; for, by various paths,
 And in small groupes, they've fought this capital,
 At various seasons ; and for weary weeks
 Their numbers have been joining ;—night by night,
 Ev'n in the palais royal, 'midst the minions,
 Of black Egalite ! most free and safe
 From all suspicion, when the nearest danger,
 They hold their meetings ; all are pledged and sworn
 To perish, or restore to liberty
 Their captive king. Thou, to the queen, reveal
 What providence designs ; the king remains
 Unconscious of our labours for his good.

S C E N E III.

*Enter, GASTON, with other loyalists, disguised as national
 guards.*

My soul, my soul be firm, collect thy force,
 Accomplish the great work, redeem thy king,
 Or fall an happy victim. Welcome, friends,—
 Say, say, how speeds our cause ?—Have ye been busy'd,
 As zeal should prompt ?—How goes our preparation ?—
 What of the cuirassiers ?—And has La Mark
 Survey'd the temple works ?

Gaston. Ev'n to our wish ;—

La Mark has noted down whate'er may serve
Our future purpose ; and the Cuirassiers,
Disguis'd like federates, mix with the crowd,
Unknown and unsuspected.

Paris. Has thy care

Prepar'd for Orleans ?—How I long to greet him,
With my good sabre, on the crest, and cry—
Thou ruffian prince, thou shame of royal blood,
Receive thy monarch's thanks !—

Gaston Our trusty bands

Surround his palace : and, even now, we hold
The savage in our toils.

Paris. Oh thanks to heav'n !

Now, vengeance, vengeance, vengeance on rebellion !
Now smile, ye great deliv'ers of the land,
Champions of justice. Hark—your country's voice
Calls to th' immortal deed, the high purgation,
With holy steel, and sacramental fire !

Gaston. The melancholy form of ravag'd France,

In sable stole array'd, and stain'd with blood,

Rises in weeping majesty ;—she stands,

Hourly, before me ;—to my hand she gives

The sword of justice, and, in sounds that thrill

The secret soul, she cries—“ Behold, behold !—

“ Art thou my son ?—Is thine heart truly french ?

“ Thy king—thy king in chains ;—his beauteous consort,

“ Delight of ev'ry eye,—his royal progeny—

“ Oh feel, feel, feel ! ”—I do, I swear by heav'n—
 I view—I feel—I have both eyes and heart—
 My hand shall follow.—Yes—a deed shall be——

Paris. There spake a son of France.—My friend, embrace me ;
 Yes, look around and weep ; where'er we turn,
 Are subjects for our tears ; but, let those tears
 In flame, not melt our courage to despondence ;
 The prostrate state presents a spectacle
 Of outrage wild, and multiplied misrule ;
 She lies, a giant corse, o'erthrown and butcher'd,
 By her rebellious children ; reft of sense,
 She welters in her gore ; in ev'ry quarter,
 The dreadful echos of her mighty fall
 Are heard abroad ; they shake the solid earth ;
 From rocks and dens, from water, earth, and air,
 They call each noxious, vile, and hideous thing,
 That lives by prey, to share th' abundant feast—
 From air, descends the felon kite, the crow,
 The pie, the daw, the raven ominous,
 And ev'n the moping owl, by scent of carnage,
 Is tempted into day :—all flap their wings,
 And rend her bleeding vitals. From the hills
 And mountain caves, pour forth the scowling tenants,
 The slavish jackall, and the wily fox,
 And the gaunt wolf, with slaughter never cloy'd,
 And, more obscene, the minor plunderers,
 That loathing light, abide within the earth,
 In privacy abhor'd,—ev'n they assume

Unwonted boldness, brave the sight of man,
 And, still more awful, the broad eye of day.
 The hydrus, lizard, and the crocodile
 Their river-haunts forsake, o'erspread the land,
 And feel their chilly hearts strange warmth imbibe,
 With draughts of human gore.

Gaston. A time may come—
 Our warlike hosts will spurn their upstart kings,
 And feel the worth of ancient royalty.
 With thunder on his plumes, and martial clang,
 The mighty eagle from the clouds shall sweep,
 With pounce resistless; at his dread approach,
 Fled are th' inferior spoilers.—From his den,
 The lion rouses; with commanding roar,
 He shakes the distant woods; the forest trees,
 Like rushes, bend beneath him, forth he bounds,
 He seizes on the prey, the feeble bands
 Of subject spoilers sink beneath his fangs.

Paris. Dumourier holds the balance of our fates,
 The darling of the troops, the ruling mind,
 That warms the public cause.—In field and council
 Ever unwearied, ever full of hope,
 Calm and undaunted, atlantean mind,
 He bears against the storm, repels the waves
 Of the mad populace, the gust of malice
 And shafts of calumny.—His ken profound
 Can fathom men and motives, and his art,
 With pliant skill, around the spirit winds,

And shapes it to his purpose. Dumourier
 Is ours in secret : hence, he spar'd the foe
 And bade th' enthusiast soldier, in his speed,
 And full career of glorious victory,
 Forbear the bands, with plague and famine thin'd.—
 Th' exterminating angel hover'd o'er them,
 In clouds of putrid vapour ; in his hand,
 A flaming sword ;—he show'd the barren plains,
 And cry'd—“ behold your graves.”

Gaston. Soon, shall the flames
 All parts of France emblaze. The hardy Bretons
 Shall soon the standard raise, for loyalty ;
 Devoted to their king, they meddle not
 With abstract questions ; leagued with english succours,
 Their arms shall spread, and reach this nest of traitors.

Paris. Th' expanding cloud, that blacken'd in the north,
 In dense array moves on, it congregates
 The tributary horrors, and convenes,
 From ev'ry quarter of the low'ring sky,
 Th' embattled elements, Sardinia, Spain,
 Th' imperial eagle, Prussia nurs't in fight,
 And Germany awakes, thro' all her circles,
 Her slow obdurate children ; last, and chief,
 Batavia bids the british lion rouse,
 Recall the triumphs of his streaming crosses,
 And vex the deep again. The land and seas
 Shall groan with armaments, and earth be fat,
 And water red, with blood of human kind.

Gaston. In Lyons, we have many.—Scarcity—
 Part real,—aggravated part, shall yield
 The first pretence, and give the signal cry,
 For insurrection.—Here, our converse ends,
 For enemies approach. Farewell 'till midnight.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

S C E N E III.

As they quit the scene, enter KERSAINT with SIEYES.

Sieyes. 'Tis not a time to ponder what were best ;
 If men were free to chuse, we must select,
 Amidst a choice of ills, and call it wisdom ;
 Such various motives and discordant aims
 Divide th' assembly, where the jarring atoms
 And embryon elements of action mix.—
 Ev'n virtuous, wise, and patriotic minds
 Most strangely differ, as the diff'rent force
 Of birth, profession, education, studies,
 Habits of life, pursuits, and temper lead.—
 It much imports the honest few to guard
 Each avenue, that, to the public mind,
 An access yield ; lest knaves and fools obtain
 Supreme and fatal sway. That Robespierre,
 And wild Marat, a sanguinary maniac,

Have wak'd a thirst of blood, I see, and mourn it,
That cannot be subdued ; it must be quench'd.

Kerf. And why is this, that nature teems with ill ?—
Why tow'rs the poison plant infecting air ?
Why form the hooded snake, the crocodile,
The tyger, the hyena, and Marat ?—
Marat—an aggregate of every crime,
A summary of noxious properties,
Horror and guilt, with brand indelible,
Have mark'd him for their own, with glance oblique,
Scowl in his downcast eye, and add a gloom
To his dark visage ; the tumultuous workings
Of his volcanic mind, thro' face and limbs,
Distorted hideous, convulsions spread,—
Yet, thus distorted, cannot they express
The strange obliquities, the wild distortions,
Of monster-breeding fancy. 'Tis most strange,
This miniature of horror should possess
The gen'ral confidence, when nature's tongue,
In ev'ry feature, and in ev'ry limb,
So plainly cries—"beware."

Sieyes. The voice of reason
Again shall reach our hearts. We, then, shall mourn
Our wild excesses, and, with hatred, view
The fatal instruments, that urg'd us on
To drown the civic wreath in royal blood.
I can predict the downfall of these men
Whose word is now a law, whose frown is death.

Virtue, mean-time, nor shrinks, nor quits the bark,
 As of the state despairing ; 'tis her boast,
 And noblest pride, to combat difficulties,
 Wrestle with danger, and despise the praise
 That living tongues may lavish. We are call'd,
 To double efforts ; and, the less our hope,
 The more our duty, with our best exertions,
 To labour for the state ; the more our praise ;
 Succeeding in those efforts, and the more,
 Those efforts failing, is the consolation
 That shall endear our fall, if heav'n should doom us
 To seal, with blood, our civic piety.

Kerf. The state is too unwieldy, and too vast,
 For democratic sway ; the huge machine
 Demands a single head. The luxury
 Of crowded Paris, and the capitals
 That vie with Paris, in our provinces,
 Hath indispos'd us, for the sober forms
 And self-denials of a common-weal,
 That needs a grave and hallow'd character,
 Where patriot wisdom, on the solid base
 Of private virtues, builds, with happy hand,
 The glorious structure of the public good.—
 And what are we, that emulate the Romans ?—
 A skipping, dancing, dissipated crew,
 With bursts of wild ferocious levity.

Sieyes. Thy censure is unjust ;—our nation boasts
 Th' exalted aims and comprehensive views

Of mild philosophy, with lib'ral arms,
 Embracing all mankind—the statesman's skill
 In council, and in treaty—science led,
 From the sequester'd lamp and barren toils,
 To wed with commerce in productive union,
 And great inventions, both for peace and war,
 Are their glad progeny. Among the crowd,
 If luxury prevail and levity,
 Blame a corrupted court, from age to age,
 With base examples of unblushing vice,
 And wild extravagance exhausting art,
 Tainting the public eyes, and public mind,
 With gross pollutions, canst thou wonder then,
 If yet some stains are found, the foes of freedom,
 With triumph, mark them, and on freedom charge
 What want of freedom caus'd.

Kerf, Assert thyself.—

Profound research and a commanding soul
 Are thine; and wilt thou stoop to practice arts
 That dignify such things as Robespierre?—
 Resist, with firmness, the vile populace;
 Oppose thy bosom to the roaring torrent.—
 Were glorious talents, philosophic views,
 And mild humanity ordain'd to follow
 The guidance of the rabble?

Sieyes. Yet, my friend,
 That guiding rabble is conjoin'd, by fate,
 With freedom's cause.

Kerf. Then, desp'rate is that cause,
 If such support it needs,—a worthless rabble,
 The ministers of luxury, the spawn
 Of dissipation join'd with sudden famine !

Sieyes. We may not, all at once, the habits form
 That flow from steady freedom. It will need
 Experience, time, and, chief, calamity,
 That stern but useful teacher, to restrain
 The wild exub'rance and impatient warmth
 Of public mind, intoxicated, now,
 With copious draughts of power ; but, we shall see,
 A british spirit fill the gallic breast.
 As yet, their liberty, like sumptuous garments
 Giv'n to some mendicant, restrains and galls
 Th' unpractis'd wearer.

Kerf. True, the past oppression
 Disfigur'd and embruted human kind ;
 Proscribing free research, and lib'ral thought,
 And virtuous motive, binding up the tongue,
 In abject terror ; that the feast of reason,
 And holy interchange of mind with mind,
 Were here unknown ; and frivolous delights,
 The dice, the dance, and vague licentious love,
 Were call'd in aid, to banish rising thought,
 That told men they were slaves ; and idle noise
 And mirth dissembled drown'd the hated cry
 Of jealous despotism, resounding ever,
 In tones severe and hollow, to the fears,

Freezing the heart's warm currents, as they flow'd.—
 But why should Louis expiate the crimes
 Of tyrants that preceded?—We are witnesses,
 He meekly bore his faculties, and lean'd
 To wholesome counsels, zealous, to concur
 In ev'ry project, for the public weal.

Sieyes. I know it—but the common herd retain
 A savage mem'ry of the past oppressions ;—
 Hence their excesses, hence the mournful waste
 Of noble blood.—Ye rulers of mankind,
 O never drive the people to despair.
 Feed them with hope, and they will much endure ;
 Still teach them to look upward to their king,
 For cure of evils ; let them not be taught
 To right themselves, and know their dangerous strength,
 A fatal secret for the governor,
 And for the crowd themselves ; for, that once known,
 First, they remove their wrongs and grievances,
 They next secure their rights, but this perform'd,
 Good, in itself, injurious in the means,
 They rest not here content, but, flush'd with conquest,
 From bond-slaves, they commence insulting tyrants,
 And use their pow'r, with insolence, proportion'd
 To their past abject state.

Kerf. The death of Louis
 Would blot the gallic fame to latest times.—
 May we not hope, by timely opposition,
 To stem the people's rage. Will they not feel

His peaceful virtues? will they not recall
His large concessions to the public voice?

Sieyes. Marat prevails, and all attempts are vain
To save his destin'd life; ruin to us,
Perdition to our country, waits th' attempt.
The crowd demand a victim; we shall perish,
After a vain attempt to stem the torrent,
With him we would preserve. We must retain
The public confidence, our only hope
In this conjuncture, better yield, awhile,
To wind and tide, and deviate from the course
That brings the vessel to her destin'd port,
Than by impatience drive her on the rocks,
Where certain shipwreck waits her; better join
The people, ev'n in wrong, that we may turn them,
From wrongs yet greater, and their own perdition,
Than by desertion, in the fatal hour,
Hazard the loss of all. To guide the people,
We must not only seem to follow them,
But yield, in part, to do so. Confidence
Is by complacence won, and confidence,
Confirm'd by use, becomes authority.

Kerf. Mistaken hope, to rule the populace,
By yielding to their rage! This fatal act
Will scatter wide the seeds of civil war.—
And shall this land, the seat of polish'd arts,
And mild philosophy, and social joys,
Become the residence of brutal rage,

Devouring anarchy, and deadly carnage ?—
 Shall the wide havock of devouring war,
 Deform the scenes of peace and elegance ?

Sieyes. Despond not thus ;—our civic bands, sublim'd
 By bright enthusiastic fire, will brave
 Danger, and want, and raging elements,
 With daring more than human. Thou shalt see them,
 Like lions, rush to thin Pannonia's ranks.

Kerf. Surrounded, as we are, by puissant foes,
 We need the rule of one ; the times demand
 A summary and vig'rous promptitude,
 A brief and dextrous secrecy, in council,
 A calm and rapid concert in the field ;
 Such, as we may not hope, from loud debate,
 Manag'd by theorists and demagogues,
 In mix'd tumultuous meetings.

Sieyes. We must own—
 If ancient maxims are receiv'd, on trust ;—
 That wide extended states, by monarchy,
 Are best administer'd ;—but future times
 Shall see th' example of our common-weal
 Refute the prejudice, and give an instance
 Of vigour, secrecy, and promptitude,
 Surpassing all belief.

Kerf. I would preserve
 The kingly pow'r, as true support of freedom.—
 Calm, sober freedom, not licentious rage,
 Verging to tyranny, in the worst form.

Our maker tells us, that supremacy
 Should be concenter'd in a narrow space,
 And rais'd aloft conspicuous ;—thus, we see
 The ruling head surmounts the graceful fabric
 Of man, divinely form'd, within itself,
 Comprising sense and life ; imperial source
 Of thought, volition, reason, fantasy ;
 Sovereign to sway, and provident to guide,
 Each vital function, with unquestion'd pow'r
 And kingly promptitude, it sends abroad
 Its mighty mandates thro' th' obedient limbs.

Sieyes. If thou would'st argue from the works of nature,
 They speak more strongly for a common-weal.—
 Nature's great author, in his works, hath taught us
 That elements should mix, and adverse pow'rs
 Temper each other ; in all kinds that breathe
 And live, and ev'n in things unorganiz'd
 And lifeless, various elements combine,
 Earth, water, air, and fire, to form a mass ;
 Nay, elements themselves, that simple seem,
 Are all compounded, and within them hold
 Discordant principles ;—thus, earth combines
 Air, water, fire ;—and water, earth and air.—
 Thus, air, a gen'ral thief, collects, from all things,
 Discordant particles, and blends them all,
 In one fair tissue of transparent blue ;
 And, from the plunder of creation, forms
 Her curtains thin, around this earthly ball.

[*Scene closes.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

The street near the Palais Royal.—Time, before day-break.

PARIS, GASTON, and other Conspirators, who are supposed to have just learned the decree for the King's immediate execution.

Paris.

HORROR and sacrilege!—our king, our father,
 Dragg'd thro' the public streets a criminal,
 A pageant of dishonour to the crowd!—
 The hooting rabble!—and to close his days,
 His sad career of life and royalty,
 Like a base malefactor, on the scaffold.

Gaston. Arise in vengeance, heav'n, if kings on earth,
 Are god's vicegerents; rise, in majesty
 Severe, to blast our foes!—let anarchy
 Pervade the state, let discord fill their councils,
 Famine their streets, and terror, and dismay
 Their rebel armaments.

Paris. Forbear, forbear!

Thy curses kill not, Louis claims thy sword.—
 Ours is an heav'nly cause, the man that falls
 A blessed martyr dies.—My friends remember
 For what we fight ;—the blood of fainted Louis,
 The blood of our great Henry—sacred laws
 And hallow'd orders fix'd by god himself
 Ere eldest time began—the majesty
 Of Gallia's crown—the fame of loyalty,
 The boast of Frenchmen—the majestic charms
 That deck our suff'ring queen,—the piety,
 The mild humanity, and patriot aims
 That should endear our king—the innocence
 And early promise of exalted virtues
 That grace our lovely prince ;—the sufferings, last,
 Of his mild sister, like a beauteous flow'r
 Declining on the stalk,—let these speak home,
 And inward, to the man, within the soul ;
 And rouse the spirit to atchieve an act
 That shall eclipse all proud antiquity,
 Exulting in her heroes.—Haste, my friends,
 Each to his sev'ral charge, the hour is come.

Gaston. Paris, thou hast said well—more words are vain—
 Each to his sev'ral post—Averne, proceed—
 Beset the Thuilleries ;—and thou, Lamont,
 With thine allotted numbers wait the signal ;—
 Then cry—“ o pardon—pardon to our king !”

Be these our watch words ;—they will be re-echoed
From ev'ry quarter.

Paris. Then, while conscious guilt
And torpid wonder freeze the faculties,
And hold suspended that assassin band,
With timely sudden boldness, onward rush,
And seize the cannon, turn them on the foe,
And Louis reigns again. Thou, Ablancourt,
With thine associates to the palais royal,
To crush the hydra head, that rears its crest
'Gainst virtue, ties of blood, allegiance, oaths,
And heav'n itself—haste, haste—these hours are rich,
In great occasions of immortal fame.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

S C E N E II.

Enter SANTERRE, ROBESPIERRE, *and* MARAT.

Marat. Amidst our triumph, let us not relax
Our wise precautions for the public safety.
The times demand unwonted vigilance.
'Tis more than rumour'd that a desp'rate band,
By Paris led, are now within our walls.

Rob. It much behoves the friends of liberty,
With anxious zeal to watch the populace,

Ever afloat on shifting vague opinions,
 Ever athirst for change and novelty.
 To keep them firm, we must restrain the voice
 Of forward disaffection, which would work
 On the gross feelings of the multitude.

Sant. I have provided for th' emergency.
 From ev'ry section, shall a trusty cohort
 In arms assemble, five times five, from each,
 Of known integrity ; to form a guard,
 Lest any friend of prostrate royalty,
 Urg'd by despair, should form a last attempt
 To stay the course of justice. From the legions,
 Shall bands selected line the streets, and close
 Each avenue, that, to th' appointed scene
 Of awful justice leads. In ev'ry section
 Shall a strong phalanx wait prepar'd in arms.

Marat. O well prepar'd. Come on, thou glorious day,
 Mark'd in the fasti of revolving time,
 The signal feast of justice. Rise, o sun,
 Call forth the tyrant, usher in the pomp,
 The triumph of our freedom ;—feast these eyes,
 With Capet's lifeless trunk and streaming gore.

[*Excunt.*

S C E N E III.

The Queen's apartment in the Temple.

*The QUEEN, PRINCESS-ROYAL, MADAM ELIZABETH and
the DAUPHIN.*

Queen. How obstinate is life in misery!
 How strong to suffer, and how slow to perish,
 This seeming feeble frame! oh death, oh death,
 Why mock me thus, for ever in my fight,
 Yet ever-more delay'd?—oh life, life, life,
 Intolerable burthen! life no more,
 But an oppressive intermediate state,
 'Twixt entity and nothing, a dire slumber,
 Fill'd all with horrid visions that succeed
 Dread uniformity of varied woe.
 But Cleri bids me hope. In terms obscure
 The scroll was worded—but 'twas full of hope.—
 What hope!—What hope?—Can Cleri too be chang'd,
 Like the false world?—Would he insult my woe,
 And raise my soul, with flatt'ring images,
 To sink me deeper, by the sad reverse,
 In sorrow and despair?

Daup. O tell me, mother,
Where is my father now ?

Queen. Unhappy child !
Too near, and yet too distant.

Daup. How is that.—
Distant and near ?—but 'tis no matter ;—say
When shall I see him ? 'Tis a weary age
Since I have seen him. Sure, these Jacobins
Are cruel people. Have they little children ?
Oh, if they had !—but they will kill my father,
And you, and me, and drink our streaming blood ;
For Cleri tells me, they are cannibals,
And feed on human flesh.

Queen. Oh, that were mercy—
To drink our blood, and banquet on our flesh—
They will not grant it, savage and inhuman,
Beyond the practice of the fiercest hordes,
And wildest savages that show our nature
In deepest degradation.

Daup. I had hopes
My father was releas'd.

Queen. And wherefore child ?

Daup. I could not sleep all night, I heard such noise
Of shouts and distant mirth. O how I long'd
To join the crowd and shout. Some joyful tidings
Are near at hand, and I shall see my father.

Queen. They shouted—for what cause ?—Thou little wretch,
Some demon has inform'd thy luckless tongue,

It teems with barbed words.

Daup. Have I said harm ?

Queen. Peace, peace, for Cleri comes ; unwonted joy
Looks thro' his eyes. What comfort dost thou bring ?

S C E N E IV.

Enter CLERI.

Thy billet darkly hinted mighty things ;—
Say—shall they rise in act ?

Cleri. Yes, heav'n repairs
Th' unkindness past, and Louis shall be free.

Queen. Freedom !—a crown—to join the austrian camp—
What—vengeance on our foes—

Cleri. A loyal band
Of hardy veterans wait the glorious moment,
By Paris led, to give their fov'reign freedom.

Queen. What Paris—faithful Paris—how he wept,
When to his arms I gave this kingly child,
On the sad morn that call'd our gallant train,
To fruitless efforts and a glorious death.

Daup. Shall Paris come again ? I can remember,
His whiskers hurt my cheek ; I could have cry'd,
The pain was such, but thought it was not princely—
But I'll forgive him, if he saves my father.

Queen. Peace, list'ner, peace ;—'tis not for thee to know—
 Restrain that babbling tongue—our foes may hear.

S C E N E V.

Changes to the King's Apartment in the Temple.

LOUIS, *solus.*

Father of mercies, hope of sinful man—
 This awful season saw thee take our form,
 And yield thyself, obedient, to the flames,
 Infirmities, and sorrows, that besiege
 Our earthly pilgrimage. Author of good,
 Receive me to thyself. I haste to prove,
 Imperfect as I am, the blessed fruits
 Of thy mysterious birth and wond'rous death.—
 Thou know'st I fought not tyranny, I mourn'd
 The baneful influence of despotic pow'r,
 That brooded o'er the land—I saw, with pride,
 The growth of reason in the gen'ral mind,
 I gladly yielded to the first emotions
 Of nascent liberty, and reign'd, in thought,
 The king of happy people.—Sad reverse !
 Nature design'd me for a time of peace,
 And calm obedience, then, I had been blest,

And made my people blest—but, wanting force
 Of stern severity or subtle craft
 To crush or to deceive, I fall a victim.—
 But all is past.—How poor are crowns and thrones!
 Compar'd with that eternal crown, that seat
 Among the blest above! The pious Edgeworth,
 Has fill'd my soul with sacred energy—
 I see the blissful mansions ope---I rise,
 With firm alacrity, to take the cup
 An heav'nly hand extends :---the moment comes.---

S C E N E VI.

*Enter PETION and SANTERRE, with other deputies appointed to
 communicate notice to the King of his approaching execution.*

Petion. Offspring of Capet, with reluctant pace,
 And bleeding hearts, do we perform the task
 The state enjoins. Thou know'st why we are here.

King. I know it well, and long have school'd my mind,
 To welcome your approach.

Petion. O pardon us,
 The hard necessity of these dread times
 Impos'd the fatal duty.

King. I believe it,
 And thank thee for the tender sympathy,

That feels for my misfortunes, and removes
 Outrage and insult from this fatal moment.

Petion. Receive our reverence, and our pious tears,
 All we, alas, can give. More we would say ;
 But our stern function, and the solemn duty
 We owe our country, interdicts our voice.

King. May I not see my children and my wife,
 Long strangers to my sight ?—I know the terror,
 That such a meeting brings.—What agonies
 Shall rend my heart,—yet cannot I refuse
 This cruel pleasure to my parting hour.

Petion. Thou shalt behold—

King. And speak to them ? and fold them,
 In these fond arms ?

Petion. Yes, thou shalt freely speak,
 And clasp them to thy breast, without restraint
 Of witnesses.—The ruling council mourns
 Th' inevitable doom.—All that may soothe
 The poignancy of death---they freely grant.
 We shall retire—the guards will entrance yield,
 Frank and unquestion'd,—to the much lov'd pledges,
 That soon must be resign'd ;—may heav'n sustain,
 And arm thy soul, with fainted constancy.

[*Exeunt Deputies.*

S C E N E VII.

The King, solus.

A dreadful privilege. I then shall see them—
 Clasp them a moment---and for ever part.
 My soul recoils ; would I were now to die---
 Nor meet this dreadful trial---it must be---
 My suff'ring wife---my child---my innocent !

S C E N E VIII.

*Enter the QUEEN, PRINCESS ELIZABETH, PRINCESS ROYAL,
 and DAUPHIN.*

Queen. My lord—my husband !—and, yet dearer name,
 My king—the king of France—long, long a stranger
 To these dear pledges, fold them to thy heart—
 Restore them their existence :—they have mourn'd,
 In darkness and despair ;—thy countenance
 Gives them the light of hope, restores their being,
 Sole being, that th' aspiring progeny
 And wives of kings should know.—Yes, royal Capet,
 I come to hail thee with the gladsome tidings.

King. Delusive visions—banish all thine hopes.
 My faithful servants have ignobly fall'n,
 By hands of vile assassins ; and their king
 Follows this hour, and leaves the wretched state,
 A dismal theatre, where Robespierre,
 And his infernal comrades paramount
 Shall act their tragedies.—Look up, my child,
 My daughter ;—thou art chang'd, since last these eyes
 Beheld thy graceful form—how pale and wan !

P. Royal. Thus let me clasp thee, never more to part,

King. Indeed, I see, I feel, my suff'ring angel,
 There is a sad prophetic verity
 In what thou say'st. We shall, indeed, be join'd,
 And that full soon, no more, no more to part.

Queen. Look down, thou king of kings, thou god of justice.
 Send thine avenging spirit.—

King. Do not curse,
 Nor make thy god, accomplice with his creatures,
 In deadly passions. O, were heav'n vindictive,
 What doom were ours !—Hear thou a diff'rent pray'r.
 O spare my people, heav'n,—may beaming truth
 Pervade misguided souls, and peace, and order,
 The reign of reason, and of equal law,
 And humble piety possess the land. †

Queen. And shall I see these beings mark'd for scorn,
 And thee for death ? But vengeance is at hand.

Daup. Nay, mother, why is this ; for long, long months,

My father has been absent—now, he comes,
And you would chide him from us. Bless me, father.

King. My child, my child, may god relent and bless thee.
His hand is heavy on thy little head.—
Arm him with fortitude to bear his doom.
For aid, or hope, or pity, from mankind—
Vain, vain dependance!—This—this last embrace—
My mortal hour is come. I go, before thee,
To seats of happiness, where thou shalt find me,
And dwell for ever, if thy soul is sway'd
By virtue's precepts.

Queen. O, my royal lord,
I must not leave thee longer, in the gloom
Of ignorant despondence; heav'n relents—
Agents divine are busy to redeem thee.

King. I know not what thou wouldst;—thy words portend
Some hope;—thou art deceiv'd, if thou hast fram'd
Hope of deliverance for thy wretched husband,
Save by the stroke of death. I now must give thee
A parting last embrace, and clasp my children,
Thus, to my heart, and thus, and then, resign them,
For ever!—Know, this mercy is indulg'd,
In contemplation of approaching death.

Queen. My lord, my husband, no, thou shalt not die.
The faithful Paris shall these gloomy walls—

King. Let us not waste the moments—to thy care,
Need I commend these children? Thou, my sister,
Be thou a second parent, join the task

Of counsel and instruction ; let them learn,
 To trust in him who made them, and receive,
 With meek submission and exalted zeal,
 His hallow'd precepts.—Thou unhappy parent
 Of royal sufferers, o forgive the pangs,
 From me, their guiltless, but destructive cause,
 On all I love redounding ; may'st thou stand,
 At present, free from self-accusing thought,
 And, at the future, by the judge of hearts,
 In sight of men and angels, be absolv'd
 From touch of guilt and censure.—O my children,
 Next to your duty to that gracious pow'r,
 That chastens us in mercy, o, remember,—
 Be firmly join'd in amity ; on earth
 Your friends, alas, are few ; with pious love,
 And rev'rent gratitude, regard your mother.—
 My sister in maternal care is join'd,—
 May she be join'd, by filial piety,
 A second mother ;—as for thee, my son,
 Too young to know the horrors of thy state,
 Altho', alas, thine infant mind outruns
 Thy bounded space, and antedates misfortune,
 A man in feelings, but a child in years.

Daup. But tell me, father, when shalt thou be free ?

King. Soon, soon, my child, I shall be free as air.

Daup. And wilt thou take me with thee ?—I remember,
 One night, you woke, and hurried me along ;
 'Twas frightful dark, and said we should be free,

And then we travell'd such a wondrous distance,
Methinks, we ne'er had stopt, but so it chanc'd,
A faucy man came out, and turn'd us back.—
I would that we were free.

King. I soon must leave thee.—

My son, my son, revere my parting words,
Imprint them on thy soul, if heav'n should call thee
To that laborious and unquiet state,
Grac'd with th' imposing name of royalty,
Know, that a king, in sight of heav'n, sustains
A function most tremendous ; mighty talents
To him are giv'n, and most severe th' account
Of talents misapply'd ;---He must devote
His thoughts, his cares, his dreams, his very being,
For those he rules, and think their happiness,
His happiness, his fame, and his salvation.

Daup. O father, were I king, th' cruel men
That kill'd Laporte should feel that I could punish.

King. Thou, as a king, forget I was thy father.
But, as a man, remember, to forewarn thee,
How frail the tenure of humanity.
Forget my wrongs for vengeance, but retain them,
To stimulate thy soul, with anxious zeal,
To make thy people happy. Would a king
Render himself secure, and reach the summit
Of all the good his pious heart designs,
Let him retain a due authority---
Else vain the kingly name ;---his scanty pow'r,

Becomes, like med'cine us'd in small proportion,
 Destructive, which had life and health diffus'd
 Thro' ev'ry member, giv'n with copious hand.—
 But well remember, and, if providence
 Allows thee means, an hundred fold repay
 The care and kindness of the faithful few,
 That, fall'n on evil days, beset with dangers,
 Preserv'd their loyalty. I have incurr'd
 A sacred debt—on thee, my heir in woe,
 And sure, I trust, my heir, in gratitude,
 Devolves th' incumbrance.

Daup. Father, I have found
 The means to free thee from this gloomy place ; —
 The foldiers love me—I will pass the guards,
 I know they will not cruelly detain me,
 And run about the streets, and cry for mercy,
 For mercy to a king ;—and I will fall
 Low on my knees, before that Robespierre,
 Tho' much I hate him, and before Marat,
 And swear to love them, if they save my father.

P. Royal. Sure death approaches, bear me to my father,
 Recline me at his feet and let me grasp
 His hand—and breathe—oh ! oh !—my parting soul.

P. Eliz. The light forsakes her eye, the red her lip,
 Her hands are cold and clammy, and the dews
 Of death o'erspread her temples.

King. Bear her hence—
 Recline her on the couch—tears, tears be dry'd. —

Vain resolutions!—daughter, daughter, daughter!—
 This spectacle has robb'd me of myself—
 And I would for some little space possess
 My faculties unclouded—bear her hence—
 For ever from these eyes—my child!—my sister!

[*Exit Princess Royal, supported by
 Princess Elizabeth.*

Queen. O Paris, Paris, haste—no longer mock
 My weary hopes—this earth shall be my throne,
 Here will I sit, sovereign, at least, in woe,
 And never rise, until I rise a queen.—

King. O, cling not to the world, nor cherish hope,
 Groundless and wild.—I know the doom is past
 Beyond recall of man—these idle sounds
 Of hope illusive more distract my soul,
 Than piercing shrieks, of sorrow and despair:—
 Peace—hear me calmly—for I would bequeath
 Some parting precepts to this little-one—
 All that his father and his king may leave him.
 Remember, boy, should royalty be thine,
 The faithful band, that for thy father bled,
 Their parents, and their progeny survive,
 To feel thy gratitude—full well I know,
 That many, where I chiefly hop'd to find
 Love and attachment, in the day of trial,
 Forsook their benefactor;—but, my son,
 Should pow'r be thine hereafter, dim thine eyes
 For objects of resentment; purge thine optics,

With euphrasy, that thou, with sharpest ken,
 May'st mark the subjects of beneficence.
 Heav'n sway'd the heart of many, that I found,
 Love unexpected, tho' my wretched state
 Precluded present good, and flatt'ring hope,
 Of future recompence, and honest zeal,
 That truly serv'd me, serv'd me, ev'n in dangers
 Most fatal, which might shake the constancy
 Of friendship tried and firm ;—but I must pause,
 Lest ev'n the whispers of a grateful tongue
 Prove mortal to their theme ; — thou may'st requite
 Their unbought services— but I may sound
 My thanks and praises to the good Chamilly,
 And pious Edgeworth---they have sooth'd my hours,
 In this abode of horrors, willing victims
 Of holy friendship, and my Cleri too—
 He hath been constant, 'midst surrounding dangers.

S C E N E IX.

Re-enter PETION, SANTERRE, and the other Deputies.

Petion. Louis, of France, excuse the fatal duty,
 Most painful to my soul---the moments fly——

King. Awhile delay ;—I shall not hold you long.——
 May heav'n forgive my causeless enemies.

For, sure, I cannot tax my conscious thought,
 From manhood upward, with delib'rate wrong
 To living mortal, ev'n in careless hours
 Of boundless pow'r, prosperity, and ease.—
 But if I err'd, unknowing, and forgot
 My duty to my subjects, heav'n and they
 Forgive, and pity, me, as I forgive
 The fatal efforts of misguided zeal,
 And popular resentment urg'd to frenzy,
 By wild fanatics, or designing traitors,
 Fatal alike to me.—Thou good supreme,
 Hope of the hopeless, comfort of the wretched,
 Behold these miserables,—look, with pity,
 On us, unequall'd in our present pangs,
 As in our glory past !—To thee, Maria,
 My children I bequeath ;—their future life,
 If heav'n should please to grant them life, is mark'd,
 For suff'rings past example : let them learn
 To seek that pow'r, whose all-supporting hand,
 Alone, is solid strength, and feel, and know,
 If heav'n should call them to the dangerous state
 Of earthly pomp and grandeur, that their worth
 Is small, indeed, and their duration brief ;
 That earthly crowns, tho' baubles they may seem,
 Dreadfully pond'rous, sink the heads that wear them
 In deepest condemnation—but when virtues,
 Brighter than jewels, blend their hallow'd rays
 Around the circlet, they are passports, then,

That give the wearers entrance—to a seat
 High and conspicuous 'midst the blest above.—
 My child, my child, hope not for good or glory
 Fleeting and earthly,—'tis delusion all.—
 Look there—thy god is there—there only seek
 Thy glory and thy good.—Hopes, aims, and thoughts
 Be heav'nward all directed.—View thy mother.—

Queen. No mother, as no wife—all human ties
 Are at an end, all names are blotted out,
 From nature's book!—despair, despair, despair!—
 I hate thee child, the sight of thee is madness,
 Begone, begone, begone—take him, in mercy,
 And kill him with my husband; ere he learns,
 To feel th' extent of sorrow—hang not on me,
 Away, away, thou wretched little one.

Daup. My father—o my father—let me fly—
 Oh give me way—I'll kneel and kiss the ground,
 And kiss the hands of every citizen.

Petion. What wouldst thou little one?—

Daup. O give me way—
 I fly, to save a father and a king.—
 Santerre, Santerre, wilt thou be merciful,
 And give me way. I fly to save my father.—
 O take me, in his stead; my blood will serve
 To calm the furious crowd, and when they see me,
 So young and helpless—they will, sure, be mov'd
 With pity, and restore my headless trunk,
 To my poor parents—poor I now must call them.—

Sant. Refrain that child. He talks us from our purpose.

Daup. Why, would they kill my father, let me hence
I'll range about the streets and raise the people :
I'll find some loyal hearts to pity me,
Off, let me pass—I fly to save my father.—

[*Dauphin runs out.*]

King. A sacred inspiration fills my breast—
I hail him king of France.—The depths of time
Are rich in mighty things ; the minutes toil
With a prodigious birth, that shall confound
The wond'ring world.—

Queen. Two days—two days delay.—

King. Speak'ft of delay?—thy reason is disturb'd
Time flies—it bears me from thee—pass two hours—
And I am number'd with my ancestors,
That in the tomb repose.

Queen. The tomb—the tomb—
Oh, mercy, mercy!—Louis—king of France.—

Petion. With grief of soul we trespass—but our mission
Prohibits more delay.

King. All gracious heav'n,
That, for wise purposes, beyond the ken
Of human foresight, hath ordain'd for me
This lot of suff'rance, o sustain my soul,
To bear it royally—let no base symptom
Of human weakness stain my parting hour !
I will not cry farewell—but this last embrace—
Where are my children?—raise her, life forsakes

The languid frame---'tis vain---I must be gone---
The voice of heav'n itself has call'd me from thee.

Queen. Thus, thus, I clasp him; break my circling arms---
Break ev'ry limb, and tear me, joint, by joint;---
The cords of life, each agonizing nerve,
In dying efforts, shall around him twine;
And ye must break them all---relentless monsters---
Ye loath'd detested fiends, in human form.

Petion. O scene of horror---'tis a dreadful function.

Queen. To death, to death---death on a scaffold.--- Monsters---
Assassins!--hell-hounds!--is he not your king?---
Fall down with reverence.---Hah!--in savage joy---
Ye mock my rage---secure in villainy---
Vile sacrilegious things.---He shall not go.---
Thus will I hold him---thus---will grow upon him.---
With these strong clasps, thus grov'ling on the earth.---
Hew off these hands, and tear me, mangle me.---
Another trophy, fend my gory head,
To speak your clemency, and join Lamballe.

King. Spare me, Maria, thy convulsive feelings,
Thy dreadful agonies, unman my soul---
The cup, indeed, is bitter---so support her---
Seek for our children, bring them to her arms---
Convey me to the scaffold, ere she wakes---
One look---one parting look---farewell, for ever.

[Scene closes.]

S C E N E T H E L A S T .

PARIS, *with GASTON, wounded and bleeding.*

Gaston. Vain, vain our hopes, all avenues beset
With murderous bands.—The fierce parisian throng,
That wield the fatal pike, the fiery cohorts,
From fouthern France. With these the marshall'd ord'nance
Commands the streets, and, with its iron throat,
Enjoins submission to the fatal doom.

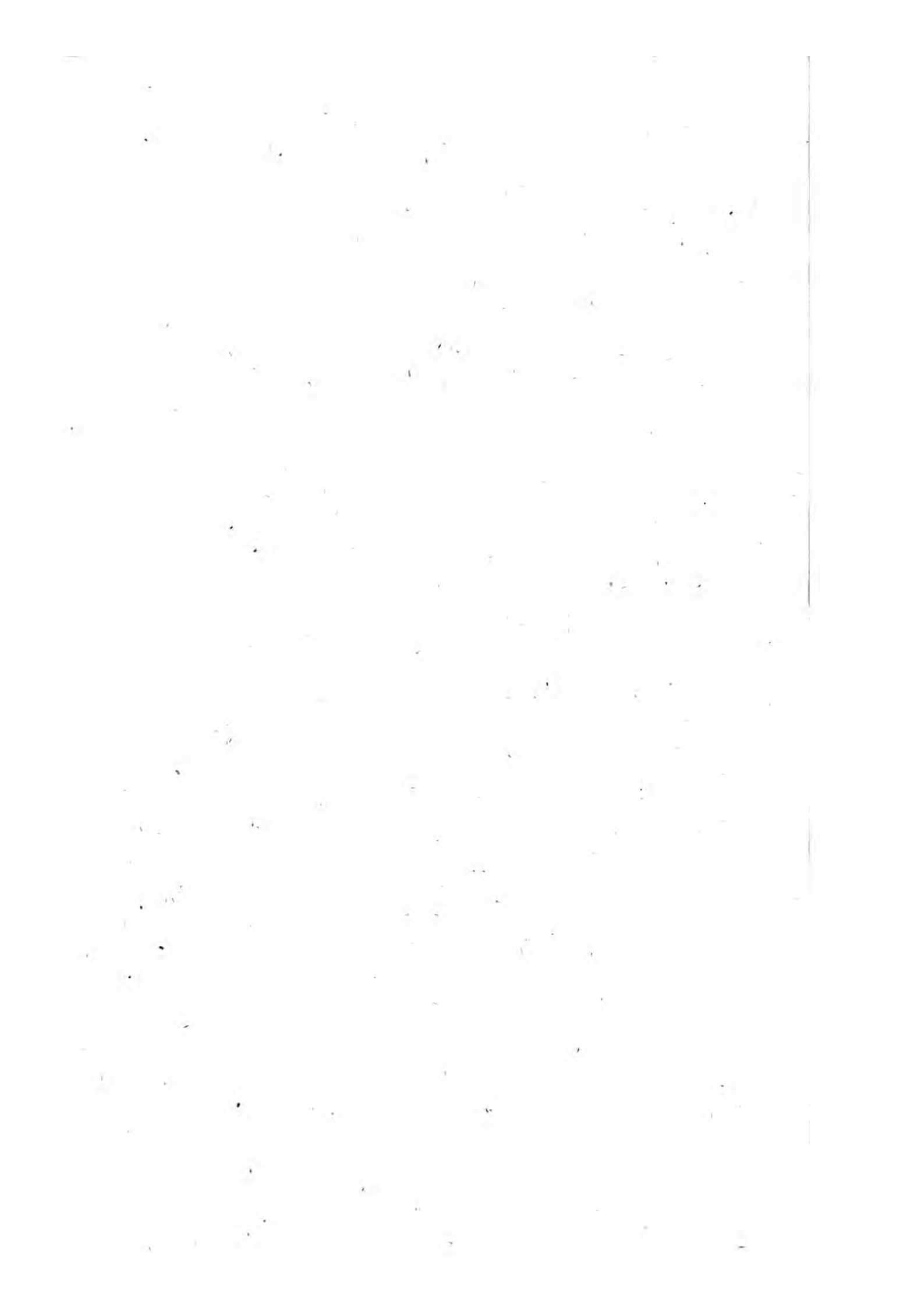
Paris. Eternal curses blast the trembling cowards !—
Not one would follow, when we gave the signal,
And loudly cry'd “ o pardon for your king !”
All panic-struck---all motionless, as statues,
Speechless and pale---an hundred loyal men,
Joining, with timely voice, our honest cry,
Had sav'd their soveraign---o 'tis lost, 'tis lost---
For ever lost---the glorious great occasion !

Gaston. Thou know'st I follow'd with a mind resolv'd,
And firmest tone, when all our base associates
Had left us to our fate---'till pressing onward—
To gaze upon my king, and catch his eye,
The pikemen smote me, lifeless, then, I fell,—
And when I wak'd——

Paris. Oh, who can bear the thought?—
 Sacrilege, sacrilege! The fell blow is struck—
 Oh France for ever curst, thy monarch bleeds.—
 But rouse, my friend, our mighty grief demand
 Not tears alone and listless dumb despair,
 Deeds, deeds must speak our sorrow; trait'rous blood
 Shall expiate the land.—Thou, to the Bretons,
 With providence thy guide; and I, where heav'n
 May call my wand'ring steps: for well I know,
 This arm shall be illustrious, by some act,
 Of mighty daring —The revolving hours,
 With awful changes fraught, mature the means,
 That, from th' abyfs of abject misery,
 Exalt our youthful king, to pow'r and freedom,
 And place th' imperial sceptre in his hand.

[*Exeunt.*

T H E E N D.



P O S T S C R I P T,

THERE is not, perhaps, an event recorded in the page of history, that leads to such serious and important reflections, as the tragical fate of Louis the sixteenth, a prince, on whose head, the sins of his fathers have been most severely visited. In the foregoing drama, I have attempted to delineate this affecting and awful story. The reader need not be informed, that this work is hastily written, but the good intentions of the author, will, I hope, atone for the manifold defects of the composition. The candid reader will allow; that if I had adopted the precept of Horace, *nonum prematur in annum*—much of that energetic feeling, which attends the transactions of the moment, would have evaporated, and my production would have lost in interest what it might have gained in correctness.

I must beg leave to acquaint the subscribers to my poetical works, that the whole copy of my poems had

been arranged for the prefs, and very nearly printed off, long before I formed the idea of writing a drama, on the subject of Louis the sixteenth, so that this latter production could not have found a place in these volumes, without deranging the whole plan of the edition :—however, I have printed it on the same paper, and in the same manner with my poetical works, to accommodate such of my subscribers as may wish to bind it, with my other poems.

I was much mortified, at being unable to publish my poems as early in the year, as I proposed; the delay equally unavoidable, and unforeseen, was partly occasioned, by the slowness of engravers; partly, by a disappointment with respect to paper, which I had bespoke in England, and which was detained there, by want of convoy, many months later, than I might reasonably have expected. All difficulties are now surmounted, the letter press is nearly finished, and I think, I may promise with confidence, that the work will be ready, to make its appearance, in the course of two months.







