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Marie de Corday

(after Siccardi)

FOUR FRENCHWOMEN

BY

AUSTIN DOBSON

London

CHATTO & WINDUS, PICCADILLY

1893

[*Special-paper Edition*]

V53 y 7²⁶ L4

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TO MY FRIEND

BRANDER MATTHEWS

PREFATORY NOTE.

*A*MONG reasons for reprinting these papers, two chiefly may be mentioned:—one, that they were originally planned for publication in book-form; the other, that, by re-issuing them now, the author has been enabled to give them the revision of which, from lapse of time, they stood in need.

It may be objected that the Princess de Lamballe was, by birth, an Italian. But by her marriage, by the more important part of her life, and above all by her tragic death, she belongs to the country of her adoption.

Some justification is perhaps required for the title which, in this volume, is uniformly given to the first of its heroines. It is true that by the historian she is known as Charlotte Corday; but to her family and her relatives she was Marie de Corday, and this signature is affixed to the letter to Mlle. Rose Fougerson du Fayot, quoted at p. 13, as well as to

the last she ever wrote, penned while actually preparing for the scaffold.

In the references to Lady Edward Fitzgerald, at p. 189, Moore and other authorities are followed. But the recent investigations of Mr. J. G. Alger, in the "Dictionary of National Biography," have established the fact that, although the matter is still not wholly free from doubt, there is more truth in the "circumstantial fiction" put forward by Madame de Genlis than has hitherto been supposed.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
MADMOISELLE DE CORDAY	1
MADAME ROLAND	31
THE PRINCESS DE LAMBALLE	63
MADAME DE GENLIS	107

ILLUSTRATIONS.

MADemoiselle DE CORDAY.	<i>After Siccardi . Frontispiece</i>
MADAME ROLAND.	<i>From a lithograph . To face p. 31</i>
THE PRINCESS DE LAMBALLE.	<i>After Hichel „ 63</i>
MADAME DE GENLIS.	<i>From a lithograph „ 107</i>